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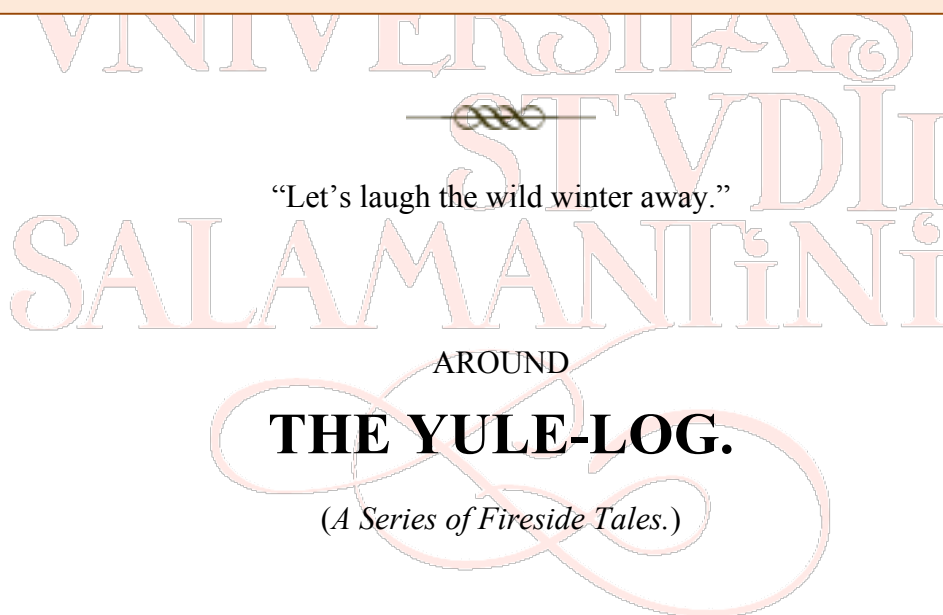
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BY **EDWIN WAUGH.**

MANCHESTER:

JOHN HEYWOOD, EXCELSIOR BUILDING, RIDGEFIELD, JOHN DALTON
STREET; AND 18, PATERNOSTER SQUARE, LONDON.

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OH, THIS TOOTH!

“Whate'er the place is priests ca' hell,

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Where a' the tones o' misery yell,
An' rank'd plagues their numbers tell,
In dreadfu' raw,
Thou, Toothache, surely bears't the bell
Amang them a'."

"Adown my beard the slavers trickle;
I kick the wee stools o'er the mickle.
As round the fire the giglets keckle,
To see me loup;
Whilst, ravin' mad, I wish a heckle

Were i' their doup!" *Burns.*

Winter forenoon. A little cottage by the wayside at the end of the village. MALLY O' RONDLE'S pacing to and fro in the kitchen, with a swollen cheek, and her face lapped in hot flannel.

"EH dear o' me! Whatever mun I do? My gooms are steawngin' an' lutchin' to that degree! I can never ston this mich longer! . . . Sarah, see if that back dur's shut! I'm sure there's a draught somewheer! Oh, good gracious, this is bad to bide! . . . Ay, thou may laugh, thou little sniggerin' snicket; but

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if I wur weel, I'd make thee laugh o' tother side o' thi mouth!"

"I weren't laughin'."

"What arto pooin' thi face at, then?"

"I weren't pooin' my face."

"Get out o' my seet; an' keep out! . . . Gi' me another handkitcher, some on yo!
. . . Jenny, doesto think this swellin' goes down ony?"

"Nawe; it gets worse."

"Oh, Lord o' me! Talk about pain! . . . Eh, my poor yed; it feels like a wasp-
neest! . .

Jenny, reitch me that cup off th' hob! An' somebody keeps negglin' at that sneck.
Who is it? Do keep th' dur shut, I pray yo! It's enough to drive onybody crazy! . . .

The Salamanca Corpus: *Around the Yule Log* (1879)

Eh dear, eh dear! did ever ony poor soul suffer as I'm sufferin' this minute? (*Enter a little girl from a neighbouring cottage.*) Now, then, theer yo are; that dur's oppen again! Who is it? Oh, it's thee, Liddy, is it? What doesto want?"

"Mally, my mother wants to know if yo'n be as good as lend her a basinful o' flour till my faither draws his wage?"

"See what hoo wants,—some on yo,—for I cannot yer a word that hoo says! Oh, dear o' me!"

"Her mother wants to borrow a basinful o' flour."

"Oh, that's it, is it? . . . Well, tell thi mother that I haven't a bit o' flour i'th house!

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Beside, I'm gooin' to bake; and I's want it mysel', tell thi mother! Shut that dur, that's a good lass! . . . Bless my life! they're never off th' dur stones for one thing or another! . . . Jenny, warm this flannel again! and just put some more coals upo' that fire! Fasten yon buttery-window, some on yo! . . . Oh! this tooth, this tooth! (*Door opens again.*) Theer yo are again! What now?"

(*Enter MALLY'S little lad.*)

"Mother, there's a chimbley afire!"

"Well, let it burn! . . . Get out o' this house, thou little monkey,—an' shut th' dur after tho,— or I'll chine tho to th' floor! One met (might) as weel be livin' in a dog-kennel, an' me as ill as I am! Eh, dear! eh, dear! Jenny, reitch me that cup off th' hob again! an' fill th' kettle up! . . . (*She tastes of the tea.*) Oh, good Lord o' me! Who's sweeten't this tay?"

"Me!"

"An' where didto get thi sugar fro?"

"Out of a white basin i'th buttery."

"Well; taste on't!"

"Eh, it's saut!"

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“Saut! The divvle saut yo! I think yo’r doin’ everythin’ that yo con to torment me,—as if I wern’t enough tormented o’mysel’! It’s enough to

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make a body run their country! . . . Gi’ me another flannel out o’ that oon! Oh, my poor gooms!”

“Here, mother, sit yo down i’ this cheer, bi th’ fire; and I’ll lap some’at round yo’r shoulders.”

(She sits down and JENNY laps her up.)

“Ay, that’s better, lass ! . . . Now, do try to mak a cup o’ gradely tay! Thou’ll find some sugar in a brown papper, upo’ that second shelf. . . . Oh, these teeth! Talk about lyin’-in!— it’s a foo to this! *(The door opens again.)* Now then! That dur again! I’ the name o’ good Katty, what han yo agate this time?”

(A man selling sand looks in.)

“Dun yo want ony sond?”

“If thou artn’t ont o’ that dur-hole in hauve a minute, I’ll tak thee atop o’th yed wi’th fire-pote! *(Exit the sandman.)* I think the dule’s thrut has club o’er this house! Latch yon dur,—an’ lock it,— an’ keep o’ out that is out! . . . Hello! What’s that cat gotten?”

“Eh, mother, it’s run upstairs wi’ a beefsteak in it mouth!”

“Good gracious! Wherever are yo’r een?—o’on yo! I could like to swear at yo! If I’m laid up mich longer, this house’ll go to rack an’ ruin!

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Cover yon milk up,—an’ shut that buttery dur! An’ look if thou con see aught o’th doctor comin’; it’s about his time.”

The Salamanca Corpus: *Around the Yule Log* (1879)

(JENNY looks through the window.)

“He’s comin’ now, mother!”

(Enter the Doctor.)

“Good morning, Mally!”

“Good mornin’! Eh, I’m fain yo’n come’d, doctor; for I’m very nearly done to th’ lung-length!”

“What’s th’ matter?”

“Matter? Look at my face!”

“Ay, I see. It’s a bit side-heavy, for sure.”

“Now, doctor, afore yo gone ony fur (further), don’t mak me laugh, for I cannot ston it just now!”

“Well, let’s be serious, then. It’s your teeth again, I see. I’ll soon put you right. Which tooth is it?”

“It’s three or four o’ these bottom uns,—o’ this side.”

“Open your mouth. (*He examines her teeth and tries them with his instruments.*) I see nothing amiss with these teeth, Mally!”

“Poo ‘em o’ out, I tell yo! I’d better lose my teeth than lose my life!”

“I don’t feel justified in pulling these teeth out, Mally.”

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“Well, cut my yed off, then; for I cannot live i’ this state!”

“Well, before we go any further, I’ll give you something that’ll relieve you. (*Writes a prescription.*) There! Send down to the druggist’s for that, and take it according to directions! Off with you to bed, and stop there; and let them bring you a good white-wine posset! I’ll call again in the morning, and, if you’re no better, I’ll see what’s to be done!”

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“Well, I don’t know whether I’s live till mornin’ or not, doctor; but, if I’m no better than I am now, I’ll poo’ ‘em out mysel’, if yo winnot! So, good mornin’!”

“Good morning!”.

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A DAB O’ PUTTY!

“Sich talk as that’s a downreet sin;

I wonder at tho, Jone!

Do, pritho, try to howd thi din.

An’ let his nose alone!” *Anon.*

Autumn evening. A cottage, in a garden, by the roadside, at the end of Chadderton Fold. MALL O’ PUDDLER’S mending stockings at a little table under the window. JABEZ, her little son, getting his supper at the same table. PUDDLER BILL, his father, who has just come in from work, sitting by the fire, smoking. MALLY (to her little lad).

“**NOW**, finish thi supper, an’ get thi lessons; an’ then off witho to bed,—like a good lad! (*The lad still plays sulkily with his supper.*) Now, Jabez; what arto chunnerin’ an’ pooin’ thi face about ? Thou doesn’t need to turn thi nose up at thi porritch, for there’s nought else i’th house for tho!”

“I’m not turnin’ mi nose up!”

PUDDLER BILL. “Nawe, nor thou doesn’t need to turn thi nose up, Jabez, my lad,—thou doesn’t need to turn it up,—as thi mother says,—for thi nose is just th’ pictur’ of her’s.”

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“How is it like mine?”

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“Well, because it wur hondsomely turn’t up when he wur born, my lass! It’s like a dab o’ putty that’s bin thrutched up at th’ end!”

MALLY (*to her little lad*). “Jabez, my lad, go thi ways an’ send yon hens out o’th garden. (*Exit JABEZ.— To her husband.*) William, I wish to the Lord thou wouldn’t meddle between me an’ these childer! It’s a strange thing that I cannot correct ‘em, but thou mun put thy motty in, an’ turn everything that one says to ridicule! A nice way o’ bringin’ childer up that is! How can they be expected to tak notice of oather thee or me, when they see’n thee pooin’ one road an’ me pooin’ tother! I wonder at tho! An’ sich seely unfeelin’ talk, too! Did ever onybody i’ their common senses mak sich remarks about folk’s noses, an’ bits o’ failin’ places. It’s a shame to talk sich talk! Bless my life, I didn’t mak mi own nose, no more than thou made those two bow-legs o’ thine. An’ if thi own mother does sken, hoo’s noan to blame for it,—poor body,—no more than yo’r Joe is for havin’ a long leg an’ a short un! A bonny trainin’ thou’rt givin’ thi childer! If I wur thee I’d measure a peck out o’ mi own seck, now an’ then, an’ try to keep mi tung between mi teeth till I could say some’at to some sense, particular when there’s a lot o’ childer about!”

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“Well, well, thou’s said quite enough! I very seldom oppen mi lips at o’; but when I do, thou’rt sure to gi’ me twenty words for one!”

“Tor the Lord’s sake do let it drop! he’s comin’ in again! (*Enter little JABEZ.*) Well, hasto sent ‘em out?”

“Ay.”

“Well, finish thi porritch; an’ then get thi lessons. Hello, who’s this? (*Enter TUM O’ NANCY’S, on his way home with a basketful of stuff from the market.*) Never, sure! Is that yo, Tummus? What, yo’r loadent like a humma-bee!”

“Ay, they’re some bits o’ things for whoam, Mally. Where’s yo’r Bill?”

“He’s i’th corner here.”

“Now then, owd buzzart, where arto?”

“I’m here, Tummy! Come an’ sit tho down! What hasto gotten i’ thi basket?”

“Oh, a twothre oddments. I’ve an offal twenty pound weight for one thing.”

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“Well, come, that’s a daicent sort of an oddment, for a start, as how ‘tis.”

“We’re fond o’ stew at our house.”

“Well, an’ there isn’t a finer dish i’th world than a bowl of good stew, weel thicken’t wi’ crisp haver-brade! . . . What hasto beside? Come, turn ‘em out, an’ let’s see!”

“Well, I’ve bin buyin’ a new pair o’ ankle-jacks, sitho!”

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“Let’s look at ‘em ! . . . Ay; an’ a rare pair they are, too! Clinker’t, an’ toe-capped too, I see! Thou’ll be primely shod for winter, owd buckstick! But, I’ll tell tho what, they looken little,—for thee! . . . Cock thi fuut up! . . . Ay; that’s a sarious sort of a hoof, that is! . . . Dun they fit?”

“Well,—if I mun tell truth, owd lad,—I don’t know whether the’n fit or not,—for, by the mass,— *I clen forgeet to try ‘em on!*”

“Well, by Guy! that’s a crumper, as how ‘tis! . . . It reminds me of a prank o’ Jem o’ my uncle Joss’s, th’ farmer, up aboon ‘Th’ Syke,’ yon. . . . One mornin’ when Jem were getting’ his-sel’ ready to be off to th’ cow fair, down i’th town, he said, ‘Oh, an’ while I’m i’th town, I’s ha’ to buy a pair o’ boots, too! Here, some on yo come an’ measure my fuut; an’ I’ll tak th’ measure wi’ me, an’ there’ll be no moore bother!’ Well, they measur’t his fuut, an’ they laid th’ measure down upo’ th’ window-sill for him to tak with him. Well, off he set in a bit, an’ as soon as he geet to th’ town he went into th’ owd shop, an’ he said, ‘Joe, I want a pair o’ strong boots!’ an’ then he began o’ gropin’ his pockets for th’ measure; but he couldn’t find noather top nor tail on’t about his rags. ‘By th’hectum, Joe!’ said he, *I’ve forgotten to bring th’ measure!* Never mind, I’ll co’ to-morn!’ An’ out he went But th’ owd

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shoemaker followed him to th’ dur, an’ shouted on him, ‘Heigh, doesto yer?’ ‘Well?’ ‘Where arto for?’ ‘I’m gooin’ for th’ measure for th’ boots!’ ‘Why, who are

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they for?' *'They're for mysel'!*' 'Well, then, *thou's gotten thi fuut witho, hasn'to?*'
'Sure, I have! By th' mass, I'd forgotten that!' "

"Come, that's a good un," said Bill; "but it's not so mich better than one I yerd
no longer sin than yesterday, for o' that."

"What wur that?"

"Well, I went into th' Seven Stars kitchen about noon, an' there I fund Lither
Dick an' th' landlord sittin' bi their two sels,—one o' one side o' th' fire an' tother
o' tother, toastin' haver-brade, an' soppin' it i' ale. In a bit Dick cocks his fuut up,
an' he says to th' landlord, '*Sitho, Sam, I've had these boots twelve months, an'
they aren't a bit worse!*' 'Ay,' said Sam, '*that may be; but thou's punish't thi
breeches — terribly!*' "

Mally had just finished setting the tea-things.

"Come, William, th' baggin's ready! . . . Now, John, yo'n have a cup wi' us,
winnot yo?"

"I will,—an' thank yo!"

"Poo up, then!"

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**I WISH THI MOTHER WOULD
COME!**

Th' owd lad had scarcely gone,

When th' bairn began to squall:

Wi' hikin't up an' down,

He let the poor thing fall:

It wouldn't hau'd its tongue,

Whatever tune he'd hum,—

'Jack and Jill went up the hill,—

I wish thi mother would come.'

Joe Wilson, of Tyneside.

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Winter evening. Victoria Station, Manchester. Train standing, ready to start for Liverpool. A stout good-looking woman come puffing up, with a child in her arms.

“TAKE your seats! . . . Any more for Liverpool? . . . Come, missis, look sharp, if yo’r goin’!”

“Nay; yo mustn’t be in a hurry! . . . I’ve bin runnin’! . . . An’ I’m such a size!”

“Here; I’ll give yo a lift! . . . Let’s have howd o’ that bantlin’! . . . Now then; step

[17] up; an’ I’ll hand it in to yo! (*She steps up, and takes her seat. He hands the child in to her.*) Now; yo’n gotten yo’r parcel; an’ yo’r o’ reet?”

“Yes; I’m all right, thank you! (*She settles herself in her seat, and gives the child a drink.*) Husht, my love! Did ‘em plague it? I’ll lick ‘em, I will!”

(*Porters on the platform.*)

“Tickets ready, please!”

(*She starts, in a fit of consternation.*)

“Eh, good gracious! I’ve forgotten mi ticket! Whatever mun I do? (*To a stout, middle-aged man sitting next to her.*) Maister, would yo be kind enough to howd this child a minute, while I run for mi ticket?”

“Well,—ay,—but yo mun be very sharp, missis,— for I’m nobbut a poor hond at this job! Now; be slippy! Yo’n very little time!”

“I’ll not be a minute!”

(*Away she runs. The man begins to dandle the child awkwardly, and the passengers joke him.*)

“There, owd lad; thou’s gotten a job at last!”

“Ay; thou may weel say that! I’ve tackle’t mony a quare bit o’ wark sin’ I wur a lad; but this is th’ first time I ever tried mi hond at weet-nursin’! . . . I hope yon woman ‘ll be sharp,—for I’m fretten’t o’ some’at happenin’! Childer are sich

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comical craiters! Hello! th’ gam’s beginnin’! (*The child cries.*) Husht, my love! For the Lord’s sake! husht a minute,—till thi mother comes,—an’ then thou may skrike thi ballyful! Hush—ht! . . . I hope it’ll not be takken ill afore hoo gets back! . . . Look out at that window some on yo! (*One of the passengers looks out.*) Is hoo comin’?”

“I see nought on her yet”

“By th’ mass, lads,” said he, “this is getting’ awk’ard!”

“Ay; thou’ll be in for it afore long, owd lad, bi’ th’ look o’ that chylt! Hasto no hippens i’ thi pocket?”

“Have I hectum as like! . . . Husht, my love! . . . Eh, this is a do!”

In the meantime the tickets were being examined; the doors were closing, one after another, with a bang; the whistle went for the train to start; and yet the woman had not returned. The poor fellow with the child in his arms began to perspire at every pore; and, when the porter came to lock the door, he started up in a fright, and cried out, “Heigh, stop! Here! Oppen that dur! Let me get out! Where’s th’ guard? Here, guard! Where’s that woman?”

“Where’s what woman?”

“Why, th’ woman that belongs this chylt?”

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“Nay; I know nothing about the woman!”

“By—! but thou’ll ha’ to find her!”

The guard began to laugh.

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“Ay; thou may laugh! But this is noan o’ my chylt!”

“Nay; how can I tell!”

“I never clapt een on it afore, I tell tho!”

“Ay; that may be!”

“I know nought about th’ woman I tell yo! Hoo axed me to stick to it a minute, while hoo went for her ticket!”

“Well; time’s up,” said the guard, laughing again; “we must be off!”

“By——! but yo munnot goo till hoo comes back! It’s noan o’ my chylt!”

“Well; and it’s not mine!” said the guard.

“It’s as much thine as mine!” said the poor fellow.

“I don’t know that,” replied the guard. “Come, get in; an’ let’s be off.”

“Nay; I’ll go noan till hoo comes! . . . There; stick to it a minute, till I go an’ look for her!”

“Nay, nay; I’ve plenty o’ that sort o’ mi own! But, we must be going!”

“There; tak it wi’ yo then!”

“Not me! . . . Shut that door; we can’t wait any longer.”

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“Then d—n yo, goo!” said the poor fellow, wiping his forehead with his sleeve, “I’ll not stir a peg till that woman comes!”

Away went the train; and the passengers looked out, laughing at the unhappy wight, as they rolled away, and left him staring helplessly to and fro, and dandling the crying child, with a kind of clumsy fear, as if it were a red-hot poker. The people on the platform, too, began to make fun of him.

“Give it a saup o’ cinder-tay, owd lad!” cried one.

“Ay,” replied he, wiping his forehead again, “an’ if I hadn’t this thing i’ my honds, I’d gi thee some cinder-tay, too! (*But now something happened that drew his attention to the child again.*) Hello! . . . Now for it! . . . Ay; it’s just as I expected! . . . Look here! These are my Sunday breeches.”

“Lend him a hippin, some on yo!” cried one.

“Tak thi handkitcher, owd lad!” cried another.

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*(The child began to scream more violently than ever,
and a countrywoman came running up.)*

“Whatever are yo doin’ at that chylt? Th’ little thing’ll skrike itsel’ into fits! An’ yo’r hondlin’ it like a foo; wrang side up! Gi’ me howd on’t! There’s a pin prickin’ it, somewheer!”

“Ay,” said the poor fellow, with a sigh of relief, “just tak howd on’t a minute, missis,—an’ see what ails it!”

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But the instant he got it safely landed in the woman’s arms, he slipt off to the corner of the building, and shouted for a cab. The cab drew up, and he jumped in.

“Where to?” said the cabman.

“Drive straight out at tother end o’th town,— toward Delamere Forest,—as fast as thou con! I’ll tell tho when to stop!”

And away they went.

• • • • •

“Ay,” said the kind-hearted countrywoman who had taken the child in hand, “th’ poor little thing might weel cry, with a greight pin runnin’ into it! Look theer!” and as soon as she had put the child to right, and soothed it into quietness, she looked round, and said, “Now then, maister, tak howd! It’s o’ reet, now!” But the man was not to be seen. “Hello!” cried she, “where’s that chap?”

“He’s off in a cab!” said one of the bystanders.

“Good gracious!” cried the poor woman, “whatever mun I do? My train starts in about five minutes; an’ I’ve childer enoo o’ mi own to look after without bein’ bother’t with onybody else’s! Whatever mun I do?”

In the meantime the mother of the child had got her ticket, and she came running up to the place where she had left the train standing.

“Hello!” cried she “where’s th’ train?”

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“Th’ train’s gone!”

“An’ where’s my chylt?”

“That fat chap geet out o’th train, an’ took it away with him.”

“Eh, whatever mun I do?” cried she; and she went screaming about one part of the platform, crying out, “My chylt, my chylt! where’s my chylt?” whilst the strange woman with the child in her arms was going screaming about amongst the passengers, in another part of the platform, crying, “Where’s th’ chap that belongs this chylt?”

At last the two happily met. The mother got her child; the kind-hearted countrywoman was relieved from her untimely burden; and peace was restored.

But the fat man, who had been nursing the child, came no more to Victoria station that day.

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COCK ROBIN.

“Singing he was, or fluting all the day;
He was as fresh as is the month of May.”

—*Chaucer.*

IT was a bitter winter forenoon. A heavy snowstorm was driving wild across the moor tops. The kitchen of the Heather Bell was all aglow with a roaring fire, and the wind roared in the wide chimney. On one side of the hearth a poor hawker sat warming his thin hands, with a gill, full of sopped oat-cake, on the hob beside him; on the other sat the old landlord smoking, and watching the snowflakes, which darkened the little lattice as they flew by,— whilst his wife Mary busied herself stirring a great panful of lobscouse which hung over the fire, and turning now and then to give directions to her servants.

“Joe” said she to the lame old ostler, “goo an’ shool th’ snow away fro yon front dur. Folk cannot get in.”

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“There’ll not be so mony folk here to-day,” said Joe, as he went limping towards the door. “Oh, yigh!” said he, in a tone of surprise, as he looked into the storm, “there’s one comin’ now!”

“Who is it?” inquired Mary.

“Nay,” said Joe, “I cannot mak him out yet,— for he’s lost i’th snow! . . . He’s a winter surplice on,—I can see that,—an’ he’s singin’ like a March throstle, too, as who he is! . . . Husht!”

A clear strong voice was heard coming up singing through the snow:—

“Come. Caleb, an’ settle thi shanks,

An’ let’s ha’ no moor o’ thi bother;

Wi’ thi camplin’ din, an’ thi pranks,

Thou’rt wortchin’ thisel’ to a lother;

Come, Nathan, poo up into th’ nook,—

Thou’rt a good-natur’t, comical craitur;

Let’s join in a chat, an’ a smook.

An’ a noggin o’ hot rum an’ wayter.

Fal-derdal-layrol-iday!’ ”

“By th’ mass,” said owd Joe, “I thought I knew that sound! . . . It’s Cock Robin!”

“Set th’ cheese an’ loaf onto that little table,” said the landlord. “He’ll be as hungry as a hunter!”

In the meantime the song came nearer as the singer came slowly up the steep and snowy road:—

‘We’re neighbours, an’ very weel met;

We’re o’ merry lads, o’ good mettle;

There’s Nathan,—wur never licked yet,—

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An' Caleb's i' farrantly fettle:

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With a pipe, an' a tot, an' a crack,
An' a crony, I'm just i' my glory:
So now, I'll fling th' world from my back,
An' brast off with a bit of a story!
Fal-derdal-layrol-iday!'

The singer was now within a few yards of the doorway.

"Good mornin', Robin!" cried old Joe. "Thou'rt like th' redbreast,—th' cowder th' weather an' th' better thou sings!"

"Hello, owd buckstick!" replied Robin. "This is a bit o' good, owd-fashion't winter, isn't it? Ston fur,—an' let's come into th' house!"

Robin was going right forward, loaded with snow from head to foot, when the landlady shouted from the inner doorway, "Stop, Robin! Shake that snow off i'th lobby, afore thou comes in here; or else we's ha' this kitchen floor in a swim!"

"Reet, Mary, reet!" cried Robin, shaking the heavy snow from his clothes, and beginning to sing again :—

'Twas when the dawn of morning
Began to leet the sky,
I donned mysel' to wander
Afore the dew was dry;
To wander in the gay greenwood,
Right early I did rove,—
I could not rest upon my bed
For thinkin' of my love!'

"Good mornin', Mary!" said Robin, as he entered the kitchen.

“Good mornin”, Robin! Thou’rt i’ rare fettle, lad! Wipe thy shoon a bit, upo’ that mat! . . . (*He wipes his shoes.*) Ay; that’ll do. Now, get for’ad wi’ thi ditty! I like to hear it. Thou knows

‘Owd rhymes an’ owd chimes
Maken one think of owd times,’
so get on wi’ thi singin’! It’ll hinder noan o’ me!”

“Well, then, here goes, Mary!—

‘Down in a flow’ry dingle,
Where sometimes we did stray,
Our vows of love to mingle,
At close of summer day;
It’s there, where oft among her hair
The flowers of spring I wove,
I sat me down to think upon
The girl that I do love.’

“Weel twitter’d, Robin, my lad!” cried the landlord. “Come, let’s have another verse while thou’rt at it! A merry heart never hindered good wark! Let’s have another verse!”

“With o’ mi heart, Sam! Here goes again!—

‘It’s there I made a garlan’,
My darlin’ for to don,
An’ the posies that were in it,
They shined like the sun;
The dewy posies, wild and sweet,
All in the leafy grove:
It breaks my heart to think upon
The girl that I do love!’

“Ay,” cried the landlord, laughing, “thou looks brokken-hearted, for sure! A greight brawsen

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bullart (bull-ward), with a neck like th’ bole of a tree! Thee,—an’ ‘The girl that I do love!’ I know nought what hoo is, Robin,—but’ thou’rt a bonny buzzart.”

“Ay,” said the landlady, joining in the laugh, “thou looks terribly wasted, Robin! But love does tak strong howd o’ some folk! An’ who is this woman that thou’s bin yeawlin’ about?”

“Why; who dun yo think it is, Mary, but yon rollin’ owd farrantly fuzzock (stout good-looking old woman) o’ mine, at our house? I used to sing that sung to her twenty year sin,—afore we wur wed. An’ I have to sing it again for her, mony a time, when we’re sittin’ by th’ fire at neet. An’ th’ childer are just th’ same,—they’re o’ fond o’ music,—an’ mony a time, when they’re gettin’ their suppers, they say’n, ‘Eh, faither, *do* sing for us a bit,—that’s a good lad!’ An’ then, there’s nought for it, yo known, Mary, but I’m like to start, for th’ sake o’ quietness.”

“Well, well; I like to yer it, Robin, for it sounds whoamly, an’ kindly, an’ comfortable. . . . An’ how is yo’r Sally, saysto?”

“Eh, bless yo’r life! th’ owd lass is as reet as a ribbin’! Hoo’s as round as a turnip, an’ as swipper as a kitlin’ (nimble as a kitten),—ay, an’ hoo’s as peort (pert) as a pynot (magpie), sometimes!”

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“Well, well; long may hoo keep so, say I,—for a better-hearted craiter never nipt th’ edge of a cake o’ brade ! . . . An’ thou’rt i’ good fettle too, Robin, for thou’s a voice like a keigh-bugle! . . . But what’s set tho agate o’ singin’ so soon this cowl mornin’?”

The Salamanca Corpus: Around the Yule Log (1879)

“Well,—I’m weel an’ hearty, Mary,—an’ th’ wife’s weel an’ hearty,—an’ th’ childer are weel an’ hearty,— an’ we owe’n nobody nought,—an’ tak it o’ together, I feel fain that I’m wick,—an’ that’s o’ that I know about it!”

“Ay, ay; thou may weel sing, lad,—thou may weel sing! Thou’rt like th’ birds i’ summer,—they keepen singin’ an’ singin’, an’ they known nought what they’re singin’ about.”

“Well; I guess they’re like other folk, Mary; they keepen singin’ because they’re fain, an’ they wanten to let it off a bit.”

“Ay, ay,” said the landlady, “I guess it is so. . . . Well, come; I know thou’rt hungry. Poo up to this table. Thou sees what there is. There’s cheese an’ brade; an’ a prime bit o’ cheese it is too. An’ there’s some cowd ham. Poo up; an’ get agate; an’ need no more axin’!”

“Eh, Mary, yo’r a good owd soul! This is grand! Bring me a pint o’ ale!”

“Come, Robin,” said the landlord, drawing his chair to the table, “I think I’ll join tho; for it

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makes me hungry to hear tho talk ! . . . An’,— doesto yer? Come here. (*In a whisper.*) There’s that chap at th’ fireside, there. He looks starve’t. Ax him to have a bit with us!”

“Maister,” said the landlady to the tattered wanderer, who sat warming himself at the fire, “yo may as weel come an’ have a bit with ’em. There’s plenty on it; an’ yo’r as welcome as th’ flowers i’ May! See yo; tak this chair!”

“That’s reet!” said the landlord. “Poo up; an’ give us a lift wi’ this bit o’ stuff,—an’ then we’s be o’ comfortable together! Now, lads, fo’ to,—and do what yo con,—as long as it lasts!”

They feasted right heartily; and as old Mary was clearing the things away the landlord whispered to her, “Doesto yer, lass? That poor owd craiter looks ill clemmed, an’ it’s hard weather for sick folk. Slip him a bit o’ some’at into his basket, to tak with him!”

“I’ll do it,” said Mary, “with o’ my heart!”

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NICE TOMMY!

A lowly craftsman, well known in the land,
For little, creeping, kindly ways;
For whispers sweet, and manners bland,
And long-drawn, nice inflated phrase.

Anon.

Time: A keen winter morning. A dense fog in the air, and deep snow on the ground.

Scene: Front of the village barber's shop. Little lads on their way to school, making a slide on the footpath. LOTHER TOMMY, the polite barber, comes out.

“**NOW**, my good boys, you mustn't slide there! Don't you see that you're making a slippery surface upon the pavement, which will be very dangerous to the feet of any decrepid person who may desire to enter this establishment? It's very wrong of you, and I beg that you will desist! Now, off with you to school, like good boys! Do you hear? . . . Now, go away at once,—or I shall certainly complain to your parents! . . . Off with you! . . . Good morning!”

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(The lads begin to retire slowly, crying out, as they disappear in the fog)

“Good mornin', Tommy! Good mornin', lother-box! Good mornin' owd wig-block!”

(TOMMY has scarcely re-entered his shop, and closed the door behind him, before a snowball comes through the window. TOMMY rushes out into the fog again, crying)—

“Who broke that window?”

(He runs headlong in the fog against SLINK JOHNNY, an old butcher, who is coming to be shaved, and sends him upon his back.)

“Eh, I beg your pardon, Mr. John! I really didn’t see you! It was quite an accident, I assure you! Allow me to assist you! I hope I haven’t hurt you, Mr. John!”

“Thou’s done me no good, Tommy, I can tell tho that! . . . Where the devil wur tho gooin’ to at sich a pelt? Thou should leet thi lamps, mon, when thou’rt runnin’ i’th dark. . . . Gi’ me thi hond! . . . Thou’s shake’t my breakfast up, rarely! . . . Where were tho runnin’ to?”

“Did you see who broke this window of mine, Mr. John?”

“Nawe; but I seed one o’ yon lads send a snowbo’ at it.”

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“And which way did they go, Mr. John, please?”

“Well,” said the butcher, pointing up into the fog, “they’re gone up theer.”

“Oh, I see,” replied the barber, looking up into the fog. “Impertinent young rascals! I shall certainly despatch an epistle to the master of the school, complaining of the unruly behaviour of his pupils. . . . Allow me to help you, Mr. John! I sincerely hope that you’re no worse!”

“I’m no better for bein’ knocked o’er, Tommy,— I tell tho again; so howd thi din; for thy fine talk’ll not set brokken limbs!”

“I’m really very sorry, Mr. John! Take my arm, please!

“Ston out o’th gate! I can manage better if thou’ll keep out o’ my road! Go thi ways in; an’ give o’er talkin’!”

(The barber goes into his shop, and the butcher limps in after him.)

“See; take this chair, Mr. John, please. . . . Shaving, I suppose?”

“Ay; shavin’.”

The Salamanca Corpus: Around the Yule Log (1879)

“Thank you.”

“An’ get done as soon as thou con; for I want to go whoam, an’ ha’ this hip o’ mine looked to. It feels very sore; an’ I doubt I’s be as stiff as a rubbin’-stoop i’th mornin’.”

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“I’m exceedingly sorry, Mr. John.”

“Ay; thou may weel say that, Tommy. I shouldn’t wonder if it doesn’t cost me two or three shillin’ for hartshorn an’ oil,—afore it’s done wi’.”

“I’ll tell you what’s a good thing, Mr. John.”

“Howd thi din; an’ get for’ad wi’ thi shavin’!”

“Thank you!”

“An’ mind what thou’rt doin’; for I don’t want both my limbs brokken an’ my chin cut.”

“All right, Mr. John! . . . Is this razor easy, please?”

“Get on wi’ thi wark, I tell tho! Th’ razor’s reet, if thou’ll hondle it reet!”

“Thank you!”

(The barber whips the cloth off; and the butcher gets up, and wipes his chin.)

“Now, then,” said the butcher, “I think I’ll sit down a minute or two; for thou’s gan me a terrible shakin’, owd lad.”

“With all the pleasure in the world, Mr. John! See; take this armchair, by the fire!”

“Ay; that’ll do. . . . There’s thi penny, sitho!”

“No. Mr. John; I don’t like to take it after what’s happened,—I don’t indeed! I think some little compensation ——”

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“Tak thi brass, I tell tho—or else I’ll knock thi lother-box o’er!”

The Salamanca Corpus: Around the Yule Log (1879)

“Well, —thank you!”

(Enter old WILLIAM SUTHERS, a neighbouring farmer.)

“Good morning, Mr. Suthers!”

“Good mornin’, Tommy!”

“The atmosphere is fearfully crowded with dense exhalation this morning, Mr. Suthers.”

“There is a terrible fog, for sure, Tommy.”

“There is, indeed, sir. I was looking through the window, just now, and if you’ll believe me, sir, I could scarcely recognise the lineaments of your countenance as you approached the entrance to this establishment.”

“I dar say not. But I knowd thee, Tommy.”

“Thank you, sir. . . . Shaving, of course?”

“Ay; I mun have a bit taken off, for it’s as rough as a yard-brush. *(Recognises the butcher at the fireside.)* Hello, Johnny, is that thee? What arto doing theer?”

“I’m restin’ a bit.”

“That’s reet.”

“Take this chair, Mr. Suthers, please! *(The farmer sits down, and the barber begins to shave.)* Let me see, Mr. Suthers,—I think you kindly purchased a hair-brush from me some time ago, did you not?”

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“I did, Tommy.”

“Thank you! . . . I hope, sir, that the bristles have not manifested any disposition to take leave of their original fastenings yet.”

“They’re o’ reet up to now, Tommy.”

“Thank you! . . . And how do you like your new man, Mr. Suthers?”

“What little Amos o’ Nell’s?”

“Yes, sir.”

The Salamanca Corpus: Around the Yule Log (1879)

“Oh, I could do no good with him at o’! He’s a little shiftless, senseless, undersiz’t wastrel,—an’ he isn’t aboon th’ weight of a full-groon foomart-dog!”

(The barber, who is himself a little man, is nettled at this.)

“I beg your pardon, Mr. Suthers; but allow me to remark that the physical proportions of the human form are so variable, and so insignificant, that to judge of a man’s worth, or of his intellectual ability, from his altitude, or from the superficial measurement of his bodily person, would be an act of the grossest injustice. Don’t you think so, Mr. Suthers?”

“I do, Tommy.”

“Thank you, sir!”

“Ay, ay,” continued the farmer, “thou’rt about reet, Tommy,—as far as I con understand tho. There’s foos of o’ sizes. . . . But, if yon lad

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had bin ten feet hee, an’ forty ston weight, he’d ha’ bin a bigger foo than he is,—an’ he’d have had so much moor lumber to carry.”

“Thank you, sir! *(The barber whips the cloth off. The farmer wipes his chin; and pays his penny; and is going away. The barber follows him to the door.)* Now, I hope that you will not allow any little discrepancy of opinion to sever the attachment which exists between yourself and one who has had your hirsute interests at heart so long, Mr. Suthers.”

“Not a bit, Tommy,—not a bit!”

“Thank you, Mr. Suthers! . . . Good morning! Remember me to all at home, please!”

“Good mornin’, Tommy.”

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The Salamanca Corpus: Around the Yule Log (1879)

“Think you, a little din can daunt mine ears?
Have I not in my time heard lions roar?
Have I not heard the sea, puffed up with winds.
Rage like an angry boar chafed with sweat?
Have I not heard great ordnance in the field,
And heaven’s artillery thunder in the skies?
Then do not tell me of a woman’s tongue;
That gives not half so great a blow to the ear
As will a chestnut in a farmer’s fire.

Tush! tush! fright boys with bugs!”

Shakspere.

Time: A fine afternoon in March. Kitchen of the old Beehive public-house at the end of the town. BEN O’TH BULLARTS sitting in a comer. JONE O’ WELTER’S, the village cobbler, is lurking in the stable in the yard, out of the way of his wife, who has been looking for him. She has just gone away. BEN lifts the kitchen window, and shouts into the yard: —

“**NOW** then, Jone! Where arto? Dost yer, Jone? Where hasto croppen to?”

(JONE peeps out at a window in the hay-loft.)

“I’m here. . . . Is hoo gone?”

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“Ay, hoo’s off. Come out.”

“Arto sure hoo’s gone?”

“I’m sure hoo’s gone. I watched her off through th’ window.”

“Which gate did hoo goo?”

“Hoo went back towards th’ town.”

The Salamanca Corpus: Around the Yule Log (1879)

“Had hoo aught in her hand?”

“Nawe; but hoo’d some’at under her shawl.”

“I thought so. It’ll be a rollin’-pin. . . . What didto tell her?”

“I towd her thou’d bin here, but thou’d gone down to Spotland Bridge after some cobblin’ jobs.”

“Hoo’ll not believe it.”

“Yigh; I’m sure hoo does, for hoo said nought; an’ hoo went off as quiet as a mouse.”

“Hoo’ll not believe it, I tell tho! Hoo’ll not believe a word that onybody tells her that

sits in a alehouse!”

“Thou’rt soft, mon! Come out!”

“Soft or hard, I darn’t come out yet. Hoo’s as fause as a boggart, mon. It isn’t th’ first time that hoo’s hunted me down. Hoo’ll turn, an’ wind, and turn again, an’ hoo’ll catch me, titter or latter; for hoo knows both th’ hare an’ th’ hare gate, and hoo’s a fine nose, an’ hoo’ll never give in till hoo’s run me down.”

“Thou’rt soft. I tell tho.”

“Thou’d be soft, too, if thou knowed her as weel

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as I do. . . . Go thi ways, an’ look down th’ road, an’ see if there’s aught stirrin’. I’ll stop amung this hay till thou comes back.”

(BEN goes to the front of the house, and looks down the road. All is still; and he returns to the window looking into the stable-yard.)

“Now, then, owd lad! where arto?”

(JONE looks out of the window again.)

“I’m here. . . . Well; how are things lookin’? Conto see aught?”

The Salamanca Corpus: *Around the Yule Log* (1879)

“Not a mouse stirrin’; come out wi’tho,—and dunnut be a foo! Come out o’ that hay, I tell tho. How long arto boun to ston tootin’ there,—like a ratton in a soof (sough, sewer), watchin’ a ferret? Come out, like a mon!”

“I’m comin’! (JONE *creeps down from the hay-loft, and enters the kitchen again, looking fearfully around.*) Between thee an’ me, Ben, I think I’d better shift my quarters; for hoo’s sure to come back.”

“Not hoo! Keawer (cower) tho down! Thou caps me, Jone! A mon like thee! Why, thou’d wacker (tremble) at a gorse waggin!”

“Thou doesn’t know what thou’rt talkin’ about, Ben.”

“Well, keawer tho down, an’ make thisel’ comfortable. Hoo’ll come noan back, not hoo. An’

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if hoo does come back, thou’rt noan fleyed of a woman, arto?”

“Yigh, I’m fleyed o’ yon woman.”

“What! Thee! Th’ best wrostler upo’ Bagslate Moor! Why, I thought thou’d a foughten a lion for a quart o’ ale!”

“What,—me! I wouldn’t face our Betty just now, I tell tho, for a barrel o’th best ale i’ this town! . . . Keep thi een upo’ that window; or else I darn’t stop i’ this hole!”

“Well, thou caps me, Jone, I tell tho again. Thou’s a feaw (foul, uncomfortable) life on’t, owd lad. Between thee an’ me, I think I could manage yon woman better than thou does.”

“I dar say thou thinks so; but between thee an’ me, Ben, thou knows nought at o’ about our Betty. I’ve yerd folk say that onybody can manage th’ bull better than those that han it by th’ horns; an’ by th’ mass, it’s true. . . . Enough said. Howd thi din, and keep thi een upo’ that window till I finish mi gill.”

“Mak thisel’ comfortable, owd brid. I’ll tent this side. There’s nought can come up th’ road without me seein’ it . . . Where’s thi ale?”

“It’s upo’ th’ hob here.”

The Salamanca Corpus: Around the Yule Log (1879)

“That’s reet. Now, mak thisel’ content for a twothre minutes. I’ll look out for squalls. . . . Hasto bin o’er at Crimble lately?”

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“Ay; I wur theer about a fortnight sin.”

“Well; an’ is there aught fresh that gate on?”

“Ay; I yerd (heard) that owd Jone o’ Flup’s an’ his wife wur deed.”

“That’s noan true, as how ‘tis; for I seed him gooin’ through th’ town wi’ a jackass cart no longer sin than yesterday.”

“It doesn’t matter. He wur deed a fortnit sin,—an’ his wife too.”

“Well, if he wur off to tother country a fortnit sin’, as thou says,—who wur this that I seed wi’ th’ jackass-cart yesterday; for I spoke to it,—an’ I’ll swear it wur oather Jone o’ Flup’s or his ghost!”

“Keep thi een upo’ that window, an’ I’ll tell tho o’ about it”

“Well, let’s be yerrin’, then; for there’s some’at wrong somewheer.”

“Well, thou shall ha’ th’ tale as I had it mysel’. It wur Bob o’th Bridstuffer’s that towd me; and he should know, for he’s own cousin to Jone o’ Flup’s o’th mother’s side.”

“He should know, as thou says. Get for’ad wi’ thi tale.”

“Well, as thou knows very weel, owd Jone comes of a rackless, gutter-creepin’ breed,—an’ his wife’s noan so much better than his-sel’. O’ through life they’n bin livin’ fro hond to mouth, an’ it’s bin come day, goo day, God send Sunday, wi’ ’em. If ever

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they addle’t a bit o’ brass by besom-makin’, an’ sich like, they made straight with it th’ first thing, for they wur both fond o’ drink, an’ they live’t in a low, tatter’t way,—partly bi hawkin’ an’ partly bi beggin’, with a bit o’ steighlin’ (stealing) among it. Mony a time they wur so staggd up that they didn’t know where to turn for a meal’s meight; an’ they’d ha’ bin clemmed to death, o’er an’ o’er again, but

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for th' neighbours. Th' owd lad up at th' ho' wur very good to 'em, fro first to last; though he knew very weel that Jone an' th' wife wur up to o' maks o' tricks for raisin' brass, when they wur druvven to th' fur end. They wearied everybody out nearly, but him; an' he get a bit tire't on 'em sometimes; but he olez started again, an' gav 'em another lift, as fresh as ever. . . . Well, to mak a long story short,—one day, owd Jone an' th' wife wur sat, one o' one side o'th hearth an' tother o' tother, smookin' an' starin' at th' empty grate,—for they'd sowd, an' popt, an' truck't everythin' i'th house for drink, an' they wur quite at their wits' end how to raise a bit o' some'at to goo on wi'. At last Jone took his pipe out of his mouth, an' he said, 'I guess thou has no brass. Mall?' 'Brass,' said Mally, 'thou knows I've no brass! I haven't a hawp'ny,—an' I don't know where to turn to get noan noather, for we'n riddle't this country-side middlin' weel, o'er and o'er again. I think we're gettin very near th' far end.' 'Well, then,' said

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Jone, 'it'll ha' to be done!' 'What arto for doin'?' said Mally. 'Between thee an' me, Mally,' said owd Jone, 'I'm thinkin' o' deein' a bit.' 'Deein'!' said Mally. 'What doesto want to dee for? Thou talks like a foo! Thou doesn't need to be i' sich a hurry about thi deein'; thou'll dee o' thisel' in a bit, if thou'll be quiet. Talk to some sense, lad; an' keep thi heart up; there'll surely be some road done.' 'It'll ha' to be done soon, then,' said Jone, 'or else I see but little chance o' keepin' mysel' alive much longer.' 'Howd thi din, an' keep thi heart out o' thi shoon, I tell tho,' said Mally, 'we'n olez poo'd through so far.' 'Well,' said Jone, takkin' his pipe out of his mouth, 'we can happen manage to poo through again, if thou'll do what I tell tho.' 'I'll do it, as what it is,' said Mally, 'if it'll bring a bit o' some'at in,—for I'm welly (well-nigh) parish't' (perished). 'Well, then,' said Jone, 'I'll stretch mysel' out upo' th' bed i'th nook theer; an' thou mun dust my face wi' flour, an' tee my chin up, an' throw a sheet o'er me, an' darken th' window a bit; and then off witho up to owd Joseph, at th' ho', an' make as poor a mouth as thou con; an' tell him I'd deod, an' thou hasn't a hawpn'y i'th house to bury me-wi'. I should'nt wonder if

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he doesn't gi' tho a sovereign.' Well, no sooner said than done. Jone wur laid out; an' off went Mally up to th' ho' a-tellin' her tale. As luck let (alighted),

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th' owd maister wur away fro whoam; but one o' th' sons coom, an' when Mally towd him about owd Jone bem' deod, he gav her ten shillin' to help to bury her wi'; an' off hoo started back again wi'th brass in her hond. As soon as hoo geet to th' dur-hole owd Jone thrut (threw) th' sheet off, an' rear't hissel' up i' bed, an' said, 'Well; how hasto getten on?' 'I've getten haue a sovereign,' said Mally. 'By th' mass,' said Jone, jumping off th' bed, 'that's a good do, for a start! I'll have a go mysel'! Here; thee lie down this time; an' I'll go an' try th' owd doctor! If I tell him thou'rt deod, I'm sure he'll be some'at toward thi berrin'! Lie tho down; an' I'll tee thi chin up, an' throw th' sheet o'er tho.' So Mally lay down, an' Jone drest her up as weel as he could, an' darkened th' window; an' then, off he set to th' doctor's, to tell him that his wife wur deod, an' he hadn't a farthin' o' brass to bury her wi'. Well; th' doctor wur a daicent kind-hearted chap, olez ready to do a good turn where he could; so he said he wur very sorry that Jone had lost his owd woman; an' he gav him a sovereign to help to bury her wi'; an' Jone set back whoam again, as hard as he could pelt, wi'th sovereign in his hond. Now, as it happened, th' doctor wur just startin' off to go up to th' ho' (the hall), to see one o'th daughters that wur poorly; an' as soon as he geet theer, th' first mortal he met, as he went in at th' dur-hole,

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wur yung Joseph, that had gan Mally th' ten shillin', to help to bury her husban' wi'. 'Good mornin', Joseph,' said th' doctor. 'Good mornin', doctor,' said yung Joe. 'Any news this mornin'?' 'Nought new,' said th' doctor, 'except that owd Mally o' Jone's o' Flup's is dead. Her husband's just bin to me for a trifle to help to bury her wi'.' 'Nay, nay,' said Joseph; 'it's th' owd chap that's dead! Mally wur here about an hour sin; an' I gav her ten shillin' to help to pay th' funeral

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expenses!’ ‘By the Lord!’ said th’ doctor, ‘I believe it’s a swindle!’ ‘It’s nought else,’ said Joseph. ‘Let’s run down an’ see; an’ if it is, I’ll flog him soundly!’ An’ off they went together to owd Jone’s cottage. Now, owd Jone happened to be tootin’ through the window; an’ he spied th’ doctor an’ yung Joseph comin’ down th’ road full pelt. ‘By th’ mass, Mally,’ said Jone, ‘we’re in for’t! Yon’s th’ doctor an’ yung Joseph comin’ down here, together! Jump onto that bed; an’ I’ll lie down beside tho; an’ I’ll poo th’ sheet o’er us,—an’ let’s look as deod as ever we con!’ They’d just time to get theirsels sattel’t when in coom yung Joe, an’ th’ doctor. It wur a dismal-lookin’ hole; an’ they walked up to th’ nook where owd Jone an’ th’ wife lee stretched out upo’ th’ bed, wi’ th sheet o’er ’em. ‘There they are,’ said yung Joe; ‘an’ by th’ mass, they’re both deod!’ ‘I don’t know whether they are or not,’

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said th’ doctor; ‘but I’d give another sovereign to know which on ‘em deed first.’ As soon as they yerd that, they both sprang onto their hinder-ends, an’ they shouted, ‘Me! I deed first.’ Wi’ that, yung Joe took owd Jone a crack across the shins wi’ his whip-stock. Jone jumped out o’ bed, an’ darted out at th’ dur-hole, wi’ yung Joe after him, floggin’ him every yard he went. ‘Murder!’ cried Jone. ‘Dun yo want to kill me?’ ‘I cannot kill a deod chap,’ said yung Joe. ‘I’ll larn thee better than deein’ afore thi time’s up!’ ‘Murder!’ cried Jone again. ‘Wilto ever dee again?’ said yung Joe, layin’ on as hard as ever. ‘Never, maister,’ said owd Jone; ‘never again,—as long as I’m wick! Give o’er, I beg on yo!’ ‘Well, fork out that berrin’ brass, then,’ said yung Joe. ‘I haven’t a farthin’ about me!’ said Jone. ‘Where is it, then?’ said Joe. ‘Our Mally has it!’ said Jone; an’ then—”

“Stop a minute, afore thou goes any fur,” said Ben o’th Bullart’s, looking through the window. “I never yerd sich a tale i’ my life; but stop a minute! There’s some’at comin’ up th’ road yon. ... By th’ mass, it’s yo’r Betty! Off witho into th’ stable again! an’ I’ll go too, this time; hoo’s brought th’ rollin’-pin wi’ her again!”

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The Salamanca Corpus: *Around the Yule Log (1879)*
TH' WRONG SIDE UP.

“Now, hasto bin wi’ the witches
I’th cloof, at deep o’th neet?
Come, tell me, Robin, tell me,
For some’at is not reet!”

My Son Robin.

“I can make noather top nor tail o’ this.”

Old Saying.

IT was a keen December day, and the trees of the vicarage were festooned with beautiful frost-work. Crisp snow lay thick upon the old church, and upon the tombs and gravestones of the churchyard, and upon the roofs of the houses around; but upon the street where the cattle market had been held, it was now trampled into slush, and soiled by the business of the day. The crowd was thinning, for evening was creeping on, and folk had begun to “tak the gate.” Cattle, sold and unsold, were slowly wending away from the scene, with their drivers at their heels; and the quaint old street, where the market had been held for centuries, was gradually sinking down to its usual stillness. But as the light of day declined, the

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glow of the kitchen fire grew stronger in the Royal Oak, a famous old hostelry in front of the churchyard, where Bill Holland and Ben Boswell, two comfortable butchers, had crept into the chimney corner for a quiet chat and a glass, before retiring for the night to their old haunts in the middle of the town.

“Between thee an’ me, Ben,” said Bill Holland, “bar-foot folk shouldn’t walk upo’ prickles.”

“Well, one would think so,” replied Ben, “but it just depends whether they liken it or not, thou knows.”

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“Well,—ay,—as thou says, Ben. If they liken to torment theirsels, they’re welcome to fill their ballies, as far as I’m consarn’t,—as long as they keepen it to theirsels, and don’t trouble other folk. But, between thee an’ me, I tell tho again, there’s a lot o’ ill contrive’t craiters i’ this world that are never comfortable. Sich folk should be kept in a bit of a pinfowd by theirsels.”

“They’re awk’ard craiters to live wi’, for sure. But what ails him? They say’n he’s as rich as Chectham o’ Castleton.”

“Rich! What’s th’ use o’ that, if a chap’s thrutched in his mind! Folks cannot height (eat) gowd! When brass gets pile’t up to that pitch, it bides a deal o’ tentin’, and lookin’ after. Now, th’ difference between five thousan’ pound an’ five

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million pound is o’ book-keepin’ an anxiety. I consider that a mon’s no more goods i’ this world than what he can get good out on. If he’d o’ th’ brass i’ Englan’ he could nobbut sleep i’ one bed at a time; an’ if his brass troubles his mind he’d better be poor.”

“I don’t like bein’ poor mysel’, Bill. But there’s some’at i’ what thou says, for o’ that. If a chap’s o’erweighted in his mind he’s in an ill case,—an’ it doesn’t matter whether it’s slutch or gowd,—if it poos him down.”

“It’s a feaw life havin’ too much brass, Ben.”

“Well, I never tried it.”

“Nawe, nor me noather. That’s a boggart that never freeten’t noather thee nor me, Ben. . . . But, come,—here’s a Merry Christmas, owd lad!”

“Th’ same to thee, Bill! It’ll be here, now, in a week or two,—as who lives to see it . . . But, I yer there’s one or two on ’em down i’th town that’s started their Christmas rather afore th’ time.”

“Oh, ay! Who’s that?”

“Well, owd Cushy, an’ Nukkin, an’ Bob Leech, an’ Occy Lee, an’ one or two moore. They’n bin agate o’ their marlocks down i’th owd street, yon, I yer. It wur Occy Lee that towed me about it”

“Ay! what wur it?”

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“Well, it seems that some on ’em turned th’ Gowden Bo’ sign th’ wrong side up tother neet.”

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“Oh, ay! An’ it’s true enough, too! It wur Bob Leech that did it i’th neet-time. Tother knew nought about it . . . But, didto yer what a prank Nukkin an’ owd Cushy had wi’ this sign th’ next mornin’?”

“Not a word.”

“Well, thou knows, Nukkin an’ owd Cushy are two o’th driest-throated craiters there is i’ this country; an’ they’re generally up afore onybody else in a mornin’, huntin’ for some’at to sup. Well; th’ mornin’ after owd Bob had turn’t this sign th’ wrong side up, these two coom trailin’ down th’ street together, soon after break o’ day, scrattin’ their yeds, an’ tootin’ about for th’ first alehouse dur that oppen’t! an’ when they geet to th’ front o’th Gowden Bo’, Cushy looked up at th’ sign, an’ he said, ‘Hello! what’s owd Dan Nield bin doin’ wi’ his sign?’ ‘This is noan o’ Dan’s!’ said Nukkin. ‘Yigh, it is!’ said Cushy. ‘Yigh, it is! I know by th’ windows!’ ‘It’s noan o’th same sign, then,’ said Nukkin. ‘I cannot read it!’ Well, Cushy see’d that th’ sign wur th’ wrong side up, so he said, ‘Come to tother side o’th road, here; an’ ston o’ thi yed up again th’ wall; an’ then thou’ll read it fast enough!’ ‘Well,’ said Nukkin, ‘I feel rather tickle-stomacked this mornin’, when I’m th’ reet end up; but I’ll have a try at this job!’ An’ down went his yed; an’ up went his legs again th’ wall.

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‘Now, Cushy,’ said Nukkin, ‘thou mun keep howd on me, or else I’s never be able to stick up; for I’m nobbut wambly when I’m stonnin’ o’ mi feet!’ ‘Here, I’ll steady tho a bit, owd lad,’ said Cushy. An’ he went an’ kept his feet up again th’ wall ‘Now, then,’ said Cushy, ‘conto make it out?’ ‘Make it out? Nawe, by th’ mass,’ said Nukkin, ‘it’s ten times worse than it wur when I stood o’ mi feet! Th’ whole house is th’ wrong side up, now!’ ‘Conto read th’ name up’ th’ sign?’ ‘Nawe,’

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said Nukkin. ‘I con mak noather top nor tail on’t! I’m not one o’th best readers i’th world when I’m th’ reet end up; but there isn’t a worse scholar alive than me,—when I’m stonnin’ o’ mi yed! . . . Nay, it’s no use! I cannot make it out! Let me come down!’ ‘Thou hasn’t gin it a fair chance yet, mon,’ said Cushy. ‘Thou’ll manage it with a bit more practice. Try it again, while thou art there!’ ‘Here, thee let go my legs,’ said Nukkin, ‘an come an’ have a try thisel’.’ ‘I would in a minute,’ said Cushy, ‘but I’ve a sore place at th’ top o’ my yed.’ ‘Ay,’ said Nukkin, ‘an’ I’s have a sore place o’ my yed, too, if I stop here much longer! Let go my legs, I tell tho!’ ‘Just have another whet at it,’ said Cushy, ‘an’ then I’ll let tho come down! . . . Conto make aught on it, now?’ ‘Not a bit!’ said Nukkin. ‘It’s like a whisketful o’ chips! An’ as for th’ letters, they’re

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o’ masht up together, like a ponful o’ lobscouse! There is one letter among ’em, an’ that’s an O,— an’ that’s o’ that I can mak out! Let go my legs, I tell tho,—an’ let me come down,—I’m gettin’ as mazy as a tup! It’s noan o’th same house!’ So Cushy leet go his legs; an’ down he coom, like a seck o’ potitos; an’ he had to lie theer a while afore he could gether his wits together again.”

“It’s just like ’em. . . . But, come; I mun be off down into th’ town. . . . I guess thou’ll be lookin’ in at th’ Blue Bell some time afore th’ neet’s o’er!”

“I’ll meet tho at th’ ‘Amen Corner,’ if thou’s a mind, at nine o’clock!”

“Agreed on!”

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SAUNTERIN’ WHOAM.

“When light enough is in the sky
To shade the smile and light the eye,
’Tis all but heaven to be by,
An’ bid in whispers, soft an’ light

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'S the rustlin' of a leaf, 'good night!'

At evenin' in the twilight."

Wm. Barnes.

MORE than an hour had passed since the summer sun had left the sky, and the rosy afterglow was beginning to blend dreamily with the shades of twilight as the bustle of market-day declined in the heart of a little rural town on the banks of the Ribble. The town was the ancient centre of a region of pure air and clear streams, rich in relics of the history of the land, and unsurpassed in all the North of England for its picturesque beauty. The green country clipt it closely in all round; and little garden plots and bloomy bits of shade gushed in, here and there, amongst the straggling cottages that fringed its one

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long, winding, old-fashioned street, as if they loved the pretty little clustered man- nest, and delighted in making it pleasant. . . . The market-day was drawing to a close, and the noisy crowd was gradually melting away from the busy scene in the middle of the town. Here and there, little vendors, who had cleared out their stocks, were beginning to pack up their empty stalls, and hurry off to refresh themselves and count their gains. People looked out at their windows, as the rattle of wheels and the clatter of horses' feet went by, in quick succession, at the town end, showing that the great business of the day in the town was over. Staid country-folk were wandering away homeward, in twos and threes, along the different roads, into the green country; and, once more, peace and quietness were stealing over the rough coble-pavement around the old cross, which was all strewn with scatterments of hay and straw, and the varied rubbish of a market-day. As the market-place grew quieter, however, the din of revelry rose higher in some of the old alehouses around, where many a reckless farmer from the outlying fell-sides still lingered, like Tam o' Shanter,

"Boozing at the nappy.

Whiles gettin' fou and unco happy,

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Nor thinkin' o' the lang lang miles

That lay between him and his hame."

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And, as stillness deepened upon the main street, the clatter of pots, and the sounds of country song from strong fell-side lungs, began to ring louder and clearer in the centre of the little town. In one of the oldest hostelries of the town,—a famous resort of market folk, the sign of which was the Eagle and Child,— sat stalwart John Braithwaite the farmer, and his good wife Mary, from Waddington Fell, waiting till their son Willie had put to the horse, and brought the spring-cart round from the yard at the rear of the house. "Th' Brid an' Bantlin'," by which name the ancient crest of the Stanleys is well known in Lancashire,— "Th' Brid an' Bandin'" was still crowded with lingering farmers and town's-folk, who had been drinking freely during the day, and who were now getting very noisy over their cups. John and his wife sat in a corner by themselves, looking anxiously through the window for the coming of the cart, for the house was getting uncomfortably hot and throng, and riotous. At last Mary was relieved by the sight of the cart in front of the window.

"Come, John," said she. "Yon's Willie wi' th' cart, sitho. Let's be gooin'."

"Ay, well," replied the farmer, drinking up his ale and rising slowly from his seat, "I'm quite willin', my lass; for this cote's getting' terrible thrang."

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"Come, come, John," cried a stout, middle-aged man, who sat on the opposite side of the room, with a great driving stick in his hand. "Come! What! yo'r never gooin' bi now, surely? Sit yo down, Mary. Come, John, thou'll have another. What's o' yo'r hurry? What! I've as far to go as yo han. Sit yo down a bit, an' we'n all go together."

"Nawe, nawe, Sam," said the farmer's wife.

"Willie's waitin' wi' th' cart, you, an' we mun be gooin'."

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“Well, let’s o’ go together.”

“I’ve no objection, Samuel, if thou’rt ready now; but if thou artn’t, we’s be like to leave tho beheend.”

“Twothre minutes’ll not mak mich difference.”

“We mun be gooin’, my lad. We’n a lot o’ childer waitin’ on us, an’ thou can shake a loose leg, for thou’s nought but thisel’. Beside, if we wur to wait thy time, Sam, I doubt we should ha’ to wait till momin’. So, good neet to tho, Sam. We’s happen get a wap on tho some time to-morn, if thou’rt ony bit like.”

“I should’nt wonder if yo doan’t see me to-neet again, yet, Mary. But good neet to yo, if yo are for gooin’. I’s be at whoam soon after yo.”

“Thou’ll ha’ to give o’er cockin’ thi little finger, then, Sam,” said the farmer, as he moved towards the door.

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“Ay, yo’n had quite enough, Sam. Come on with us, while it’s dayleet,—like a good lad.”

“Nay, I’ll just have another, Mary,—an’ then.”

“An’ then what?” said Mary.

“Why,—an’ then,—another,” said the farmer to his wife.

“I shouldn’t wonder but it’ll turn out so, John,” said Sam, who was already beginning to stammer in his speech. “I shouldn’t wonder but I’s end up wi’ what th’ owd clerk at Waddington co’s ‘a final gill.’ ”

“Ay, that’ll be about th’ size on’t, Sam,” replied the farmer. “An’ that ‘final gill’s’ finisht mony a strung chap, Sam. But thou mun do as weel as thou con; so good neet to tho!”

“Good neet to yo both, John, an’ God bless yo!”

• • • • •

“It’s a thousan’ pities about Sam,” said the farmer to his wife, as they went down the lobby. “I doubt he’s just gooin’ to end up th’ same as his faither did.”

“How so?”

“Well, his faither begun a-wrostlin’ th’ champion when he wur a yung chap.”

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“What champion?”

“Well, he begun a-drinkin’ when he wur quite yung, an’ though he wur as strong a chap as ever stalked Waddin’ton Fell, he deed afore he wur forty-five;

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an’ th’ doctors o’ said that his liver wur brunt to a cinder, for he’d bin drinkin’ brandy at a terrible rate mony a year afore he deed. An’ I doubt Sam’s gooin’ to end up th’ same, bi th’ way he’s gooin’ on. It’s a greight pity; for he’s a daicent chap.”

“It is a pity,” said the farmer’s wife, as they came up to the cart, where her son Willie was standing at the horse’s head. “Now then, Willie,” said she, “hasto gotten o’th things into th’ cart?”

“Ay.”

“Where’s that can o’ traycle?”

“It’s here.”

“Well, thou’d better tee th’ lid on wi’ a bit o’ streng. I don’t want to find th’ traycle swimmin’ about i’th bottom o’th cart, among thi faither’s new clooas, th’ same as it did th’ last time. . . . John, hasto a bit o’ streng i’ thi pocket? Let him tee th’ lid on.” Willie tied the lid upon the treacle can.

“Now then,” said the farmer, “is o’ reet, my lad?”

“Ay.”

“Then up witho, Mary, an’ let’s be off.”

“I’ll tell tho what, John,” said the farmer’s wife, looking up at the clear evening sky, “it’s a beautiful neet I’d as lief walk as ride, if thou will,—an’ let him goo on wi’ th’ cart. What; it’s nobbut about three mile; an’ I’ve bin cramp’t up, first i’ one nook,

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an’ then in another nook, o’ day, till I feel as if I wanted to stretch my legs a bit. What saysto?”

“I’m quite willin’ my lass.”

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“Well, then, Willie, hie tho whoam wi’ th’ cart; an’ mind how thou taks those things out; an’ tell our Martha to have a bit o’ supper ready in about an hour. Thi faither an’ me’s gooin’ to walk. Now don’t thee goo an’ stop upo’ th’ road,—that’s a good lad.”

Away went Willie with the cart, rattling out at the town end, past the quiet mansion where the two halberts flanked the front door; to show that the mayor of the town dwelt there.

The farmer’s wife watched him till he had turned the corner, and then she said. “What! he’ll be at whoam i’ twenty minutes, if he keeps on at that rate. Come on, John; let’s be gooin’.”

And away they went, cheek-by-jowl, jogging quietly down the old street,—Mary with a basket on her arm, and the tall, stalwart, staid-looking farmer by her side, with a stout hazel staff in his hand, as fine a specimen of the north-country yeoman as could be met with in a day’s march. And many were the kindly greetings they met with on the way.

“What, yo’r gooin’, John?”

“Ay, we’re off.”

“Well, good neet to yo!”

“Good neet to thee, Dick!”

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The next was a hale, cheerful old woman, who stood in her open doorway, with spectacles on nose, enjoying the balmy twilight.

“Never sure!” said she, as the farmer and his wife came down the footpath. “Never sure! What’s to do that yo’r afoot, John? I seed Willie go by wi’ th’ cart, an’ I thought to stop him, but he went to fast for me. . . . Well, Mary, an’ how are yo?”

“We’re weel an’ hearty, Martha, thank yo.”

“Well, an’ yo looken so,—both on yo,—yo done, for sure; an’ I’m fain to see yo. . . . An’ how are they o’ awhoam?”

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“Well, they ail’n nought, Matty,—thank God for’t! Yo’d think so, too, if yo wur to see ’em at meal-times.”

“I’m fain to yer it, Mary,—I am for sure. I like to yer o’ folk bein’ meat-whole,—it’s a good sign.”

“Well, I think so, Matty. An’, if yo’n believe me, it does me good to see ’em get their dinners; for if folk cannot eat they cannot work, as who they are. . . . An’ how’s yo’r Abraham getting’ on?”

“Oh, he’s pikein’ his crumbs up again, thank yo, Mary.”

“Well, we mun be gooin’; so I’ll bid yo good neet, Matty! It’s sich a fine neet that our John an’ me are gooin’ to walk it.”

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“It is a beautiful neet, Mary; an’ good neet to yo,—an’ God bless yo!”

And thus, exchanging many friendly salutations by the way, the comfortable couple toddled out at the old town end, into the open country, where the shades of twilight were sinking softly upon the quiet fields, and the evening air was sweet with the smell of new hay. When they had got about a mile and a half on the way, the farmer stopt in front of a pleasant looking cottage, which stood, half-hidden, in a garden by the roadside, and he said to his wife, “What! we’s be like to co’ at yo’r Joe’s, I guess?”

“Well, I want to be gettin’ whoam; but we’d happen better just look in, or else they’n think it strange. But don’t let Joseph persuade tho to stop, now; for if thee an’ him gets sit down together, there’s no stirrin yo.”

“I’ll be ready as soon as thou’s done talkin’ wi’ Sarah,—and yonder hoo is i’th durhole, sitho,— waitin’ on us!”

Joseph was brother to the farmer’s wife, and Sarah, who stood in the doorway, was Joseph’s wife.

“Well, if ever!” cried she, spreading her hands as the farmer and his wife came up the garden walk.

“Well, if ever! Wonders never cease! Whatever’s come’d o’th cart? Han yo bin upset or some’at?”

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“Nawe,” replied the farmer. “There’s nought

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wrang, Sally. My wife an’ me han walked up, as it’s sich a fine neet; an’ we sent Willie on wi’ th’ cart. . . . Where’s that chap o’ thine?”

“Yo’n find him i’th corner theer, John. In wi’ yo. . . . Well, Mary, an’ how are yo? Come for’ad, an’ tak yo’r things off; an’ I’ll put th’ kettle on.”

“Thou doesn’t need to put no kettles on, Sally, for our supper’s waitin’ on us, an’ we’re not gooin’ to stop mony minutes.”

“Well, bless mi life! tak yo’r things off while yo stoppen! Now, John, mak yorsel’ a-whoam. Yo seen what there is upo’ th’ table. . . . Mary, come into this tother room a minute, I want to speighk to yo.”

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The farmer and old Joe were now left to themselves, sitting opposite one another, each with his glass and his pipe.

“Well, John,” said Joe, “has there bin aught stirrin’ i’th town to-day?”

“Nawe. A poor market,—very. . . . If I wur about ten year yunger, Joe, I’d farm no moore lond i’ this country,—unless it wur mi own.”

“Rents mun come down, John.”

“Ay; but farmers’ll ha’ to come down first.”

“I dar say. . . . Why, owd Bill Sprowell’s wife’s deod!”

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“Ay; an’ th’ owd lad wouldn’t let ’em bury her for mony a day. He kept sayin’, ‘Let her stop a bit! Let her stop! *I’m determin’t to ha’ one quiet week wi’ her*, as how ’tis, afore we parten!’ . . . This is a saup o’ very good whisky, Joe,” continued he. “Very good it is. Wheer doesto get it fro?”

“I get it fro Manchester,” replied Joe. “What a terrible shop Manchester is for drinkin’,” continued he. “I wur theer about a month sin’, at th’ cattle market, an’ I had to goo into one o’ thoose starin’, flarin’ ginshops, to look after a butcher that

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I'd had some truck wi'; an' while I wur theer I seed as sickly a bit o' brokken-down town life as ever I clapt een on. While I wur loungin' about th' counter, waitin' for this butcher, there wur a greight, fat, dirty, red-faced woman coom staggerin' in at th' dur-hole, wi' a little, wizzent, quiet-lookin' chap beheend her, with a face as white as a sheet. Afore hoo could get gradely into th' place, down hoo went upo' th' floor; an' as this little chap helped her up again, hoo looked round, and hoo said, 'I'm trouble't wi' th' rheumatics. This is my husban'. I'm come to tak care on him. He's a jobber in a factory, but he's bin out o' wark. John, goo an' sit tho down,'—an' th' little tatter't divvel went an' set down i'th nook as quiet as an owd sheep. 'Maister,' said hoo to th' chap at counter, 'gi' me a glass o' rum?' Th' chap gav' her th' rum, an' said, 'What's he

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to have?' 'Who?—our John? Oh, give him a bottle o' pop,—he's had enough ! John, thou mun have a bottle o' pop. Thou connot ston' mich drink,—it gets into thi yed so! . . . He's my husban', maister; an' I like him as weel as ony I've tried yet!' 'Why, how mony han yo had?' 'I've had three afore him; an' if he dees I'll have another!' ”

Here the farmer's wife and her sister-in-law came in from the next room.

“Come, John,” said the farmer's wife, “let's be gooin'! Yon supper'll be waitin' for us; an' it'll tak us have an hour to get up th' broo! . . . Well, good neet, Joseph! Good neet, Sarah! We's see yo o' Sunday again, if o's weel!”

“Good neet to yo both! Yo'n have a nice walk, for it's a lovely neet!”

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OWD MALLY'S CART.

“He's a cur who can bask in the fire's cheery light,
And hearken, unheeded, the winter wind blow,
And care not a straw for the comfortless wight

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That wanders about in the frost and the snow:

Bring in the green holly, the box, and the yew,

The fir, and the laurel, all sparkling with rime!

Hang up to the ceiling the mistletoe-bough,

And let us be jolly another yule time!”

Christmas Song.

IT was a fine winter forenoon, and it was the day before Christmas. The weather was keen, and the air was pure and bright. The season, so far, had been the severest known for many years; and as strong old country folk met one another they rubbed their hands with hearty glee and said, “This is one o’th owd sort o’ winters.” There had been a deep fall of snow, followed by a week of intense frost; and now the roads were hard and slippery, and the crisp snow

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crackled under foot, and glittered in the wintry sun like diamond dust. Every pool, and pond, and wayside well was frozen over, and every spout and rindle of running water was hung with twinkling pendants of ice. The rough roadside walls, the loose stones, and the leafless trees, in grove and garden, were all richly clad in beautiful frost-work, and everything in sight told of an uncommonly hard season.

It was a comfortable cottage, in a quiet lane, on the edge of the busy suburban village. The cosy little house stood in a garden, close by the wayside, and was half hidden by frost-decked bushes of holly and thickset thorns; and a clean-swept pavement of stone flags led from the door down to the little green-painted iron gate. A cheerful looking middle-aged woman stood at the window, looking out upon the road, with her children about her,—three healthy happy girls, ranging from ten to fourteen years of age, and a little bright-eyed mischievous lad about nine. The little house rang with blithe clamour, for they were all talking at once, and they were all looking out, as if in expectation of something they wished to see.

“Do mak a less din, childer,” said the good-natured dame, smiling. “I’m sure owd Mary’ll not be long, now. It’s just about her time. Johnny, thee run down to th’ gate, and see if hoo’s com in’.”

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The lad ran down to the gate and looked out. In an instant he came back with a rush, clapping his hands and shouting, "Hoo's comin'! hoo's comin'! Th' cart looks like a garlan'! An' th' jackass has a greight posy on it yed! Now for it! now for it!"

And the merry lad capered about the house like mad, while his three sisters clapped their hands and chatted to one another with wild delight.

Two or three minutes passed, and then a little jackass-cut stopped in front of the cottage gate. The cart was laden with Christmas boughs, and with green-grocery of different kinds; and the driver was a stout ruddy-faced old widow, who kept a little shop in the neighbouring village, and was well known all over the neighbourhood by the name of "Bonny Mally."

"Roll up for green holly! Green holly! Green holly! An' box,—an' laurel,—an' mistletoe! Roll up here for mistletoe,—an' turmits,—an' carrits,—an' potitos,—prime lapstone kidneys! Roll up here for Kesmass greenery!"

The inmates of the cottage all rushed down to the gate to welcome the old woman and her cart. The girls clustered round the Christmas load of green, and little Johnny began to fondle and tease the donkey.

"Good mornin', Mally," said the mother of the household. "Good mornin'! How are yo?"

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"Well; I'm th' better side out, Hannah! A merry Christmas to yo!"

"An' a merry Christmas to yo, Mally! . . . Now, then, what han yo gotten i' this cart?"

"What have I gotten? Come yer ways an' look for yersel'! I've gotten everythin' at's bonny, an' fresh, an' good, an' toothsome! Yo towd me to bring yo some Kesmass green. There it is, see yo! Pike for yersel'! Holly, green holly! Roll up here for mistletoe! . . . Now, Hannah, what win yo have? I've turmits,—an' carrits,—an' potitos,—prime lapstone kidneys,—an' I've oranges, an' I've nuts, an'

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I've apples,—a nicer lot o' Newtown pippins I ne'er clapt een on! Now, then! What is't to be? It'll be Kesmass Day i'th mornin'."

"What dun yo want for this, Mally?" said Hannah, picking out a fine branch of holly.

"Yo's ha' that for thripence,—now then! An' I'll fling this lump o' laurel in with it! Will that do for yo?"

"Put 'em o' one side for me, Mally. . . . An' now then, I mun have a bit o' this ivy, an' a branch or two o' fir, and some mistletoe!"

"Mistletoe,—mistletoe,—mistletoe!" cried little Johnny. And, in the delight of his heart, the lad threw his arms round the donkey's neck, and cried out again, "Eh, this is a bonny jackass! . . .

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Mistletoe,—mistletoe,—mistletoe! Be sharp wi' that mistletoe! There's a lot o' nice lasses i'th house,—an' we're gooin' to have a party to-need!"

"Do howd thi din a minute, lad!" said his mother, laughing. "Now then, Mally; let's ha' some o' this greenstuff, or else ther'll be no quietness!"

"There," said Mally, laying branch after branch upon the step by the gate. "There, see yo! A shillin' for th' lot! That'll not hurt yo, will it?"

"There's yor shillin', Mally! . . . Here, childer, here's yor mistletoe, an' stuff! Here, Johnny, off with it into th' house, an' get it hanged up!"

And away ran the blithe lad and his sisters, shouting and laughing, each with an armful of Christmas evergreens.

"Oh,—an' see yo," said Mally; "I'd like to forgetten! I've brought that bak-stone (bake-stone) that yo ordered th' last week, Hannah."

"That's reet, Mally. How much is it?"

"It'll be ninepence. . . . Oh, an' I've a new thyble for yo, too."

"Oh, ay,—th' porritch-slice. . . . Well, an' what's that, Mally?"

"Well,—we'n co' it thripence, Hannah! Yo known, it isn't what one may co' a common mak of a porritch-slice, isn't that. Our Billy puts a deal o'

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wark into his porritch-slices,—an’ I towd him this wur for yo! . . . Let’s see,—
ninepence and thripence, — that’ll be a shillin’ o’ together, winnot it, Hannah?”

“I believe it will, Mally, when it’s weel reckon’t up. An’ there it is, see yo! . . .
Now, han yo ony dried yarbs?”

“Plenty, plenty,—but, stop,—dun yo want ony spiggits an’ forcits?”

“Naw; we’re o’ reet for spiggits.”

“That’ll do! . . . Well, about yarbs,—what dun yo want?”

“What han yo gotten?”

“I’ve sage, an’ pot marjoram, an’ mountain flax, an’ sanctuary, an’ wood
betony, an’ baum, an’ rue, an’ Solomon’s seal, an’ — I know not what”

“Han yo ony mint, or penny-royal, or robin-run-i’th-hedge?”

“Plenty, Hannah!”

“Han yo it wi’ yo?”

“Nawe; it’s awhoam.”

“Well; yo’n be comin’ i’th afternoon again, I guess?”

“I shall, Hannah.”

“Well; bring some wi’ yo. An’ I’s want some stuff for th’ kitchen beside. . . .
Good mornin’, Mally! I mun be goin’ in, or else yon childer’ll ha’ th’ house turn’t
th’ wrang side up!”

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“Good momin’, Hannah!”

And away went Mally with her jackass-cart, singing—

‘Come all you weary wanderers
Beneath the wintry sky,
This day forget your worldly cares
And lay your sorrows by!
Awake, and sing,

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The church bells ring,

'Twill soon be Christmas morning!

Roll up for green holly!—an' mistletoe! Kesmass,—Kesmass,—Kesmass is
comin'! Cheer up! an' don yo'r houses!"

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THE DULE'S I'TH BUTTERY!

"Heigh, Bill, owd lad! yo'r Margit's yon!

Hoo's comin' like a racer!

Some foo has put her upo' th' track!

Cut, or hoo'll have us in a crack!

By th' mass, I dar not face her!"

Margit's Comin'.

EARLY in the afternoon of the last day of the year, Billy Tatchin', the village cobbler, crept in at the kitchen door of the Bull's Head, in the hope of spending a genial hour or two of New Year's Eve with his "ancient, trusty, droughty crony," the landlord. The roads were as hard as iron, and the snow lay thick and crisp upon the ground, for the frost had been bitterly keen for weeks past. The landlady had brought Billy his pint of "fettled" ale; and she had gone away to the front of the house, where the servant lass was strewing fresh sand upon the slippery path which led to the door, leaving the cobbler and the old landlord with the kitchen to themselves. Billy had just got comfortably planted by the fire, with his

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drink upon the hob beside him, and he was filling his pipe, and chatting cheerfully, when the landlord rose and looked out at the end window, which commanded a view of the road up from the village.

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“I’ll tell tho what, Bill,” said he, as he gazed upon the silent, snow-clad scene, “this is a terrible winter. I doubt it will go very hard wi’ poor folk; for it’s the heaviest nip that I can remember. Owd Jonathan wur here this mornin’, an’ he says there’s bin lots o’ sheep an’ brids fund frozen stiff upo’ th’ moor-ends. Poor things! it seems a shame for ’em to be out sich weather as this. Hello! Stop! What’s this? By Guy, owd lad, thou mun look out! Thi wife’s comin’ up th’ road here, full scutch!”

“The dule hoo is!” said the cobbler, starting up from his seat, and whipping his pipe into his pocket.

“The dule hoo is! Then I mun get out o’ seet, till hoo’s gone! Where mun I go to?”

“Here,” said the landlord, opening a little door at the end of the kitchen, “slip into this pantry! Thou’ll be as snug as a button there till hoo’s gone!”

“It looks dark,” said the cobbler, peeping in; “but ony port in a storm! . . . Come,” continued he, glancing round at the shelves, well stored with cold meat,— “come, this’ll do! Shut that dur,—an’ lock it,—an’ put th’ keigh i’ thi pocket! I can manage here till our Sally’s gone!”

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In went the cobbler. The landlord closed the door, and then went and took his seat by the fireside again, waiting for the cobbler’s wife.

In the meantime, the cobbler’s wife came puffing up to the front door, where the landlady stood watching her servant lass at work.

“Mary,” said the cobbler’s wife, “is our William here?”

“Ay, he is, Sally! Yo’n find him i’ th kitchen, yon!”

“I have sich bother to keep him to his wark as never wur! But I mun have him out o’ that shop, as how ’tis!”

“That’s reet, Sally! Get him off whoam, while yo’n a chance; an’ as soon as yo’n gotten him off, come into this little room here. I want to speak to yo about a bit o’ sewin’.”

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“I’ll be wi’ yo directly, Mary,” said the cobbler’s wife. And away she went to the kitchen, where the landlord sat smoking by the fire, and looking as innocent as a purring cat.

“Is our William here?”

“He wur here, two or three minutes sin,” said the landlord, looking up dreamily, as if he was thinking of something else; “he wur here; but he’s off again, somewhere.”

“He’ll happen be back again directly,” said Sally.

“If he comes, tell him he’s wanted. An’ tell him

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I’m waitin’ for him i’th tother room. Th’ mistress wants to see me about some sewin’.”

“I’ll tell him, Sally.”

Away went the cobbler’s wife into the other room to the landlady; and as soon as the landlord had seen her safely housed with his wife, in the next room, he crept up to the pantry door, and peeped in at his prisoner.

“How arto getting’ on, Billy?”

“I’m as rect as a cat in a tripe shop!” replied the cobbler.

“Well, thou mun keep still a bit! Hoo isn’t gone yet!”

“Hoo doesn’t need to be in a hurry,” said the cobbler. “I can do here a bit longer.”

“Hasto fund some’at to bite at?”

“Ay; a bit o’ goose!”

“Get it into tho, owd lad! Wilto have a gill o’ ale?”

“Mak it a pint, Sam,” said the cobbler; “an’ be sharp!”

“Theer it is, sitho!” replied the landlord, as he handed in the ale. “Now, thou mun be as quiet as thou con, or else thou’ll be fund out! I’ll tell tho when hoo’s gone!”

“Lock that dur again,” said the cobbler; “an’ keep th’ keigh i’ thi pocket!”

The landlord locked the door, and took his seat

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by the fire. Then, lighting his pipe again, he began to muse and mutter to himself:—

“By th’ heart, I wish I’d locked him up i’th coal-house! It would ha’ bin a deal chepper! He couldn’t ha’ done much damage among th’ coals; but he’s an awk’ard prisoner to lock up in a pantry,—for he’s as keen-bitten as a winter wolf, is Billy! . . . I wish to the Lord yon wife of his would go! If hoo stops much longer we’s ha’ nought left for th’ supper! . . . Husht! What the dule has he agate now?”

(BILLY, *in the pantry, begins to shout and kick the door.*)

“Heigh, Sam! Let me out! I’m deein’!”

“What’s up witho?”

“Send for a doctor! I’ve supt a lot o’ paint!”

“We han no paint”

“What’s that, then?”

“It’s starch!”

“Let me come out! I’m noan weel!”

“Get in witho! A saup a starch’ll do tho no harm! I could sup a bucketful!”

“Well, here, then,” said the cobbler, “there’s a saup left i’th bowl yet,—sup that!”

“Howd thi din!” whispered the landlord, pushing the cobbler back into the pantry. “Howd thi din; yo’r Sally’s comin’!”

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The landlord had just time to lock the door, and take his seat again by the fire, when the cobbler’s wife came in.

“Has our William come’d back?”

“Not yet, Sally.”

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“Well, if he comes, tell him he’s wanted a-whoam, directly. I mun be gooin’. A Happy New Year to yo, Sam,—when it comes!”

“Th’ same to yo, Sally!”

The cobbler’s wife had barely got out at the front door of the house when Billy pulled a shelf down in the pantry, and upset a can of treacle upon his head. This was followed by a great crash of broken pots; after which Billy began to kick the door, and shout “Murder! Let me out! I’m kilt!” The noise brought the landlady into the kitchen with a run.

“Good gracious!” cried she, “whatever han yo agate?”

“Here,” replied the landlord, handing the key of the pantry to her, “unlock yon buttery-dur, an’ look for thisel’!”

The landlady unlocked the door, and out came the cobbler, head-foremost, with the treacle running down his face.

“Hello!” cried the landlady. “What’s this?”

“Ston fur!” said Billy. “Ston fur! I’m smoorin’!”

“Whatever hasto bin doin’ i’ that pantry?”

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“Howd yo’r din!” said Billy, panting for breath; “an’ gi’ me some wayter!”

“By th’ mass, Billy,” said the landlord, laughing, “thou’rt a sweet-lookin’ craiter, for once! Thou desarves lickin’, owd lad! Give him some wayter, an’ let him wesh his face!”

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FLOUNCES AN' RIBBINS.

“Ring out wild bells to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light;
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

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“Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow;
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.”

Tennyson.

THE long keen frost was over, and a rapid thaw had set in. Soft southerly winds and drizzling rains were gradually melting away the snow from the fields and hillsides in front of the Moorcock Inn. It was the last day of the old year; and Sam, the landlord, was seated in the kitchen with Dan o’ Simeon’s, an old shepherd, and little Twitter, the bird stuffer, two cronies from the moorland village in the neighbouring clough. Matty, the landlady, stood in the open doorway with her hands upon her hips, looking dreamily out upon the slushy road in the front of the house, and the melancholy landscape beyond, when Jenny Pepper, the

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dressmaker of the village, came by with an umbrella over her head, and a paper parcel under her arm.

“Hello, Jenny!” cried the landlady. “Happy New Year to yo!”

“An’ a Happy New Year to yo, mistress,—an’ mony on ’em!” replied Jenny.

“But come in a minute, lass! What! yo’r noan i’ that hurry, sure?”

“Well,” said Jenny, putting down her umbrella and coming into the doorway, “I mustn’t stop long. This dress is wanted for a weddin’. It should ha’ bin done yesterday. Th’ weddin’s i’ th mornin’.”

“Never, sure! An’ who’s getting’ wed this time, I pray yo?”

“Well; yo couldn’t guess in a week, Matty.”

“Not I, marry! Who is it?”

“It’s Nancy o’ Tum’s.”

“Nay, sure! Well, well! Hoo’s bin fishin’ a good while for nought, but hoo’s gotten a bite at last, it seems! . . . An’ who has hoo catch’t, I pray yo?”

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“Yo couldn’t guess.

“It’s never try. Who is it?”

“It’s owd Peg-leg, th’ besom-maker!”

“Good gracious, Jenny! I never yerd sich a tale i’ my life ! Hoo’s run through th’ wood, an’ taen th’ scrunt at last! Why, he’s owd enough to be her gronfather! Whatever’s th’ lass thinkin’ on?”

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“Well, between yo an’ me, Matty, Nanny’s chance wur gettin’ very thin; an’ yo known th’ owd sayin’,— ‘Hungry dogs are fain o’ dirty puddin’!”

“Well, well,” replied the landlady, “this is a wonderful world, to be sure! There’s one good thing about it, Jenny,—hoo’ll nobbut have one shoe to polish for him, as he’s a wood leg. But come yo’r ways in. I want yo to look at yon new dress o’ mine.”

The landlady led the dressmaker into a little room near the kitchen.

“There, Jenny,” said she, “sit yo down till I goo an’ speak to our Sam. I’ll bring yo a drop o’ gin in a minute.”

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“Sam,” said the landlady, looking in at the kitchen door, “I wish thou’d look to th’ bar a minute or two, while I show Jenny Pepper yon new dress o’ mine. Hoo’ll have to put a fresh gusset under th’ arm; an’ it wants takkin in a bit; an’ hoo thinks it would look better with another flounce or two. What does thou think?”

“Nay,” replied the landlord, “thou doesn’t need to bother me about thi gussets an’ thi flounces! I know nought about thi fithers an’ thi furbelows, an’ thi top-knots, an’ thi tanklements! Thou may flounce thi dross up to the neck-hole, if thou’s a mind, my lass,—an’ thou may ornament thi yed

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wi' a garland o' pickle't-cabbich, an' horse-gowd, an' paycock-fithers, if thou likes, but if thou does, thou'll ha' to walk bi thisel'! I'm noan boun a-pace-eggin', if thou art! I'm not gooin' to walk to church with a two-legged rush-cart upo' mi arm,—an' a lot o' childer after us, shoutin' an' starin'! If yo'r Jonathan's wife likes to don hersel' like a mountebank's foo, let her do it,—an' among 'em be it; but if thou'rt for doin' th' same, my lass, thou'd better goo an' get a shop among th' show-folk; an' lev me to look after this house mysel'. I can happen get some poor craiter or another, that's donned like a Christian, to help me a bit."

"Sam," replied the landlady, "thou talks a lot o' talk that would be a great deal better untalked! I never yerd sich stuff come out of a mortal mouth! Doesto think I'm without wit?"

"Well; thou'rt noan o'erstocked, lass, no moore than a body's sel'."

"Ay; thou may weel put that in; for I believe thou'rt gooin' off it, o'together,—I do, for sure! I don't know what's comin' o'er tho! I declare I can never have a bit of ought daicent to put o' mi back but thou poos it i' pieces a shame to be sin! Thou ought to be ashamed o' thisel',—that thou ought! an' me slavin' an' tewin' as I do, fro mornin' to neet, an' fro week end to week end, an' never puts mi yed out o'th dur hardly! I wonder what-

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ever thou thinks a woman's made on! If thou'd some folk to deal with, thou'd find a different rub o'th spindle, I can tell tho! Bless us an' save us! Thou doesn't need to fly up o' that road! I nobbut want to yer what th' woman has to say about it! Good gracious! If one is to wear anything at o', one may as weel have it to fit! Look to this bar a bit! I'll not be mony minutes!"

"Off witho, my lass; off witho! I've said my say; an' I know thou'll ha' thi own way, when o's done!"

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“Here we come a-wassailing,
Among the leaves so green;
And here we come a-wandering,
So fair to be seen;
Love and joy come to you,
And to your wassail too:
And God send you a happy new year!”

Old Song.

“How came this man here,
Without the leave o’ me?”

Scotch Song.

THE first spell of severe weather was over. A rapid, rainy thaw had cleared away the deep snow from hill and dale, and the piles of melting mud were fast disappearing from the roadsides. The change from intense frost to a wet, unseasonable mildness, had been unexpected and strong; and people who had lately complained of the bitterness of the season were just beginning to tire of slushy streets and muggy gloom, and to dread the influence of a “green January” upon the future crops, when the bitter, biting north suddenly

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returned upon us again, as rigorous as before; and once more, all the wide landscape was shrouded in a wintry veil of maiden white; once more “coughing drowned the parson’s saw;” and crowds of young, strong folk were rushing blithely back again to the fresh congealing ponds and rivers, in high glee, where,—

“As they swept
On sounding skates, a thousand different ways,

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In circling poise, swift as the winds along,
The glad gay scene was maddening all to joy.”

It was at the close of the cattle-market day. The sun had gone down behind the snow-clad ridge of Pendlebury; and the full moon was rising, round, and yellow as an orange, from the edge of the horizon, on the opposite side, as the light of day declined. The roads were hard; and the air was clear and bitterly cold; for the keen north-east,—Kingsley’s “wind of God,”—that brought the bold pirates of Scandinavia, with swelling sails, down upon the green shores of England in days of yore, was sweeping wild and strong across Kersal Moor, as old John Burnet, the farmer, came slowly down the slippery road, “setting his staff, wi’ a’ his skill, to keep him sicker.” The old man was tired with the business of the market; and he was fully bent on making his way right on to his own fireside down in the vale, when a lithe, strong footstep came up

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behind him; and, with a friendly slap on the shoulder, somebody cried out in a cheerful voice—

“Now then, John, owd lad! this is winterly enough for yo, isn’t it?”

It was Jem Royle, a stalwart middle-aged farmer, belonging to the neighbourhood.

“Hello!” said the old man, turning round, “is it thee, Jem? Ay, its winterly, for sure. It’s eighteen yer sin we had as keen a nip as this afore.”

“Ay,” replied Jem, “that wur a stinger; but it didn’t last as long as this has lasted. Besides, we’d better times then.”

“They couldn’t be much worse than they are now,—takkin’ everythin’ together,” said the old man, trudging right on down the road.

“Here, stop!” cried Jem, pointing across to the old inn on the moor. “Are yo noan gooin’ to co’ at th’ owd shop for an odd gill? Come in, for a minute or two! What’s o’ yo’r hurry?”

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“Well, for a minute or two, Jem,—as thou says. But I munnot stop long; thou knows I’ve further to go than thou has.”

“Just an odd tot together, John; an’ then I mun be gooin’, too, for we’n some cattle poorly. Come on, owd lad; we do’ not leet o’ one another every day.”

“Away wi’ tho,” said the old man, turning in the direction of the inn,—“away wi’ tho; I’m comin’.”

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They entered the Kitchen of the Running Horses together. There was not a soul in the place; and the fire was getting low.

“Hello!” cried Jem, knocking loudly upon the table with his “cauve-stick.” “Hello! Is there nobody wick i’ th hole? Hello, Matty!”

The landlady came in from the back room, wiping her hands upon her apron.

“Now then,” said she, “what’s o’ this din about? . . . But I might ha’ known that it wur thee, Jem, for thou maks moore racket than onybody that enters this dur! Well; an’ what’s wanted, now that I am here?”

“Wanted!” cried Jem. “Look at this fire! Is that ony mak of a fire for a winter’s neet? If it had been summer time yo’d ha’ had it roarin’ up th’ chimbley! Mend it up a bit, owd lass! Mend it up! It maks me dither i’ mi shoon to look at it! Mend it up! Th’ hole’s as dark an’ as cowl as th’ inside of a tombstone!”

“It’s a poor fire, for sure, Jem,” said the landlady, scaling out the ashes from the lower bars. “I towd Harry to put some coals on hawe-an-hour sin,—but he’s forgotten. If one wants aught doin’ they mun do it theirselves. But we’n had nobody in; an’ our folk are o’ busy i’ th wesh-house; an’ that’s how it is. Come, I’ll see to it! . . . What wi’n yo ha’ to drink?”

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“Bring us a pint apiece.”

Matty brought the drink. In a few minutes the fire was blazing bright; the hearth was swept; and the two friends crept up to the hob together.

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“Well, come,” said the old man, taking up his pot, “here’s a Happy New Year to tho, Jem!”

“Th’ same to yo, John!” replied Jem. “An’ I hope yo’n live t’ enjoy yo’r dinner th’ next Christmas Day, owd lad! . . . Well; an’ is there aught fresh gooin’ on i’ yo’r quarter, John?”

“Well, there’s nought fresh, Jem, that I know on. . . . Oh, yigh! That greight lollopin’ lass o’ Jone o’ Well-trough’s is gooin’ to be wed at last!”

“Never, sure! What, her wi’th red toppin’?”

“Ay; that’s her. . . . Well hoo’s o’ th’ lass that they han; an’ Jone didn’t want to part wi’ her. But natur’ will tell, thou knows; an’ th’ owd lad had to give in, an’ let her goo.”

“An’ nought but reet, noather. . . . But who’s th’ chap, John,—who’s th’ chap? He’ll have a rare armful for his brass, as who gets her.”

“Why, it’s owd Billy Gusset lad, o’ Pendlebury,— that little bow-legged taylior.”

“Never, sure! Why, he’ll be like a tomtit peekin’ at a round o’ beef!”

“It doesn’t matter; he’s gotten her,—an’ he’ll ha’ to mak th’ best on her, now. . . . He’s bin after her a good while,—tootin’, and rootin’, and whewtin’

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about th’ house; an’ owd Jone swore, mich an’ moore, that if ever he geet howd on him he’d break every bwon in his hide. But it wur no use,—th’ lass would have him,—an’ he would have her; an’ when that’s case, thou knows, there’s noather lock nor bowt that’ll keep ’em long. Beside, th’ lass wur turn’t thirty; an’ I dare say hoo thought that it wur about th’ last chance. . . . Owd Jone did o’ he could to keep ’em asunder; but it wur no use. There wur a bit of a thing happen’t one neet about a month sin that brought things to a point; an’ th’ owd lad had to give in.”

“Oh, ay! How wur that?”

“Well, one neet, about a month sin’, when owd Jone an’ his daughter, an’ little Robin, th’ cow-lad, had finish’t their suppers, th’ owd lad drew up into th’ arm-cheer, bi th’ side o’th hob, an’ poo’d his pipe out. Th’ eight o’clock bell, at th’

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church, had just dropt tollin', an' owd Jone said to his daughter, 'Matty; thee go thi ways to bed! Thou knows thou'll ha' to be up bi four i'th mornin',—as it's th' weshin'-day! Robin an' me can look after th' shippon, an' th' pigs! Off witho!' An' away went Matty upstairs, without a word; an' o' wur still; for owd Jone an' th' cow-lad had th' kitchen to theirsels. . . . But they hadn't set there long afore th' gam begun. . . . Matty slept in a reawm o'er th' top o'th kitchen, that looked down into th' back-

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yard, where there wur a lot o' weel-stocked pigstyes. . . . Well; this little taylior had bin rootin' about th' back o'th house an hour or two, tryin' to get a wap o' Matty; but when he see'd th' leet planted i'th chamber-window aboon th' kitchen, he thought to his-sel',— 'O' reet! That'll do! I can get to speigk to her now!' Well; afore he went ony further, he peeped through th' kitchen window, to see how things wur gooin' on. Owd Jone wur smookin' i'th nook, an' th' cow-lad wur sound asleep at th' end o'th dresser; an' o' wur clear; so th' little taylior climbed up onto a coal-house slate that sloped up to Matty's window. It wur a frosty neet, an' th' slate wur as slippy as glass; an' th' taylior had hard wark to keep his feet; an' it happen't that close by th' side o'th coal-house there stood a greight tubful o' swillin's, about five feet deep, for th' pigs. Th' taylior had just gotten howd o'th ledge o'th window, an' he'd gan one bit of a tap at th' pane, when his feet shot fro under him; an' down he coom into th' tub, up to th' neck among these swillin's. . . . Well; th' din set th' pigs agate o' yellin' an' gruntin' like mad; an' it roused owd Jone, i'th kitchen. . . . 'Now then, Robin,' said he, 'wakken up, my lad! Thee goo do yon shippon up; an' I'll look to th' pigs! Gi' me that lantron!' Away went Robin; an' away went owd Jone wi'th lantron in his hond; an' as soon as he coom to th'

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swill-tub, th' first thing he set een on wur th' little taylior's white face stickin' out at th' top o'th swillin's. . . . 'Hello!' cried owd Jone, droppin' th' lantron to th'

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floor, 'what th' dule is there i'th tub?' . . . Well, the little taylior wur flayed out o' his senses; and he squeaked out, 'It's me! help me out!' 'An' who arto?' 'I'm Jack o' Billy's fro Pendlebury!' 'Th' devil thou art? an' what arto doin' i'th swill-tub?' 'I've fo'n off th' slate!' 'An' what wur thou doin' upo' th' slate?' . . . Here Matty coom in. Hoo'd yerd th' din; an' hoo knew o' about it; so hoo hurried her clooas on, an' hoo coom runnin' down into th' yard. 'Eh, faither,' cried Matty, when hoo geet to th' tub, 'it's Jack! Help him out!' 'Nay,' said owd Jone, 'thou mun help him out thisel'! The devil tak Jack,—an' thee too! Get him out; an' bring him into th' house! I mun ha' this job sattled at once!' So Robin an' Matty geet th' taylior out o'th tub,— an' they wshed him,—an' took him into th' kitchen. An' th' weddin' wur made up th' same neet, for Jem see'd that it wur no use feightin' again it ony lurger.... But I mun be gooin', Jem," continued the old man, drinking up his ale. "I mun be gooin'! So I'll bid tho good neet!"

"Good neet, John!" replied Jem. "I'll just have another gill; an' then I'll be off mysel'!"

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A BONNY PICTUR'.

"LORD. What's here? One dead, or drank? See
doth he breathe?

"HUNTSMAN. He breathes, my lord. Were he not
warmed with ale,

This were a cold bed to sleep so soundly.

"LORD. O, monstrous beast! How like a swine he
lies!"

Shakspere.

IT was in the height of summer; and it was six o'clock of the morning after the market-day. The kitchen of the Blue Bell was a scene of dirt, and swill, and drunken disorder; and its air was redolent of the fumes of drink and tobacco,—the

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sickly relics of a late carouse. The landlord's company had staggered off homeward about two hours after break of day, leaving one of their number,—Johnny o' Flops,—sound asleep upon a "long-settle" in the corner. The six o'clock bell is tolling at the church; and Nanny, the landlady, has just come downstairs. The servant girl is breaking chips across her knee, to light the fire

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with. The landlady stops in the doorway, and looks round:—

"Eh, good Lord o' me! what a hole this is to be sure! Come, Sarah, stir thi limbs, an' get that fire leeted! . . . Good gracious! what a smithy for one to put their yed into th' first thing in a mornin'! An' what a stench there is! it's enough to sicken a dog! Oppen that window, lass; an' let's have a bit o' fresh air, for goodness sake! . . . Eh, dear o' me! I don't know how to begin to put this place to-reefs,—I don't, for sure! It's as ill as shiftin' a midden,—that it is! I'm weary o' livin' i' sich rackety cotes,—that I am! Just now I feel as if I could like to lie down, an' sign o'er,—an' give everything up,—for I'm sick o' this life,—sick as a dog I am! . . . I' the name o' good Katty, whatever han they had agate? It looks as if there'd bin a dog-battle i'th hole! . . . Here, Sarah; bring thi brush, an' sweep these brokken pots up, to begin wi'! . . . Talk about savages! If there's ony savages i' this world worse than these, they're noan fit to live,—an' I'm sure they're noan fit to dee! . . . I think i' my heart that th' world's gooin' yed-lung to rack an' ruin! An', just now, my back aches to that degree that I can hardly bide! But it's no use; I mun buckle to. If I wur deein', it would be just th' same. I should ha' to keep slavin' at it; an' never

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as much as 'thank yo!' Ony poor soul that's forc't to live among drunken company, again' their will, desarnes to go to heaven at last,—that they done! It's no use talkin',—I mun do some'at! (*She comes into the corner where the drunken cobbler lies asleep.*) Hello! What han we here? Good gracious! Look here! Look at this mangy tyke i'th nook, here! That's a bonny pictur' for th' sunshine to leet on! I

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wish to the Lord he'd wakken up, an' tak hissel whoam. Idle, swillikin' slotch that he is! He's bin hangin' about here, guzzlin' an' drinkin', mony a week,—an' now he's gradely stagg'd up! Sich folk are noan fit to be gooin' loose i'th world! He's o' filth an' dirt; an' he hasn't a farthin' o' brass about his rags this minute; an' he's covered yon cupboard-dur wi' chalk-marks beside. . . . I mun ha' that craiter shifted o' somehow! (*She shakes him up.*) Now then! Dun yo yer? Get up! I want to come into that nook! . . . It's no use. I met as weel talk to a milestone. I'll send somebody else to him. (*She goes to the door, and calls JONAS, the ostler, in from the yard.*) Here, Jonas! Come an' stir this lump o' stuff that's cruttle't i'th nook here, an' send him off to where he belongs! I'll not have him i'th house ony longer,—an' that's enough!"

(*The ostler shakes him up.*)

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up, owd dog! It's time to be joggin'! Come; they wanten to clen th' house up! Dost yer? Come, owd lad; gather those limbs o' thine together, an' get whoam, an' to bed; it's welly breakfast time!"

(*The cobbler yawns, and stretches his arms.*)

"O' reet! I'm comin'! . . . Keep thi leg back! . . . What time is't?"

"It's haue-past six."

"Haue-past six, eh! . . . Here; drop it! Let go mi shoolder! . . . Where am I?"

"Thou'rt i'th owd nook."

"Th' owd nook! . . . Which on 'em?"

"Thou'rt i'th Blue Bell."

"Blue Bell, eh? Come; it met ha' bin war (worse). When I fell asleep I wur in a breek-kil'. I wonder where I's be next."

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“Thou’ll be i’th wrong shop, if thou doesn’t mind.”

“I don’t care where I am if thou arn’t theer. What day o’th month is it?”

“It’s th’ fifteenth o’ June.”

“Fifteenth o’ June, eh? . . . By th’ mass, this has bin a crumper of a New Year! I’ve never bin sober sin th’ first o’ January! . . . Bring me a gill o’ ale,—an’ be sharp! I’m as dry as a kex!”

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“Thou’s had enough! Come, get up, an’ wesh thi face; an’ brush thi clooas a bit, they’re o’ barken’t wi’ slutch! Come, owd lad; thou’rt a shame to be sin!”

“Who’s a shame to be sin? Me? Never thee mind whether I am or not! Thou doesn’t need to look at me! A shame to be sin, eh? Thee measure a peck out o’ thi own seck! I’ve sin prattier folk than thee i’ my time! . . . Off witho out o’ my seet,—an’ fly up wi’th hens! . . . Get out o’th leet, I tell tho; an’ let’s be quiet! . . . If ever there wur a broken hearted lad i’ this world it’s me! . . . Who-up! cried neet-eawl! (*Sings.*)

“ ‘Turn o’ Fob’s wur a good-natur’t sort of a lad;
He’re a weighver by trade, an’ he live’t wi’ his dad;
He’re fond o’ down-craiters, an’ th’ neighbors o’ said,
That he’re reet in his heart, but he’d nought in his yed.

Derry down.’ ”

“Mak a less o’ thi din, thou yeawlin’ hount; an’ be off whoam!”

“Nanny, yo’r terrible rivven, this mornin’! What’s th’ matter? I’ll have another skrike, as how th’ cat jumps! (*Sings again.*)

“ ‘Nan o’ Flup’s wur a lass that wur swipper and strung;
Hoo’d a temper o’ fire.—an’ a rattlin’ tung;
Hoo’re as hondsoma a filly as mortal e’er seed,
But hoo coom of a racklesome, natterin’ breed.

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“Jonas,” cried the landlady, “get him out o’ this house at once, I tell tho! Put him out at th’ back,—an’ shut th’ dur on him!”

“Come, owd lad,” said Jonas, dragging him out of the corner, “thou’ll ha’ to go this time!”

As Jonas put him out at the back-door, he said, “Now, conto manage to keep thi feet?”

“I can manage to get out o’ thy seet, Jonas, I dar say; an’ that’ll do for me. . . . Look here! I’m noan goin’ to tak things as I have done! I’ll poo someb’dy’s legs fro under ’em! It caps the dule if I cannot lick Jemmy Robishaw! Does thou see that arm, Jonas?”

“Ay, I see it. If thi yed wur as strung as thi arm, owd lad, I could mak a mon on tho.”

“Strung! Mi yed’s strunger than thine! What dun’ yo co’ strung? I tupp’d th’ brewhouse dur in at th’ White Swan tother day, an’ never a yure turn’t! Go thee and kom (comb) thi toppin’! Thou cannot do that!”

“Now, conto manage?” said Jonas.

“Thee tak thi yed into th’ house,—an’ let me do for mysel’,” said the cobbler, as he staggered away.

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TOPPIN’ FAT.

“Let us have no lying; that becomes none but tradesmen.”

Shakspeare.

Time: A keen winter day; the church clock striking twelve. Scene: An old wayside inn, overlooking the snow-clad fields at the end of the village. MALLY, the landlady,

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and BETTY O' JUDD'S, *the sempstress of the village, talking together at the front door.*

"I'LL tell yo what, Betty, this frost gets keener and keener! Yo mun mind yo'r feet, as yo gone down th' road, for it's as slippy as a lookin'-glass! I went into th' yard yesterday mornin' with a bit o' stuff for th' hens, an' I hadn't bin out two minutes afore I coom down slap o' mi back!"

"Eh, Mary! that would shake yo terribly,—yo'r sich a size!"

"Ay, marry, it did shake me! To tell yo truth, Betty, I've never bin reet sin',—an' mi hip's as black as a coal; so I'd ha' yo to mind yo'r feet; for yo'r

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like me, yo cannot bide knockin' about at yo'r time o' time!"

"Eh, bless yo, nawe, Mary! I cannot for sure! I'm soon put o' flunters, now,—I am that! . . . But I mun be gooin'! I've left th' childer i'th house bi theirsels,—an' I'm fleyed they'n be gettin' into some sort o' lumber."

"Well,—good day to yo, Betty! . . . Now, yo'n do as weel as yo con wi' that dress o' mine; yo'n see what it wants doin' at! An', for goodness sake, let me ha' those shirts of our Sam's afore th' end o'th week, I pray yo!"

"Yo's have 'em bi Saturday mornin', Mary,—at th' latest! . . . Well, now, I mun be gooin',— for, as I tell yo,—I left th' childer,—an' I've left mi weshin',—an' th' house is o' upset! I wish to the Lord I could meet with our Judd! He's off upo' th' rant again! I think there's no poor soul i' this world that's worse plagued with a mon than I am! I don't know whatever we should do for a livin' if I didn't stir mysel'! An' I may wortch my fingers to th' bone, but he never seems to think that I've done enough! Talk about weddin'! Eh, dear!"

"God help yo, Betty, lass,—God help yo! Folk little known! . . . I'll tell yo what, Betty; yo might come up to yo'r tay some afternoon,—an' bring th' childer wi' yo!"

"I will, Mary!—an' thank yo!"

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“Ay, do,—an’ don’t let it be long!”

“I’ll come, Mary! But I mun be off; for childer are nobbut childer, yo known; an’ I’m freeten’t o’ some’at happenin’! So, I’ll bid yo good day, Mary!”

“Well, I mun be gooin’, too, Betty; for our dinner’s upo’ th’ table; an’ we’n my brother George o’er fro Rossenda’ Forest,—I haven’t sin him as mony a month afore! So, I’ll bid yo good day, Betty! . . . Now, mind yo’r feet, for it’s very slippy!”

The dinner was already set out upon the great table in the kitchen ; and Sam, the landlord, sat at the head of the board, chatting with his brother-in-law, a burly old farmer from the green slope near the foot of Musbury Tor, in Rossendale. Little Johnny, the landlord’s youngest lad, sat near his father, yammering, and rubbing his hands as he gazed with hungry eyes upon the smoking mass of boiled beef at the head of the table. Opposite to little Johnny sat his two elder brothers, both stalwart young men, who had come in hungry as hunters from looking after the cattle of the farm connected with the house. There were yet three chairs empty at the side of the board.

“Now, then,” anid the landlady, as she entered the kitchen, “I hope yo aren’t waitin’ o’ me!

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George, thou’ll be quite famisht! Hello! where’s yon lasses?”

“Nay,” said the landlord, “thou mun look after ’em thisel’! They’re olez i’th felt when they should be i’th lone! Thou’d better shout on ’em; they’re upstairs, yon, fiddle faddlin’!”

“I never see sich wark i’ my life!” said the landlady. “Come, I’ll stir ’em! (*She goes to the foot of the stairs and shouts up to them.*) Now then; whatever are yo

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lasses doin' so long up theer? I've tow'd yo mony a time; if yo cannot manage to come, down to yo'r dinner when it's ready yo'n ha' to go without till th' next meal! I wonder how yo can for shame,—that I do,—keepin' th' whole table waitin',—an' yo'r uncle George here, too! Whatever are yo thinkin' at? Come down this minute! Whatever are yo doin'?"

"We shan't be a minute, mother! We're nobbut doin' er (our) hair up!"

"Doin' yo'r hair up! . . . Come down this minute, I tell yo! If I have to come up to yo, I'll do yo'r hair up for yo, with a rattle! . . . Sarah; I wonder that *thou's* no moore sense! Whatever's keepin' yo?"

"Mother; we cannot find th' hair oil!"

"Od drat yo, an' yo'r hair oil!"

"Let th' lasses alone, Mary," said the landlady's brother,—“let th' lasses alone! They're fryin' to

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mak theirsels as snod as they con, becose there's a visitor to-day! They're yung, mon, they're yung,— an' thou's bin yung thisel'! I remember th' time when thou wur as fain of a bit o' toppin' fat for thi yure as ony lass i' Rossenda' . . . I guess thou's forgotten me bringin' a pot o' bear's grease for tho out o'th town once, about thirty yer sin?"

"Ay; I've quite forgotten o' about it."

"Well, but I haven't."

"I dar say not, George. But thou sometimes remembers things that never happen't."

"Ay, but this is as true as I'm here! . . . I'll tell thee, Sam. . . . One mornin', about thirty yer sin, when our Mary, here, wur just sich another slip of a lass as yo'r Sarah, hoo took me to one side as I wur startin' off to th' town, an' begged on me to bring her a pot o' bear's grease, unknown to mi mother, fro owd Joe Sutcliffe's, th' barber—"

"Eh, George," said the landlady, "I wonder how thou can say sich a thing!"

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“Howd thi din, lass,” said her brother, “it’s quite true! . . . Well, when I geet back fro th’ town, at th’ edge o’ dark, I happen’t to put this pot o’ bear’s grease down i’th buttery, without thinkin’ at it. Well; it hadn’t bin there mony minutes before Lung Robin, a great hungry cow lad of ours, coom loungin’ in fro th’ shippon; an’ he went reet into th’ buttery, to get a sly bit o’ some’at to height (eat);

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an’ th’ first thing he laid howd on wur this pot o’ bear’s grease that I’d brought for our Mary. Well; he made no moore ado, but he cut two or three shives o’ loaf, an’ he spread this stuff onto it, and down it went, one shive after another, till he’d emptied th’ pot. Well, in a bit, our Mary comes into th’ kitchen, an’ hoo axed what I’d done wi’th bear’s grease. ‘Thou’ll find it i’th buttery,’ said I; an’ off hoo went. In a minute or two hoo coom back into th’ kitchen, wi’th pot in hond, an’ hoo said, ‘Why, George, th’ pot’s empty!’ Well, Robin happen’t to be sittin’ at th’ fireside, an’ he said, ‘Here; let’s look at that pot! . . . What wur there in it?’ ‘Bear’s grease!’ ‘It doesn’t matter what it wur,’ said Robin, ‘I’ve etten it,—an’ I could have etten twice as much, if it had bin there!’ ‘Why, it’ll mak tho ill!’ ‘I’m o’ reet up to now,’ said Robin. An’ he wur so, too. It didn’t seem to mak a bit o’ difference; for in about two hours after he ate as hearty a supper as ever he did in his life.”

And now the landlord’s three daughters came rushing down into the kitchen, with many apologies for keeping their uncle George waiting for his dinner. And it was a merry meal; for the old Rossendale farmer was full of genial life, and racy humour, and he kept the table in a continual roar.

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UNDER TH’ OWD TREE.

“When the flickerin’ light through the window pane
From the candle’s dull flame do shoot,
An’ Jemmy, the smith, is a-gone down the lane.

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A-playing' his shrill-voiced flute;

An' the miller's man

Do sit at his ease

On the seat that is under the cluster o' trees,

Wi' his pipe an' his cider can."

Wm. Barnes.

A fine evening in hay-time. BILL O' GROUTYED'S and JACK O'TH MARL HOLE, two mowers, seated on the old ale-bench, under "th' big tree" by the roadside, in front of the Golden Lion, better known as "Th' Brass Dog." DICK O' DODY'S leaning against the horse trough, telling a tale. OWD BILL bursts into a laugh.

"**BY** th' heart, that needs no provin'! Stop a minute, till I get mi wynt! . . .

Dick, owd lad, thou's done it at last! I neyer yerd th' marrow to that sin' I're born o' mi mother! Eh! what a tale! . . . Dick, I cannot believe th' have o' thy talk! What does thou think about it, Jack?"

"Well,—I think it's a sunbrunt lie."

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"Yo han it as I had it,—word for word."

"Who towd tho?"

"Joe Plunge, th' bobby-cocker."

"Ay, well, then! Joe's about as prime a hood at ratchin' (stretching, exaggeration), as ever bote off th' edge of a cake o' brade! But, I doubt thou's left it nought short, thysel'. There's no gotten th' breadth of a hay-seed in between Joe an' thee, for moonshine talk! There's six o' tone and have-a-dozen o' tother. If he tells a tale,—it needs no mendin', and it needs no contradictin',—and if onybody i' this world tells thee a tale, thou'll put a finishin' stroke o' thi own to't, th' next time that thi mouth flies oppen! ... If I wur thee, Dick, I'd give o'er lyn' an' start o' steighlin',— thou'll make more brass by it!"

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“I’ll tell tho what, Bill, thou’rt gettin terrible tickle about folk’s talk, o’ at once. Thou met (might) ha’ joined th’ ‘Owd Body’ (the Old Wesleyans), or some’at! Thou talks a deeol o’ Sunday stuff, owd lad! What’s up!”

“Oh, bother noan! It’s o’ reet! I like a good lie,—if there’s no harm in it,—as weel as onybody. What says thou, Jack?”

“Well,—I’m th’ same as thee, Bill,—I can do wi’ a good lie, if there’s no harm in’t! But, at after o’—there’s nought like gradely straightforrad talk. There are no good lies.”

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“Thou’rt reet again, Jack; but if onybody tells me ony lies, I like to know beforehand that they are lies.”

“I’ll tell yo what, lads, yo’r very bad to plez! Has there bin a prayer-meetin’ somewheer i’th fowd? I’d better button my lip a bit!”

“I’ll tell tho how it is, Dick.”

“Well.”

“Thou’s bin talkin’ dry-mouth, mon. Thou may weel tell lies.”

“Come; I con soon awter that (*Shouts to the servant in the doorway.*) Here, Liddy! Bring me another pint!”

“That’s reet; weet thi whistle, an’ to’t again! . . . How didto get on at th’ rushbearin’ o’ Monday?”

“Well,—what wi’ pooin’ th’ cart, an’ whip-crackin’, an’ doancin’, an’ feightin’, I’ve bin as stiff as a rubbin-stoop ever sin’.”

“Well,—well,—youth will have it fling! I use’t to be as limber as a snig,—an’ look at mo now. Ay, ay,—I’ve sin th’ time when I could ha’ doance’t a bit,—ay, an’ ha’ foughten a bit, too! Ax Bull Robin,—an’ Black Bill,—an owd Curly, at th’ Lower Yates,—they known! Ax ’em to count th’ notches upo’ their shins,—they known! . . . But my junkettin’ days are o’er, now! Once a mon, an’ twice a chylt,—that’s th’ owd tale. . . .

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Ay, ay, time plays th' upstroke wi' th' best on us! I'm gettin' as cratchinly as a crush't wisket! . . . What, yo'n had gay deed amung yo down i'th town, then?"

"Ay, ay, we had that! Flitter Billy, at th' Clover Nook, geet wed th' same day; an' we kept it up at th' Hare an' Hounds alehouse."

"Oh, ay! is Billy gotten wed, then?"

"Ay; he's buckle't to i' good time."

"Good time, saysto? That'll depend how it leets. . . . What! it's noan so lung sin' he wur wearin' hippins!"

"Nawe, it isn't, for sure. He's hardly larn't how to dry his nose yet."

"By th' mass, but he's gooin' to a rough schoo, now! . . . An' who's th' lass, saysto?"

"Dick o' Kitter lass,—th' sond-knocker."

"Never, sure! . . . Well, by Guy! that's a smart pair o' raa guttlins (unfledged birds) to tee together. Th' kettle cannot co' th' pon 'brunt-rump,' theer, as how 'tis; for he isn't aboon ninepence th' shillin',—an' I doubt hoo'll not reitch aboon sixpence-hawp'ny, or sevenpence at th' most."

"They're a bonny couple, for sure. But they'n happen poo though,—there's no tellin'. . . . Little Mall o' Robin's wur telling me about this lass o' Kitter's gooin' to th' town a buyin' some print for her weddin'-dress. Little Mall went wi' her,—an'

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one or two moore,—to help her to choose th' pattern. . . . Well,—when they geet to th' town, they went gawpin' about a while, wi' their mouths oppen, fro one window to another, starin' at things, an' talkin' their awvish talk, an' reckonin' their brass up, an' sich like,—an', at last, they went wamblin' an lollin' into one o' these draper's shops,—an' a counter-jumper coom to 'em, an' axed 'em what they wanted; and Little Mall said, 'We're come'd a-buyin' some print to make a dress on, for this lass, here.' 'Yo'n want some'at lively, I guess?' said th' chap. 'Ay,' said Mall, 'it'll ha' to be lively. It's for Sally, here; an' hoo's boun' to be wed o'

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Monday,—arn'to Sally?' 'Yigh,' said Sally, 'I guess I am,—if nought happens.' 'That's reet!' said th' counter-jumper., 'I wish yo mich happiness.' 'Thank yo, maister,' said Sally,—'it'll be o' reet Billy says he'll tak care o' that.' 'That's th' mak!' said th' counter-jumper. 'Now then; let's see it I can fit yo up wi' this dress-piece. What sort of a pattern would yo like?' 'Well,' said Sally, 'let's look at some'at wi' brids on,—brids, an' posies, an' sich like. An' yo mun let us have it chep,—for we ha'not mich brass,—han we Mally?' 'Well, come,' said th' counter-jumper, 'let's see what I can do for yo!' An' th' owd lad set agate o' pooin' things down for these lasses to look at,—but nought wur reet. At last, he poo'd down an' he poo'd down till

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th' counter wur cover't, an' pile't up wi' stuff, an' still these lasses kept sayin', 'Eh! that'll do noan! we wanten bigger picturs nor thoose!' At lung-length, th' counter-jumper geet out o' patience, an' he said, 'I'll tell yo what it is, lasses; I begin to think that yo'n no taste!' 'Taste!' said Sally; an' hoo stare't at th' chap a bit,—an' then hoo turn't to Mally, an' hoo said, 'Yer tho, Mally! *He thinks we're boun' to heyt (eat) it!*' "

"Well done, Sall o' Kitters! . . . That reminds me of owd Ben o' Kitter's,—he wur uncle to this lass. Owd Ben had bin i'th warkhouse a bit; but he couldn't bide i' that shop,—so he lost no time i' getting' out again th' first chance he had. He said he'd leifer dee i'th oppen air than be lockt up i' sich a cote as that, wi' o'th fat o'th lond about him. . . Well, as soon as th' owd lad had getten out, he began o' lookin' round, an' thinkin' what he could do for a bit of a livin',—an' he unbethought him 'at he'd try his hond at green grocerin',—for he'd sin folk make a good lot o' brass wi' gooin' round wi' a jackass-cart a-sellin' potitos, an' carrits, an' sich like. But th' owd lad wur fast, fur he'd noather cart, nor jackass, nor stuff, nor he hadn't a farthin' o' brass in his clooas,—nor he didn't know where to turn to get noan. At last, he unbethought him o'th owd miller, an' he pluckt up, an' off he went a seein' him. Well,—he knocked at th' front dur, an'

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when th' servant coom, he axed if th' maister wur in; an' hoo said he wur. 'Tell him I want a word wi' him,' said Ben. In a minute or two th' miller coom to th' dur; an' as soon as he see'd Ben, he said, 'Hello, Ben! what's th' matter, my lad?' 'Well,' said Ben, 'I want yo to lend me a sovereign!' 'A sovereign!' said th' miller. 'What for? I thought thou'd bin i'th wark-house.' 'Ay,' said Ben, 'I ha' bin theer,—a bit. But I cannot get my breath i' yon hole! I've stown out; an' I'd sooner be hanged than goo in again. I want to set up i'th green-grocery line. I can borrow a jackass for a start; an' I know wheer I can buy a cart for fifteen shillin',—an', if yo'n lend me a sovereign, t'other five shillin' 'll set me up wi' a bit o' stuff.' 'Ay,' said th' miller, 'that's o' very weel! But what mak o' security am I to have for my brass?' 'Well,' said Ben, 'yo'r an owd friend o' mine,—an' I'll tell yo what I'll do wi' yo,—*yo shall have yo'r name upo' th' cart! I cannot say fairer than that!*' "

(Servant lass shouts from the doorway)

"Th' baggin's ready!"

"That's reet! Come, Jack! Come, Dick, my lad, thou'll have a bit wi' us? Bring that scythe in!"

• • • • •

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*(A jolly haymaker comes down the road with his coat on his arm,
and a rake upon his shoulder, singing)*

"O'er moor an' mountain grey,

Molly, oh!

I've wandered mony a day,

Molly, oh!

The Salamanca Corpus: Around the Yule Log (1879)

Trudgin' wi' restless feet,
Onward, fro morn to neet,
To see those een so breet,
Molly, oh!"

*(He sits down on the bench under the tree, and shouts to the servant
lass, who stands in the doorway)*

"Liddy! has Fiddler Bill co'de here?"

"Not yet."

"Bring me a pint o' ale, then; for mi throtle's as dry as a kex." *(Sings again)*

"Trudgin' through wind an' weet,
Pantin' fro morn to neet,
To kiss those lips so sweet,
Molly, oh!"

*(A way-worn tramp comes creeping up from the road, and sits down upon the bench to
rest. The hay-maker looks at him a bit, and then begins to talk to him.)*

"Thou's never bin here afore."

"Yigh, I have."

"I've never sin tho!"

"I wur nobbut four year owd when I wur here afore."

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"Oh, nawe! . . . Well; an' con thou remember bein' four year owd?"

"Ay; I con."

"Well, by th' mass! . . . Why, I cannot remember what time I went to bed last
neet! *(The tramp gropes in his pocket, and then looks about the floor.)* What arto
seechin'?"

The Salamanca Corpus: *Around the Yule Log* (1879)

“A pipe.”

“What mak of a pipe?”

“A little wood un,—o’ perpetrated wi’ holes.”

“O’ perpetrated wi’ holes? (*Stares at the tramp.*) How owd arto?”

“I’s be thirty-five come Thar-cake Monday.”

“Thour’t gettin’ on, owd lad. . . . An’ what arto co’de?”

“I’m co’de Nathan o’ Switcher’s, but mi gradely name’s Fuzzbo’.”

“Fuzzbo’, eh ? Ay, an’ a good name, too. . . . Well,—I’ll tell tho what,—if I wur thee, Fuzzbo’,— I’d give o’er usin’ these one-an’-ninepenny words,— an’ stick to nice little rount uns,—they’re better to manage,—an’ they come’n in chepper. There’s a good deal o’ sarviceable talk to be gotten out o’ little words, weel-sorted, an’ sarve’t up nicely. (*The tramp looks about the floor again.*) What arto seechin’ now?”

“I’m seechin’ some cheese an’ loaf, an’ a pint o’ ale.”

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“Hasto ony brass?”

“I’ve a hawpenny.”

“I see. . . . Conto wortch ony, to ony sense?”

“I’ve bin poorly!”

“Thou’s bin poorly a good while, bi th’ look on tho.”

“Ay; a good while.”

“Ah; an’ thou’ll tak a deeol o’ curin’. What trade arto?”

“I sarve’t mi time to makin’ skewers for butchers.”

“Ah; an’ a good trade, too. . . . I dar say thou’s turn’t o’er a deal o’ brass i’ thi time.”

“Ay; I’ve sin better days.”

“Ay; I guess so. . . . An’ thou’ll see ’em again afore aught’s lung,—if thou’ll behave thisel’. . . . Doesto know onybody about here?”

“Nawe; but there’s an uncle o’ mine lives about five mile off.”

“Has he ony brass?”

The Salamanca Corpus: Around the Yule Log (1879)

“He’s as poor as a crow.”

“Keep o’ thi own side then! . . . I’ve a bit of a manchet i’ mi pocket, here,—if that’ll do tho ony good thou’rt welcome. Here! Now, give o’er cockin’ thi little finger,—an’ get agate o’ makin’ skewers as soon as thou con! An’ so, good day to tho! My ale’s done; an’ I’m off!”

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FREETENIN’.

“I’ve heard my reverend grannie say,
In lanely glens yo like to stray:
Or where auld ruined castles, gray,
Nod to the moon,
Ye fright the nightly wanderer’s way
Wi’ eldritch croon.”

Burns.

A dusky night, late in autumn, with a patch of stars looking down, here and there, between the clouds. TUM RINDLE and JONE O’ LIMPER’S entering the shady lane leading up to the church. All still around. A low wind moaning through the trees.

“**WHAT** time is’t gotten, Tummy?”

“Noan so fur off nine. Th’ eight o’clock bell dropt just as I wur comin’ out o’ Bull Robin dur-hole, wi’ a pluck-an’-liver for my Aint Mally.”

“I’ll tell tho what,—it’s terrible dark.”

“It’s raither a sad-colour’t mak of a neet,—as thou says,—but it’ll get leeter after we’n bin out a bit.”

“Poo up! . . . Hast ony ’bacco?”

“Ay; thou’ll find some i’ that box. Help thysel’!”

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“Well,—I think I’s pipe up, afore I goo ony fur! . . . I’ll tell tho what, Tummy,—I don’t haue like this lone i’th neet-time!”

“It’s a feaw look, for sure, owd lad,—i’th eawl-leet. But, thou’rt happen boggart feared?”

“Well,—I’m noan partial to sichlike nooks as these, at th’ edge o’ dark, nor I never wur, fro bein’ quite a bantlin’. Beside, I’ve yerd o’ things bein’ sin i’ this lone.”

“What mak o’ things?”

“Why,—o’ maks o’ freetenin’! Things ’at are never sin i’th gradely dayleet!”

“I’ve never sin nought o’th sort; an’ I’ve travel’t this lone aboon twenty year, drunk an’ sober,—at o’ maks o’ times.”

“I don’t care. Some folk never dun see nought,—noather bi neet nor day! But I’ve both sin things an’ yerd things i’ this lone ’at’s made my yure ston’ straight up, mony a time! Don’t tell me! Beside, Bill o’ Toppin’s, th’ keaw-doctor, wur smoor’t i’th ditch, yon, at th’ time o’ greight flood; an’ owd Jack o’th Smithy hanged hissel’ i’th elm-tree nook, about th’ middle o’th lone, th’ last back-end; an’ folk say’n ’at they both on ’em come’n back.”

“Well,—let ’em come back a bit if they’n a mind,—I’m noan fleyed on ’em! But I should advise ’em to keep o’ their own side now that they’re gotten safe lounded,—if they’n let ’em stop.

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They don’t need to come back here again, as how ’tis,—for we’d quite enough on ’em afore they laft this country! But, it’s mich to me if they’n let folk out again, at after they gotten quietly lapt up in a grave! What good con they do when they dun come back, that’s what I want to know? . . . But, it’s o’ bull-scutter! I don’t believe sich tales!”

“Thou believes i’ nought nobbut thi bally.”

“Well, Jone, I’ve moore reawm i’ my inside than thou has! Thou’rt so thrutcht-up wi’ o’ maks o’ flaysome fancies that thou’s no comfort o’ thi life. But,—I tell

The Salamanca Corpus: Around the Yule Log (1879)

tho again,—I'm noan fretten't o' deod folk! It's th' wick uns 'at I'm fleyed on! If I can get o'er th' wick uns, I think I can bant tother mak,—for aught that I've sin' on 'em yet! An' as for 'em comin' again,—well,—I've been out at o' times o'th neet, between candle-leet an' cock-crow, i' o' maks o' one-ly spots,—an' I never let o nought yet mich warse nor mysel'!”

“I dar say not, Tummy. But, it's no use o' talkin'! There is folk 'at's sin things, if thou hasn't! . . . Hello! my leet's out! Let's co' at owd Bill's, here; he'll happen goo up th' lone wi' us.”

“Never thee mind owd Bill! There's nought'll come when there's two on us together! Besides; there isn't a ghost i' this world that dar face me! Come on, witho; and dunnot be a foo!”

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“There's no harm i' co'in, as how 'tis. Beside, I want a leet!”

“Well, in witho, then.”

(TUMMY opens the door of old BILL'S cottage. A crabbed old woman is seated on the hearth, smoking by candlelight.)

“Is Bill awhoam?”

“Nawe.”

“Where is he?”

“He's gwon out.”

“Where's he gwon to?”

“Somewheer where there's ale to be had, I dar say.”

“Is Bill wife in?”

“Nawe; hoo's gwon out.”

“Where's hoo gwon to?”

“Hoo's gwon a-seechin' him; an' if hoo leets on him it'll be rough!”

“Con I leet my pipe at th' fire?”

The Salamanca Corpus: Around the Yule Log (1879)

“Nawe, yo connot; for th’ fire’s gwon out, too. An’ yo may goo out an’ o’,—as soon as yo’n a mind, an’ shut that dur after yo!”

(They come out, and shut the door.)

“Well, by th’ mass, Jone, yon’s a nattle’t owd fuzzock, as how ’tis ! Who is hoo?”

“It’s owd Bill wife mother. Hoo’s aboon four score. They say’n hoo can witch folk.”

[118] “Ay; an’ hoo favvours ir, too! But hoo’d no ’casion to fly at me wi’ sich a ber, canker’t owd besom as hoo is,—I never clapt een on her afore i’ mi life, ’at I know on, an’ I don’t care, if I never see her again,—for hoo’s noan so pratty! To my thinkin’ hoo looks as if hoo’d had a deool o’ truck wi’ th’ lower shop.”

“Thou’s just hit it, Jone! Hoo comes of a moonshine breed! A scowlin’, skulkin’ lot o’ sky-wanderin’ besom-striders, ’at delighten i’ hatchin’ devilment for folk! I know th’ whole seed, breed, an’ generation on ’em. Owd an’ yung,—they’re a prowlin’, lurchin’, ill-willed brood o’ unhowsome spawn, that ever creepen away fro th’ leet, a-brewin’ hag broth, i’ festerin’ nooks, where no gradely thing can live! When I wur a lad, as we’n bin sittin’ bi th’ fire at neet, I’ve yerd mi mother tell sich tales about ill deed done bi one an’ another o’th lot that, mony a time, my yure’s stoode of an end, an’ goose-flesh has crept o’er me, fro top to toe! This nattle’t owd hag ’at we’n just sin,—hoo use’t to sell charms, an’ temptin’-powder, an’ sichlike,—an’ hoo’s witched mony a score o’ folk to deooth, bi o’ accounts. Folk use’t to turn out o’th road when they see’d her comin’,—for they wur fleyed o’ meetin’ her. Th’ whole country-side wur fleyed on her,—for if they geet her ill will they wur done for. . . . An’ her faither afore her,—

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The Salamanca Corpus: Around the Yule Log (1879)

he wur just th' same. He live't at a lonesome outside place, i'th heart o'th moors,— deep down by th' side o' runnin' wayter,—an' it wur known bi th' name o'th 'Wesh-cote.' There wur no road went by it; an' there wur no regular trod led to't; an' nobody could see th' house,—sich as it wur,— till they geet very near a-top on't,—it wur so low down in a nook. That's where this owd woman's faither live't, and that's where hoo wur brought up. I've yerd say that her faither use't to tell fortin, an' he reckon't to rule planets, an' sich like. He went bi th' name o' Boggart Bill,—for he wur seldom sin i'th dayleet; but he use't to wander about a good deool bi his-sel' i'th neet-time. I remember my uncle Jonas tellin' about gooin' to th' 'Wesh-cote' once a-seein' this Boggart Bill, th' wise man, about a cow 'at he'd lost. He said he never seed sich a fleysome-lookin' cote in his life,—it wur so dark, an' dirty, an' lumbersome,—an' it wur o' full o' dusty yarbs, an' skins, an' skeletons, an' bottle't snakes, an' hedgehogs, an' feaw-lookin' worms wi' wings on, an' sich like—an' there were two greight black cats, wi' green een, i'th hole,— an' these cats coom reet up to my faither, an' sat down i'th front on him, an' they kept starin' at him. An' there were a greight owl, up in a nook, that kept oppenin' an' shuttin' it een; an' there were a dried alligator hanged fro th' ceilin', o' cover't wi' dust,—it had

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glass een—an' it had th' skeleton of a monkey sittin' stride-legs on it back. Well, Boggart Bill laft my uncle Jonas bi his-sel' among these things awhile, an' he went into another reawm, a-seein' about this lost cow. Well, my uncle Jonas said that as soon as Boggart Bill had gone out o' wur deod still for two or three minutes, an' he felt very quare among this fleysome lot; an' then a terrible gam begun 'at made him sweat like a bull; an' he wacker't ole o'er like a lump o' warp-sizin'. He said this stuffed alligator, 'at hanged fro th' ceilin', began a-winkin' at him; an' a skeleton 'at stoode i'th nook put it arm out to shake honds wi' him; an' then th' owl i'th corner gav a wild skrike, an' everythin' i'th hole rattle't an' turn't round; an' my uncle Jonas said he wur so freeten't that he couldn't stir a peg, but he could feel his yure goin' white. An' then he said that, just as he wur thinkin' o' tryin' to dry

The Salamanca Corpus: Around the Yule Log (1879)

his for-yed wi' his hankitcher, one o' these black cats, that had bin lookin' into th' fire, coom an' stode reet i'th front on him, an' after it had stare't at him a while wi' two green een, it said in a rough voice, 'Thou'd better be gooin'!' My uncle Jonas said that he wur so capt wi' this that he couldn't tak his wynt; but, afore he coom to his-sel', there wur some'at else started. There wur a kettle stode upo' th' hob, at his elbow, an' th' lid o' this kettle

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hove up, an' a voice i'th inside co'de out, 'Ay; thou'd better be gooin' while thou'rt weel!' Well,—sweat started a-runnin' down my uncle Jonas's face i' greight rindles; an' he gav a glent at th' dur-hole; but he said he couldn't stir a fuut,—for he felt as if he wur nail't to th' floor. At last, he unbethought him 'at he'd try to say his prayers,—an' it wur time, for just as he wur beginnin' a-saying, 'Our Father, which art in heaven,' th' skeleton i'th nook poo'd a short black pipe fro under his hip-bwon, and, knockin' th' ashes out again th' woll, it said, 'That's reet, owd lad; hast ony 'bacco?' an' afore my uncle Jonas could oppen his mouth, one o' these black cats up o'th hearthstone took a little brass box fro under its reet oxtor, an' he said, as he honded it to this skeleton, 'Here, Scrag, owd brid; thou'll find a bit i'th bottom o' that box'—"

"Here, stop, Tummy ! Thou doesn't meeon to tell me that thou believes that tale?"

"Yigh, I do ; every word on't!"

"Well, then,—owd lad,—I've gotten it into my yed 'at thou's no business out o'th dur! It's time to turn a keigh upo' thee! Thou'rt noan reet, owd buzzart,—thou'rt noan reet!"

"Reet or wrung, Joan, it's true what I'm tellin' tho! But let me finish my tale."

"Get endways, then. I want it o'er."

"Well,—at after that, this skeleton poo'd a stoo

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The Salamanca Corpus: Around the Yule Log (1879)

up to th' fire, an' then it sit down, an' crost it legs, an' then it filled th' pipe, an' began' a-smookin', an' starin' into th' grate,—an' o' wur still for a minute or two. At last th' skeleton honds this 'bacco box back to th' cat, an' he says, 'How soon should we begin, thinksto?' 'Well,' said th' cat, 'it's gotten welly time.' 'Brast off, then!' said th' skeleton, 'while I get a reech o' 'bacco!' Then, my uncle Jonas said that th' stuffed alligator wagged it tail, and begun a-laughin',—an' everythin' i'th hole,— deod an' alive,—gave a skrike, an' a twirl o'er. 'Howd!' said th' cat, 'there's some on 'em short; I'll co' their names o'er!' an' wi' that, it poo'd a bit o' papper fro under it tail, an' began a-coin' out, 'Batkin!' A voice i'th chimbley said, 'Here!' 'Blin-worm!' said th' cat; an' th' onswer coom fro under th' floor, 'I'm playin' me i'th soof!' 'Come up!' said th' cat; an' then it went on readin'. 'Edder-cop!' an' some'at fro th' back o'th clock co'de out, 'Here!' 'Slutchkin!' an' a voice fro th' hinder-end o'th alligator cried, 'Here!' 'Flipperswitch!' an' this time, my uncle Jonas said, th' onswer coom straight out o' th' solid wall, close to him,— 'Here!' cried a squeakin' voice. 'That'll do,' said th' skeleton, knockin' th' ashes out o' his pipe again his shin, an' puttin' it back under his hip-bwon,— 'That'll do! strike up, Bitterbump!' an' a drowsy mak o' music coom out of an owd

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saut-box at hung close to the dur, beawt lid. An' then my uncle Jonas said there were hell's delight agate i' that hole in a minute. These two black cats started a-waltzin i'th middle o'th floor,—an' th' tungs an' poker geet one another round th' middle, an' twirl't away after 'em,—an' th' skeletons coom out o' their nooks, an' began a-rattlin' like mad at a three-hond reel,—an' as for th' cheers an' tables, they lilted and tilted, some one gate, some another, every mon for his-sel', an' there wur sich a wild racket o' dins i'th hole that my uncle Jonas said he felt his-sel' goin' mad, an' he whisper't to his-sel', as he crope a bit nar th' dur-hole, 'I mun oather get out o' this cote or I'm a lost mon.' At last—"

"Howd, Tummy! . . . What's yon?"

"Wheer?"

"Under th' trees, yon!"

The Salamanca Corpus: Around the Yule Log (1879)

“Ay,—by th’ mass! what is it?”

“Nay! . . . It’s two een, I see,—as what it is!”

“Ay,—by th’ mass,—an’ they’re pummers, too! . . . Howd! It’s comin’ this gate on!”

“It’s comin’, for sure,—an’ I can yer no feet, noather!”

“I’m off!”

“An’ so am I! (*They take to their heels ; and meet again at the church gates, out of breath.*)

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Now then, Tummy! Thou wouldn’t believe! What dost think about that! Wilto believe thi own een?”

“Well,—it looked rayther quare for sure; but it’s happen nought nobbut a jackass.”

“Am I a jackass, thinksto?”

“Well,—I think so, sometimes.”

“Well, but,—if yon’s nobbut a jackass, what didto run for?”

“I ran becose thou ran; thou doesn’t think I wur boun’ to be laft standin’ yon bi mysel’? If thou hadn’t started, I’d never ha stirred a peg! I thought thou’d more pluck than runnin’!”

“Pluck! what’s th’ use o’ pluck? It’s no use feightin’ wi’ things ’at belongs another world!”

“No moore it is. . . . An’, at after o’ there’s some’at quare about ghosts.”

“There is that . . . I wonder, sometimes, what they’re made on.”

“Well,—my opinion is ’at they’re made o’ white-weshed moonshine.”

“Ay; an’ likely stuff, too. . . . An’ there’s both white uns an’ black uns,—but, bi o’ accounts, leet-colour’t uns are th’ warst to lay. . . Hello! Sitho! . . . It’s comin’ again!”

“Ay; it’s yon, by th’ mass! . . . Tak up theer! I’ll meet tho at th’ ‘Amen Corner!’ ”

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NECK OR NOTHING.

“Here’s such a coil!”

Romeo and Juliet.

A fine summer evening. BILLY PANSY and MAT O’ SWITCHER’S, two haymakers, seated on the ale-bench, under “th’ big tree,” in front of the Golden Lion, an old roadside inn, better known as “Th’ Brass Dog.”

“I’LL tell tho what, Bill; it’s bin a swelter i’ yon meadow, to-day.”

“It has, owd craiter. There’s bin a deeol o’ ale save’t from gooin’ sour sin th’ sun geet up this mornin’!”

“There has that! I’ve put a saup out o’ seet, mysel’.”

“If I’m an ounce, Mat, I’m five pound leeter than I wur when I laft whoam at break o’ day ! . . . An’ just now my shirt sticks to mi back like a play-bill pasted again a wole!”

“Well,—an’ if I’ve supt a gill I’ve supt a gallon o’ one mak o’ stuff an’ another sin breakfast time this mornin’,—an’ I’ll swear that I’ve gan out moor

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nor I’ve takken in. . . . An’,—look here!— it’s fair sipein off me yet! . . . Tak those rakes into th’ house, Bill,—an’ bring some’at weet back wi’ tho!”

“What mun us have?”

“As mich ale as ever thou con persuade ’em to part wi’.”

“Will a quart do,—for a start?”

“Well,—ay,—it’ll do to send word by.”

“What word?”

“It’ll do to send word by,—that there’s moore upo’ th’ road. . . . Off wi’ tho!— afore I strike fire! . . . Howd! Stop a minute!”

“What now?”

The Salamanca Corpus: Around the Yule Log (1879)

“Rub mi back a bit.”

“Wheerabouts?”

“Between mi shoolders.”

“What’s th’ matter!”

“A lot o’ hay-seeds geet down mi neck. I wur asleep i’th meadow, at noon.”

(BILL rubs his back.)

“Now then; will that do?”

“Ay; off witho,—an’ be sharp back wi’ that sleekin’-stuff?”

(BILL takes the rake inside, singing as he goes)

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“In Thorney-moor woods, in Nottinghamsheer,
Right fal der dal, layrol right fal-ladadie

In Thorney-moor woods, in bold Nottinghamsheer;

Right fal der dal, layrol leigh!

Three keepers house stooode three-square.

And about a mile from each other they were;

Their orders were to look after the deer;

Right fal der dal, layrol li day!”

(MATT looks after him.)

“Go thi ways, Bill, my lad! A merrier heart never beat time to an’ owd sung!”

(BEN O’ SWITCHER’S, a lusty mower, comes lounging up to the ale-bench, with his brown breast bare, his coat upon his arm, and his scythe upon his shoulder.)

“Hello, Mat! Thou’rt croppen into th’ nook again, I see.”

The Salamanca Corpus: Around the Yule Log (1879)

“Now then, Ben, owd layrock! is that thee? How arto getting’ on, owd bild?”

“Well,—if I mun tell tho truth, Mat,—I’m fain ’at I’m wick!”

“Thou looks primely, owd lad, as how’t be.”

“If thou’ll believe me, Mat,—I ail nought,—an’ I owe nought,—an’ I’m fleyed o’ nought,—an’,—I wur just goin’ to say that I want nought,—but, I could do wi’ a saup o’ some’at to sup,—for my throttle’s as dry as a bakin’-spittle! . . . (*He looks round.*) Thou’rt noan sittin’ dry-mouth, arto?”

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“Billy Pansy’s just gone inside for a quart.”

“A quart! If thou’rt nobbut about haue as dry as me, it’ll hardly go once round among three on us!”

“Never thee mind! Rear that scythe up, an’ keawer tho down; an’ tak thi turn among us! What, they’n aboon one quart i’th hole, sure-ly! We’n ha’ that throttle o’ thine sleek’t, or else we’n see what it sticks at!”

(*BILL comes out of the house, with a jug in his hands.*)

“Now, then, Mat! I’ve brought haue a gallon.”

“Thou’s just done reet, my lad; there’s another customer here, sitho!”

“Hello; wheer’s thou sprung fro? Thou’rt just i’ time. Conto manage a gill o’ ale?”

“I could like to wrostle a quart!”

“Well,—keawer tho down,—an’ thou’s go nought short.”

“Ay! keawer tho down. . . . An’ Bill, thee buttle out, an’ bring thisel’ to an anchor. . . . (*MAT slaps BEN on the shoulder.*) Well, Ben, owd buzzart, an’ how’s o’ goin’ on i’th fowd?”

“About th’ same There’s bin four or five berrins,—an’ five or six weddins,—an’ eight or nine kessonins (christenings), sin’ thou wur theer.”

“When didto see owd Tuner?”

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“About a fortnit sin’, but, I doubt I’s never see him again,—at leeost, I shouldn’t like!”

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“What for?”

“Becose he wur buried o’ Thursday.”

“Oh, ay ! Poor owd lad! What did he dee on?”

“Rheumatic gout.”

“What mak o’ gout’s that?”

“Ay, that’s just what I axed him, mysel’ . . . I let on him hobblin’ through th’ fowd about a month sin’, an’ I said to him, ‘Tuner, owd lad, thou’rt out o’ flunters a bit, bi th’ look on tho.’ An’ he said, ‘Ay, I am that, owd brid,—to some gauge (measure)!’ So I axed him what ailed him, an’ he said it wur rheumatic gout. ‘Rheumatic gout!’ said I, ‘that’s a new mak o’ gout to me. I never yerd o’ noan nobbut gradely gout afore. What’s th’ difference between ’em?’ ‘Eh,’ said poor owd Tuner, ‘they’re noan fit to be name’t o’ th same day! Gradely gout’s an angel for steawngin’ an’ lutchin’ at th’ side o’ tother mak!’ ‘Oh, ay?’ I said,— ‘how’s that?’ an’ he said, ‘Well,— I’ll tell tho. . . . Put thi finger into a vice,— an’ then let somebody screw this vice up as tight as ever they con for their very lives,—an’ then, at after that, give ’em a gill or two, an’ let ’em rest theirsels a bit,—an’ then, let ’em screw it up a good deeol tighter, till they cannot get no fur (further), as however they wur to try,—well,—that’s what they co’n *gradely gout!* Well,—now then,—when they’n screwed th’ vice up to gradely gout,—let ’em get

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somebody to help ’em to gi’ th’ screw another twirl or two tighter,—*an’ that’s rheumatic gout!*’ ”

“Poor owd Tuner! He’s gwon through St. Peter’s needle, then!”

“Ay; an’ he’s gotten safe out at tother side, at last.”

“He’ll wartch (ache) no moore. . . . Wheer is he buried?”

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“Th’ wife would ha’ had him laid down among his fore-elders, i’th owd ground, but th’ grave wur crom full,—so they’n buried him i’th new yard, yon!”

“They’n had to buy a new grave, then?”

“Sure, they had ! . . . His uncle Ab went a-buyin’ this grave,—an’ it seems that him an’ th’ owd saxton wur a good while afore they could agree about th’ price. After they’d walked up an’ down th’ yard awhile Ab pointed to a dry nook under some trees, an’ he said to th’ saxton, ‘How much couldto put me a grave in for up i’ yon nook?’ An’ th’ sexton said that a grave up i’ that nook couldn’t be done under two pound. ‘It’s a greight deool o’ brass,’ said Ab; ‘but how dun they run o’ tother side o’th yard, yon?’ ‘Well,’ said th’ saxton, ‘a grave o’ tother side o’th yard, yon, would come to two pound ten!’ ‘Two pound ten!’ cried Ab. ‘Thou talks very loud, owd lad! How is it that they’re ten shillin’ moore o’ yon side than they are o’ this?’ ‘Well,’ said th’ owd saxton,

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‘there’s a better view o’ yon side.’ ‘Oh, I see!’ said Ab; ‘an’ I think I’s may this do at’s i’th nook, here!’ So, at end of o’, they geet th’ owd lad laid down i’ this forty-shillin’ boose.”

“Well,—he’s better off now than ever he wur while he wur wick; for it’s th’ first bit o’ rest he’s had sin he wur born.”

“To my thinkin’, Ben, it’s a good job that folk don’t live for ever.”

“Well,—I dar say th’ most o’ folk begin a-feelin’ as if they’d welly (well-nigh) had enough when they getten lurn’t three-score; and Tuner wur one o’ that sort.”

“He belunged to an unlucky family. They wur like as if they wur born to trouble, o’th lot on ’em. His mother wur drownt, an’ his faither wur kilt i’th stone-delph,—an’ they say’n his uncle Joe’s clen gone off it, at last.”

“Poor owd Joe! A better chap never stept the ground than he wur! I yer he’s lost that owd’st lad of his.”

“Ay,—that’s what knocked him o’er. They never had but two childer,—two lads, ay, an’ two as fine lads as ever sun shone on! Th’ owd’st deed last Thursday but one, tother deed about two months sin’. They went out one after tother,—just

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like snuffin' two candles. When th' first lad deed th' leet went out for poor owd Joe,—an' he begun

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a-wanderin' in his talk,—but ever sin th' owd'st lad deed he hasn't bin his own person at o'. . . . He went to th' funeral, o' tother,—but he seemed to know nought about what wur gooin' on,—an' he kept axin' for th' lad that lee i'th coffin beside him. 'Wheer's our John? What's he dooin' that he doesn't come? 'An' when they geet whoam again fro th' church, an' they wur o' sit down to th' table, he looked round, an' he said, 'Wheer's our John? Tell him to come to his dinner!' An' then th' wife went, wi' tears in her een, an' hoo whispert too him, 'Joseph, my poor lad,—our John's dead an' buried,—we'n just bin to th' funeral!' 'Eh,' he said, 'thou never towd me!' an' then he went on wi' his dinner, an' chatted an' talked to th' folk about him, just like a child. An' then, in a twothre minutes, he looked round again, an' he said, 'I wonder whatever's keepin' that lad!' Poor owd Joe! He's quite gone! Th' owd woman has to look after him, now, just as if he wur nobbut three or four year owd."

"I guess he's quite harmless?"

"Harmless! He olez wur harmless,—but he's moore so now,—an' he seems quite happy in his way."

"Well,—it's a marcy,—poor owd brid!"

• • • • •

"Come, lads, cheer up! Here, Billy, buttle

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round! What! we're noan beawn to dee i'th shell, are we? . . . Who's sin owd Woggy latly?"

"I see'd him about a month sin'."

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“Ay, but he’s bin kilt sin’ then,—an’ he’s come’d to life again.”

“Oh, ay! How wur that?”

“Well,—Daunt o’ Peggy’s tow’d me th’ tale while we wur gettin’ er baggins i’th meadow this forenoon. . . Thou knows thoose slaughter-houses at th’ top o’th Bull Broo?”

“Sure, I do.”

“Well,—it had been th’ killin’-day; an’ when th’ butchers had finish’d slaughterin’, some on ’em crope off to their baggins a-whoam, an’ some on ’em went down to th’ Blue Bell, an’ they laft three or four odd lads beheend ’em to side up i’th slaughter- house. An’ just as they wur straightenin’ their ropes and blocks, who should come rollin’ by but owd Woggy, as drunk as a lord. Well,—when Woggy see’d these butchers busy wi’ their ropes, he went staggerin’ in among ’em, an’ he would have ’em to hang him. ‘D—n it, hang me!’ he said. ‘Hang me,—I’ve desarve’t it lung enough!’ An’ he bother’t ’em about this hangin’ till, at last, they said to one another, ‘Let’s hang him a bit,—for quietness!’ An’ they geet howd on him, an’ they said, ‘Here, Wog, owd lad,—thou’s be hanged, for once,— as how ’tis!’ So they rigged th’ rope round his

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neck, an’ then they wund him up till his feet wur about haue a yard fro th’ ground,—for they wanted to give him a nice bit of a throttle,—an’ then let him down again. An’ as soon as they seed th’ owd lad begin a-goin’ black i’th face they thought he’d had enough, an’ they ran to lower th’ rope. But, by th’ mass! when they coom to let him down, th’ rope had gotten fast somewheer up at th’ top, an’ they couldn’t stir it,—an’ theer th’ chap wur,— just givin’ his last wriggle, as he dangle’t bi th’ neck. . . . Well; these butchers were in a terrible sweat,—an’ they began a-shoutin’, an’ runnin’ to an’ fro, like mad,—for th’ chap wur deein’ afore their een. ‘Howd him up a bit!’ cried one. ‘Cut th’ rope!’ cried another. An’ they scuttert about for a thwittle. At last they manage’t to cut th’ rope,—an’ down coom Woggy to th’ floor; but when they coom to look at him, th’ owd lad wur as deed as a nit. . . . Well, these butchers wur war fleyed nor ever! ‘By th’ mass, lads,’ said

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one, 'we're in for it this time!' 'Ay,' said another, 'this'll be a hangin' job for us, as how 'tis!' 'Let's try him wi' a saup o' brandy!' said another. An' off they ran for some brandy; an' they temd (teemed) some into his mouth, an' they wortcht his arms about, an' tried him o' gates,—but not a spark o' life wur there laft i' Woggy. . . . 'Put that dur to,' said one. 'Let's keep this job to ersels!'

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'I'm off to Liverpool!' said one. 'An' so am I!' said another. 'Here, co' at our house, an' gi my wife this brass, an' tell her I'll write!' 'Here, here,' said Bill o' Tupper's, 'yo'r noan boun' to lev me wi' th' deod body, are yo?' 'Th' best thing 'at thou can do wi' him,' said Tummy Glen, 'is to bury him i'th midden, theer, an' then cut thi lucky!' 'Well,— come an' help me, then!' said Bill. 'Noan o' me,' said Tummy. 'I wouldn't stop another minute, for a keaw-price!' An' off he went. . . . Well,— to make a long story short,—Bill wur laft to bury th' deod chap, an' he geet a spade, an' made a hole i' this midden, an',—at after he'd tooted round, to see that nobody wur lookin',—he laid owd Woggy down i'th hole, an' begun a-coverin' him up. But he hadn't thrut aboon three spadeful onto him afore Woggy oppent his mouth, an' skrike't out 'Murder!' By th' mass,—that skrike wur the finest bit o' music 'at ever Billy yerd in his life! As soon as he yerd it, he flung the spade to tother side o'th yard, and started a-doancin',—an' then he ran to th' top o'th broo, an' he shouted, 'Heigh, Tummy! Turn back! He's comin' to!' But Tummy wur aboon a mile upo th' road to Liverpool —"

(A servant comes to the door.)

"Th' maister wants yo i'th kitchen!"

"Come on, lads, let's goo in!"

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I'M OFF!

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“The wicked flee when no man pursueth.”

Old Book.

Summer evening. BILLY PANSY, seated on the ale-bench, under “th’ big tree,” in front of the Golden Lion, an old roadside inn, better known as “Th’ Brass Dog.” MAT O’ SWITCHER’S comes lounging homeward from the fields, with his coat upon his arm and a spade upon his shoulder, singing: —

“Then I boldly steppèd up to her,

And thus to her did say,

‘Are you engaged to any young man?

Come, tell to me. I pray.’

‘No. I’m not engaged to any young man.

I solemn-ly do swear;

For I mean to live a virgin,

And still the laurel wear.’”

(Stops, and sneezes.)

“A-A-T-CHOO! . . . Good! . . Hello! There’s somebody under th’ owd tree, yon! I’ll bet a groat it’s oather Lollocker or owd Jone o’ Snatch-block’s! . . . Nawe,—

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I’m wrang. . . Grey yure,—an’ a red nose,— bi th’ mass, it’s Pansy Bill! I’s be like to co’!”

(Saunters up towards the ale-bench, singing again.)

“Says I, ‘My stars an’ garters!

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This here's a pretty go,
For a nice young maid like you, my dear,
To sarve all mankind so!"
Then the other young maid she looked at me,
And thus to me did say,
'Let you an' I together go,—
An' let her go her way.'

Now then, Bill; thou's gotten upo' th' favourite peorch again, I see."

"Hello, owd buckstick! Come, an' keawer tho down! . . . Here, tak a poo at that!"

"What hast gotten?"

"Th' best ale."

"Well,—there's about a tablespoonful laft, i'th bottom o'th pot,—but if I sup it, I's never feel it go down. Here, finish it thisel',—an' I'll co' for a pint o' mi own,—an' then I can touch both sides o' mi throttle at once."

"Thou'rt reet, owd brid,—an' nought less than a pint would do it! ... Matty, fill this pot again."

"Ay, an' bring me one o'th same mak, Matty,— while thou'rt agate."

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"Now then, Mat, my lad,—pipe up, and may thisel' awhoam,—while thou art here! . . . Oh, thou remembers me tellin' tho, tother day, about owd Woggy bein' hanged?"

"Sure, I do. But he's noan hanged,—not he! Nought o'th sort! What, it wur nobbut yesterday that I seed him weel an' hearty as ever,—for he wur gosterin' up an' down th' fowd as drunk as Chloe."

"There's nought so likely, owd lad. I seed him mysel',—an' I paid for a pint for him at th' same time, becose he'd bin nar th' edge o' tother world than ever he wur in his life afore. . . . Didn't I tell tho that, after they'd hanged him, he coom to again, just as they wur buryin' him i'th midden?"

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“Oh,—ay! . . . Let's see! . . . How wur it, again?”

“Well,—as I towd tho afore,—it had bin killin' day i'th owd slaughter-house at th' top o'th Bull Broo, yon,—an' th' butchers wur agate o' straightenin' up their ropes an' blocks, just th' last thing afore they went whoam, when who should come wobblin' by th' dur-hole, as drunk as a wheel-yed, but owd Woggy? Well,—when Woggy see'd these butchers busy wi' their ropes an' things, he said, ‘D,— —n it, lads, hang me! Hang me, I tell yo!’ An' he bother't 'em, again and again, to hang him, till, at last, they said one to another, ‘Here; we's be like to hang him a bit, or else there'll be no

[139] quietness!’ So they fasten't th' rope to his neck, an' they wund him up till his feet had laft th' floor a twothre inches,—for they wanted th' owd lad to feel his own weight,—just to quieten him a bit, like,— an' then they'd let him down again. An' as soon as he begun a-goin' black i'th face, they said, ‘That'll do! Let him down again! He's had enough!’ But, by th' mass! he'd had more than enough! When they coom to let him down again, they fund that th' rope had gotten fast up at th' top,— an' theer poor owd Woggy hung, deein afore their een. ‘Cut th' rope!’ cried one. ‘Howd him up!’ cried another. An' they scutter't about th' hole like rats in a ferret-cote. At last they managet to cut the rope, an' down coom Woggy, as lennock as a seekful o' slutch,—for he wur as deod as Chelsea! ‘By th' mass!’ said one o'th butchers, as he leet owd Woggy's arm drop on th' floor like a great sausage, ‘I believe we'n quietent th' owd lad to mich! ‘Ay, we're in for't this time,’ said another; ‘for he's as deod as a dur-nail! This'll be a hangin' job for *us*, now!’ Then they looked at one another a bit,— an' their yure begun a-goin' white. An' they tried first one thing an' then another to wakken him up, but it wur no use,—Woggy wur as deod as a lump o' cowl tripe. ‘This is a black look-out, lads!’ said Tummy Glen. ‘What's to be done?’ ‘I see nought for it but runnin'!’ said Bill o' Tupper's.

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‘Put that dur to! Let’s keep this job to ersels!’ ‘I’m off to Liverpool!’ said one. ‘An’ so am I,’ said another. ‘I’ll play for Yor’shar,’ said another. ‘Here, here,’ said Bill o’ Tupper’s, ‘yo’r noan gooin’ to lev me by mysel’ wi’ th’ deedod chap, are yo?’ ‘I’ll stop no longer, as who else does,’ said Tummy Glen; ‘an’ th’ best thing thou can do wi’ th’ deedod chap, Bill, is to bury him i’th midden theer, an’ then tak to thi heels, an’ run as fur as there’s ony land, for if thou’rt ta’en up thou’rt safe to be hanged!’ ‘Come here, then, an’ help me!’ said Bill. But away they went, like redshanks,—one this gate an’ another that, an’ Bill wur laft by his-sel’ to bury owd Woggy. Well,—as soon as o’ wur quiet, Bill made a hole i’th midden; an’ then he laid owd Woggy down in it, an’ begun a coverin’ him up. But afore he’d thrut (thrown) three spadeful onto him, Woggy begun a comin’ to,—an’ he skrike’t out ‘Murder!’ Well,—when Bill yerd that, he flung his spade down, an’ begun a doancin’,—he wur so fain. An’ then he ran to th’ top o’th broo, an’ shouted after these tother butchers, to tell ’em that owd Woggy wur comin’ to. But, bi that time, they wur’n gotten far out o’ ear-shot,—some one gate, some another.”

“Well, but, Billy,—thou’s tow’d me this afore.”

“I know I have,—an’ now I’m gooin’ to tell tho some more.”

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“What about?”

“Well,—about these three butchers that took to their heels when they fund that Woggy wur kilt.”

“Get endways wi’ thi tale, then.”

“Well,—when these chaps fund that Woggy wur deedod, off they went like shot, an’ laft Bill o’ Tupper’s to bury him i’th midden. Tummy Glen took th’ Liverpool road, as fast as he could set his feet down. Jone o’ Cutlet’s tighten’t his shoonbants, an’ swore he’d be o’er th’ top o’ Knowe Hill afore he’re an hour owder; an Slink Jamie said he didn’t know whether to drown his-sel’ or go to America,—but, he’d lev it to th’ wife, an’ a quarter of an hour would saddle it, one gate or tother,—an’ then, off he ran at full scutch. Well,—away they went, every mon his own road,—but, as it happen’t, noan on ’em geet quite as far as thought on.”

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“Oh, nawe? How wur that?”

“Howd thi din,—an’ thou’s yer! . . . Well,— after these chaps wur gone, Bill o’ Tupper’s begun a-buryin’ Woggy among th’ midden; but afore he’d gotten him cover’t up, th’ owd lad started a-skrikin’ ‘Murder!’ ”

“Thou towd me that afore!”

“Now then, bowster-yed! Thou’rt agate again! I know what I’m doin’! . . . Thee keep thi mouth shut,—an’ thi ears oppen,—if thou wants to larn aught!”

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“Get forrad wi’ tho, then,—an’ let’s yer a bit o’ some’at fresh!”

“Keep thi lung between thi teeth, then! Thou’s no more patience nor a cat in a tripe shop. . . . Well,—when Bill fund that owd Woggy wur comin’ to life again, he poo’d him out o’th midden, an’ carried him back into th’ slaughter-house, an’ gav’ him a saup o’ brandy. An’ then he rubbed him, an’ cotter’t about wi’ him, till, at last, th’ owd lad coom quite round again. Well,—if thou’ll believe me,—I don’t know which on ’em wur th’ fainest, but as soon as Woggy had gotten th’ use o’ his legs a bit, off they went down to th’ Blue Bell, an’ begun a fuddlin’ together in a corner. ‘I’ll tell tho what, Woggy,’ said Bill o’ Tupper’s, ‘yon three chaps that’s ta’en to their heels at sich a pelt dunnot know this blessed minute but what thou’rt a deod mon!’ ‘I dar say not,’ said Woggy. ‘An’, by th’ mass! they may weel think so, for it’n bin a — near go! I’m noan gradely wick again yet!’ ‘It’s bin a near go, as thou says, Woggy ; but it’s sober’t tho, owd lad,—an’ that’s some’at!’ ‘Ay, bi th’ mass! it’s some’at, for sure,—an’ if killin’ a chap doesn’t sober him I don’t know what will!’ ‘Well,—deod folk are generally sober, I believe. But let that leet as it will,—if thou’s a mind, Woggy, we can have a bit o’ grand gam wi’ yon three afore they finden out that thou’rt come to life

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again.’ ‘Well, I’m willin’, owd lad; for they’n had enough out o’ me. But they’n be th’ have road to Liverpool, by now!’ ‘Nought o’th sort! Dunnot thee believe it! I’ll

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bet a crown they're every one hud (hid) a-whoam, just this minute!' 'By Guy! I shouldn't wonder!' 'I tell tho it is so! An' if thee an' me can manage to keep out o' seet middlin' weel to-neet, we's ha' some prime gam i'th mornin', thou'll see!' An' then Bill an' owd Woggy crope quietly out o' th' house, whisperin' together. . . . Well,—now then, Mat, owd lad, I mun hark back i' my tale a bit to wheer these chaps started a-runnin' for their lives. . . . Bill o' Tupper's were reet,—they noan on 'em went very far. . . . Jone o' Cutlet's started for Rooley Moor; but afore he'd gotten a mile upo' th' road he turn't back whoam again, to get some brass, an' his wife wouldn't let him out again; so he hud (hid) his-sel' under th' couch-cheer, till things had gotten quiet a bit. . . . Tummy Glen took off toward Liverpool as hard as he could leather at it. As he run through th' town first one an' then another shouted,—but Tummy never looked beheend him. 'Now, then, Tummy,' cried one, 'what's o' thi hurry? Han yo a labbour agate?' 'I'm off!' cried Tummy, pantin' for breath; an' on he went, like an uncarted stag, wi' th' dogs at his heels. When he coom to th' Pinfowd alehouse there happened

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to be a lot o' butchers stonnin' at th' dur, wi' their tots i' their honds. 'Hello!' cried one, 'wheer the —'s Tummy Glen off at sich a pelt? . . . Heigh, Tummy! Poo up,—an sup!' 'I'm in a hurry!' cried Tummy. 'Tay thi wynt a minute! What's up?' 'I'm runnin' my country!' 'What for?' 'There's bin a chap kilt!' 'Th' devil there has!' An' away went Tummy, out at th' town-end. But afore he'd gotten have a mile further upo' th' road, what should he spy but a policeman comin' up about five hundred yards i'th front on him. 'By —!' said Tummy, 'I'm in for it, now!' and he slipt into a felt at th' roadside; an' then he climb't onto a haystack; an' there he lee, in a cowl sweat, till dark coom on; an' them he crope off whoam; an' his wife hud him amung some hay i'th stable,—for they expected th' police comin' every minute. . . . Well,—it wur an uncomfortable neet for those three chaps, tho may depend; for they wur quite sure that owd Woggy wur lyin' deod as a robin i'th midden."

"Well, but what becoome o' Slink Jamie?"

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“Now then, thou’rt agate again. If thou con manage to button thi lip about two minutes thou’s yer o’ about it! I wur just beawn to tell tho about Slink Jamie. He coom off th’ warst of o’. He towd Tummy Glen that he’d o’ertak him afore he’d gotten two mile upo’ th’ road to Liverpool,—but he wanted

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to co’ a-whoam, a minute afore he started, to put a bit o’ brass in his pocket. Well,—he run into th’ house, pantin’, an’ wi’ his yure stickin’ up like a hedgehog; an’ as soon as he could get his breath he said, ‘Nan! gie me my Sunday clooas!’ Th’ wife jumped up, an’ hoo said, ‘Whatever’s to do?’ ‘There’s a chap kilt!’ said Jamie, dryin’ his for-yed. ‘Hasto ony brass? I’m off to Liverpool!’ But Nanny locked th’ dur, an’ put th’ keigh into her pocket; an’ hoo said, ‘I don’t care who’s kilt,—thou gwos noan out o’ this house to-need!’ And theer he wur, an’ theer he had to stop till mornin’. . . . Well,—th’ next mornin’, Jamie wanted to get up soon, an’ cut his lucky afore onybody wur up; but his wife said, ‘Thee lie still wheer thou art,—an’ I’ll look out.’ Well,—th’ neet passed away, an’ Jamie an’ th’ wife lee crackin’ their ears, an’ tremblin’ at everythin’ that stirred,—an’ as soon as peep o’ day coom, Jamie wanted to don his-sel’ an’ cut, but his wife made him lie still. Then hoo get up, an’ hoo kept tootin’ out at th’ dur-hole to see if ought wur comin’. Well,—it geet nine o’clock i’th forenoon an’ nought had turn’t up, an’ Nanny begun a-thinkin’ it would blow o’er, an’ they should yer no moore about it. But hoo wur terribly out. Afore th’ church clock had strucken ten, hoo spied a policeman comin’ loungin’ down th’ lone (lane). Nanny run to th’ bottom o’th stairs, an’ hoo shouted

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up, ‘Jamie, there’s a policeman comin’ down th’ street!’ ‘Oh, Lord!’ cried Jamie, ‘what mun I do?’ an’ he sprung out o’ bed. Then Nanny ran an’ locked th’ dur; but in a minute or two there wur a knock coom. ‘Who’s theer?’ ‘Police!’ ‘What dun yo want?’ ‘Is yo’r Jamie in?’ Then Nanny run to th’ bottom o’th stairs again, an’ hoo cried out, ‘Off witho’. He’s at th’ dur here!’ Jamie needed no moore tellin’. In a

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have a minute he'd letten his-sel' out at th' back chamber window, an' here creepin' along th' riggin' from one roof to another, wi' nought but his shirt on, an' his breeches hanged on his arm. Well, it happen't to be keaw-fair day, an' there wur a good lot o' folk i'th street; and when they seed this chap creepin' along th' slates, in his shirt, they gether't round in a crowd. 'Who is he?' says one. 'He's crazy!' says another. 'He'll be kilt!' says a third. Well,—when Nanny thought that Jamie had gotten middlin' weel out o'th road, hoo went an' oppen't th' dur; an' when th' policeman coom in hoo said, 'Our James is noan a-whoam. What dun yo want wi' him?' 'Well,' said th' policeman, 'I've co'de a-tellin' yo that th' chap's come'd to life again!' 'The dule he has!' said Nanny. 'Well, then, I'll see if I con find our James! Come this road!' An' hoo ran out o' th' dur, followed by th' policeman; an' when hoo coom to wheer th' crowd wur watchin

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Jamie, in his shirt, tryin' to hud (hide) his-sel' among some chimbleys upo' th' house-top, hoo cried out, 'Come down, tho greight leather-yed, owd Woggy's come'd to life again!' 'He's — as like!' cried Jamie fro th' house top. 'I'll not believe it!' Just then owd Woggy coom out of an alehouse at th' street-end, wi a pint pot in his hond, an' he shouted out, 'Conto believe thi own een? I'm here, sitho!' Well,—Jamie wur so fain to see Woggy alive again that he begun a-doancin' upo' th' slate. But he missed his fuut, an' down he coom sock into a midden i'th back-yard. 'Murder!' cried Jamie; for he'd ha' bin smoor't if they hadn't poo'd him out. 'Theer, owd lad!' said Woggy. 'Yo buried me in a midden yesterday, but it's thy turn to-day! How doesto like it?' "

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ELF-LOND.

“Up the airy mountain,
Down the rushy glen,

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We daren't go a-hunting
For fear of little men;
Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping all together;
Green jacket, red cap,
And white owl's feather!"

Wm. Allingham.

A fine evening in hay time. BILL O' GROUTYED'S, and JACK O'TH MARL HOLE, two mowers, coming out of the old roadside inn, called the Golden Lion, better known as "Th' Brass Dog.")

"I'LL tell tho what, Bill,—yon lad's mother deserves hangin'!"

"What for?"

"Why, for givin' way to his faither."

"Well, an' his faither desarves hangin'!"

"What for?"

"Why, for bein' his faither!"

"Well,—between thee an' me,—I think it's a breed 'at should be stopt, o' somehow, afore it gets ony fur."

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"Who is th' camplin' pynot, thinksto?"

"Nay, I know not; but I never yerd a mon wi' a lennocker tung sin I're born. ... It reminds me o' that lad o' Billy Tricker's. Billy an' this lad o' his went out in a boat one day; an' they hadn't bin out lung afore a breeze sprung up, an' after they'd wobble't about a bit, the boat upset. Well,—theer they wur,—faither an' son,—both i'th wayter at once, but it wur every mon for his-sel', for they could noather on 'em swim mich. Well, Billy took no notice o' nob'dy, but played straight for dry lond; an' this lad of his splashed after his faither as weel as he could; an' he kept co'in' out for him to stop a minute. 'Stop, be d—d!' cried Billy. 'I'll stop noan! Come

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thee this gate on,—there's no leetin'-shop here (alighting-place) till thou gets to th' bottom!' Well, that fleyed th' lad war (worse) nor ever, an' he begun a-sayin' his prayers; an' now an' then he yeawlt eawt for someb'dy to come and save him; but every time he oppen't his chops down went another greight gulp o' wayter,—till th' lad wur as swelled as a balloon. At last his faither turn't his yed, an' he said to him, '*Johnny, if thou want's to be save't, THOU MUN KEEP THY MOUTH SHUT!*' . . . An' it's th' same wi' yon mon i'th inside, here."

"Ay. . . . I could hardly hutch an' abide while he wur agate o' talkin'! I think that folk han

[150] no more reet to rom their talk into one's ear-hole bout axin' one's lev (leave) than they han to walk into one's house bout axin'. An' I didn't like th' look o' yon chap, noather, for he coom slivin' in at th' dur-hole as if he'd bin robbin' a hen-cote. An' as for talk! By th' mass, he licks Batterlash! . . . When he wur agate of his cample, it made me think o' Jone o' Twiner's when he wur hearkenin' a greasy-lookin' chap at wur preitchin' at th' market-cross. This chap had yeawlt, an' shouted, an' thumped, an' pown his book a good while, an' Jone had been meeterly patient; but at last Jone co'de out to th' preitcher, an' said, 'I'll tell tho what, my lad, I've gotten it into mi yed that *if my salvation depends upo' thy skrikin' I met as weel sign o'er,—for I'm a lost mon!*' . . . Bill; we mun have another tot, I guess?"

"Ay. Let's sit us down."

(They sit down upon the old ale-bench, under "th' big tree.")

"I'll tell tho what, Bill; yon bit o' baggin's done me good."

"Ay, an' me, too. I wur as hungry as a foomart-dog!"

"Ay, an' me, too. It wur good stuff,—an' there wur plenty on it ... Hasto ony 'bacco?"

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“Here, help thisel’! . . . Ay, it wur a bit o’ prime stuff, as thou says! . . . He’s a good provider, is th’ owd lad,—an’ good luck to him, say I,—for he brews th’ best ale o’ this country-side.”

“It’s a saup o’ good stuff, Bill; an’ there’s never a wick thing needs to go short of bally-timber at this house!”

“There isn’t, Jone! . . . Gi’s a match! (*Lights his pipe.*) . . . He’ll have a rare hay- crop this time, too, will th’ owd lad.”

“Ay, he will. An’ I never cut a bit o’ better stuff sin’ I’re born. I could ha’ fund i’ my heart to lie down an’ heyt (eat) it!”

“I’ve etten war (worse) stuff in my time, Jone. Ay, ay; there’s some pleasur’ i’ cuttin’ a good yarb! Where’s that scythe o’ mine? . . . Oh, it’s theer?”

“It’s a new un, isn’t it, Bill?”

“Yigh. I bought it at Jim Hamilton’s, when I’re down town last Monday. Owd Jem o’ Thatcher’s bought one at th’ same time.”

“I’ll tell tho what, Bill, owd Jem’s getting’ white about th’ gills.”

“Th’ colours o’ gone into his nose. Yon nose of his has been terrible red a good while.”

“It’s cost as mich brass, paintin’, as a row of good-size’t houses.”

“Ay, it has; an’ it’s noan finish’t yet.”

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“Nawe; nor it never will be till he’s finish’t his-sel’ . . . They say’n he’s trouble’t wi’ a maut-seawker in his inside.”

“What’s that?”

“It’s some mak of a worm, that will have ale.”

“Bilady; th’ owd lad’s noan bi his-sel’! There’s a deeol o’ maut-seawkers about this country!”

“There is that, owd lad! . . . I guess thou didn’t yer how Jem o’th owd Sur’s were getting’ on while thou were down i’th town?”

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“Nawe; I hadn’t mich time. At after I’d bought mi scythe, I geet a pint o’ ale, an’ some cheese an’ brade, at th’ Hare an’ Hounds, an’ then I laft mi scythe, an’ went out a buyin’ some bits o’ oddments for th’ wife ; an’, while I wur agate, I geet a bowl o’ stew at owd Boswell’s upo’ th’ New Wole,—an’ I dropt into Billy Whipp’s, at th’ bottom o’th church steps, a-buyin’ a top-cake, an’ a catch-bo, an’ a pen’oth o’ humbugs (a kind of sweets), for yon bantlin’ o’ mine.”

“Well; an’ how’s Billy getting’ on?”

“Oh,—as reet as a ribbin! . . . Thou knows that curly-yure’t lad of his?”

“What! that little hurcheon wi’ th’ cauve-lick’t toppin’?”

“Ay, an’ blue een.”

“Sure, I do,—he’s co’de Billy, after his gron-faither!”

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“Well,— he wur in when I co’de tother day, an’ Billy towd me a bit of a crack about him that raither tickle’t me a bit! He said this lad coom runnin’ in one day, an’ he said, ‘Gronfaither; how mony commandments are there, say’n yo?’ ‘Well,’ said owd Billy, ‘there use’t to be about ten on ’em, when I wur a lad.’ ‘Well, then, they may get agate o’ makin’ a fresh lot, as soon as they’n a mind,’ said th’ lad ‘Why, what for?’ ‘Becose th’ owd uns are o’ done for! Me an’ Johnny Butter’ oth has brokken a lot on ’em into smithy-smudge,—an’ th’ lads i’th fowd are agate o’ mashin’ tother as fast as they con,—an’ nob’dy dar stop ’em!’ ‘How’s that?’ ‘Becose it’s Mis-chief Neet!’ ‘Why,—how mony commandments han yo brokken?’ ‘Eh,—I connot tell,—but I’m sure there’s noan o’th owd uns left; for Iron Jemmy has run th’ owd bang-beggar into a duck-pond, wi’ his holiday-cloos on,—an’ Tommy Reed has temd (teemed, poured) a haue-a-pound o’ traycle into his aint Margit’s Sunday boots,— an’ Juddy Buckley has twitchel’t his gronmother’s cat with an’ owd tin-kettle, full o’ brokken pots,—an’ Charley Preston has squirted a lot o’ blue ink into th’ schoo’ maister’s ear-hole, through a snip i’th window,—an’ Billy Livesey’s hanged th’ Amen Corner alehouse sign o’er th’ top o’th Ranters’ chapel dur-hole—an’ little Johnny Parker’s gan th’ parson a black e’e wi’ a

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turmit-lantern,—an’ they wur startin’ o’ fresh mar-locks when I coom off!’ ‘An’ what hasto lafl ’em for?’ ‘Becose I want a butter-cake. Be sharp,— so as I con go back!’ ‘Well, an’ what has Johnny Butter’oth an’ thee bin doin’, then?’ ‘Eh,— Johnny Butter’oth’s lick’t ’em o’! He started wi’ givin’ owd Nukkin a wusk o’th chops wi’ a stockin’ful o’ slutch,—an’ then he pickt (pushed) one o’ Lung Turner chimley-sweeps into a mugful o’ churn milk that stood at owd Flocky’s dur-hole,— then he climb’t o’er th’ wole into owd Dearden orchart, an’ he coom back again wi’ his hat full o’ apples, an’ at after that, he ran up a culvert, wi’ two foomart-dogs beheend him. . . . An’ I’ve done my share,—for I teed owd Collier toffy-standin’ to a coach wheel, an’ off it went up th’ street, wi’ o’th lads i’th town scramblin’ for th’ toffy. I geet a greight lump o’ Indy-rock, an’ some kissins (kind of sweets) for mysel’. At after that I sent mi fuut-bo’ through a chapel window,—an’ as soon as I’ve had a butter-cake I’m off a-steighlin’ coals to make a brun-fire on,—so I think there’ll not be so many commandments laft when we’n done wi’ ’em.’ ”

“That lad’s like his faither,—he’s fair fizzin’ wi’ life!”

“Ay; an’ he’s as full o’ mischief as an egg’s full o’ meight!”

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“Lads win be lads,—if they’re weel and hearty. An’ they’re noan o’th worst mak, noather!”

“Nawe, they are not! . . . I’ve gotten to th’ bottom o’th pot,—I don’t know how thou’rt getting’ on.”

“I’m boun’ to have another.”

“That’s reet!”

• • • • •

“I’ll tell tho what, Bill, it’s a grand neet!”

The Salamanca Corpus: Around the Yule Log (1879)

“Ay, it is. I think it’s th’ nicest part o’ th’ day just when th’ eawl-leet’s comin’ on.”

“Ay, an’ so do I. . . . Bill, does tho believe i’ fairies, an’ sichlike?”

“Believe i’ fairies? Ay, an’ witches, an’ clap-cans, an’ boggarts, an’ o’ maks o’ deviltry. I don’t know that I ever seed a gradely fairy mysel’, but I have sin mony a quare thing ’at doesn’t belong this world; an’ I know lots o’ folk that’s both sin fairies an’ yerd ’em,—ay, an’ felt ’em too,—for they’re noan within doin’ a bit o’ mischief to folk that they dunnot talk to.”

“It’s me that knows that! . . . Thou remembers that red yure’t wench ’at use’t to be th’ sarvant at Billy Nutta’s, th’ baker, i’ th’ Bull Broo Entry?”

“Sure, I do.”

“Well,—they say’n hoo’s bin fleyed out o’ her wits; an’ it’s mich if ever hoo’s hersel’ again. Her mother’s terribly put about o’er it.”

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“Poor lass! Fairies, I guess?”

“Fairies,—an’ nought else! . . . Thou knows hoo’s bin livin’ at an owd farm, down i’ th’ Thrutch, this year or two back,—an’ bi o’ accounts, every dingle, an’ dell, an’ hollow i’ that cloof swarms wi’ fairies, an’ o’ maks o’ freetenin’. . . . Well, one moonleet neet, when this lass wur comin’ whoam through th’ wood fro a churn-supper at Jem o’ Fair-off’s, at Whit’oth, hoo yerd some music playin’,—an’ hoo pept through th’ hedge to see whatever it could be, at that time o’ th’ neet; an’ theer, sure enough, in a green dingle, there wur a swarm o’ th’ bonniest little craiters ’at ever wur sin, drest i’ o’ maks o’ glitterin’ finery, dancin’ to music by moonleet. . . . Well, th’ lass stare’t wi’ o’ her een,—an’ at last, hoo wur so ta’en up wi’ this seet, that hoo clapt her honds, an’ started o’ singin’ an’ dancin’ to th’ tune hersel’. . . . Well,—hoo’d hardly gotten her mouth oppen afore these little folk set up a skrike, an’ a cloud coom o’er th’ moon. Well,—this lass remembers nought after that; but hoo wur fund th’ next mornin’, lyin’ on her back i’ th’ cloof, nipt black an’ blue all o’er; an’ ever sin’ then hoo keeps agate o’ singin’ this tune ’at th’ fairies wur doancin’ to,— an’ they cannot stop her.”

The Salamanca Corpus: Around the Yule Log (1879)

“Poor lass! It’s mich if ever hoo’s reet again!”

“Hoo’s done for, I believe. . . . Well, look at mi Uncle Joe! . . . He’d bin off mowin’ at

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Marlan’,—an’, as he wur comin’ whoam late one moonleet neet, he yerd a hunt agate up i’th air, just aboon him. He said he could yer ’em crackin’ their whips, an’ shoutin’ to their dogs, an’ he could hear their silver bridles jinglin’, an’ their dogs barkin’, as clear as if the whole thing had bin gooin’ by afore his een. Well,—my Uncle Joe wur fond of a hunt his-sel’,—so he started a-yeawlin’ eawt some o’th owd huntin’-cries,— ‘Hark up to Bugle! Blossom, bonny lass! By, dogs, by!’ But, by th’ mass! he’d better ha’ kept his tung between his teeth, for, in a second, there wur ten thousan’ little whips floggin’ at him,—an’ he wur fund th’ next mornin’, lyin’ on his back on a midden, two mile off, as dateless as a rubbin’-stoop.”

“Well, it wur very near th’ same wi’ Billy Robishaw. One neet th’ last summer, he wur comin’ through th’ wood, at Sparth Bottoms, wi’ a basketful o’ stuff fro th’ town, when he yerd a silvery sort of a jingle in a green nook at tother side o’th edge. So Billy crope up th’ bonk, an’ pept o’er, to see what there wur agate. An’ theer, sure enough, there wur a grand company o’ fairy gentry, set at a table covered wi’ gowd dishes, an’ gowd candlesticks,—an’ there wur fairy sarvants i’ livery, waitin’ on,—an’ while th’ supper wur agate, full swing, there wur haue-a-dozen fairy harpers playin’ up in a corner. Well,—Billy, like thy Uncle Joe,

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couldn’t howd his din,—so he shouted, ‘Yo’r doin’ it nicely, down theer!’ But afore he could say another word, out went th’ leet, an’ Billy felt a greight whuzz o’ hummabees about his yed, an’ he rolled down th’ bonk; an’ theer he lee, on his back, fast to th’ floor. Well,—he felt pins runnin’ into him all o’er, but he couldn’t stir a peg. At last, one little divvel, dressed in a green jacket an’ a red cap, begun o’ dancin’ on th’ end of his nose; an’ Billy watched him until he could bide no longer,

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so he shouted eawt, ‘Go it, Redcap, my lad!’ Wi’ that, this fairy-doancer run up Billy’s nose-hole, an’ he coom eawt at his right ear, an’ shouted, ‘Off wi’ him!’ An’ away went Billy an’ his basket, through th’ air, at th’ rate of a hundred mile an hour. An’ he wur fund th’ next mornin’ at th’ top o’ Knowe Hill, hauve-starv’t to deecho,—an’ it wur mony a day afore they could get a word out on him. . . . Hello! who this ’at’s comin’?’ ”

“It’s Fiddler Bill!”

“By th’ mass! I’m off!”

“An’ so am I!”

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VNiVERSITAS
STVDII
SALAMANTIINI

THE STORM.
(A TALE OF COTTOM FAMINE.)

CHAPTER I.

“Hopdance cries in poor Tom’s belly for two white herring. Croak not, black angel; I have no food for thee.” *King Lear*.

Summer afternoon. TOM BOCKIN and RONDLE O’ DOTHERIN’ JOHNNY’S, on the highway from Blackpool to Poulton-in the Fylde, talking about the Cotton Famine of 1861-2.

“**AY**, ay, lad. That wur about th’ hardest nip that ever I went through! We wur seven of a family o’together. It brought my wife to her grave; an’ if it had gone on mich longer, we should every one ha’ bin clemmed to deecho. . . . Talk about hard times! . . . Eh, the scenes that I seed among th’ factory folk

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while that famine wur agate! When I think about it, now, it looks like a dream! But thou'll not remember mich about it, Rondle,—thou'd be too yung."

"Oh,—don't I remember it? . . . We lived at Preston at th' time o'th Cotton Famine; an' my faither wur manager o' one o'th biggest mills i'th town. Both mi faither and mi mother wur of a religious turn; an' up to that time we'd bin weel brought up, an' we'd never known scant nor want— nor we never expected to know it. But no mortal con tell what there is afore 'em. When that famine began, we wur amung th' first that wur thrut out o' wark,— for they spun fine counts at mi faither's mill,—an' afore it wur o'er we'd about as hard a poo through as ony poor souls i' Lancashire. We stooed it middlin' th' first year, for mi faither spent his bit o' brass to keep us gooin',—an' he wur very free-honded wi' thoose that wur worse off than his-sel',—for he kept thinkin' times would mend. But when th' second year o'th famine began, we wur dished up, an' as close to th' floor as th' poorest o'th poor, that wur gooin' shiverin' for their breakfast every mornin' wi' a soup-ticket i' one hand an' a borrowed pitcher i'th tother. . . . Remember it? I should think I do,—an' ever shall! . . . I wur twelve year owd on th' 10th o' April, 1862,—an'

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that wur about th' time o'th keenest nip o'th famine. I remember that I wur very tall o' mi age,—an' I'd never been breeched,—an' our folk couldn't afford to breech me, noather. So I had to wear one of mi sister's owd black frocks, to cover mi lung thin legs wi'. It wur a greight trouble to me, I con tell yo, for I couldn't for shame goo out o'th house. . . An' then mi mother begged a bit o' cloth o' some o'th neighbours, to make into a Scotch cap for me,—but hoo'd no ribbin to make a tail on. Well,—when it wur finished, it looked like a dunce cap,—an' what wi' this cap, an' mi sister's frock, an' mi lung black yure, an' mi thin clemmed jib, I wur one o'th comicalist figures 'at ever een wur clapt on! . . . I remember one day,—th' first thing i'th mornin', as soon as we geet up, three o'th yungest childer begun a-cryin' for some'at to heyt,— an' th' little things wondered how it wur that they couldn't get it,—for they didn't underston' this famine business at o'. But, cry or no

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cry, there wur not a crum o' meight o' no sort i'th house for noan on us,— an' we wur every one clemmin' (starving) like wedge-wood. I looked at mi mother, an' her face wur as thin an' white as a corpse's,—but hoo never complain't, though th' tears trickle't down her cheeks as hoo tried to sattle these little uns 'at wur cryin' for their breakfast. At last, I could ston' it no lunger, so I said, 'Mother, I'll goo out, an' try if I con get

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some'at to do!' So off I set, i' mi black frock an' mi cap,—for I wur getting' quite desperate,—an, I'd th' whole world before me, but I no more knew what to do, nor which way to turn mysel', than th' mon i'th moon; but, after I'd maunder't about awhile, wi' a heart as heavy as a lapstone, I happen't to spy a swillin'-tub close to a little back-garden gate. Well,—this swillin'-tub wur full o' fresh potito-pillin's,—an' as soon as I set een on 'em I wur as fain as if I'd fund a sovereign,—for, thou knows, i' that hard time, there wur salvation, now an' then, even in a hondful o' potito-pillin's,—an' I thought these pillin's would be good when boiled. Well,—I hanged an' swither't about a bit, for I wur quite asham't o'th job; but at last I pluck't up, an' I went an' axed th' woman 'at belonged this swillin'-tub if hoo'd let me tak these potito-pillin's whoam wi' me,—an' hoo said that I met tak 'em if I'd a mind. Well,—I gathered these pillin's together,— some i' mi cap, an' some i'th skirt o' mi frock,—an' off I ran whoam wi' 'em,—an' if thou'll believe me, there wur as much rejoicin' i' that hole as if I'd brought a quarter o' lamb wi' me! Well,—mi mother wiped her een, an' hoo set to an' wshed these pillin's,—again an' again hoo wshed 'em an' better wshed 'em,—for hoo wur as clen a body as ever drew breath,—an' then hoo unbethought her of a bit o' meal that there wur laft i'th nook, of

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a poke,—it wur nobbut a hondful, but it wur a God-send,—an' hoo mixed th' meal and these pillin's together, an' boiled 'em well, wi' a bit o' saut,—an' between thee

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an' me, Tom, I never relished a meal i' o' mi days as I relished that! As soon as this dish o' pillin's wur ready, mi mother sat 'em out for us, an' then hoo put us o' i' our places round th' table, an hoo made us every one say 'grace' o'er these potito-pillin's, one after another,—an' then we fell to with a will, I can tell tho! Well,—while this meal wur agate, first one then another said how good it wur. 'Eh, mother! this is good!' 'Eh, mother! this is th' best dinner we've had this year!' 'Eh, mother! if it hadn't bin for me, we should never ha' bin sittin' here havin' this!' Well,—thou never see'd a dish better clear't than that wur, for there weren't enough for us o'; an', when we'd finish't, I said to my mother, 'Eh, mother! I'll watch yon tub; an' if ever I see ony moore pillin's in it, I'll ax yon woman for 'em!' Well,—we wur happy for that day; an' th' youngest childer went up an' down among th' starvin' neighbours tellin' what a good dinner we'd had."

"Ay, ay; an' I should ha' bin fain of a meal o'th same mak mysel' at the same time. There's nobody had a harder draw through than we had at our house. We'd noather a bed to lie on, nor a cheer to sit on, nor a bit o' firin', nor a bit o' mate o'

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no mak,—an', if it hadn't bin for th' soup kitchen, we should every one ha' bin clemmed to deechoth. Me an' three o'th owd'st lasses went out a-singin' i'th streets for four or five times,—an' we geet a bit o' brass that road,—but we didn't like it; an', at last, we made it up that we'd dee afore, we'd goo out again."

"Eh, I know lots that had to goo into th' streets a-singin',—an' amung 'em there wur one or two that did it a year or two longer than there wur ony occasion for. . . . I remember my faither use't to start off every mornin',—an' generally with an empty stomach,—a-seechin' wark,—ony mak o' jobs that he could get,—howdin' horses or carryin' parcels, or getting' coals in, or ought else that coom first. . . . Well,—one day he dropt into a bit o' good luck. First he geet a job to howd a horse, an' then he geet a lot o' windows to clean, an' a back-yard to swill,—an' at th' end of o' he coom whoam at neet as merry as a cricket, wi' three-and-sixpence in his pocket Well,—by th' mass,—we thought we should never look beheend us again. There wur ten on us o'together, an' the childer danced round mi faither,—an'

The Salamanca Corpus: Around the Yule Log (1879)

mi mother begun a-cryin', hoo wur so fain,—an' there wur sich a do i'th hole as never! At th' end of o', my mother sent me out a-marketin' wi' this three-and-sixpence. An' I had to buy a pound o' traycle, two pound o'

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meal, five pound o' potatoes, a quarter of a pound o' bacon cut in slices, an ounce o' tay, haube-a-pound o' threepenny sugar,—an' a pennoth o' onions, to help to make a bit o' lobscouse, wi' some drippin' that Sally had gan us. . . . That wur th' grandest do we'd had at our house for aboon two year! . . . But, when I come back wi' this stuff, my mother wouldn't let us taste till we'd every one kneeled down an' thanked God for this three-an'-sixpence that mi faither had gotten. . . . An' weel we met (might) be thankful, for my faither suffer't moore than any one on us. . . . The very day before he geet this three-an'-sixpence he'd bin out, as usual, fro morn to neet, lookin' for some'at to do,—an' he hadn't tasted o' meight o' that day,—an' I'm not sure that he'd had aught th' day before. Well,—when he'd traill't about like a ghost o' day, seechin' work, an' findin' noan, he turn't towards whoam again, when neet coom on, with a heavy heart, an' as sick as a dog. It wur th' only place i'th world he had to go to,—an' he wur freeten't o' gooin' theer, for he knew that we wur o' starvin' to deecho, an' as ever he showed his face we should every one look at him, to see if he'd brought us any relief. Well,—I've yerd him say that he stopt afore he enter't th' house, an' sat down on a step to rest a minute, for he could hardly trail one limb after another,—an', but for his wife an' family,

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he would ha' bin fain to lay him down an' dee just wheer he wur. At last, he pluck't up a bit, an' he paddle't on to his own house; but, he no sooner reitch'd th' dur-hole, an' see'd a lot o' thin white faces gathered about th' empty fire-grate, than he dropt down to the floor, as dateless as a stone. He'd fainted; an' we'd a good deal to do to bring him to again."

The Salamanca Corpus: Around the Yule Log (1879)

“Poor fellow! . . . When th’ cotton famine began a-tellin’ upo’ th’ factory folk, I live’t up a bit of a ginnel among a lot o’ poor neighbours; but long afore things had gotten to th’ warst, there weren’t a soul i’ this ginnel that had a chip o’ furniture’, nor a rag o’ bed-cloos laft. Th’ next dur to us there wur an owd couple live’t, that had three groon-up daughters,— they wur o’ factory folk, an’, afore th’ first year o’th famine wur o’er, they wur welly clemmed to deeth, an’ perish’t wi’ cowl,— for they’d noather bed nor bed-cloos, nor firin’, nor furnitur, nor meight, nor money. Well,—It wur i’ winter time,—an a hard winter it wur,—an’ th’ owd chap wur takken very ill,—an’ they geet a bit o’ strae somewheer, an’ laid him down on it in a corner. An’ theer he deed. I seed him dee, i’ that cowl nook, wi’ th’ owd woman an’ th’ three daughters kneelin’ round him to keep th’ cowl wind off.”

“Ay, I seed mony a heart-breakin’ seet mysel’

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durin’ that time. . . . Hello! it’s startin’ a-rainin’! Hadn’t we better house a bit? Let’s goo into th’ Red Cat, yon!”

“Come on; it’s gooin’ to be a pelter!”

(They run into the Red Cat, at Bispham.)

“Hello, theer! Wheer’s th’ lonlort?”

(The landlady comes.)

“Sha’not I do? Our John’s gone o’er th’ Shard to a churn supper.”

“Well, well,—yo’n do, I dar say. Bring us some’at to sup. . . . Here, stop! Tom, what mun we have?”

“Ale, I guess.”

“Ay; bring us two pints o’th best ale.”

“We have nought but th’ best, here; we brew’n it ersels.”

“Well,—bring it, as what it is,—it’ll be good, I dar say.”

(*She brings the ale. TOM drinks.*)

“This is a saup o’ very fair ale, Rondle!”

“Aye, it’s noan bad takkin’, for a dry throttle!”

“Nawe, it isn’t. . . . Well,—here’s luck!”

“Th’ same to thee, owd brid! ... Eh, sitho how th’ rain’s comin’ down!”

“Ay, it’s grand, is this! It’s bin wanted a good while! There’s a good deal o’ sallet i’ this wayter!”

[168] “Ay, if it’ll nobbut keep agate lung enough, it’ll awter th’ shap (shape) o’ little potitos. . . . I think we’s ha’ thunner afore lung.”

“I’m sure there’s thunner about,—I can tell by my yed. . . . I’ll tell tho what, Rondle,—thinkin’ o’ that cotton famine again,—it weren’t those who skrike’t th’ hardest that suffered th’ most!”

“Eh, dear, nawe! I know mony a one that would ha’ deed at that time afore they’d ha’ gone a beggin’,—an’ they’d hard wark to get some of ’em to have aught fro th’ relief committee. I never knew, till then, how proud poor folk con be. . . . Now, I weren’t so mysel’; for, if I had bin, we should every one ha’ deed at our house.—as hoo’d buried us. . . . I remember one day, when I wur up afore th’ relief committee, an owd chap coom in, seemin’ly between seventy an’ eighty year owd,—an’ his face wur pinch’t an’ shrunkn,—an’ his yed wur as white as a moss-crop. Beheend him there wur a good-lookin’ young woman, about eighteen year owd; but, he couldn’t get her to come in, so hoo stooed i’th th’ dur-hole, blushin’, an’ coverin’ her face up. So they axed th’ owd chap what he wanted, an’ he said, ‘I want to see if yo con do a bit o’ some’at to help this lass till sich times as hoo can get wark again. I couldn’t get her to come hersel’, an’ I’m freeten’t on her

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bein' ill. If yo can help her a bit, I'm sure hoo'll pay yo back.' So they axed him if hoo wur his daughter; an' he said, 'Nawe; I'm uncle to her. Hoo's noather faither nor mother; nor nought i'th world to tak to,—but what I con spare for her.' Then they axed th' owd chap if he couldn't manage to keep her his-sel'; an' he said, 'Eh, God bless yo! I cannot keep mysel'! I'll howd out as lung as there's ony chance; but, yo known, what's hardly enough to keep life i' one would clem two; an' I should be thankful if yo could give her a bit o' some'at, if it's ever so little, to help her while things are as they are.' Well,—they granted some relief for this lass; but,—for o' that,—afore a month had gone by, th' owd chap wur fund deed in a nook a-whoam; an' th' doctors said that he'd deed o' starvation."

"Poor owd fellow! . . . Hello, Tom,—isn't that leetenin'?"

"It's leetenin', for sure! . . . There it is again! Eh, what a flash! Put that dur to!"

"Nawe, nawe; throw it oppen,—an' oppen th' window wide. This is a grand storm! . . . Eh, how it rains!"

"We'd better have a saup moore, I guess."

"Ay; we cannot goo out while it's comin' down thus. . . . Ring that bell!"

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CHAPTER II.

"Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,
Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you
From such seasons as these?"

Shakspere.

TOM BOCKIN *and* RONDLE O' DOTHERIN' JOHNNY'S *seated at an open window,
in the Red Cat, at Bispham, in the Fylde. A thunderstorm raging outside.*

The Salamanca Corpus: Around the Yule Log (1879)

“WELL, thou knows, when he said that, he raither took me bi th’ face. So, I gav o’er talkin’; an’ I lean’t up again a wole a bit, an’ thought some thoughts.”

“Thou met weel (might well)! Folk han to think a bit, now an’ then, Rondle, whether they liken it or not.”

“They han, Tom,—but I cannot say that it agrees wi’ me, so much on’t,—it mays mi yed bad.”

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“I dar say. . . . Some folk are noan cut out for that mak o’ wark, Rondle.”

“They are not Tom,—an’ I’m one on ’em. Now there’s nought suits me as weel as a bit o’ straight-forrad hommerin’ an’ thumpin’,—but if it comes to aught wi’ curls in it I’m noather here nor there, nor nowheer else. . . . (*Lightens.*) Hello,—another flash! By Guy, that wur a switcher! Come away fro that window!”

“Not I! . . . Don’t thee stir! Thou’ll be no safer than I am here, if thou runs up th’ chimbley! Beside, I like to see it! It’s a grand seet!”

“I see nought pratty about it. One con run out o’th road o’th rain, but leetenin’s like some’at belungin’ another world,—there’s no knowin’ wheer it comes fro, nor wheer it’s gooin’ to, nor what it’s gooin’ to do; an’ as fur as I’m consarn’t I’d raither ha’ mi yed in a seck while it’s agate.”

“Well, I day say they’n find tho a seck i’th house here. But if thou gets thi yed into’t thou’ll lev tother end out,—what’s to become o’ that?”

“I care nought about tother end so that I don’t see it.”

“Thou met as weel ston’ thi ground, Rondle. Thou’rt noather safe in a seck nor out of a seck. Folk never are safe i’ this world, till they’re in a grave.”

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“Ay, ay, bi th’ mass! *That* seck’ll ston’ some leetenin’! (*It lightens again.*) Theer it goes again! Eh, what a flash! There’ll bi some lumber done afore this is o’er! . . . I’ll tell tho what, Tom, it’s a good job for folk that’s gotten their hay in.”

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“Ay; it’ll he ill for ony hay that’s laft out i’ this pash, whether it’s cut or uncut; for if it’s uncut it’ll be laid, an’ if it’s cut it’ll have o’th life stewed an’ swilled out on’t, till it’ll be as tasteless as beggar-berm, an’ fit for nought but beddin’.”

(Enter MALLY, the landlady, in a passion, with the drink.)

“Two pints, did yo say?”

“Ay.”

“Theer, see yo! *(Sets the ale down.)* . . . Careless little snickett that hoo is! Hoo does more lumber than her wage comes to,—ten times o’er! I declare I’d sooner do every smite o’th wark mysel’ than I’d be bother’t wi’ sarvants! Hoo taks no delight i’ nought but guttlin’, an’ sleepin’, an’ sich like! If yo aren’t watchin’ her, hoo stons hangin’ her knockles like somebry that’s dateless,—an’ if one sets her agate of aught, hoo’ll oather break it or spoil it, or else hoo’ll sweat.”

“What’s th’ matter, Mally?”

“Matter? marry, matter enough I think! I sent yon lass down into th’ cellar a-drawin’ some ale,

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about a quarter of an hour sin’, an’ hoo coom up again, an’ laft it runnin’,—an’ th’ cellar’s o’ in a swim, yon!”

“That’s a nice caper, Mally! Th’ lass mun be thrutched in her mind about some’at.”

“Thrutched in her mind! Devil thrutch her,— hoo has no mind about nought. . . . If there’s one drop there’s thirty gallons o’th best ale lyin’ upo’ th’ cellar floor this minute! It is yon,—if anybody wants to sup it they’re welcome ! . . . I wish to th’ Lord our John would stop a-whoam, an’ look after things his-sel’! For two pins I’d fling o’ down an’ run mi country!”

“Wheels he gone to, say’n yo, Mally?”

“Gone to? He’s gone ower th’ Shard a-junkettin! . . . He can go onywhere, bless yo! . . . An’ here I am,—fro morn to neet, fro day to day, fro year end to year

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end,—tether't like an owd mill-horse,—an' never a bit o' a change o' no mak!' But it cannot last so lung,—that's one blessin'. If he'd some women, they'd larn him a different rub o'th spindle,—they would that!"

"He'll be back to-neet, winnot he?"

"Back to-neet? The Lord knows whether he'll be back to-neet or not! an' if he does come back to-neet he'll be so crom-full o' snig pie, an' Shard mussels, an' sour ale, an' sichlike, that he'll not be fit to do a hond's-turn for a week to come. An' as

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soon as he gets reet, he'll be off again. Oh, let him alone for lookin' after his-sel'! . . . If ever ony poor soul i' this world had a weary life on't, it's me! Just this minute, I'm muddle't to that degree that I dunnot know which gate to turn,—an' so ill that I con hardly set one fuut afore another! It wur nobbut yesterday,—I'd just gone into th' garden a-hangin' some clooas upo' th' hedge,—an' I hadn't turn't mi back aboon two minutes afore — (*A sound of pots breaking comes from the kitchen.*) Theer hoo is again, yer yo! What the dule has hoo agate now?"

(She runs away to the kitchen.)

"I think I've seen this woman afore, Rondle. Who is hoo?"

"Hoo's th' lon'lord's wife."

"I know that; but wheer does hoo come fro?"

"Hoo comes fro Preston. Her mother used to go up an' down a-sellin' alicar (alegar) wi' a greight tin can on her back."

"What! that broad-set, paum-peckle't owd woman, that wore a blue bedgown?"

"Th' same owd lass, Tom,—an' a daicent, hard-wortchin' owd body hoo wur, too. Hoo'd three moore daughters, besides this,—o' good-lookin' lasses,—an' they o' wortch't at th' same factory as me. Their faither wur a cripple; an' they had to

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keep th' owd lad as weel as they could among 'em. An' I don't think there wur a family i' Lancashire that suffer't moore than they did while th' cotton famine wur agate. They live't i'th same ginnel as me; an' like o'th rest on us, their bits o' furnitur', an' one thing after another, dribble't away, to get a bite o' meight to go on wi', till they'd nought i'th world left but four bare woles, an' a three-legged stoo, and some strae for th' owd chap to lie on. Owd Abram had bin bedridden aboon ten year; but, at th' lung-length, he geet rid of his bed,—for th' last pinch o'th famine wur comin' on,—an' they had to sell it fro under him to get a bit o' some'at to keep 'em alive. Th' bed wur th' last thing they sowd,—o' tother had gone before, bit by bit. They lived nearly three week out o'th price of an arm-cheer that had bin i'th family forty year. I went in one day, an' I fund th' table gone fro under th' window, an' I said, 'Hello! what's gotten th' table?' An' th' owd woman said hoo'd sowd it th' day before for have-a-crown, an' bought another bit of a rickety thing for ninepence,— 'becose our Abram's a deeol worse, an' I want to get him some nourishment.' Then I axed her how leets hoo didn't get some relief fro' th' committee; an' hoo said, 'Eh, bless yo! our lasses wouldn't hear tell on it. An' as for mysel', I don't like troublin' folk for charity.' An' thus it wur that they sowd

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first one thing, then another,—an' they geet poorer an' thinner fro day to day, till, at last, they hadn't a stick nor a stone left,—but four bare woles, an' an empty fire-grate, wi' th' owd chap lyin' upo' some strae in a corner. I happen't to pop in the very day after, they'd sowd th' bed,— an' there he lee i'th nook,—thin, an' white, an' still, an' as like a corpse as aught I ever clapt een on. But there wur a great deeol o' corpses walkin' about this part o'th world while that famine wur agate. . . Well,—it wur a chill wintry day, an' very little leet coom fro th' sky,—an' there weren't a spark o' fire, nor a chip o' furnitur', nor a rag o' clooas i' that dingy, comfortless cote,—an' th' first glent I geet through th' gloom o' that pale face among th' strae i'th corner, I thought, 'th' owd lad's gone at last!' Th' lasses wur out, lookin' for wark,— but they met as weel ha' looked for holy wayter in an

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Orange Lodge, just then,—an' th' owd woman wur sit on a stone under th' window, petchin' her bedgown: So I whisper't to her, 'How is he to day?' An' hoo said he wur rather worse, of oather, an' hoo wanted him to get a bit o' sleep. An' I wur creepin' out again as quietly as I could,—to let him have a rest,—but he'd yerd us talkin', an' he said, 'Who's theer?' An' th' owd woman towd him that it wur me that had come'd in a-seein' him. An' he put out a bit of shrivel't white hond that didn't look

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much bigger than a brid's claw, an' said, 'Come a bit nar.' So I went an' sit down upo' th' floor aside o'th strae wheere he wur lyin', an' I axed him how he wur. 'Well, Rondle, my lad,' said he, 'I'm gettin' a bit nar whoam every day, thou sees.' Well, I didn't just catch what he meant at th' minute, so I said, 'How so, Abram?' 'Well,' he said, 'thou sees, I've gotten down to th' floor,—an' th' next thing, I's be under it!' So I towd him to cheer up, for times would be sure to mend before lung,—they couldn't last lung as they wur,—an' he'd happen get better. An' he said, 'I don't want to get better, Rondle,—I don't want! I shall be fain to get out o'th gate! I see everybody is clemmin' to deeth around me,—an' I cannot help them! I've bin nought but a weight an' a burden, an' it grieves me to th' heart, Rondle! I shall be fain when it's o'er,—it'll be a blessin' both to me an' everybody else!' Well, if thou'll believe me, Tom, it brought th' wayter into my een when I yerd the owd lad talk this way; but I turn't my yed o' one side a bit; an' then I put a good face on, an' I towd him not to talk sich stuff as that; for it wur a lung lone that had never a turn; an', come what would, he couldn't get no lower i' this world. But he said, 'Yigh, mi lad,—a little bit. Ten feet lower, Rondle,—an' I's be at rest!' Well,—do what I would, I couldn't raise his spirits. An' sure enough,

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th' owd lad wur reet. It wur a hard winter; an' what wi' clemmin' an' starvin', inside an' out, an' frettin' to see other folk clemmin' an' starvin' about him, it wur

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too mich for him; an' afore a fortnit had gone by he wur buried bi th' parish,—as mony a score daicent folk wur at that time, that never dream't o' comin' to sich a pass as that i' this world. . . I went in a twothre days after th' funeral; an' I fund th' owd woman an' th' lasses' strugglin' on i'th empty house, just i'th owd way. They fretted terribly about th' owd chap; an' I tried to cheer 'em up, an' I did what I could to help 'em,—an' that wur not mich, God knows! for I wur clemmed like wedge-wood mysel',—an' I didn't know where th' next meal wur to come fro. I remember that day very weel. They'd brought some stones into th' house to sit on,—an' there they wur, huddle't round th' empty fire-grate, to keep theirsels warm,—for th' snow lee thick upo' th' ground, an' th' leet that coom through th' little window looked cowd an' ghashtly. It looked moore like a tomb than a place for wick folk. Well,—I axed th' owd woman how they wur gettin' on; an' hoo said, 'O,—middlin'.' Well,—I knew what that meant. They wouldn't ha' complain't if they'd bin at th' last gasp. At last hoo turn't, an' hoo said again, 'I yer they're for sellin' these houses' Well,—I knew that; for the lon'lort had bin so

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poo'd down bi th' hard times that he wur gettin' nearly as ill off as onybody else; so I said I believe't they wur. 'Ay!' hoo said, 'they are.' . . . They'n sell th' floor fro under us next,— an' then there'll be nought laft for us but th' cowd sky,—an' I wish to th' Lord I wur theer!' An' then every one brast out a cryin'. An' between thee an' me, I believe it did 'em good. But I couldn't ston' it no longer; so I coom off, wi' a heavy heart,—for our folk wur noan so mich better off a-whoam."

"Poor things! . . . An' wur that owd woman this londlady's mother?"

"Hoo wur nought else."

"I connot remember her."

"Ay, but I con. . . . This woman, here, wur th' owdest lass, an' a hondsoner lass never bote off th' edge of a cake than hoo wur!"

"Hoo nobbut looks ill now."

"Oh, weddin's poo'd her down terribly; an' hoo's had a deeol o' childer,—an' alehouse life's nobbut a hard job. It doesn't do for folk at's a family to bring up."

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“It’s a rough schoo’, for sure. . . . Th’ rain’s comin’ down as hard as ever, thou sees.”

“Ay; an’ it’ll bate noan yet, bi th’ look on’t. We are where we mun be for a bit, I doubt . . . What saysto to a bit o’ some’at to heyt?”

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“I’m willin’.”

“Ring that bell then.”

(He rings, and the landlady enters.)

“Wur yo ringin’?”

“Con yo find us a bit o’ cheese an’ brade?”

“Ay; an’ there’s some cowl beef, too, if yo’d like it.”

“That’s reet! Let’s make ersels comfortable!”

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CHAPTER III.

“LEAR. My wits begin to turn.
Come on, my boy. How dost, my boy? Art cold?
I am cold myself. Where is this straw, my fellow?
The art of our necessities is strange,
That can make vile things precious. Come, your hovel.
Poor fool and knave. I have one part in my heart
That’s sorry yet for thee.” — *Shakespeare.*

Midsummer afternoon. TOM BOCKIN and RONDLE O’ DOTHERIN’ JOHNNY’S seated by an open window in the Red Cat, at Bispham, in the Fylde, watching a thunderstorm, and talking about the Cotton Famine.

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“AY, ay, Tom! when I think o’ that dreary time when th’ famine wur agate it seems to me like lookin’ back into another world,—for I never seed nought like it afore,—an’ I hope I shall never see nought like it again. A deal o’ folk geet it into their yeds that th’ day o’ judgment wur drawin’ on. An’ weel they met (might), for it wur a black look-out. I know it sent mony a hundred to their graves that

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would ha’ bin livin’ this day but for what they went through then. An’ when I remember th’ strange change that coom o’er everythin’, as mill after mill stopt,—mill after mill,—till, at last, there weren’t a wheel runnin’, an’ th’ insides o’th factories, that used to be full o’ buzzin’ din, an’ lasses singin’ at’ their wark, wur as still as tombstones. I don’t wonder that folk should think th’ world wur comin’ to an end. I used to peep in at our factory window now an’ then, at that time, an’ I could see every wheel, an’ drum, an’ strap, stonnin’ still, an’ th’ bits o’ fluzz lyin’ about th’ floor, where so mony busy feet used to run back an’ forrad; an’ I’ve looked till mi yure’s begun a-bristlin’ up,—for it seemed to me as if th’ place wur full o’ ghosts. When I wur a lad, folk used to grumble about th’ air bein’ smooky i’ Lancashire; but it geet pure enough at that time, for, at last, every factory chimbley wur clear an’ cowl, an’ there weren’t one that sent a reech up. Ay,—th’ air wur clear enough just then,—an’ a deeol o’ folk had very little else to live on. Lancashire used to be famous for bell-ringin’, too, o’ one sort an’ another,—but there wur very few bells stirrin’ while th’ famine wur agate, except passin’-bells. An’ the streets had a terrible doleful look. There wur no merry-men wanderin’ about Lancashire at that time, I can tell tho. Nawe,—it wur a bad trade while that famine lasted.

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Th’ streets, that used to be crom-full o’ heavy carts an’ luries, an’ rattlin’ wheels o’ o’ sorts, wur as still, at last, as a moor-top; an’ there wur nought stirrin’ but, here an’ there, some poor clemmed soul, creepin’ off through th’ cowl to th’ soup-

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kitchen, wi' a pitcher in her hond; or a knot o' factory chaps, wi' thin pale faces, an' nipt noses, loungin' again a wole to keep one another warm, and starin' into th' wide world, as if they wur watchin' a funeral. An' I wur as ill as ony on 'em,—for I noather knew wheer to go nor what to do, but hang about an' clem th' time out, same as everybody else. I used to goo an' sit mi down i'th market-place sometimes; but I met as weel ha' gone into th' churchyard, for there wur very little to sell, an' I hadn't a hawp'ny to buy nought wi' if there had bin. . . . Now for it! What han we here?"

(Three wet travellers rush in at the doorway, from the rain. One of their company trudges on through the shower. They shout after him)

"Now then, Bill! Wheerto for? Arto noan dry?"

"Nawe. I wish I wur."

"Come in a minute,—out o'th rain!"

"Nawe. I'll be joggin' on. It'll not harm me, now, for I'm as weet as I con be."

"Well, but thou'd better have a gill."

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"Nay; I've done bucketin' enough for one day. I'll be gooin' forrad."

"Off witho, then,—an' fill thi bally wi' rain-wayter!"

• • • • •

"Is he gone?"

"Ay, he's for wadin' on, he says."

"Why, he'll be as weet as a wayter-dog."

"Well, he says he likes it."

"Oh, ay! Why, then,—let him help his-sel',— there's plenty on it. . . . Here, keawer tho down."

"Nawe. I cannot sit."

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“How’s that?”

“A bit of a boil.”

“Oh,—I see. . . . Well, an’ who is yon chap, saysto?”

“Well, they co’n him Bill o’ Bess’s, for a bye-name; but his gradely name’s Peighswad.”

“Bill o’ Bess’s, saysto? Bill o’ what Bess’s?”

“Why, Bess o’ Bab-rag’s.”

“What, owd Amos o’ Fettler’s widow?”

“Ah, sure. They co’n her Bess o’ Bag-rags, becose hoo’s olez getherin’ bits o’ stuff to make babbies’ clooas on.”

“It’s her ’at keeps th’ pie-shop i’ th’ owd Market-place?”

“T’ same woman, I tell tho.”

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“Never, sure! . . . What! an’ is this her lad, saysto?”

“He’s nought else.”

“Ay, ay! Well, an’ hoo’s a farrantly owd lass, too!”

“Hoo *is* that! . . . Hoo’s a widow; an’ this lad wur by her first husban’. Hoo’s bin wed twice.”

“I don’t care if hoo’s bin wed a hundred times,— hoo’ll clog again, will yon woman, bi th’ look on her!”

“Ay, an’ hoo’d make a rare wife yet!”

“Hoo would, owd lad. . . . Well,—aren’t we to have an odd toothful, o’ some mak?”

“Ay; ring that bell.”

(The landlady comes in.)

“Bring us a pint a-piece. . . . Ay, I remember Amos o’ Fettler’s, that wur this woman’s last husban’. I remember him very weel. He wur th’ manager at that owd mill, down bi th’ wayter-side; an’ he’d been at th’ same place o’ his life very near.

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But th' owd lad thought a great deal of his-sel', an' he geet it into his yed that th' folk he wortched for couldn't get on without him; an', sometimes, he took sich liberties that they'd hard wark to bide with him. Oh, he wur a very consaited chap. . . . One day th' owd maister happen't to say that he'd a good mind to goo away somewheer for a change.

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Well,—Amos wur a bit nettle't about some'at at th' time, so he turn't to th' owd maister, an' he said, 'Well, if yo'n go soon enough,—an' goo far enough,—an' stop lung enough,—it'll be reet enough!' Another time th' owd maister an' Amos had bin havin' a bit of a dispute about some'at or another, and Amos said, 'Well, I've wortched at this place forty year; an' I consider I've done a great deal to make this firm what it is.' 'Well,' said th' owd maister, 'thou happen has, Amos; an' now, when I come to think on it, I wonder how it is that everybody has manage't to get on without thee,—except me!' ”

“Some folk would ha' bagged him upo' th' spot.”

“Ay, but they didn't. They kept th' owd lad on till he deed. . . . Well,—I guess we'd better be gooin'?”

“Ay, we mun jog on,—rain or fair!”

“Dive into't, then.”

(They go out into the rain.)

“Yon's a quare lot, Rondle.”

“Oh,—they're reet enough. I see nought ails 'em. They favvor'n wortchin'-folk. I like as if I should know that red-yure't un. I've gotten it into my yed that he's a jobber at owd Peawch's factory.”

“By th' mass, thou's hit it, Rondle! I remember him, now! He wed that lass o' Jenny Pepper's!”

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“It’s th’ very mon! . . . Yon could tell some tales about th’ famine, if he’d a mind.”

“No doubt he could,—for he wur i’th thick on’t. . . . Oh,—but I didn’t finish my own story.”

“Nawe, thou wur among some potito-pillin’s when thou left off.”

“Oh, ay— I remember. . . . Well—I think things geet to th’ worst wi’ us, at our house, about th’ back-end of 1862. Th’ keenest nip o’th famine, wi’ us, wur about that time; an’ th’ tide begun a-turnin’ soon after. I wur not quite twelve year owd,— a thin, gawky, shame-face’t lad, wearin’ one o’ my sister’s owd black frocks, becose I’d no breeches to put on; an’ it wur i’th autumn o’ that year that I begged those potito-pillin’s, that kept four on us alive nearly two days. I shall never forget how we gether’t round my mother, yammerin’ an’ watchin’ her as hoo wesh’d these pillin’s, an’ shook a bit o’ meal out o’th bottom of a poke, to boil wi’ ’em. That wur a grand day for us poor craiters, I can tell tho,—for we’rn welly (wellnigh) famish’t to deooth. There’s an owd sayin’, that ‘Hungry dogs’ll eat dirty puddin’;’ — but if onybody had tow’d my faither, two year afore that time, that ever his family would be brought to be fain to make a meal of a hondful o’ potito-pillin’s, piked out of a swillin’-tub, he’d ha’ said they’d bin lyin’. But it’s a dangerous thing for onybody to swagger i’ sich

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a world as this is,—for there’s nobody con tell what they han to go through. . . . Well, as I said afore, I wur a thin, awkward, shy sort of a lad,— an’ I wur so asham’t of onybody seein’ me wi’ this nasty owd black frock of our Mary’s on, that it wur a good while afore they could get me to put my yed out o’th dur at o’. But, lo an’ behold! th’ first time that I ventur’t out, what should I leet on but these potito-pillin’s! Well,—that wur a god-send,—an’ it gav me sich encouragement, that, i’ spite o’ mi black frock, I begun a-creepin’ about th’ neighbourhood to see if I could get to goo an arrand or aught, that would bring a meal in. I wur a quare figure, thou may depend, wi’ my clemmed face, an’ my thin legs, an’ my black frock, I believe I

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looked moore like a ghost than aught belugin' this world,—an' th' neighbours begun to notice me; an' some on 'em co'de their childer in when they see'd me comin',—as if I'd bin a wild animal prowlin' about. I remember one day, when I wur trailin' down a back street, hardly able to poo one leg after tother, I yerd a little lass shout out, 'Heigh, mother! that crazy lad's comin' again!' Well,—that wur quite enough. I turned back, an' went whoam, an' I coom out no moore that -day. Another time, when I wur hangin' about a corner o'th market-place, turnin' o'er bits o' cabbage-levs, an' sichlike, a gentleman coom across th' street, an'

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offered me a sixpence; an' I blushed to th' roots o' mi ears, an' towd him that I weren't beggin'. 'Poor lad!' said he. But I slunk off whoam; an' he followed me a bit, as if he wanted to see where I went to. I slipt up a ginnel, out o'th road,— an' I've never sin him again fro that day to this. . . . At last, when th' house wur stripped of everything, an' we wur getten as near th' floor as we could be without gooin' into it, things begun to mend, an' mi faither geet a place at a pound a week. Well,—that wur like th' beginnin' o' a new world to us, after what we'd gone through. Didn't we sing, 'Oh, be joyful!' Thou never see'd sich rejoicin' among a lot o' starve't craiters as there wur i' that house. We'd bin brought so low that we'd very near gan o'er expectin' aught but starvation i' this world again. But as soon as this bit o' good luck turned up, we thought we wur gooin' to have everythin' back at once,—an' one cried out, 'Mother, let's have this!' an' another said, 'Mother, let's have that.' But,—I remember it as weel as if it wur yesterday,—I remember my mother sayin', 'Now, childer; we cannot have so mich yet, yo know, becose our Tom has to be breeched, before we get aught else.' Well,—if thou'll believe me, Rondle, that wur music i' my ears, for never poor soul wur fainer to get out o' prison than I wur to get out o' that black frock!

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. . . Well,—there wur grand doin's i'th hole, thou may depend. . . . But th' first thing,— afore one bodle o'th brass wur spent,—my mother made us kneel down, an' pray, an' thank God. An' then, we dance't, an' sung hymns, an' caper't about, like wild things,—for we thought we should never look beheend us again. . . . Well,—‘it never rains but it pours,’ as th' sayin' is; an' this bit o' luck o' my faither's put us o' into good heart; an' as soon as hoo could muster a bit o' some'at to go out in, our Mary Ann determin't that hoo'd get a place o' some sort, to help to make a livin'. Hoo'd be between eighteen an' nineteen, then,—an' John an' her wur cwortin' at that time. They'n bin wed a good while now; an' they'n gotten a fine family about 'em. But at that time John wur one o'th yed book-keepers at th' mill,— an' he wur as daicent a chap as ever stept shoo-leather,—but he wur out o' wark, an' staggd-up, th' same as everybody else. Well, — our Mary Ann never said a word to nobody, but off hoo set a-seechin' a place; an' afore a week wur o'er hoo geet a place as a waiter at a refreshment-room i' Manchester,—an' hoo brought every penny of her wage to mi mother at th' week-end. Hoo didn't want John to know that hoo wur theer,— for hoo didn't think o' stoppin' no longer than till we could turn ersels round a bit. But, lo an' behold! one day, when John wur i' Manchester, he

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happen't to drop into this very refreshment-room where our Mary Ann wur waitin', an' he rang th' bell for a cup o' tay, an' who should bring his tay but our Mary Ann hersel'! Well,—I've yerd him say that yo might ha' knock't him o'er wi' a pin-yed. An' our Mary Ann wur just as ill. Well,— as soon as John could get his breath he made her pack up her box, and come off whoam wi' him; an' nought would saddle him but they mut (must) get wed at once. So they geet wed straight off th' reel, an' they'n never had an ill day sin. An', mind tho, didn't I cry my een up, because I couldn't goo into th' room amung th' weddin'-folk, becose o' mi black frock. . . . But I slipt out at th' back dur; an' when the cab started off, to tak 'em to church, I jumped up beheend, an' I rode to church wi' em, i' my black frock! . . . Hello! it's clearin' up!”



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“Ay,—let’s be gooin’!”

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