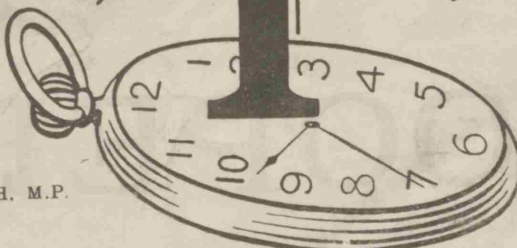


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Vol. V. No. 23.

Registered as a Newspaper.

NOV. 30th, 1918.

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Mr. J. HARDY, 51, Guildford Street, Luton.

"N-T-F"

Circulates throughout the British Empire and wherever Britons are fighting.

The Field Marshal sends you his best wishes for the continued success of your excellent work.—Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig.

The "N-T-F" is the backbone of the Prisoner of War Fund.—The Town Clerk of Luton.

"But for those parcels I should have had a wooden cross in Germany."—Pte. T. Samuels.

"N-T-F."

Nov. 30th, 1918.

"N.T.F." ("Nine-Thirty-Five.")

Founded in June, 1916, by Passengers on the 9.35 p.m. train from Luton to Harpenden.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY—THURSDAY.

By the Proprietors:—

J. J. Hunt (Vice-President), J. Hardy (Chairman), L. R. Dellar (Vice-Chairman), H. Wood (Dispatch Manager), F. E. Hawkes (Hon. Secretary), H. Tompkins, E. C. Dobbs, G. Worker, jun., A. Dutton, F. Lewin, W. E. Gladstone Burge, B. Angel, and G. Malone.

—All Services Voluntary.

FROM THIS DATE

All correspondence should be addressed:—

THE EDITOR,

"N-T-F & Tuesday Telegraph,"

**Luton News Buildings,
LUTON.**

All cheques should be made payable to "N-T-F Prisoner Fund," and crossed "& Co."

All letters containing Treasury notes, postal orders, or coin should be registered at the General Post Office.

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THE CHANGE.

This issue of the "N-T-F" may only be like the closing of a chapter to the reader. To the men and women who have worked so assiduously for it during the last two and a quarter years it has flourished it means the end of a book. They will, with this issue, when the last word is written, the last copy sold, feel that they have earned a rest. So they have. Not one of us but has felt the need for that rest; not one but has been tempted more than once to "stand down" and leave the work to others. I am afraid some have given way to this feeling, some have perforce done so, but the little band who have kept together from the beginning, sometimes pulling against the tide, sometimes going easily along with the current of prosperity, may well feel like the sailorman who reaches harbour after a long and tedious voyage.

* * *

OUR EMBARKATION was on a tiny rowboat, but gradually we improved the craft, and although at times we felt that we should have to take to the rafts, with the certain knowledge that sooner or later we

should be submerged, we have now arrived safely in harbour with a vessel which is destined to voyage still farther. The cargo we have brought home has been a happy one, for who can estimate the happiness that £1,200 we have raised has brought home to the poor fellows who have suffered the stern and often devilish torture of imprisonment in Germany?

* * *

IT HAS BEEN HARD WORK—far harder than probably any six of our readers imagined, but it has been a noble work, we almost might say a sacred work, and now that the final issue has come, so far as the Committee is concerned, we feel that it has been worth while, and we have the comforting knowledge that our labours have not been in vain, that we have done something which will remain in our memories as long as we live, and it may be, when the prisoners know all that the "N-T-F" has involved, if know it all they ever can, that they will occasionally pause in their work and play to bless the men who endeavoured to alleviate their sufferings and to give some measure of practical sympathy to those so unfortunately placed.

* * *

ONE CANNOT REVIEW the whole of the period covered by the "N-T-F." We cannot thank individually all those who have worked for us without taking any serious part in the management. Sufficient to say that but for the hearty co-operation of employers and employees of munition factories, we could never have succeeded. In this connection we would like to mention Messrs. George Kent, Ltd., Commercial Cars, Ltd., Skefco Ball Bearing Co., Ltd., Davis Gas Stove Co., Ltd., Messrs. Hewlett and Blondeau, the Luton Co-operative Wholesale Society, and Messrs. Hayward Tyler & Co. We have left out a few, but our gratitude is as sincere to them as to those named. With one exception all the large firms have shown that spirit of goodwill and charity towards our movement which was to be expected when the nation was united in a desire to secure the victory of our arms. Of that exception we are not going to say one word offensive, but regret we cannot include them in this word of praise.

* * *

TO OUR WORKERS, apart from the Committee, the sub-agents who have assisted in distribution at the works, to all who have materially helped, President, Vice-Presidents, advertisers, artistes at concerts, all, all who have helped in money or kind, even when it has only been a word of encouragement, we express our gratitude, and trust they will take unto themselves some credit for the success achieved.

It is difficult to know where to stop in recording our indebtedness, and some are sure to be left out, but we wish here to thank everybody for assistance, to apologise for any offence we may have given at any time to any single reader or non-reader, and to express the devout hope that there may never again be cause to inaugurate such an effort for such a cause—in short, that permanent peace is now assured.

* * *

FROM THE EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT, we should like to thank all contributors: "A. Moulder," who has found time to write articles in the scanty leisure of very full munition work; "Evelyn Harrowden," who wears two wound stripes and saw the worst horrors of war in the worst and darkest days of the war; "Cameo" for her short stories and the splendid series on the Munition Girl; Gladstone Burge for his continued interest when removed from the locality; Eric Dynes for his poetry; "Penquill" desires no word of gratitude, and the Editor, who

REX NEWHAM,
First Editor

R. DUTTON,
Dunstable
Representative.

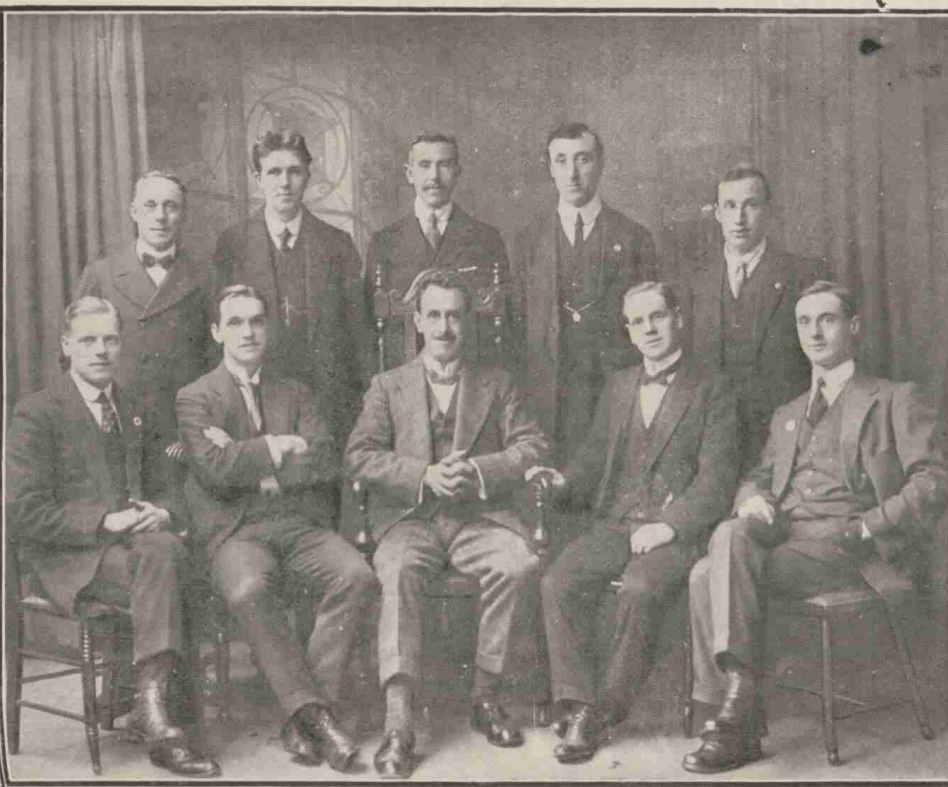
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F. E. HAWKES,
Hon. Secretary.

previously helped and later succeeded Mr. Rex Newham in preparing the journal, is in the same boat.

* * *

THE STAFF.—John Hardy has been as assiduous in his care of the financial details as if it was his own business; Russell Dellar gave much sterling work in the shape of concert organisation; George Worker, jun., Harry Wood, Fred Lewin, George Malone, Harry Tompkins, Ted Dutton, Miss Duckering, Ted Dobbs, Fred Hawkes, and Bert Angel have been the mainstay in a hundred ways, chiefly as agents and committee men, while Messrs. Armitage and Horn have helped generously with the bookkeeping. To the printers, Messrs. Gibbs and Bamforth, we are also indebted, and especially to their staff for the promptitude and willingness with which they have met all our demands. Not once have they disappointed us, never have they been a day late, and frequently have we tried their patience. We thank them without stint.

And now, from the Editor's personal standpoint, we say farewell to all our friends. The "N-T-F" will continue, and nothing would give us greater pleasure than to see it permanently secured. For ourselves, we have little to say, except that it has been an honour and a privilege to do this work, to feel that we have been able to do just a little for our brothers in adversity, and we shall have but one regret when we hand over the "N-T-F" to the new proprietors, and that will be that we have not done more. If the merit of the adventure has been small and insignificant, we can at least claim that the spirit of charity which prompted it and kept it steadily going has been of pure and honest character. And so, Farewell.

THE HISTORY OF THE "N-T-F"

The initials "N-T-F" stand for the 9.35 p.m. train from Luton to Harpenden, on which the project was conceived in June, 1916. The "Saturday Telegraph" published an article in which one prisoner asked for a Bible, and several asked for bread. The matter was taken up by Mr. Rex Newham, Mr. Archie Dellar, Mr. Harry Tompkins, and Mr. J. J. Hunt, who were then joined by Mr. Hardy. A sheet of typewritten fun was produced, and this was handed round in the train at "4d. a peep," and so heartily was it taken up that another was produced the following week, but before it was produced there were so many demands that it was decided to print 50. Before the order was executed, 200 copies were ordered, and Mr. Percy Gibbons offered an advertisement. George Worker promised to sell some at Messrs. Kent's works, and thence everything went well for a week or two, and the number grew. By Christmas we had raised about £30, but not without difficulty, for here and there was opposition, and but for the encouragement of the Town Clerk of Luton (Mr. Wm. Smith) and Councillors J. T. Dales and R. P. Graham, of Dunstable, we should probably have given up the ghost. But the Town Clerk was hon. secretary of the Luton Borough Prisoners of War Fund, and he knew better than anyone how much the money was needed, and he urged us to go on. The result was a continuance, and favours came oftener than rebuffs, the circulation grew and grew, and the paper gradually increased in size as follows:—

No. 1	June 15, 1916	4	Typewritten as an experiment.
" 2	" 22	" 200	Printed, 4 pages.
" 3	" 29	" 300	" 8 "
" 4	July 6	" 300	" 8 "
" 5	" 13	" 400	" 8 "
" 6	" 20	" 500	" 8 "
" 7	" 25	" 600	" 8 "
" 8	Aug. 3	" 600	" 12 "
" 9	" 10	" 1,000	" 12 "
" 10	" 17	" 1,000	" 12 "
" 11	" 24	" 1,000	" 16 "

And with the increase in size came a demand for an increase in quality. Our readers asked for a higher tone than pure fun, and we gave it. We began to rope in gentlemen of local importance, and so we gained influence, until in January, 1917, we were selling 2,400 copies and had a 24-page paper.

The paper shortage caused important changes in the cost of production, but our readers held on, and so we reached the 3,000 mark at which we stand to-day. We never increased the price, however, and it will not be increased now. We got the benediction of Sir Douglas Haig, the gratitude of the prisoners, and the thanks of the Luton Borough Prisoners of War Committee, on which body we were allocated a seat, and by concerts and other functions we were able to swell the funds.

And now the "N-T-F" opens a new chapter, or, we had better say it, another book commences. It will be under the direction of Messrs. Gibbs and Bamforth, proprietors of the "Luton News." Instead of the voluntary distribution as of old, it will be distributed to newsagents, and it is safe to assume that where you are able to get the "News" and the "Saturday Telegraph" you will be able to get the "N-T-F."

The present features will be continued for some little time, at any rate. There will be the writings of "Moulder," "Harrowden," "Penquill," "Cameo," and the "Munition Girl's" author, the serial will be continued, and new writers will contribute. If the experiment is successful—and we cannot think it will be otherwise—you may look for improvements in it in many ways.

Order your copy at once from your regular newsagent.

* * *

The following paragraphs are culled from the first (typewritten) number of the "N-T-F":—

The Nine-Thirty-Five.

No. 1.

June 14th, 1916.

WHAT WE THINK.

The Editor wishes to state that in publishing this weekly journal remarks will of necessity be made concerning the Boys. He trusts that such remarks will be accepted in the same light with which they are given. We intend to avoid personal injury. The Boys, we know, are all good fellows. We trust our readers will appreciate our endeavours to provide them with the weekly news.

* * *

UNDER DIFFERENT CIRCUMSTANCES.

The writer was privileged with an introduction to our worthy's fiancée recently, and has upon several occasions come to Luton in their company. We are glad to proclaim, however, that whereas before we thought that such things were lacking, some love abounds. Good luck to him and his future bride. May he continue to love with such abundant fervour.

* * *

A FEW DONT'S.

Don't let your girl or wife know what you talk about on the train.

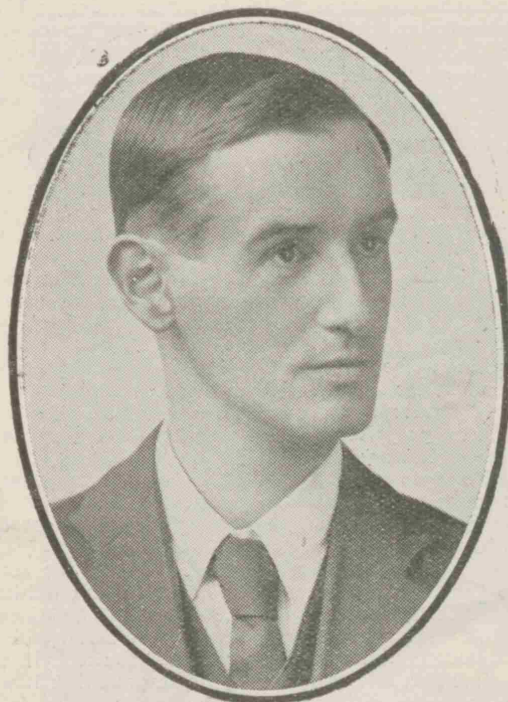
Don't linger on the platform at Harpenden or leave your reputation behind.

* * *

We hope by your frequent waitings for the 11.30 that your mind is not being led astray. Rather late, you know! Why not the 9.35 more often, excepting, of course, when the Editor waits himself.

Articles will be accepted for publication in this journal, but same should be handed for print not later than Tuesday morning. I think at all times it will be perfectly understood that should an item appear with reference to a Nine-Thirty-Fiver, that no malice will be brought to bear. The Editor will, of course, refrain from publishing facts detrimental to a chum's welfare. We hope to receive a few comments for our next issue.

Fire away, boys, but don't make it too hot.



POETS' CORNER.

(All rights reserved).

A BIRTHDAY.

From day to day and year to year,
As down life's chequered path we wend,
One only thing I ask you, dear,—
That you will be my friend.

The past holds many gladsome hours,
What of the future who can say?
To-day we'll gather love's sweet flowers,
To-day, your natal day.

Yes, we'll be true, come weal or woe,
Or cloud or sunshine, storm or calm;
We'll keep the bond of union so
That none shall work it harm.

One object ours,—each other's good,
Each other's fortune in the fight;
And when foes are to be withstood,
To be each other's might.

We'll trust through winter's chill and cold,
And summer's wealth of minstrelsy;
Before us life's unreckoned gold,—
Behind, it's pot-pourri.

ERIC DYNES.

September, 1918.

OUR DISCONTINUED STORY.

Coolduffer was one of those breezy, slap-you-on-the-back fellows. Also, his middle name was Nerve.

He met Pilker. Exchange of greetings. Pilker had a black cigar peeping coily out of his left-hand upper vest pocket. With the utmost sang-froid Coolduffer lifted it. This was one of his taking ways. "Ha, ha," laughed Coolduffer, "caught you napping that time."

Pilker smiled wanly and handed him a match. Coolduffer then lit the loaded cigar.
The end.

* * *

He: "I detest a liar above everything."
She: "Well, you're certainly not egotistical."

* * *

Half the work that is done in this world is to make things appear what they are not.

LITTLE LONDON.

No. 10.—MEPHISTOPHELES.

By W.E.G.B.

Mephistopheles still carries on a roaring trade—making new devils daily.

I saw a cartoon of the Devil recently, with horns, cloven feet, and forked tail complete. He looked a very sly, creepy sort of individual, as he always does in pictures. I have never seen him looking handsome, upright, brave, and chivalrous. He is always pictured as a shrewd, cunning, treacherous person, whose great aim is to hide his real mission under the cloak of mystery.

I have often wondered who invented the make-up of the Devil, but as no definite information on this point seems to be forthcoming, I must accept the personal appearance of the Devil as usually portrayed. Not many days ago I discovered a real devil, and shook hands with him. I have now decided never to shake hands with him again simply because he is a devil. But for one small happening, not unusual among people of such pronounced social tendencies as we Britishers, I probably should never have known he was a devil.

I met him one evening, as I had often met him before, and accepted an invitation to accompany him home. There it was I first discovered his devilishness. In his own home, above all places, which only proves the saying that "to size a man up you must see him at home."

I had met him many times before in his office, and at the club, and other places, but never at home before. I wish now I hadn't done it that once, because, to say the least, it is not pleasant to discover a devil.

The first thing that happened when we got home was this: His children, three in number, made a combined dash for their beds. The devil calmly informed me that this scamper was repeated nightly, as his children were mightily afraid of him. Thus to hear the latch-key inserted was the signal for precipitate stair-climbing.

And then afterwards the devil's wife appeared, but scarcely a glance was exchanged.

"Can I speak to you a moment, George?" the wife asked, in low tones.

George is the devil's name. Excusing himself, the devil went out of the room, and from what subsequently reached my ears during the next five minutes my fast-growing conviction was fully confirmed. Yes, George was a devil.

Evidently the wife required some money. It seemed like ten shillings, but the devil seemed to think she wanted to purchase Selfridge's, lock, stock, and barrel.

After much tribulation, the devil returned victorious. That is, he refused to part with the ten shillings; and I made a hasty departure.

George is not the only devil I have met in London. I met several last week, but they were she-devils, which, to my mind, is worse. I was standing at the junction of Tottenham Court Road and Oxford Street, and there saw a bus stormed by these she-devils, although a queue of patient men in hospital blue were waiting to board the 'bus. This is a common occurrence, and reminds me of the monkey house at the Zoo at feeding time. But it is too serious a matter for jest, and a monkey is hardly human, though some are more human than these she-devils who ride in 'buses.

I saw another devil recently. I went into a large shop somewhere in Oxford Street to make a purchase. There was a devil. In this large shop was kept a very large stock of everything for human need. The devil had two shop assistants and a shop walker in attendance. How long she had been devilling I do not know, but the whole stock of the shop seemed to be on the counter, piled mountains high. Every second more stock was added to the pile, and the two assistants appeared on the verge of expiring. But still the devil devilled. While my purchase was

being wrapped up the devil left the shop without making any purchase or an apology for chaos indescribable. I am sure three people were suffering from a nervous breakdown the next day.

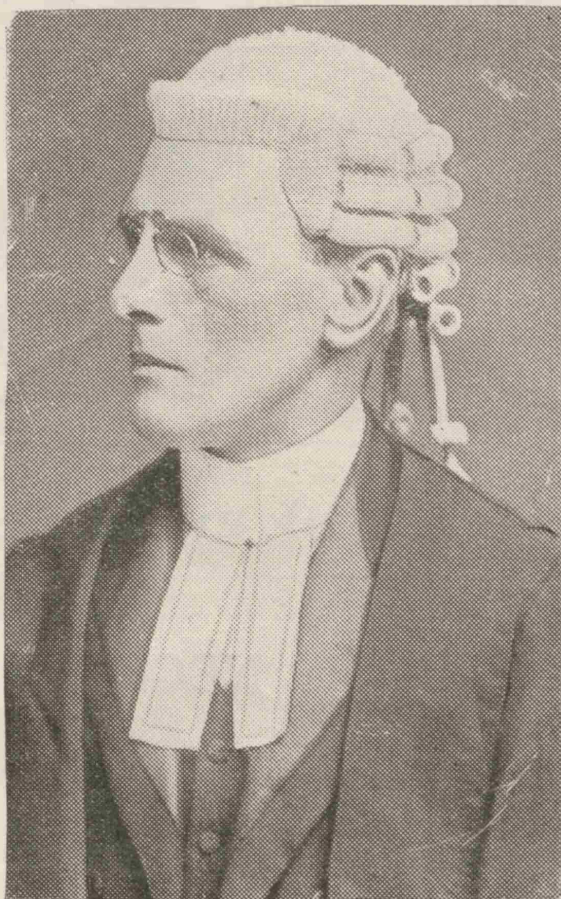
Devils seem to be everywhere these days. Three days ago two devils got into my morning train, and there was much devilment in the air that morning. Number one devil wanted the window open, so opened it. Number two closed it. Number one opened it again, and number two, equally deter-

mined, closed it. This went on for a mile or more, and then both devils made an onslaught on each other's vocabulary, with the result that a fiery battle finally ended in the window being half opened. Neither of the now hot opponents were satisfied with the compromise, and number one bit off the end of his pipe, while number two amused himself and others by carrying on an almost inaudible one-man conversation.

And yet another train devil was loose the other



W. J. PRIMETT, Esq.,
Chairman, Luton Borough Prisoners
of War Fund.



TOWN CLERK OF LUTON
(MR. WM. SMITH),
Hon. Sec., Luton Borough Prisoners of
War Fund.



H. O. WILLIAMS, Esq., J.P.,
Hon. Treasurer, Luton Borough Prisoners
of War Fund.

day. A lady devil this time. After a day's toil I boarded a suburban train and entered a smoking compartment. There was the devil in state, surrounded by endless luggage and parcels. Cases, trunks, portmanteaux, parcels, and golf sticks were littered everywhere, on the seats, racks, and floor. At each station more passengers boarded the train, but in spite of the fact that ten members of my own and the other sex were standing up, no attempt was made to remove the luggage from the seats. At the

end of the journey, we all changed, and the devil politely asked for someone to assist in removing her furniture, which should have been transported in a pantechicon, not a railway carriage.

I might go on for ever describing devils, but what's the use? Mephistopheles still carries on a roaring business, making new devils daily. Only this morning I met another devil. He was one of those economy devils, and asked me to lend him a match. That's what I call "home-made" economy.

It were no virtue to bear calamities if we did not feel them.

* * *

Those who have a heart to do good never need complain for lack of opportunity.

* * *

There never was a war in which each side couldn't prove the other the aggressor.

Nobody gets as much enjoyment out of robust health as some people do out of their minor ills.

* * *

Happiness is like a kitten's tail—hard to catch; but there's plenty of fun in chasing it.

* * *

Gentleness and cheerfulness: these are the perfect virtues; they come before all morality.



This Smart FUR SET, in Natural American Opossum, Cape Collar, Pillow Muff—42/6 set.

The Cheapest Shop in Luton for FURS.

See the **DISPLAY** in Window, and note the prices.

Fur Muffs and Necklets

In Black Wolf, Black Wallaby, Black Foxline, Dark Brown Skunk Goat, Grey Squirrel, Natural Opossum, Natural Fitch, Natural Musquash, White Foxline, and Ermine.



FURS of every description.



This Set of Furs in Black Foxline, 35/6 set, as Sketch.



This style, as Sketch, in Bearine, 55/6 set, worth 70/-



NECKLETS in

Tangos, Capes, Necklets, Pull Through, Collars.

MUFFS to match.

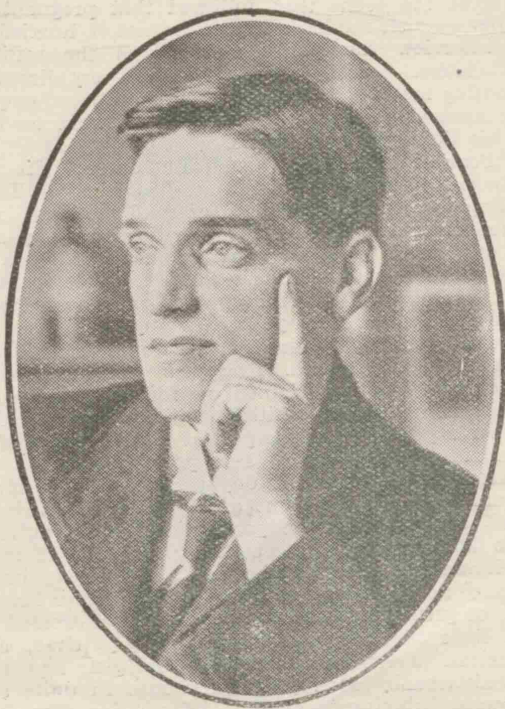
MUFFS in

Pillow, Barrel, Open.

NECKLETS to match.

W. GOODY,

21, Manchester St.,
LUTON.



A MESSAGE TO YOU.

(By "Penquill.")

His workings are so inscrutable and diverse that we miss much of their beauty by looking for them in ways they may never come.

There is so much to say in this issue of the "N-T-F" that I hardly know where to begin. Life is very short to those who have reached that stage when they are uncertain if they will see another milestone, just in the same way as a happy boy or girl will tell you that the year just gone has passed all too quickly. But the last four years have been a valley of shadow, and although we have ever had an increasing assurance of victory in the war, the spectacle of desolated homes, of distressed women and children, has ever been before our eyes, and the period has seemed long—too long. For those who have lost all they held most dear, the dawn of peace is grey and blurred. We cannot see clearly through tears. For those sorrowing I want to make the first portion of this article a message. It is that sorrow may be either bitter, with a hard, hopeless and loveless prospect, or it may be an experience which will gradually make fertile the heart, bringing new and holy aspirations. Do not let the sense of loss sterilise the source from whence springs all that is best in life. It is from experience I write thus. I know it is not easy to visualise gold when one is looking on iron; I know the despair and distress of shattered visions; I know just what it is to fall headlong from the smiling plain into the chasm of strong grief; I have felt that I was living in a night that would not end, just as you may be now, but there came a day when I looked upward, and a glimmer of hope gave comfort and strength, and seeking a way out I found a new acquisition of strength, a new and keener desire to reach beyond the frowning edge of the precipice towards that bright bit of sky, and as I essayed the task the patch of brightness grew larger and eventually I found that the ascent was less difficult as I got higher, that there were better and greater treasures of heart awaiting me for the asking. That way you too may find peace and consolation. I do not say that there will be no clouds, because doubt and misgiving are human frailties, but if one hopes firmly and holds steadily onward it will be surely found that the new vision of the light will be clearer than before.

How may you do it? I have said in earlier articles that I intuitively felt the presence near me of those who had gone before. When the loved one who is lost was parted from you and there were hopes of return, you swept back the tears and quieted the fears by your trust in the Divine protection and love, did you not? Why should you feel that because the Unknown Love which helped you then is less because your hopes have been shattered? "He shall give His angels charge concerning thee." Not merely the invisible angels, but also those forces, embodied in material form who have helped or shown a desire to help, to comfort, to share the burden. The angel presence is not merely the shape of departed spirits. Wherever is a kindly word or deed there is the promise of God fulfilled that His angels have charge. His messengers may be a nod, a smile, an approving glance even—His workings are so inscrutable and diverse that we miss much of their beauty by looking for them in ways they may never come. The children of the widow may be the Divine recompense for the withdrawal of some other phase of His goodness; the courage of the widowed mother who is left to struggle on into an unclear future may be the star to guide the fatherless children. In such ways may the presence of the angels be felt, always inspiring hope, ever cheering the dark place and opening up new vistas to those who keep their faces towards the East. Sorrow is sacred because it was sanctified by God when He came down to earth and suffered the greatest tragedy of all time that mankind might have eternal happiness.

I have quoted previously these lines:—

I look no more without, and think to win
The treasures that are only found within;
And after many years have grown too wise
To search our world for some lost Paradise.
Or feel unhappy should we chance to miss
The next life and the possibilities in this.
'Tis then we follow, but hereafter find
The goal all golden-miraged in our mind.

At the hill-top I reach my resting-place,
To find clean heaven, feel it face to face;
Firm footing after all the weary slips,
To hold a cup unshaken to my lips.
The weaving of my life grows clear at last,
And I can smile at troubles past.

I thank my God for all that He hath given,
And ope the windows of my soul to heaven;
And so I journey to the land above,
Clothed with humility, and crowned with love.

And now to those who are looking forward with eager vision to the new world. There is a sanctity of joy not less than of sorrow. Whom do you think were the most sincere in their thanksgivings for the end of war—those who knelt and thanked God for deliverance or those who paraded the streets shouting and singing in wild and meaningless tunes and words? Science tells us there is one division of the brain known as the "reflex," which sees without impression, which hears without knowing, which feels without sense of touch. Another division retains all that is worth seeing, knowing, or feeling. So I think must have been the great Mind and Heart of the Creator in regard to the recent Peace celebrations: the wordless prayers from hearts relieved, the tears of silent joy, the hands clasped or outstretched in token of relief and gratitude, the fervent hymns of praise and the heartfelt prayers—these I think were things which were recorded in heaven on Armistice Day.

Why? Because if those prayers and praises were sincere they meant the re-affirmation of faith, the dedication anew of life and talents to His purpose. That is the part of everyone of us, but more especially for those who have little of a personal nature to grieve over during the last four years. I wish I could say something that would make all my readers consecrate their lives to this practical form of thanksgiving. There are a thousand ways in which to do it—and new ways and golden opportunities open before

us every day and pass into oblivion like shooting stars. Let us find those ways in unselfishness, in sacrifice, in constant endeavour to serve those in need, for that is the way of Christ. I close with more lines I quoted in an article in these columns over two years ago:

What, then, is life? A fitful sound,
A weary wish, an idle hour?
Say, what is life? A truth profound?
Or idle thought upon the flower?
O! can it be aught less than this—
A spirit seeking after bliss?
Aye, seeking good in every form,
True wisdom from the Master-Spring;
The morning breath, the evening storm,
From light and shade, and everything;
Its glory in the sunny sky,
From whispers softly passing by.
Say, what is life? An act of will,
A deed performed or left undone?
To live! The spirit findeth still,
It has but now its race begun;
Starting ever, its end unknown,
Begins with heaven, ends with the Throne.

Pengwill

WHEN JIMMY GOT LOST.

By "A. MOULDER."

A silly sheep can find its lamb among a thousand, but we could not find Jimmy.

It was late in the afternoon when young Johnny made the alarming discovery that filled every moment



of the next fourteen or fifteen hours with enough thrills to make up an American film serial. In a dozen words he disclosed the whole tragic story. "Jimmy's gone out somewhere, and I can't find him anywhere." Words utterly fail me, so must leave you fond parents or loving brothers and sisters to

imagine the scene that followed that pregnant intelligence. At mother's urgent request, I hurried off to interview the police and inform the military authorities. Search parties set off in every direction, shouting for Jimmy in every street and lane, enquiring anxiously at every house he was wont to visit in his little perambulations.

"Poor little fellow!" sobbed mother; "it was only two hours ago when I washed him." Then, calling to mind little things, as fond mothers do in times of stress, she said: "I noticed a nasty sore on one of his poor little feet; and he did look so nice in his black and white coat. I am sure someone will steal him. There is always someone ready to pick up nice little things like Jimmy."

In vain was my opinion that he would find his way back when he got tired. I might as well have spared my breath. Mother blamed me for being the cause of his nomadic propensities, whilst I inferred that keener supervision on the part of mother might have minimised our troubles, and possibly averted the disaster. I felt sure he ought to have been made acquainted with the name of the street in which he lived, so that when he got lost he would at least have known where he wasn't. But none of these recriminations brought him back, and we continued to conjure up visions of him toddling under horses' feet, or getting run over by the trams; ill-treated by bad little boys; pictured him hungry, tired, and homeless. Precocious little boys and girls added to our distress by coming to our house in units and platoons, bringing incoherent information regarding places where they had seen him; but, like the mirage of the desert, he had gone when we got there.

Oh! that night! How we fondly hoped some kind person had taken him in. But even supposing they had, how were we to find each other? Somehow, the world had never seemed so boundless; the limitations of the so-called intelligent human had never seemed so narrowed. A silly sheep can find its own lamb amongst a thousand, but we wise humans—amongst our own—couldn't find Jimmy.

Of course, we told all our tradespeople our sad trouble, thinking it possible that, in their peregrinations from street to street they might catch a glimpse of him. I expect it was one of them who told the Vicar. He, good fellow, came up and expressed his deep concern, reminding us, in his nice way, that it was his duty and pleasure to weep with those that wept. "How did the little fellow manage to get out without your knowledge?" he asked. "Surely it is not usual for you to allow him to—ah—er—run the street, Mrs. Sims?"

"Oh, yes!" replied mother, "quite usual; only the trouble is he went out without his collar on!"

"I'm afraid I don't quite follow you," said his reverence. "What difference does his collar make? Isn't it—er—unusual, that is to say, somewhat unnecessary, for one of such tender years to wear a collar?"

"Well, he'd get 'collared' if he didn't," replied mother, with unconscious humour.

The Vicar frowned; and his smooth voice seemed harsh as he enquired with some acerbity: "May I ask, is this Jimmy a boy or a girl?"

And when we told him what it really was, he gave us the impression that he had been deceived. And so have you!

Fact is, the military authorities have issued a fiat stating that all dogs without collars are liable to be regarded as ownerless, and will loose the number of their mess accordingly.

And that mongrel of a Jimmy had dutched off without his collar.

"A. MOULDER."

A good thought is a great boon, for which God is to be first thanked, then he who is the first to utter it, and then in a lesser, but still in a considerable degree, the man who is the first to quote it to us.



THINK NOT.

By EVELYN HARROWDEN.

Every Wedding is somebody's Funeral.

Don't think that because a man proclaims himself "a miserable sinner" in church, that he appreciates your describing him as such outside.

Don't think that a man of fifty, who tells you he wishes he was young enough to fight, really jumps for joy when the age limit is raised. His favourite text is not "Hold the fort for I am coming," but "He also serves who only stands and waits."

Don't think that because a man is old he is wise. Methuselah's only claim to fame is that he didn't die young.

Don't think that because a man preaches "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," he practises it. Many a man wants for himself what he isn't anxious to give to others.

Don't think that all the good and desirable men are in one party. Joan of Arc, the late Queen Anne, and our friend, Charles Peace, are all dead, but they achieved distinction by widely different methods.

Don't think that the clothes are the man. A little khaki covers, sometimes, a multitude of wanglings. And a little "work of national importance" goes a very long way.

Don't think that it rains because someone walks along with an umbrella up. Some people's only pleasure is sadness.

Don't think that because one swallow doesn't make a summer, nobody else can help us. A pert little wasp can always make one spring.

Don't think that women cannot bear pain with fortitude. Any shoemaker knows they can—and do.

Don't think that all men are polite to a woman just because she is a woman. It's probably because she is pretty.

Don't think that the parting of the fool and his money is an entirely reprehensible proceeding. At any rate, it keeps the rest of us from starving.

Don't think that women will be content now they have a vote. They'll still want a certain amount of loving.

Don't think that it's work that will kill you. It may be worry, and it may be the eternal scramble for what you haven't got and don't really want—but never good hard honest work.

Don't think that compromise is any good. It's merely an agreement whereby both sides get what they don't want.

Don't think it's any disgrace to be poor. But it might as well be.

Don't think that unpopularity is an altogether bad thing. It doesn't cost half as much to live when you're unpopular.

Don't think that blunt speech is a virtue. The worst thing about folks who blurt out just what they think is that they haven't thought.

Don't think that up-to-dateness is everything. The commonest tramp whistles the latest tune.

Don't think that the good all die young. I'm still here.

Don't think you're as wise as you think you are. It's a difficult matter to be completely truthful—especially to one's self.

Don't think all the lunatics are under control. Some of us are clever enough not to be found out.

Don't think that war is altogether evil. It at least shows us who are men, and who are only cheap imitations.

Don't think that it's easy to "forgive and forget." The deeper a wrong sinks, the longer it takes to come out.

Don't think you ought to have all you earn. You would probably have a little penal servitude as wages now and then if you did.

Don't think you'll ever be satisfied with getting what you ask for. It's the wanting you like, not the getting.

Don't think that I mean all I say. I've got to write something.

Don't think that I never mean what I say. I, even I, speak the truth sometimes.

DON'T FORGET!

Next Tuesday Tea-Time at 4.45.

"N-T-F and Tuesday Telegraph."

Latest News, Pithy Pars, Topical Articles.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

Our Future.

From the date of present issue, the title and copyright of the "N-T-F" are being taken over by the Proprietors of the "Luton News," who propose to issue it in future, on

Tuesday Evenings instead of Wednesday, as the

"N-T-F & Tuesday Telegraph,"

Price—One Penny.

All the BEST FEATURES, including, Munition Girl's Diary, "Evelyn Harrowden," "A. Moulder," "Penquill," and the great Serial Story—

"Thro' Darkness to Dawn,"

will be retained.

Other features will be added and the policy which has made the "Saturday Telegraph" so successful, viz., the inclusion of the Latest Home and Foreign news in addition to Local reports and comments, will be followed.

LOOK OUT!

**Next Tuesday Tea-time
at 4.45.**

LATEST NEWS.

PITHY PARS.

TOPICAL ARTICLES.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

THINGS WE WANT TO KNOW.

IMPORTANT.—Contributions from Munition Works can only be accepted through a recognised agent of the "N-T-F." Reflections upon moral character cannot be entertained. Contributions from private individuals must bear name and address of sender.]

DID "C." and "B." know that they were being overheard in George Street at 9.35 on Nov. 6th?

WOULD "W.A." be able to count up how many whiskeys he drank to celebrate the Armistice, and had he the "flu" or a thick head the following morning?

HOW did "H.G." get out of the predicament in which he was placed on the morning of Nov. 14th?

THE sweeper-up in a local factory who makes eyes at the girls in the time office, and is he aware there is nothing doing?

DOES "Cuthbert" like time off or time-keeping?

DID "Tommy" feel very proud of himself when his speech was "accepted"?

DID the girl who was dressed for London lose the "train" or "bus" on Tuesday, or was it to show off the style of her new dress-coat?

WILL a certain young lady get her house now the war is over?

WHEN is "L" going to start waiting on herself?

THE Luton soldier who awakened his brother in France at 4.30 a.m., and asked him what time he wanted calling?

THE soldier billeted in High Town Road who said to the smartlooking civvie the other week: "I say, mate, when are you going to do your bit," and was he aware of the fact that this civilian (?) was a soldier home on his first leave after 3 years' active service abroad—(not service in Luton)?

WHY the Co-op. (High Town Road) would not supply the Luton soldier with his ration of sugar when home on furlough, and did he get great satisfaction from the grocer opposite, who was very pleased to serve him?

THE landlord who refused a house to a Luton soldier's widow, and is he aware of the fact that many Lutonians out here say: "How would he like a Rough House with music provided gratis after the war?"

THE Quartermaster who exchanged matches for oranges last year, and will he do the same thing now the orange season is in full swing?

WHAT did O. do with his complimentary ticket, and does he think he had done enough for charity?

IS it true that Uncle Ted's one cauliflower was worth eight of Sinbad's?

THE girls of a certain dyeworks who are always minding other people's business?

THE girl who is always bragging about her dress, and does she realise that when she's up and dressed her wardrobe is empty?

THE girl of a certain dye-works who was always quarrelling with a boy and is now doing all in her power to get on friendly terms with him and does she realise that she is too late?

THE girl who says her mother buys her everything she wants, and does she really wangle?

THE certain foreman in the machine shop who ordered the girls of the stores to put their smoke out, and did he mean the cigarettes?

DOES the "Special" now wish he had joined the Volunteers?

WHO is the boy that goes in the name of "Emma"?

WHAT the boy tormentor of the girls says when they call him "Ding-Dong"?

IF it is correct "She of the red hat-band" has lost her heart to "Our conductor"?

"Thro' Darkness to Dawn"

By Mrs. A. J. PHILLIPS.

"Author of 'Swifter than a Weaver's Shuttle,' 'Feet of Clay,'
'The Grindstone,' 'Millgirl or Heiress?' &c."

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS:

ROSA, a girl full of grace and of great beauty, sits beside the bed of her dying mother, Mrs. Jeffreys, who endeavours to tell her of some papers that are in an old chest, informing the girl also of her noble birth. She expires without mentioning the name of her father.

On searching, Rosa fails to find the papers or money, and suddenly realises she is absolutely friendless and penniless. To pay the funeral expenses of her mother and her board, she consents to act as a servant for two years to

MRS. MELROSE, the landlady of the house, who, learning of the existence of the papers, has, while Rosa sleeps, stolen them and the money.

MARIE, the landlady's daughter, consents to personate Rosa.

LADY ST. IVAL, who designs to marry her daughter Diana to Lord Manly, and on approaching the matter, finds, to her surprise, Diana is already in love with him.

LORD JEFFREYS, brother of Lady St. Ival, has just received news of his long-lost daughter Rosa, and wishes to place her in his sister's charge.

CHAPTER IV. (Contd.).

"Ready!" cried Mrs. Melrose, in deep surprise. "Oh, that sounds all right. Suppose you go and have a good look for them, and also for the money."

A queer smile crept round her mouth when the girl had left the room, and it turned the pleasant, genial face of the landlady into a cruel, crafty one, full of deceit. Mrs. Melrose was an adept in deceit. She had been deceitful all her life. As an assistant in a shop she had owed her smart appearance by secreting many things and allowing others to be dismissed in consequence. By it she had won her husband, cheating another and better woman out of his love, and, still further, she had packed him off to America after pretending him dead, and thereby cheating an insurance company of a good round sum. She seemed to possess a mind particularly cunning, which she cleverly concealed under a kind and benevolent manner, and no one in her company would suspect her of possessing a subtle and scheming disposition.

She waited quite calmly for Rosa's reappearance. Already she was word perfect in the rôle she was about to play, and she knitted away indifferently while the girl upstairs was hunting for that which had been stolen away.

Rosa in the meantime had entered her mother's room, and as her eyes fell upon the bed and saw the pillow still dented where the dear head had rested, a wave of grief swept over her; but she recovered herself with an effort, and, opening the drawers, began her search. Very carefully she looked through

everything, but found nothing until she came to the bottom drawer of all, and in that she found the cashbox. With a sensation of relief she turned the key in the lock and opened it, only to experience a sense of deep dismay when she saw that it contained nothing at all. She looked at it blankly, fear in her heart. Surely her mother had not left her penniless! Feverishly she continued her search through another and smaller chest of drawers, a large trunk, and a portmanteau, but no other box found she, nor did any bundle of papers come to light. Finally, she sat down upon the bed with a cold sensation at her heart.

"I am penniless," she whispered. "What shall I do? Who can help me?"

However, there was nothing to do but to go down and tell Mrs. Melrose the result of her searching. With reluctant feet she took herself downstairs, a feeling of utter helplessness making her cold and faint.

"Mrs. Melrose," she said, in a frightened voice, "I can find neither money nor papers of any sort," and she looked at the woman appealingly, seeking for comfort.

"No money?" returned the landlady. "Surely, my dear, your mother must have left something."

"The cash-box is empty," replied Rosa, "and I can find no papers of any sort."

"Strange," said Mrs. Melrose. "Whatever will you do? There's the funeral expenses and my bill to settle."

"How much did you say it was altogether?" faltered Rosa.

"The funeral cost fifteen pounds, and my bill is six," replied Mrs. Melrose, a hard note in her voice; "that makes twenty-one pounds in all."

"And I can't find a penny," cried Rosa, the fear in her voice growing deeper. "What shall I do?"

"Surely your mother told you of some relation you could go to?" asked the landlady, coldly, keeping her small eyes fixed upon the girl as a snake upon a rabbit.

"No. She tried to at the last, but was too ill to say much. I know of no one."

"No one at all—and you are penniless? How, then, is the undertaker to be paid?"

Mrs. Melrose's manner had changed; all politeness had vanished out of her voice, and she addressed Rosa as though she were speaking to one very much inferior to herself. The girl noticed it, and though Rosa Jeffreys was far from proud, she resented it, and, drawing her slender form up unconsciously, replied quietly and coldly: "No doubt I shall find some way out of the difficulty. My mother told me to go to some lawyer, and I think I shall do that at once, and try to find my relatives."

At once Mrs. Melrose was all kindness. That plan would not suit her in the slightest. At all costs she must keep this girl under her eye. "Now, listen to me, my dear," she said, in her old, motherly manner. "You would make a great mistake if you did that. Lawyers are

NEXT WEEK: "N-T-F" in a New Form.
"N-T-F & Tuesday Telegraph," ONE PENNY.

expensive people to deal with, and I really fear you have no relatives living. Your mother was a widow, and said many times she'd no people of her own. Will you let me advise you?"

"I should be very glad," replied Rosa, tears in her eyes. "I feel intensely miserable about it. It is dreadful to owe money and to have no means of paying it back. There is some jewellery of mother's; I could part with that."

"No, indeed," replied the landlady, warmly; "not likely. I will take care of that for you, and your jewelled cross. Now I'll tell you what I can do. My brother will lend me the money to pay the funeral expenses. He is always very good to me whenever I want money. You won't object to that, will you?"

"How shall I repay you?"

"Well, now, I was up in the house, and Annie has just left me to be married and Marie is going away to live with her uncle. What do you say to staying with me and making your home here? You could pay me back that way, for I paid Annie fifteen pounds a year, and I could keep part of your wages and give them to my brother in payment of your debt. If you stayed with me two years, you'd pay every penny back and have a home as well." And Mrs. Melrose looked at Rosa with a benevolent smile.

"Could you do this?" cried Rosa, a great relief in her voice. "I would willingly help you in the house, do anything that would assist you, if you will only show me how to."

Mrs. Melrose experienced a sense of relief, and her smile was very brilliant as she replied: "Very well, then, that is settled. I will hold your jewellery in my care until the debt is paid. I shall give you another room, of course, but you won't mind that, and I will arrange your work; it won't be hard or menial."

"I will do as much as I can, and learn from you what you wish me to do," answered Rosa, gratefully. "A home and shelter is what I require most, for I feel dreadfully lonely and helpless." And the girl's lip quivered painfully.

The next day the change began. Rosa packed up her mother's belongings in one large trunk, the jewellery she gave into Mrs. Melrose's care. Her own things were taken into a smaller room upstairs, and the rooms which of late she and her mother had occupied were made ready for a prospective lodger.

Mrs. Melrose's large and comfortable lodging-house was in the middle of a long row of similar houses situated near the promenade of the prosperous and bracing seaport town of Brightpool. Her house was rarely, if ever, without paying guests, and during the season she never had a room to spare.

Mrs. Jeffreys had occupied a small back sitting-room for the last twelve months, and both she and her daughter had lived simply and almost frugally.

Rosa, when her bedroom was ready for her, quickly emptied the big chest of drawers which she had used in her mother's bedroom, and carried the contents up into the attic.

While so occupied she heard a voice say, sympathetically, "What be you adoin' of, Miss Jeffreys? 'Ere, just you put that heavy load down; I'm here to do that sort of work."

Rosa turned and saw Martha, the kitchen-maid, looking at her in amazement. She smiled, and shook her head. "It's all right, Martha," she replied. "I'm moving up a little higher, that is all."

"Well, you don't say. Wot a shame; but let me help you, miss. Now do."

"Very well; come along. After all, two of us will make shorter work of it."

In a short time Rosa's things were once

more settled, and as the last garment was put in the bottom drawer she heaved a sigh of relief.

"Thank you, Martha; you are very kind. You have helped me considerably."

"Bless you, miss, that's nothing. I'm glad yer stopping, miss. I was afeared you was goin', I were, for sure."

"No, I am staying on for some time, Martha. Mrs. Melrose has kindly offered me a home. She needs a help in the house, and has asked me to stay."

Martha's face was a study as she heard this. Astonishment blended with incredulity gave place to a look of fear as she suddenly bent and, catching hold of Rosa's hand, cried, sharply:

"Don't take any favours from her; don't yer, now. Oh, miss, don't stay 'ere for that. She'll lead yer a horful time."

"Hush!" whispered Rosa, quickly, laying her finger on her lips. "Mrs. Melrose is coming upstairs."

And as they listened the sound of a cat-like tread was plainly heard.

CHAPTER V.

Lady St. Ival's plan had succeeded, and the affianced couple had met several times and discussed the coming wedding-day.

Diana was radiantly happy, and David found her society distinctly agreeable. Once or twice he looked at the glowing face in surprise. That she should be satisfied with such an arrangement puzzled and disappointed him. However, she seemed happy enough, he thought, and would make a charming hostess in his house, and since Lady Amelia had distinctly told him Diana understood and agreed to his conditions, nothing more need be said. He did not feel quite happy about it, all the same, and the more he saw of Diana the more he regretted listening to Lady Amelia's enticing voice. After all, it was childish and absurd to wish for revenge, and he felt mad that Diana had been brought into it. Still, he consoled himself with the knowledge that she knew all about it, and dismissed the whole thing from his mind with a shrug of his shoulders.

The day before the wedding all was excitement. Lord Jeffreys had lent his town house for the occasion, and a great many guests were invited. Everything was on a most lavish scale, and the flowers were lovely. A most enjoyable evening was spent, and Diana and David appeared to be the happiest of all. David, far from being so, felt exceedingly wretched, and found himself from time to time looking at his bride with questioning eyes.

She, on the other hand, was happiness itself. From guest to guest she moved, bubbling over with spirits, while Lady St. Ival kept watch over her, and, unknown to her, quietly manœuvred that she and David should not have the chance of being alone. She felt guiltily afraid lest David would unconsciously betray her, and in consequence she was upon pins, and though outwardly smiling and composed, was far from feeling so. On the morrow she had made up her mind to tell David of her deception, and, though quaking inwardly at the ordeal, she determined to carry it out for Diana's sake.

"So, Di, you are actually going to be married?" asked a tall, stylish woman clothed entirely in black. "Come and sit down by me and tell me all about it."

Diana sat down beside young Mrs. Morrison, and smiled at her with laughing eyes. "What is there to tell you, Stella, that you do not already know?" she replied, gaily. "Wooded in a hurry, and as quickly married, if all goes well."

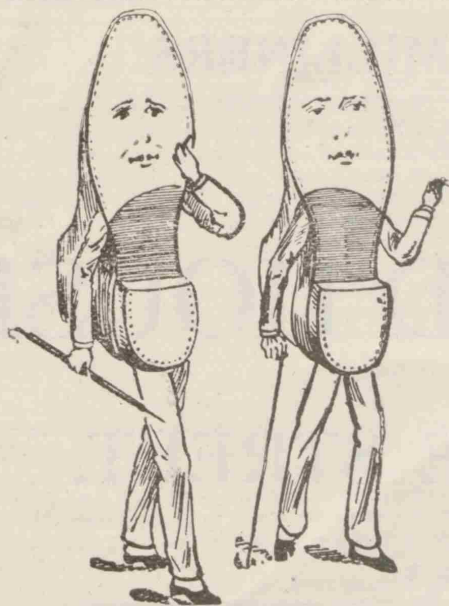
(To be continued).

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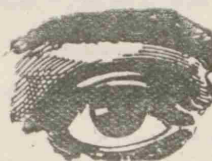
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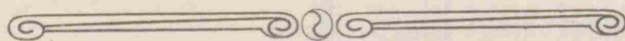
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"THE 'FLU.'"

It was a dark and dreary Monday evening, and the wind came in strong gusts from the North. Very few of the inhabitants of Simbury-on-the-Lea were out-door, the reasons being: (1) an alarming number of cases of influenza; (2) the uncertainty of obtaining the national "beverage" at the local inn. (The "Hop Boilers" from Witchin having given their tied agents a "miss in baulk" for some days).

The Pessimist, with his usual keenness and thirst to quench, discovered on turning the lane a short beam of light, which, to his trained mind, could only proceed from the local "pub," commonly called the "Black Drake."

"Ah!" he cried, "something doing."

On reaching the main entrance, the old sign, true to custom, gave its greeting, but this evening, the sound resembled a donkey's last earthly wail, and certainly emphasised the lack of lubrication on its internal and external joints. Within the Pessimist quickly found proof of the visit of the brewers with some of the national liquid for combating the terrible germs of "Influenza."

At first glance the inn seemed deserted. The Private Bar (rightly named) was in darkness, so he betook himself into the Public Bar. Here was a fairly large number of "Imbibers," but several habitués were missing.

"Good evening, gentlemen," were his first words, and turning to one of his particular chums, added: "Ah, Foker, glad to see you looking fit and well; missed the 'flu,' eh, what? See you haven't missed having your tonic."

The Pessimist lost no time in calling for an Imperial pint, which he quickly tasted, and, judging by his expression, the quality was evidently normal, although somewhat cold. Placing his glass at the end of the counter with more than ordinary care, he sat down ready to join in anything the company took up.

A game of dominoes was in progress in one corner of the room, the players two old experts called Packson and Paker. Packson must have had the "double six," judging by the remarks he passed every time Paker played a "card," which either took his (Packson's) end off, or baulked his getting the requisite domino in to permit his playing the high one. Dominoes, however, seemed no attraction for Pessimist that evening. In another corner of the room a game of "Devils amongst the Tailors" was going on. Neither did this game appeal to Pessimist, being much too noisy. The two players of the "Devil" were evidently strangers, as no one appeared to notice them, and even Pessimist did not view their attendance that evening with friendliness. The taller caused quite a sensation when somebody's Imperial pint came suddenly off the table, and the precious liquid found its level in the sawdust. Apologies were immediately tendered, with a description of the so-called accident. Whether the string or the extra keenness of the taller man in winding the "Devil" was at fault, Pessimist was not certain. Matters were soon adjusted and things quietened down on the taller player replacing the spilt liquid with another Imperial pint. The landlord did not appear to consider this last act contrary to the Non-treating Order, so the noise recommenced, caused by the "Devil" endeavouring to knock down nine "Tailors" in one spin.

The Bar Parlour door suddenly opened, and in walked another brother of the Hop fraternity. This latter arrival, too, was evidently a stranger, as no one saluted him on his journey to the counter.

Pessimist was getting rather weary, and on looking at his watch found there still remained 20 minutes for the sale of the national beverage. He quickly finished the remaining beer in his glass and called for another. Resuming his seat, he ventured a friendly smile on the newcomer. This was acknowledged with a nod accompanied by a loud cough and a fit of sneezing. The newcomer, recovering, spoke on the prevalence of the "Flu," and the weak state to which it brought sufferers.

"Yes," replied Pessimist, "it seems as though you are about to have it."

"Oh, no," quickly replied the newcomer, "while I can get some of 'Rucas' best unadulterated Hop mixture, I do not worry."

Pessimist was getting rather uneasy, and strongly advised his unknown friend to make for home. This advice was evidently not appreciated, as the newcomer called for a further drink.

The domino and "Devil" players having finished, quietness reigned. How the games ended did not worry Pessimist, he was bent on making his drink hold out till 9 p.m.

"Five minutes to nine, gentlemen; order your last drinks," shouted the landlord. Several glasses found their way to the counter which kept the landlord busy for a few of the remaining minutes.

Suddenly somebody commenced on the topic "Influenza." Packson said it was a "fever," and called the "Flu," because the medical profession were uncertain of the Latin name, but agreed that "Rucas" best fortified one's constitution and kept the fever within bounds.

Paker added "Everybody has got it, some worse than others, a lot, of course, imagine they have it because they require a rest in bed, others are after sick club money as Christmas is drawing near. Why, it is fashionable now. People wonder why doctors are puzzled; they ought to know what I know."

The remainder of the company were inclined to agree with Paker's wisdom.

Pessimist was quite excited, and ventured to suggest it was caused through germs which came from Germany. This remark made the company laugh, but somebody shouted "Shut up. You know more about 'spuds' than 'Influenza.' You'll put the wind up the landlord, talking like that; he'll close down till Saturday."

The landlord looked at his watch and called, "Time, gentlemen, please; open again on Saturday—7.30 p.m."

Pessimist nearly collapsed, and remarked: "Well! I'll go to the —. He's got it right enough."

They all made for the door as the landlord turned the gas out.

Nobody, recently, although several had stayed till ten o'clock, had bought any of the "sugared gas" in the bar during the hour of 9 till 10; the only "gas" consumed was that which came through the Corporation pipes, so to be patriotic and economise, the landlord decided from that evening to close the inn at 9 p.m. Pessimist went off home, and arrived rather in a bad temper, and at supper told his wife, on account of the extraordinary number of the villagers down with the "Flu," he would remain in at nights until Saturday, when by that time, no doubt, one would be able to go out and purchase "Cigarettes" without fear of catching the "Flu."

"WIDE-AWAKE."

* * *

If one only wished to be happy, this could be readily accomplished; but we wish to be happier than other people; and this is almost always difficult, for we believe others to be happier than they are.

* * *

Nothing is so narrowing, contracting, hardening as always to be moving in the same groove, with no thought beyond what we immediately see and hear close around us.

The wounds of sin may be healed, but their scars will remain painful to the touch.

* * *

Evil events come from evil causes; and what we suffer springs, generally, from what we have done.

* * *

Seeing much, and suffering much, and studying much, are the three pillars of learning.

NOTE.—The Luton Borough Prisoner of War Fund is not yet closed, and any donations will be gladly forwarded by the new proprietors of the "N-T-F" to the Fund, and earmarked as from the "N-T-F."



MUNITION GIRL SERIES.

No. 31.—EXTRACT FROM JESS'S DIARY.

The Countess's paste buckle was found in my locker at Dover Street this morning.

I did not put it there, but I feel sure Miss Frère did to spite me.

The moment I arrived I noticed something very wrong was the matter. The girls stood about in little groups whispering and staring. I knew they were talking about me, and felt wretchedly miserable. Yet I never associated their strange behaviour with the missing buckle. My mind was too occupied with my own troubles.

Then Miss Frère came to me with a malignant look of spite in her dark eyes, and said, "You are to go to Madame's office immediately."

I went, a sickening fear at my heart, still never thinking of the lost buckle. But the moment I got inside I saw Madame talking earnestly to the Countess of Redchester, who looked very grave.

"I should prefer to prosecute her, your ladyship," Madame was saying. "A most impudent theft. She came to me without any reference, I regret to admit, but you know in these difficult times one—"

"No! No! I will not hear of it, Natalie. Certainly not." Then, turning to me she took my hand regretfully, and said, looking sadly and searchingly into my face: "Child, why did you do it?"

I was speechless, and looked wildly from one to the other, then burst into a torrent of tears, for in Madame's hand was the lost buckle.

"A most impudent theft," continued Madame. "Found to-day. Miss Frère actually found it in your locker. What have you to say?"

"I—I—did not know it was there; I never put it there."

"Oh! Lies, lies! Don't make it any worse, you wicked girl! A thief always lies; but this sort of thing does not go unpunished here. You shall go to prison."

I heard a fearful cry. It sounded as if in the distance; yet it was in reality my own cry of agony.

Somebody's faint voice said: "No, Natalie! She must not be sent there. So young! It would be a terrible thing to do."

That was the last thing I was conscious of, as I sank upon the floor in a dead faint.

When I recovered, Susy Grendon, the clerk, was sitting by me.

By and bye I remembered everything, and how ill and depressed I felt.

"You are better now, Jess, and it will be best for you to go, I think. Madame has promised the Countess she will not prosecute you—and—you can think yourself lucky, and thank her ladyship for that. They have just telephoned down to me you are to have no money. Oh, Jess! I am sorry about it. Why, oh why, did you do such a fool's thing?"

"Do you believe it as well?" I asked, angrily.

Susy Grendon shrugged her shoulders. "What else is there to believe?"

"I did not! I would not take a pin of anyone's—I am not a thief. Someone who dislikes me put it in my locker. I believe it was Miss Frère," I passionately declared.

Susy looked sorry for me.

"Well, my poor child! I must get back to the office. I am very very sorry. Everybody knows Frère is a cat, and was very jealous of you. It was such a clumsy business. Oh! I don't know, I'm sure, what to believe."

"You can please yourself," I said icily, going to my locker and taking out my modest possessions.

Slowly I fixed on my hat and dressed myself to go away.

"Good-bye Miss Grendon. Perhaps you don't wish to shake hands with me," I said, coldly, "but you have shown me some little kindness, I should like to thank you."

"Good-bye, Jess! I am right down sorry for you. I believe all you told me, and I hate whoever played that vile trick on you. What shall you do now?"

She held my hand earnestly. Her kindness made the tears rain down my cheeks, for I realised I was in desperate straits.

"Look here! Go and see the Countess—190, Mount Street. She is very sweet, and so good to hosts of people. She might be able to place you somewhere in spite of Madame."

"Oh! I couldn't! How could I go to her of all people, after this has happened?"

"I should! Go and tell her all about it. She is an angel. I know she is. She runs all sorts of things—all sorts of people—from hospitals to homes for lost girls. I have heard she has some wonderful place that she calls "Dawn House," where poor girls go who are alone and destitute, in the worst trouble there is. Sisters of Mercy wait on them and nurse them, and the Countess won't call them homes or hostels, or any name like that, but "Dawn House," because it is her idea that having been there is the dawn of a brighter day to the poor souls. What an idea! So like her to be like that over something all the world condemns with bitter scorn. So if she is as merciful over a big thing, you may be sure she would help you over this."

I took Susy's kind hand gratefully, and turned away, scarcely able to see through a mist of tears, for she was the only one in Madame's establishment who had shown me the least kindness.

All that day I tried without success to get some employment, and at length, feeling weak and thoroughly ill, I went back to Camden Town.

To-night, I have counted out my little store of money. It will not last very long.

What can I do? Where can I go? Without friends or character, or references of any sort, my quest is well nigh useless and impossible.

(To be continued).

Can anyone say on any day that he has done his whole duty; that he has done all that he ought to have done; that he has uttered no hasty word, entertained no wrong thought, or passed no harsh judgment upon his fellow-man?

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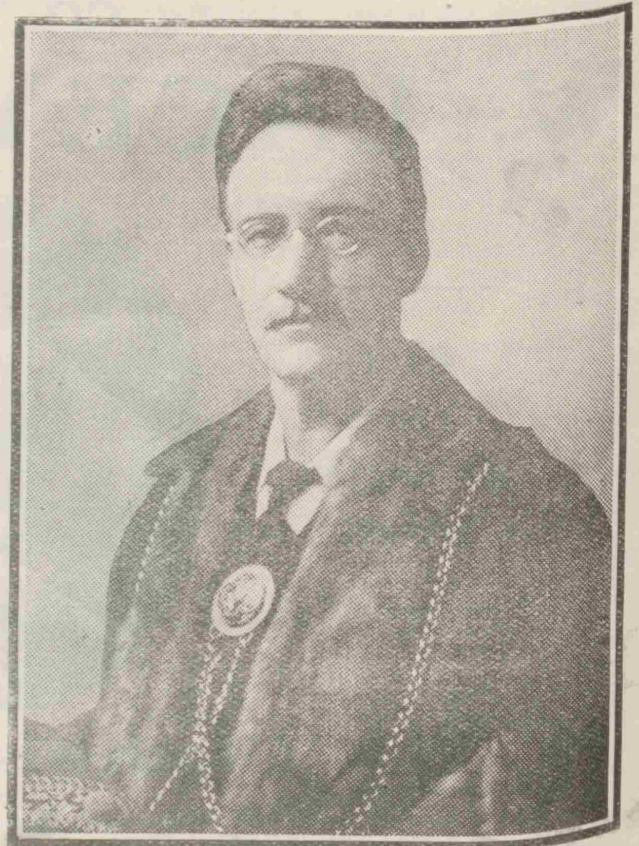
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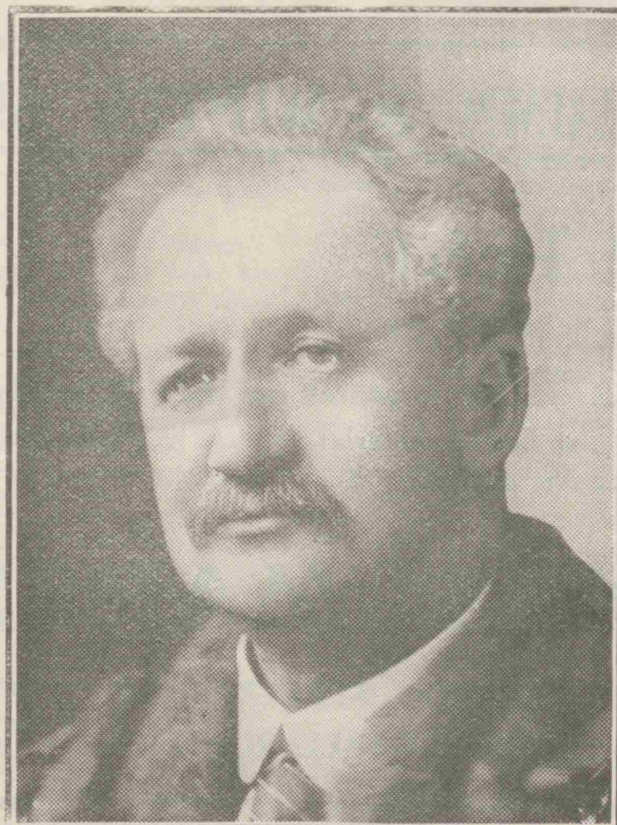
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THE MAYOR
(H. IMPEY, Esq.).



THE DEPUTY-MAYOR
(CHAS. DILLINGHAM, Esq., J.P.).

FOOTPRINTS IN THE SANDS OF TIME SERIES.

It must have been gratifying to him to realise that in spite of the laughter, unkindness, and derision under which he had suffered in his early youth, he had made good.

No. 11.—HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN.

Come read to me some poem
Or simple heartfelt lay
That shall soothe the restless feeling,
And banish the thought of day.
Read from some humble poet,
Whose songs gushed from his heart,
As showers from the clouds in summer,
Or tears from the eyelids start.
Such songs have the power to quiet
The restless pulse of care,
And come like the benediction,
That follows after prayer.
And the night shall be filled with music,
And the cares that infested the day,
Shall fold their tents like the Arabs,
And silently steal away.

—Longfellow.

Every man who has written fairy stories must be a poet first.

It may be his verse is never written in the accepted form, yet will his poetry be found all through his fairy stories.

To begin with, what is there so delicately aloof from all the mundane matters of this world as the beautiful innocent mind of a little child to whom all things are possible?

There is nothing so uplifting, nothing so fair, nothing so rebuking. Nothing you can relate that will cause surprise, be it ever so unreal and astonishing, all things are feasible to the mind of a child, no adventure too marvellous to unfold.

The world of a little child is peopled with strange fugitive fancies, delightful possibilities, elves, imps good and bad—in fact it is an enchanted world of loveliness and surprises—how then can we doubt that the kind of story, fairy or otherwise, can best be written for children by the man or woman who has managed to keep the child's heart.

Such a man was Hans Christian Andersen.

Always a dreamy and fanciful little boy he kept his child's heart with him all through his long life.

To the purity of his fancy, his simple faith, and great understanding and simplicity he owes the world wide success of his many beautiful stories and fairy tales he wrote for the children of all ages.

It may sound a strange paradox to say that the fact that Andersen's name would go down the ages as that of the great man who charmed the world with his fairy stories, always caused him a pang of deepest regret.

He loved the children, yet he did not want to be remembered alone by his fadeless "Eventyr" as he called the stories in Danish—he wanted the whole world to remember him as a poet; playwright, and novelist first, and as the children's story-teller afterwards.

Edmund Gosse relates a touching little episode dealing with this pathetic idea of his when he writes:—

"Don't you think," he said to me in a sort of coaxing whisper towards the very close of his life, "Don't you think that people will really come back to 'The Two Baronesses' when these trifling stories have had their day?"

"'The Two Baronesses' is an old novel of Andersen's which I had not read, so I could only bend my eyes politely. But that was in 1874, and the people have neither come back to 'The Two Baronesses' nor forgotten 'The Ugly Duckling' and 'The Snow Queen.'"

Hans Christian Andersen was born at Odense, in the island of Fünen, Denmark, on April 2nd, 1805.

He was the only child of his parents, a strangely thoughtful, grotesque and ugly boy, yet the object of much love and affection from his humble father and mother.

The family were very poor; young Hans' mother had to work very hard, his father was a cobbler eking out a precarious livelihood by mending and making shoes.

Andersen owed some of his earliest fancies to his father, who used to sit mending shoes with the queer little boy beside him while he poured tales from the Arabian Nights of mysterious genii and redoubtable Caliphs into his son's charmed ears. These stories conveyed the rich scents and spices of the Orient, the sun-bathed cities of warm Arabia and Persia, fostering a love of fantasy, and deeply stirring his childish imagination, leaving an impression that never faded, only blossoming the more perfectly some years later when he himself became the greatest story-teller the world has ever known.

Andersen passed a solitary childhood running pretty wild, not going to school partly because he was the object of much scorn and derision from other boys, and partly because his parents could ill afford to send him.

There was that peculiarity about him that the average boy could neither comprehend or understand. He was not like an ordinary child, and so with humans as with the lesser animals, when this is so, persecution and unreasonable oppression inevitably follows.

Thrown very much upon his own resources, he formed queer tastes, one of which was his fondness of frequenting the Odense Workhouse, where he was a great favourite among the old people. He used to relate stories to amuse them, and they in return crammed the child's head with all sorts of queer folk tales, legends, stories of trolls, spells, imps and bad men.

All these melancholy, exciting, disquieting legends fascinated, yet haunted him.

He himself attributes the germ of his fairy story-telling to have been sown in the lonely days of his childhood when he was never tired of frequenting the Odense Workhouse.

He seems always to have been drawn towards the stage, for as a child he made himself a miniature theatre, and used to spend many hours sewing clothes for the puppets, and making them act.

When he was eleven his delicate father died, and his mother was faced with the problem how to live.

They struggled along until Hans was fourteen, when his mother married again. By this time young Hans was growing a big ungainly boy, very uneducated and uncanny, and the problem was what to do with him. It was decided he should become a tailor since he had shown great ability and cleverness in dressing and making clothes for his toy puppets, but to this plan he utterly refused to agree; so he left his home with his knapsack on his back, a few shillings in his pocket, declaring he would make his way to Copenhagen, and there go on the stage.

At Copenhagen they treated him half in derision at the Theatre Royal, and half in amusement at his ambition. Had he not been possessed of a beautiful boy's voice, there can be no doubt he would have been dismissed with scorn for daring to offer himself wholly uneducated and rough as he was, as an actor.

It so happened Guldberg, the poet and man of letters, made much of him, getting him an engagement to sing at the Theatre Royal, Copenhagen, but this engagement was very short-lived owing to his boy's voice cracking very soon. For a time he was once more stranded. No one appeared to take him seriously, no one wanted him, he was the object of ridicule, and often abuse; in fact, a veritable "Ugly Duckling."

Some influential persons drew the attention of King Frederic of Denmark to his evident genius and

strange case; with the result that he helped Andersen for some years, sending him to school at last, where he got on in spite of his late beginning, and in spite of the scorn and contempt of his schoolfellows for his ignorance, and eventually he went to the University.

Several plays and novels were written as he grew up, but it was a matter of the keenest disappointment and regret that the world did not appear to do them much honour.

Public opinion remained coldly unmoved, and the young author grieved over his failure.

His first fairy tale to be published was "The Ugly Duckling"; then followed at intervals all the rest of his imperishable classics. I say classics, for how can they ever be forgotten?

The tender imagery to be found in "The Fir Tree," the delicate charm of "Little Ida's Flowers," the beauty and sadness of "The Little Mermaid," or the adventurous charm of "The Snow Queen."

All of them are unspeakably beautiful, whether we read of the martial soldier of "Tinder Box" fame, or of grim foreboding Holger Danske or of the wonders the "Coloshes of Fortune" bought.

And so it was bound to be that Hans Andersen grew great and famous by virtue of his fairy tales and stories, not by his novels and plays, yet all the while he himself never ceased to marvel at it.

With later life and complete success he became his nation's idol, and enjoyed much ease and comfort.

It is comforting also to know that our great storyteller, Charles Dickens, met Hans Andersen when he first visited England in June, 1847. To him also belongs the honour and privilege of seeing the great man off Ramsgate pier when he returned to Denmark.

Hans Andersen lived to a ripe old age, for he died on August 6th, 1875, at Copenhagen, full of success and secure in the knowledge that his beloved country Denmark could not do him too much honour, and that his Fairy Tales had travelled the world over translated into many languages.

A statue of him sitting telling stories to the children gathered about his knee stands in the public gardens at Copenhagen.

Hans Andersen had faults like every human being, the most marked of which might perhaps have been his very pardonable and child-like vanity, which was singularly noticeable in him all his life.

Everyone knows that the story of his own life was poetically written in that of the "Ugly Duckling," and there are critics who say that he should not in the end have made the Duckling beautiful, meaning it to be himself in allegory. All the same, Andersen was human, and it must have been a certain amount of gratification to him to realise that in spite of the laughter, unkindness and derision under which he had suffered in his early youth, he had been able to make good, and those self-same deriders turned at last into his humble admirers.

Whatever his faults, and mankind is prone to many, the world is the richer for his life of long endeavour, for Hans Christian Andersen, the queer lonely Odense cobbler's son, has climbed such great heights through the golden gates of the heart of a little child.

THE NATURAL ONES.

"Papa, I know the kind of ships that have dog watches on."

"Indeed, do you?"

"Indeed, do you?"

"Yes; they are barques."

Dad: "James, where have you been all afternoon?"

James: "Been looking at the cricket match through a knot-hole in the fence."

Dad: "You have, have you? Er—where is that knot-hole?"

"Do you always do as your mother tells you?" asked the minister.

"Yes," answered the five-year-old, "and so does papa."

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FROM OUR READERS.

"I am writing to ask you to oblige me with one of your books. The other boys have received one, so I sincerely trust you will kindly oblige me."

* * *

"I picked up a copy of your splendid paper, and I must say it interested me greatly. The idea is a very good one, as everybody knows how acceptable a letter is out here. For my own case, I might say that I have been four years in France, and been in practically all the big battles. I have hardly anyone to write to me, having no father or mother, and I would esteem it a great favour on your part if you would put me in touch with a girl about the same age as myself."

* * *

"Your 'N-T-F' was lent me by a chum. We liked to see it, but my chum has gone to the base. He gave me the address, and I should like very much to have your 'N-T-F' if any kind friend would oblige."

* * *

OFF TO N. Z.

We are asked to print the following:—

"Dear Sir.—Knowing your journal is read by thousands. I am writing to ask if you know of a young man about 21, who anticipates going to New Zealand next spring. As I thought of going, I think it would be company for both parties. Would you be so kind as to print my request in the 'N-T-F'?"

* * *

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