

Author: Benjamin Brierley (1825-1896)

Text type: Prose

Date of composition: 1850

Editions: 1850, 1879

Source text:

Brierley, Benjamin. *Gooin' to Cyprus*. Manchester: Abel Heywood & Son.

e-text:

Access and transcription: July 2011

Number of words: 6,118

Dialect represented: Lancashire

Produced by Javier Ruano-García

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***Gooin' to Cyprus* (1850)**

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I'd bin sittin watchin th' hummabees layin their tools by for th' day; an' there's nowt maks one moore sleepy than to yer 'em come hummin o'er th' hedge, and see 'em drop on their durstep, an' wipe their feet afore onswerin to their names. I've had mony a quiet snooze there these warm summer neets, when eaur Sal has bin neighbourin, an' th' lads an' wenchas away on bizness o' their own. I live a sort ov a two-sided life--one i' my wakken time, an' th' tother when I'm dreeamin. I've said before that I'm a great dreamer, an' ut my dreams takken very unlikely shapes. I've bin wi' th' Owd Lad in a balloon; an I've flown o'er th' sae. Th' tother neet I spent abeaut a hauve an heaur in a journey to Cyprus; an' I'd owd Dizzy wi' me for a companion.

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I reckon I must ha' bin thinkin abeaut this new country; becose I'd bin readin abeaut it; an' th' newspaper lay on th' hedge-backin. I dar'say I thowt it wur time a new shop turned up, as th' owd sod wur gettin like eaur well has bin for a day or two--welly dried up. My pockets are in abeaut th' same predickymment,--a deecal o' scratin for owt better than lint. I'd no deaut a deecal o' folk would be swarmin o'er to Cyprus; not a few that we could do witheaut, an' so could any country. Some would goo as they go'en to Ameriky, expectin to find everythin straight-forrad, an' nowt to do nobbut sit wi' a pipe under a walnut tree, wonderin if Adam an' Eve wur blacks. Others would goo ut never had a reet place; but had lived a restless life o their time; an' no deaut a lot would find their road there ut had no idea o' nowt but plunder,--sharks, ut dunno' prowle abeaut i'th' sae for a livin, but are quite as keen after prey. An' if there isno' a brewer or two tryin for licenses neaw, it'll cap me.

In my dream I're settin eaut to Cyrpus mysel; an', what wur surprisin, I thowt I're a sengl young chap. It's strange heaw we con forget whoa we are, an' what we are, what we'n see, an' what we'n gone through; what we'n won, an what we'n lost; whoa we'n known, liked, and disliked,--when we're followin little "Queen Mab." Th' owd rib said, when I towd her, I're aulus

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dreamin what I'd like to be true. Heaw far hoo's reet or heaw far wrong, I'm no' gooin' t' say. Women han generally a good deecal o'their own road, booth i' thinkin an actin; an' eaur Sal's a woman. What I wur to do at Cyprus when I geet there I hadno' th' leeast notion on; an' I darsay th' creawd I're mixed up with had abeaut as mich. Ther showmen; tumblers; bettin chaps; three-card gamblers; niggers; one-legged sailors; day-leet colliers; book travellers; organ grinders; a Garman band; chaps wi' tracks; a gang o' property jobbers; teetotal talkers; ice cream sellers; a mon wi' a cleaud o' toy balloons; another wi' chep jewellery; an' th' next to me wur a mon wi' a Punch and Judy show. By th' curl of his yure, an' th' cock of his hat, I knew this chap at th' fust wink. A sly owd dog he is, an' up to a thing or two beside snuff. He carried his slow slung across his

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back, an' he'd his dolls hung by their necks in a bant ut he held in his hont. These dolls had faces summat like Woodman Billy, Match Bob, Johnny the Quaker, an' Ned Darby. A dog trigged by his side, an' on th' collar wur written "Jingo".

"Ben at Isaac's, if I'm not mista'en," I said.

"Right you are, old boy," he said, talkin as fine as a cockney. "Going the popular way, I see, eh, Ab?"

"I'm like to go th' road ut th' creawd carries me," I said. "I've gotten in it, an' I conno' get eaut. But what art theau dooin here? Theau's no' left Vicky o' George's farm, hasta?"

"Not such a fool," Ben said. "Got leave of absence for a month; so I thought I'd just come out here,--only for a lark, you see. I'm going to show the Cypriotes how to work the dolls in this favourite source of amusement of an ancient people. Shall give several performances on the way. What's your game?"

"I con hardly tell," I said.

"Fools never know what they're about," Ben said. "Show me a man that's chalked out his road from the beginning, and I'll tell you whether he has been successful or not. An aimless life never was a prosperous one. Have you no idea of what you're going to do?"

"Well, I did once think, but no' very sariously, that sartin a black-puddin and breawis shop would happen pay."

"With a beer license it might. Beer's the thing now. Licks the blood of old Bacchus into fits. I could do with a shove-in-the-mouth just now. I'll set down and have a performance, next pub we come to. Got a match?"

"I think we have."

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"Strike it on old Bob's head, and give us a light. You needn't be afraid of burning the hair; it's only the white lead."

I did as he axt me t' do; an' th' match blazed up like a sky rocket.

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“Something Mephistophilean about that, Ab,” Ben said, as I honded th’ match to him. “What’s the matter with Jingo?” Th’ dog wur growlin.

“I dunno’ know,” I said; “he’s showin his teeth at summat. I think he wants a fly at those dolls.”

“William’s nose he’s after. Wants to have a hold of it. I rub it with a mixture of bear’s grease and pigeon’s milk, and he doesn’t know but it’s game. You should see him perform.”

“Does he tak a part i’th’ show bizness?” I axt.

“I should think he did. Couldn’t get on without him. He has his instincts, to be sure, and them’s queer. Precious to o’ training before I could get him in the right way. Took me all my time at first to keep him from going back to his old kennel. The whip wouldn’t do. The more I flogged him the more stupid he got; so I tried the humane. Gave him plenty of sops, and trotted him round the farm. Now he’s as good a dawg as ever tasted a stocking. Just lay hold of my arm.”

“Not if I know it,” I said.

“No, it wouldn’t be safe. Kick one of the dolls; it don’t matter which. He won’t touch you. Don’t be afraid. You’ll see quite another kind of performance.”

I thowt I’d just try th’ experiment, so I up wi’ my foot an’ catcht Woodman Billy under th’ chin. When I looked at Jingo I thowt he’re gooin into a fit, for his shooters shaked, and his yead jerted abeaut, as I’ve seen dogs when they’n had a boan i’their throat.

“What’s up wi’ him?” I wanted to know, for I didno’ like th’ noise he made, as were like owd Juddie’s when he is cowghin.

“Why, don’t you see that he’s laughing?” Ben said. “Can’t a dawg have a little fun as well as a Christian? I trained him to that; but somehow he never seems to be in good humour when he laughs.

“It’s happen his breedin,” I ventured to say.

“Yes; but I’ll make him they won’t know what breed he belongs to before I’ve done with him,” an’ Ben winked at me an’ gan his dolls a shake. “After bear’s grease and pigeon milk I shall have to try something else. Come on, Jingo, there’s a pub in sight.”

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Th' dog stretched his bant to th' full tether when he yerd that, an' him an' his mesther went at sich a speed ut I could hardly keep up wi' them.

"I thought you belonged to the party of progress," Ben said, lookin back at me, an' grinnin. "A nice party of progress you are, always behind, and nothing to carry. What would yo do if you'd this old machine on your back, and the dawg to drag after you?"

"But th' dog's pooin, neaw," I said.

"He won't pull when we leave the pub, see if he does. Them instincts, Ab! He won't pull that way towards a church, though he's a good tender; and if you offered to touch a stone he'd have a mouthfull of shin stew before you could say Jingo. Can you drum any, Ab?"

"Well, I've had a penk or two upo' th' owd war-tub i' my time; but I dunno' know whether I could follow a tune or not."

"I am easy to follow. You'd find no difficulty in keeping time with me. It's when you have to drum to a band playing bits of all sorts of tunes, and keeping all sorts of time, that you find it difficult to put your blows in; like your Harlington band. They won't follow their leader; but keep falling out of the ranks, and having a fight on the way. You might give me a hand."

"But wheere's thy drum?"

"My mate in advance has got it, and he's a lame hand. He was trying to work the dolls last night, and William's axe--you see its rather a heavy one for a doll--dropped on his wrist, and cut it. I told him not to meddle with things he didn't understand; but that's the difficulty with people when they think they're doing the best thing they can for you. I engaged him to drum only; but he wants to get into the secret of the strings and the wires; so that I shan't have as much work to do, and no fear of the business going bad if I shut up. But what's the business to me if I'm not handling the strings, and taking the browns."

"Dost do thy own collection reound?"

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“Trust Benjamin for that. I tried to train Jingo to it; and had a can made for him to carry in his mouth. But, true to his instincts, the first tuppence he got he ran with it to the alehouse. I tied it to his tail after that, and took his historic notions out of him. The trouble I’ve had to edjicate that dawg!”

“Does William imitate cuttin timber, then?”

“I make him do it like a good un. It’s the best part of the performance. Brings the coppers in wonderful. Not much in it but it pleases the crowd. They laugh and shout like mad. Then

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when Jingo seizes him by the nose, and shakes him, don’t they yell? I got a string crossed one time; and he missed the wood he was chopping at, and dropped the axe on old Bob’s nut. I had to get a little more white lead before I could repair the damage. But it would pay me to get a good supply, and introduce the fake at every performance; it took so well.”

After frabbin, an’ jostlin wi’ th’ creawd, an’ Jingo gettin his bant so mixed among folk’s legs as to put him eaut o’ temper,—for Ben said he’re awfully savage if he couldno’ have o his own road,—we seeted a queer-lookin buildin ut they said did for a public-heause’ an’ ther a creawd i’th’ fowt.

“I con see my way to a good haul yonder,” Ben said; an’ he dusted his pipe, pinned his cloth reand, an’ sooarted his dolls.

“Clear a ring, Jingo,” he said; an’ th’ dog made a dash at th’ creawd. “There must be only one performer while I’m here, ladies and gentlemen,” he went on. (There’ll aulus be women where men are, if they con get at ‘em.) “You’ve now seen the first part of the performance of a celebrated animile, not the Cerberus of ancient fable, but the four-legged deity you often swear by, especially when elevated and convivial—the real living Jingo. You see how neatly he made you stand back, that his master could be the ‘observed of all observers,’ whilst belongs to him the ‘cynosure of all eyes.’ Ladies and gentlemen, do you know what the word cynosure means?”

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“It’s the dog’s tail,” one o’th’ creawd sheauted.

“Right you are my friend. Cyprus has need of such men as you. The working bee and the learned bee are the emblems of an ancient industry. Jingo, why don’t you wag your cynosure, and bark? You generally do at something you don’t understand. Well, now, ladies and gentlemen, for the next part of our performance. I wish you’d keep that ‘Bones’ from Stoke quiet. He’s always interrupting somebody’s little go. He doesn’t busk it fair. If he persists in wailing that song of the ‘Pining Nobleman’, Jingo shall shake a dewdrop from his mane. That will do. Ladies and gentlemen, this is an ancient institution modernised. In the older drama *Punch* was made to slay his wife *Judy* because she was a cantakerous old besom. I would rather have used a much stronger term. If all men would follow the example set by our hunch-backed friend the world would be much quieter. All that *Punch* is made to do after the immolation of *Judy* is only in self-defence.

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In like manner, all that I make Myself do, for the ‘counterfeit presentment’ of my own person has to share the warlike glory of this modern drama, you will see is only done in self-defence. If I am assailed I strike back; and the foe will generally admit that I give a Rowland for an Oliver. These puppets, you see, I carry by a string round their necks--the protested way. But Myself I carry in my pocket. Drum, Ab;” an’ I drummed.

Here Ben drew eaut of his pocket a doll made so like him that yo’d ha’ thowt it wur a chip o’th’ owd block. Th’ fust thing he made this doll wur to jump Jim Crow, an’ turn three somersets, wi’ a back spring.

“That is the introduction, ladies and gentlemen,” Ben said, “showing the fashion of society in the bottle-green period. In the earlier editions of this drama I introduced a character that I named Daniel the Rint-man. But Daniel, I am sorry to say, has gone to smithereens long since. He couldn’t stand his whacks. Another, Bobby the Peeler, whose particular performance was to steal the clothes of a number of old women who were bathing, I had to withdraw, as the authorities said the performance had a tendency

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to encourage theft. Those who are now ignominiously suspended, with the agile gentleman who has just made his bow to you, constitute my present company. Keep quiet, Jingo; you are too eager, old boy! You forget that Myself must have the first turn. You will excuse me, ladies and gentlemen, if I now take a flight into the realms of fancy, or, rather, get behind the mystic rag.

In hauce a minit Ben wur eaut o'th' seet, an' Jingo smellin at th' hole he'd gone through. Two dolls wur put up, Myself, an' Woodman Billy. "I once said 'the time will come'," Myself said. "It is drawing near." "Mendacious minion of a mudding and messing mis-called Government, thou liest," Billy said; an' mistakkin one o' Myself's legs for a tree, he aimed a blow at at it wi' his axe. "Would'st thou deprive me of that which may yet wear a Garter?" Myself said. "Then take one for thy nob;" an' he dropt a seause above Billy's nose ut knockt him eat o'th' seet. "One down, another come on;" an' ther a white toppin showed itsel'. "Why comest thou, and what thy purpose, thou fiend of darkness? Thou would'st have reserved the policy of this great country, and driven the people back to brimstone dips." "Were the world like thee, we should require no lights," Match Bob said; "for thou art sun, moon, and stars in thyself. Bumptious and bouncing braggart, take a buster!" "Would'st thou strike on another box than thine own?" Myself said, for Bob had landed

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him one on th' ear. "Then, in the name of Myant and Bray, I will put thy shutters up, and see how thou likest thine own darkness." An' he did put Bob's shutters up, an' painted 'em black at th' same time. A mon ut's used to wearin white spectacles, an' finds 'em changed to black so suddenly, mit as weel have a tub donned o'er his yead, for any feightin he con do. Bob mowed away at nowt for a while, an' at last leet clatter in a corner, an' wur seen no more. Th' creawd sheauted, Jingo barked, an' Ben went reawnd wi' th' hat, while he rested his arms.

"Is this all?" he said, shakin his hat, ut gan but a poorish jink. "Then the performance is at an end, and Cyprus will have lost one of its most useful lessons. Will

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you deprive yourselves of the opportunity of witnessing the astounding tricks of this remarkable animile; and all for the sake of six mil--I mean a few coppers?

The blow you,
An Cyprus too,--
The meanest few
Of a stingy crew.

The hat once more around shall pass,
And if you bleed, up goes the--Quaker”

There's nowt like poetry for drawin folk eaut. Ben geet his “coppers,” an' holed again at back of his screen. Myself an' Johnny the Quaker wur put face to face; but Myself looked a little too warpown for Broad-brim; but he oppent eaut wi' “Single-breasted rascal, of all men else I have avoided thee; but, nevertheless, the time shall come. Rooty-tooty-too!” “I will not fight thee,” Johnny said; “fighting is against my creed. But I will talk to thee till thou shalt weep.” “Leave words and tears for women and the holy Moscovite; I'm for blows,” Myself said; an' in a wink Jonny wur eaut o'th' seet. But i'th' scuffle his hat wur knockt through th' window. Jingo had howd on it in a crack. Someb'dy dropt tuppence in it, an' th' animile made a dart to'ard th' alehouse dur, Ben after him.

In a minit Ben wur back again, howd o' th' dog by one ear. But he're too late, Jingo wur lickin his lips.

“Ladies and gentlemen,” Ben said, “the dawg is impatient to be doing his share of the performance. Idleness begets a liking for beer, and Jingo's extra number of legs don't give him an immunity from the vices of the biped species. I had intended pitting Myself against a recreant knight who has begun to wear a white feather in his plume: but the dawg's impatience hurries me onward. If I trifle with him he will hurry me downward, I'm

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afraid. Now I will show you a specimen of rat worrying. I have but to clothe my puppets in hairy skins, anoint their snouts with a mixture of bear's grease and pigeon milk, turn

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them down on the ground, say "Rats, Jingo!" and you'll see what a mess the dawg will make of them. You'll say it licks the sports of ancient Rome."

It took Ben abeaut five minits for t' get ready for this job; but at last he browt his dolls eaut, an' turned 'em deawn. "Rats, Jingo!" he sheauted; an' th' dog went at 'em like a dobber at skittles. He'd one bite at Match Bob; two bites at Johnny the Quaker; wi' Ned Darby he're satisfied wi' just tumblin him o'er; but when he geet howd o' Woodman Billy's nose he had to be throttled off, or elze I believe he'd ha' etten it. I could see it wur wofully pock-marked.

"That I call the elction trick, and concludes the performance," Ben said; "Jingo, sound the note of triumph!"

Th' yeawl ut th' dog set up, an' I reckon he co'ed it singin, wakkent me; an' I fund eaur Sal stonidin o'er me, sheautin like a double-barrelled huntsman, for t' tell me I're wanted at th' "Owd Bell".

As eaur Sal had never towd me afore ut I're wanted at th' "Owd Bell" for owt, I thowt this time I must be wanted for summat very partikilar; so, under a promise ut I wouldno' be late, nor mak a foo' o' mysel, I crope deawn to th' owd rallyin shop, where I fund Fause Juddie, Jack o' Flunter's, Jim Thuston, Little Dody, Billy Softly, an' Siah at owd Bob's, as merry as if they'd gotten th' wo'ld in a bant, an' cared for nob'dy. That wur summat so unus'al that it made me wonder what wur up. For months there'd bin nowt but fratchin abeaut th' war, an' th' Gover'ment, and Lord Basconfielt; an' sometimes we didno' finish up very comfortably. Ther aulus a danger o' summat bein brokken--a glass, or a yead, or a cheear. Th' differences o'er politics naturally leeaden to breakage o' some sort, an' yeads are th' leeast expensive.

"I think yo'n lit o' yo'r feet," I said, as I poked my yead in at th' kitchen dur. "What han yo' agate, like?"

"Bring a cheear up, an' bother noane," owd Juddies said, sleauchin his bottom lip, as he drew his pipe eaut of his meauth, till it lapt o'er his chin. "It isno' every day we killn a pig."

"Yo'n no' bin havin another pig do, han yo'?" I axt.

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“Nawe, Martin’s noane in at this,” Jack o’ Flunter’s said. “We’n a better thing on than sellin a pot pig. What dost thou think abeaut gooin to Cyprus?”

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“I’ve just come fro’ there,” I said.

“What dost meean by that?” Jim Thuston wanted to know.

“I’ve bin havin one o’ my owd beaunts in a corner o’ th’ garden,” I said; “an’ dreeamt I’re loded at Cyprus.”

“Theau’rt aulus dreeamin abeaut summat,” owd Juddie said. “It’s my belief theau’rt never wakken mony minits a day.”

“An’ what sort of place didt’ find Cyprus?” Little Dody said.

“A grand place, but a trifle warm,” I said; “an’ if my dreeam’s owt like th’ truth, there’s a warm lot on th’ road to there. But Cyprus wants some fresh blood. Th’ men seem to be wearin eaut. Theau’d be a giant among ‘em, Dody. But th’ women are fine, an’ bonny. Owd Vanus wur born there; an’ they say’n hoo didno’ tak o th’ family with her when hoo flitted. It would be a rare shop for startin a new ventur or two; summat that’s never bin tried there.”

“What abeaut a hen-cote, limited?” Billy Softly put in.

“Or grooin show rhuburb?” Jack o’ Flunter’s said.

“Neaw, Jack,” owd Juddie said; “theau knows what wur agreed on abeaut an’ heaur sin’. If theau mentions show rhuburb again I’ll try whether this pot or thy yead’s th’ hardest. So sing smo.”

“Fine him gills reand,” Jim Thurston said--

“Or summat ut wants a crusher to it,” Billy Softly said.

“I’ll draw my hurns in, if that’ll suit yo’,” Jack said; “so neaw to bizness. Theau knows we sent for thee, I reckon?” he said turnin to me.

“Ay, an’ it mun be summat very important, if eaur Sal ud tell me,” I said. “Wur hoo letten into th’ insect o’ owt?”

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“Well, we gan her t’understond there’d be a fortin at th’ end on’t,” Jack said. “I knew that ud work th’ orricle.”

“Well, what is it? I axt.”

“It’s just here,” Jack said. “This country’s done up.”

“Ay; it’s bin done up mony a hundert times.” I said.

“But neaw it is, gradely, an’ no mistake,” Jack said. “We conno’ last above another yeear. So we’n bin thinkin abeaut emigratin to Cyprus.”

“That’s bin botherin mi yead, or elze I should never ha’ dreeamt abeaut it,” I said. “What sort of a schame han yo?”

“One part I dar’no’ mention again,” Jack said, wi’ a look at owd Juddie. “But I’m towd ther’s no chance o’ keepin game i’ Cyprus, tho’ any sort breeds well, an’ would be plentiful if it wurno’ for one thing.”

“What’s that?”

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“Greaund game gets etten when it’s young; an’ winged game conno’ lay a egg but it’s gobbled up afore it’s cowd.”

“Some sort of a animal?”

“What is it co’ed?”

“A Mustela. It has bin common i’ England. But they con never catch it nobbut when it’s asleep.”

“Summat like a we--.”

“Neaw, ab, ift’ goes any furr I’ll wither this pot at thy turmit,” owd Juddie said. “It’s one o’th’ articles o’ eaur Congress ut a weezle munno’ be mentioned. So mind what theau’rt dooin.”

“I’ll goo no furr,” I said; “neaw, Jack, thee goo on.”

“Well,” Jack says, “we’n bin thinkin abeaut formin a company for huntin this Mustela. If we con free th’ island fro’ it, so ut game could breed, what shootin there’d be!”

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“But what good would it be to us?” I wanted t’ know.

“Well, it’s just here,” Jack said; “we mun have a price for every animal we catchen; an’ I dunno think th’ Gover’nment would be within dooin summat for us when they’n seen what good wee’n done.”

“That’s th’ way ut I look at it,” owd Juddie said. “If it had bin one o’ yo’r radical Gover’nments they’d hardly ha’ thanked us. True blue for ever; obbut damper bluestone an’ vittril for dyin humbrels with.”

“Juddie thinks he con invent a trap ut would catch this animal when its wakken,” Jim Thuston said. “An’ as he says he’s too owd for gooin t’ Cyprus, he thinks he’d have a right to share i’ what wur getten. We thinkedn th’ same.”

“Ay, it’s nowt but reet,” I said. “A mon’s brains are sometimes better than his honds, an’ owt t’ be paid better.”

“Thy brains are no’ mich good,” Juddie said. “Theau couldno’ invent a trap for catchin this--this--what is it co’ed, Jack?”

“Mustela,” Jack said.

“Ay, Mustaliar. I dar’say it’s summat like a Musk Rot,” Juddie said; “an’ may be wo’th summat for th’ skin. There’s mony a road o’ lookin at it.”

“Juddie mit be eaur agent for sellin th’ skins here,” Jim Thuston said. “We should want someb’dy.”

“Just so,” Jack o’ Flunter’s said. “An neaw I bethink me, he owt t’ ha’ moore shares i’th’ company than we han, becose he’d have a chance o’ makkin moore profit.”

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“I’ll no’ be a share or two,” Juddie said.

“Then we’re gettin on swimminly,” Little Doddy said.

“I consider th’ company floated,” Siah at owd Bob’s said.

“Well, I’re just thinkin,” I said, “that we could put two schames t’gether, an’ work’em wi’ one company.”

“What’s th’ tother scheme?” everybody wanted to know.

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“Startin a blackpuddin an’ breawis shop,” I said.

“But wheere would’st get thy blackpuddins fro’?”

“Th’ country wouldno’ breed pigs.”

“Nor groo wutmayle (oatmeal).”

“So mich better for owd England,” I said. “We could export th’ blackpuddins ready made, an’ th’ wut-cakes ready baked. Why, Juddie could set up a bakeheause ut would find everybody i’ th’ fowt wi’ wark, an’ wayvin mit go to th’ dogs. Dunno’ yo’ see?”

“Ay, an’ tak payment eaut i’ thoose skins,” Jack o’ Flunter’s said.

“We should ha’ profits at booath ends then,” Siah at owd Bob’s said. “I consider Juddie owt’ stond glasses reaunder upo’ th’ strength on’t.”

“Ay, wi’ crushers in’ ‘em,” Billy softly said. Billy likes it chep.

“Co for ‘em,” Juddie said; an’ he threw a hawe-a-creawm on th’ table. “I’m no’ gooi t’ be shabby o’er this job.”

“Whisky for me,” I said. An’ th’ tothers followed suit; they’d everyone ha’ whisky, an’ wi’ a crusher in it.

Th’ glasses wur browt in; an’ we drank owd Juddie’s health, an’ sang “He’s a jolly good fellow, which nobody con deny.” I could see ut one article o’ th’ convention wi’ th’ owd rib wur likely to be brokken--th’ gettin whoam soon. Th’ tother article, no’ makkin a foo o’ mysel, I considered wurno quite eaut o’ danger. Owd Juddie responded to his health.

“I con see neaw,” he said, “a grand prospect afore us; an’ it’s nobbut becose I’m gotten into an owd stump of a tree, we no’ mich bark on, ut I’m prevented joinin this expedition.”

“Yo’ con do moore awhoam,” Jack o’ Flunter’s put in. “We couldno’ do witheaut a agent; an’ yo’re just th’ mon for it.”

“Happen it’s a good job I am i’ my shaky years,” Juddie went on. “If I’d bin younger, my young blood would ha’ driven me to Cyprus whether or not; an’ yo’d ha’ had to look eaut for a agent somewheere elze. Neaw I con see a fortin ofor everybody i’ th’ fowt; an’ when yo’ come back, for t’ live o’ what yo’n gotten, we’n welcome yo’

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like Lord Baconsfielt, an'--an'--what's he co'ed, his mon Friday, wur welcomed i' Lunnon. (Theere cheers for Lord Baconsfielt.) Takin abeaut Lord

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Baconsfielt has led me to think abeaut pigs. When yo' getten to Cyprus tak care to get a law past ut no pigs i' th' carcas, wick or deead, mun be alleawed to be browt in fro' other countries; so ut there could be no competition i' blackpuddins. Tak care, too, at a law's passed for t' prevent wuts, or wut-mayle bein imported free o duty. Then we should ha' no competition i' wut-cakes."

"But what if other folk sent skins, beside us?" I wanted to know.

"Tax thoose," Juddie said; "becose we could afford t' pay it, an' others couldno; so we should ha' th' market to eaursels. That's what they co'en ricketty-procketty, or swap an' swap alike, wi' an advantage o' one side. Dunno' yo see? Lord Baconsfielt has bin a good schamer, but there's somdb'dy here con see a bit furr than his nose. I wonder what thoose skins would be good for?"

"Markin glooves for pet dogs," Jack o' Flunter's said. "There's no other skins would so; so owd Tummy, th' brid stuffer, tells me."

"Owd Tummy's sure to know," Juddie said; "an' I've no deaut we shall have a good sale, for we're bringin no women up neaw-a-days; they're everyone ladies. When yo' meeten one neaw hoo'll be carryin a hontful o' frock i' one hont, an' howdin a dog in a bant wi' th' tother. I wonder dogs ha' no' worn glooves before, sein ut they'n their little parlours made for'em, and their carriages, an' are fed better than anybody i' this fowt. I con see a good trade i' these skins if for nowt bobbut these glooves."

"They'n come in for makkin watch pockets for Poll Parrots," Jim Thuston said. "Parrots are begun a-havin watches hung i'th' cage, so as they con tell what time th' sarvants getten up in a mornin, an' what time th' policeman comes in an' goes eaut at neet."

"We hardly known yet what they'n come in for," Juddie went on. "Let's see; I keep forgettin what th' animal's co'ed."

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“Mustela,” Jack o’Flunter’s said.

“Ay, Mustaliar. Hadno’ we best send for owd Tummy, th’ brid-stuffer, an’ see what he says abeaut it?”

“I’m agreeable,” I said.

So everyone wur.

“Whoa’ll fotch him?” Juddie axt.

“I’ll goo,” Billy Sofly said. An’ he put his hat on.

“Ay, theau’ll be as long as th’ road as anybody, owd quiet clogs,” Juddie said. “It’ll nobbut keep us t’gether a bit longer.” An’ Billy crept quietly eaut, like a poor methody when th’ box is on th’ road. “Neaw, chaps,” Juddie said, when Billy wur gone, “we’n ha’ fresh glasses while he’s away. Winnot he be mad when he comes back? I

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feel as if we’rn gooin t’have a good spree afore we parten. Will anybody sing? Come, let’s be merry. Through the wood, laddie, fol de rol. Ab, brast off wi’ summat--some sort of a huntin song, as yo’re gooin t’ be hunters. Let’s wesh eaur new country deawn wi’ whisky an’ reveldry. Cyprus, here’s to’ard thee!

Th’ extry glasses coome in, an’ we drank to Cyprus, an’ eaur new bizness, i’ what wur welly a bumper.

“Neaw, then,” Juddie said, after he’d welly choked hissel wi’ whisky, “if theau doesno’ sing, Ab, I will.”

“Well, screw yo’r pipes up, an’ blow yo’r cheeks eaut,” I said. “It’s a good while sin’ we’d a song eaut o’ yo’. I reckon it’s this blackpuddin an’ breawis prospect ut’s liftin yo’ up?”

“I con see moore i’ that than theau con,” Juddie said. “If it hadno’ bin for dreeamin, sich a thing would never ha’ gotten i’ that thick yead o’ thine. Th’ blackpuddin an’ breawis bizness, an’ th’ skins o’ that-what’s-it-co’ed?--I con see oppenin a bank straightforrad. We’n ha’ one o’ th’ animals stuffed an’ put i’ eaur shop window. I wish I could sing a huntin sung, but I’ve forgotten ‘em o. I’ll try another mak--that race

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between Donty Pollitt an' Abram Wood, thy namesake, Ab, but a mon wi' moore sense than thee; an' could run a mile while theau're crossin th' haue-acre. Let's see, heav does it begin? Oh!" an' owd Juddie set his shooters eaut, and blaated away in a voice summat like a sheep's when it's lost--

July the fourteenth, so clear was the sky
Near Doncaster town-- (ahum!)
Near Doncaster town-- (hang it!)
Near Doncaster town-- (damper it!)

"Near Doncaster town two footmen did try," I said.

"Ay, that's it, Ab; I'll start o'er again," Juddie said.

July the fourteenth, so clear was the sky,
Near Doncaster town two footmen did try;
Young Pollitt and Wood-- (ahum!)
Young Pollit and Wood-- (hang it!)
Young Pollitt and Wood-- (damper it!)

"A hole i' th' ballit again, Ab. Con theau raich for me?"

"None so swift could be found," I said.

"Ay, theaur't reet again, Ab," Juddie said. "I'll have another fresh start. This yead o' mine loses wynt, I think."

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July the fourteenth, so clear was the sky,
Near Doncaster town two footmen did try;
Young Pollitt and Wood, none so swift could be found,
It was nearly ten miles for four hundred pound.

"What's the next, Ab?"

"Nay, if yo' mun go through abeaut sixteen verses at that rate," I said, "yo'n have it turnin-eaut time afore yo'n haue done."

"Well, it's as good as theau con do," Juddie granted; an' just then Billy Softly coome in, an' owd Tummy, th' brid-stuffer.

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“What is it yo’ wanten me for at this time o’th’ neet?” Tummy said; an’ I thowt he didno’ look so straight tempered.

“We wanten a bit o’ that sense o’ thine, for I know theau’rt brawsen with it,” Juddie said. “Theau purtends t’ know a good deaal abeaut animals; but I’ll bet a new shillin theau conno’ tell what a--what a--Mustaliar is.”

“Mustela theau meean,” Tummy said.

“Co it what theau likes; I see theau knows summat abeaut it,” Juddie said, “so give us th’ benefit o’ thy larnin.”

“Theau knows what it is,” Tummy said to Juddie.

“If I do, I’m a tinker,” Juddie said.

“Theau tried to catch one once,” Tummy said.

“Come on, chaps,” Jack o’ Flunter’s whispered, “it’s time we geet eaut o’ this hole,” an’ we made for th’ dur.

“Mustela is th’ Latin word for weezle,” Tummy said, and ther a hauve a dozen on us tumbled i’th’ lobby.

Just as we geet i’th’ fowt we yerd a crash o’ pots an’ glasses beheend us; an’ owd Tummy, th’ brid-stuffer, wur runnin eaut o’th’ kitchen, wi’ his jacket collar drawn o’er his yead, like th’ hood of a cloak. Owd Juddie had cleared th’ garrison eaut i’ no time; an’ th’ “Blackpuddin an’ Breawis Company, Limited,” wur like th’ hencote bizness, wun up at once.

A day or two after Sam, th’ ostler, met owd Juddie walkin sentry i’ eaur fowt, armed wi’ a thick ash stick. Sam wanted t’ know what he’re for wi’ that, an’ th’ owd lad towd him he’re lookin after a yorney ot two ut du’st no’ come eaut. Sam axt him if he’d had a cargo o’ skins yet fro’ Cyprus. But if he hadno’ takken through th’ mop-hole owd Juddie would ha’ killed him. We’re same as livin under martial law near; for noane on us dar stir eaut o’th’ heause.