

Stories of
Great Writers

GREAT LIVES SERIES

SELECTED AUTHORS

Stories of Great Writers

Selected Authors

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Stories of Great Writers

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Sir Walter Scott

(Scotland: 1771-1832)

Ivanhoe, Lady of the Lake, Waverly Novels

About the time of our American Revolution, in the pasture of a certain Scotch hillside, we might have seen a blue-eyed baby boy, lying among the flocks of nibbling sheep and looking quietly at the moving clouds, or reaching for a bit of pink heather. Because his right leg had been lamed by a bad fever, so that he could not run or even creep, he was taking a queer remedy. Dr. Rutherford had said that if young Walter could live out-of-doors and lie in the "skin of a freshly killed sheep", he might be cured. So, there he was at Sandy Knowe, in the kindly care of his grandfather, and placidly companioned by all these pasture playfellows.

From the power either of the Scotch breezes or of the warm sheep-skin coat, the child grew strong. First he began to roll about on the grass, or crawl from flower to flower, and, by and by, he learned to pull himself up by a farm-house chair, and, finally, with the help of a stick, to walk and run. No doubt he was a great pet with the warm-hearted Scotch neighbors, and no doubt they brought him things to play with and flowers to love long before he could clamber over the rocks and get the sweet honeysuckle for himself. He used, wistfully, to watch for the fairies to dance on the hills, and he had a secret fluttering hope that sometime, when he fell asleep on the grass, he might be carried away to fairyland. One day he was left in the field and forgotten—till a thunder-storm came up. Then his Aunt Jane, rushing out to carry him home, found him sitting on the grass, clapping his hands at every flash of lightning, and crying, "Bonny! Bonny!"

It is no wonder that such an out-of-doors baby loved animals. On the hills, they huddled round him in woolly friendliness. His Shetland pony, no bigger than a Newfoundland dog, used to go with him into the house. One day, the child, sobbing pitifully, limped to his Grandfather's farm-house and sat down on the steps. A starling lay in his lap, its stiff little feet stretched out beseechingly, its brown feathers quite cold. The bird, which Walter had partly tamed, was dead. By and by, the child's passion subsided; but the "laird" who had hushed the starling's singing was not forgiven so soon, and the Scotch laddie had to take a long gallop on his pony to cool his aching head.

As Walter would play contentedly among the rocks for hours, or ride his pony without tiring, so for hours he would listen, in rapt imagination, to Aunt Jane's ballads, until he could repeat whole passages by heart. Stretched on the floor, with shells and pebbles drawn up in order, he would fight the battles or shout forth the rhymed stories to chance visitors. "One may as well speak into the mouth of a cannon as where that child is," exclaimed the parish preacher, with some disgust, for, after Walter learned to read, he was even more excitable. From one of Mrs. Cockburn's letters we can imagine the six-year-old boy reading the story of a shipwreck to his mother. "His passion rose with the storm. He lifted his hands and eyes. 'There's the mast gone!' he exclaimed wildly. 'Crash it goes! They will all perish!'"

From the time he was six, he read ravenously; and it was owing to his wide reading that one time, when he was only fifteen, he became, for a few moments, the center of a group of learned men. It was when the poet Burns visited Edinburgh and had shown great interest in a picture of a

soldier lying dead in the snow with a dog keeping patient watch beside him. Beneath the picture were some beautiful lines, but neither Burns nor any of those learned men knew who their author was, until young Walter Scott, who happened to be present, whispered that the lines were by Langhorne. Then Burns turned to him with glowing eyes and said: "It is no common course of reading that has taught you this;" adding, to his friends: "This lad will be heard of yet."

How proud the lad felt! How wistfully joyful in the warmth of the great poet's praise; and then how suddenly forgotten when, only a few days later, Robert Burns passed him in the street without a glance! Scott's moment of fame had vanished.

At school, however, he held the fame of the playground. Though he was lame, he was one of the best fighters and one of the readiest fighters among his fellows; and he was the very best story-teller. At recess, those who did not join in the running games crowded round the bench at his invitation, "Come, slink over beside me, Jamie, and I'll tell you a story." And so, now reciting whole pages by heart, now filling in from his own wild imagination, the boy Scott carried his playmates into a "wonderful, terrible" world. "I did not make any great figure in the High School," he tells us. "I made a brighter figure in the *yards* than in the *class*." However, he was never distinguished as a "dunce", as some have thought; but simply as an "incorrigibly idle imp."

Dr. Adam, however, by praising the lad's appreciation of Virgil and expecting him to do well, made him feel that Latin was more a pleasure than a task.

Though Scott merely dabbled in foreign languages, he devoured English romance. English poetry, too, such as

Shakespeare's plays, Spenser's poems, and, dearest of all, Percy's wonderful collection of ballads, flew away with his fancy into a dream-world. Before he was ten, he had painfully copied several note-books full of his favorite ballads, most of which he could recite from beginning to end.

Meanwhile, he was growing more and more to love natural beauty. Like Irving, he longed to paint, and only gave up his efforts to do so with sad reluctance. Great crags and rushing torrents filled him with a reverence that made his "heart too big for his bosom." And when he found an old ruin and could crown that ruin with a legend, his joy was complete. Handicapped by lameness, Scott rode wonderfully, even as a little boy, and was always joyously daring. Almost to the day of his death, he would rather leap the trench or ford the flood than "go round."

Moreover, as he said, he was "rather disfigured than disabled by his lameness," so that he managed, limpingly, to wander far, often twenty or thirty miles a day. In rough cap, jacket, and "musquito trousers", and carrying a long gun, he used to wade into the marshes to shoot ducks, or to fish for salmon by torch-light—"burning the water", befriended by his pack of dogs. A bold cragsman, he took no account of passing hours, sometimes even staying out all night. "I have slept on the heather," he tells us, "as soundly as ever I did in my bed." Little enough patience his father had with such "gallivantings." "I doubt, I greatly doubt, sir," Mr. Scott would scold, "you were born for nae better than a gangrel scrape-gut."

After leaving school, Scott, like many other authors since his day, was apprenticed to the law. "A dry and barren wilderness of forms and conveyances," he called it; but it was his father's profession, and, though the out-of-

doors boy disliked the drudgery and detested the office confinement, he loved his father and wanted to be useful. We can easily imagine how he "wearied of the high stool", and how glad he was to see daylight fade and to go home to read exciting stories by a blazing fire. Great credit, then, is due him for the five or more years that he persevered at the dull law, and much to his master, Mr. David Hume, who fitted him for that profession. Law study not only gave Scott system, but also training in persistence.

And yet it was largely the effortless education and entirely the self-education that made him an author. His real studies, he tells us, were "lonely" and "desultory", "driving through the sea of books like a vessel without pilot or rudder", or, according to Lockhart, "obeying nothing but the strong breath of inclination." On his long walks and reckless rides, he was educated by the wind and sky, and by the rough people whom he has made immortal. He knew, personally, the charming beggar of "The Antiquary"; and he had seen in his youth "some who knew Rob Roy personally" and who had found him, like the English Robin Hood, "a kind and gentle robber." In "The Pirate" he immortalized an actual old sibyl "who sold favorable winds to sailors"; in "Guy Mannering," a real gipsy, with her "bushy hair hanging about her shoulders" and her "savage virtue of fidelity"; and in "The Heart of Midlothian" he glorifies the simple Jeanie Deans in "tartan plaid and country attire."

The old warriors of the highlands were more than willing to fight their battles over again for Scott, and he used to say that the peasants of Scotland always expressed their feelings in the "strongest and most powerful language." He found more solid fun in talking with the "lower classes", whose superstitions were almost a faith,

than in spending hours with the more conventional people of his own rank. What to some was idle gossip, to him, was living history. "He was makin' himself a' the time," said an old Scotchman, "but he didna ken maybe what he was about till years had passed. At first, he thought o' little, I dare say, but the queerness and the fun." The "Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border" is an echo of his rambles, and "The Lady of the Lake," a "labor of love" in memory of Loch Katrine.

All of his interests widened rapidly; society, law, love, soldiery, all came to have their claims. At twenty-two, he began to apply his legal knowledge by acting as counsel in a criminal court, and so valiantly did he defend an old sheep-stealer that the man received the verdict "not guilty."

"You're a lucky scoundrel," Scott whispered to his client.

"I'm just o' your mind," came the happy answer, "and I'll send ye a mankin (hare) the morn, man."

Though Scott was less successful in defending a burglar, he was thanked for his efforts; and lawyer and condemned had a long, chummy talk in the prison-cell about the little, yelping dogs and the clumsy, rusty keys that were the burglars' worst enemies.

Before Scott was twenty-five he fell in love with a "lassie" who was later betrothed to one of his own best friends. Scott thought his heart was broken; but it was "handsomely pieced", as he said a few years later, though the "crack remained" to his dying day.

In the meantime, he lived the life of a man of action.

In February 1797, when all Scotland feared the invasion of the French, his fighting blood rose to the call, and with many other young men he volunteered to serve.

Too lame to march, he helped to organize a troop of cavalry of which he was made quartermaster because of his dependableness. The fighting spirit of his childhood had never died. His mother always said that if he had not been a cripple he would have been a soldier. That means we should have lost him as an author. And so we have to thank his first great handicap, lameness, for the two hundred volumes he gave the world.

Besides training a regiment on Portobello sands, astride his big black horse, Lenore, Scott's army life forced him to rise at five to drill. In addition to this, his business as Clerk of the Sessions, undertaken in 1806, demanded at least four or five hours a day for six months of the year, during which time he had to make a daily change from soldier's uniform and spirit to clerk's gown and brain.

Though now his time was closely packed with hard work, these years were holidays compared to his later struggles. Before long, he was combining the duties of lawyer and quartermaster with those of county sheriff, "speculative printer", and author. Let us get a little into the heart of the man, however, before we study him as an author, or visit him at Abbotsford.

When Sheriff Scott was compelled to judge a poacher, Tom Purdie, his human nature softened before the victim's plea of poverty and hunger, and he took Tom into his own employ as shepherd. Nothing could have been more characteristic of him. He loved to help people. Among the friends whom he helped to his own disadvantage, Hogg is conspicuous. I suppose that rough peasant took more thankless help than will ever be known. He had a way of accepting assistance as his right; and seemed as unconscious of any indebtedness as he was that his muddy

feet had no place on Mrs. Scott's chintz sofa, where he stretched himself full-length the first time he called. Scott bore with all such peculiarities because he enjoyed Hogg's humor and rustic charm; and, though, years later, Hogg repaid Scott's kindness by bitter jealousy, the greater man proved his greatness by his loyalty. When he heard that "The Ettrick Shepherd" was very sick in an "obscure alley" in Edinburgh, he paid for the best medical care; and no doubt did him many unrecorded services. Scott's own memory dismissed such things about as soon as they were done. Now he wrote sermons for a tired minister; now he created a place for William Laidlaw, dictating gipsy stories for him, and then writing:

"*Dear Willie*:—While I wear my seven leagued boots and stride in triumph over moss and muir, it would be very silly in either of us to let a cheque twice a year of £25 make a difference between us." Just at that time, however, Scott's "seven-league boots" were losing their giant stride. And yet, when he could least spare it, he furnished the unlucky Maturin with £50.

One more story of his friendships, a fine example also of quick wit: There was a poor German named Weber, who, though he had a passion for strong drink, had won this great author's loving pity. One day, when Weber had been sitting at Scott's table, apparently as friendly as ever, he suddenly charged Scott with insulting him, flew into a rage, and produced a pair of pistols. With perfect coolness, Scott asked him to lay the pistols on the table, saying that it would be too exciting for Mrs. Scott and the children to hear the noise of shooting, and that, if Weber would stay to dinner, the duel could be fought soon after, out-of-doors, and strictly according to rule. With that, he quietly picked up the pistols, locked them in a drawer, and stepped

for an instant from the room to despatch a messenger. Weber stayed to dinner, seeming perfectly rational; but that night he proved to be a hopeless maniac. To the end of his life he was supported by Scott in a New York asylum.

These stories suggest some of the costs of friendship—costs never entered in the accounts of the noble spender's heart. Yet we must remember them, later, in our reckoning of Scott's great business failure.

Let us look, first, however, at Scott the author, and Scott the home-maker.

His literary life may be divided into two parts of eighteen years each. During the first eighteen years, a period of joy, he wrote poems; and during the last eighteen years, novels. As every one knows, Lord Byron's striding popularity made Scott give up verse. We get this from his own frank admission that he "would no longer play second fiddle to Byron"; and, "Since one line has failed, we must just strike into something else." Certainly his last poem, "The Lord of the Isles," was not equal to "The Lay of the Last Minstrel", "Marmion", or "The Lady of the Lake." Scott himself called it a failure; but, whether it was a failure or not, we are glad that something made the great man, with all his hidden powers, turn to prose. We are as glad Byron beat him at poetry as we are that lameness hindered him from being a soldier. Step by step, through handicaps and failures, the buried genius of the man is found. In his warm admiration for Maria Edgeworth's Irish tales, he had once modestly thought that he might write stories of Scotland.

One day, when Scott was looking in a drawer for fishing-tackle, he came on the roughly written sheets of "Waverley", begun many years before. As he read those

unfinished pages, he wanted to go on with the romance; and so, to those first discarded sheets, we owe the whole set of the "Waverley Novels." For years, their authorship was a mystery. Book after book came out "By the Author of Waverley," while the puzzled world called him "The Great Unknown" or "The Wizard of the North." He never accounted for his disguise except by saying it was his "humour". No doubt he felt more confident in his "Coat of Darkness"; for, while he was sure of his reputation as a poet, he was merely trying his hand at prose.

And yet many think to-day that he was a greater novelist than poet. During the time that he was editing his "Complete Edition", one per cent,—one in every hundred,—of all the people in Edinburgh were at work in the making and selling of his books. In those two hundred volumes he could say truthfully, "I have tried to unsettle no man's faith", and of them he could humbly hope that, "if they did no good, at least they would do no harm." But they did do good. It is good to entertain and rest a tired world. Scott carries us into another realm,—"to society, if not better than our own, at least more interesting." His books ring with horses' hoofs and the sound of the trumpet. Like himself, they are full of fight; his people have throbbing hearts and blood and muscle.

If you have never thrilled with the "Stranger, I am Rhoderick Dhu" of that heroic law-breaker; or, with Rebecca, dared Brian du Bois Guilbert to advance one step farther toward that dizzy parapet; or cried over Kenilworth, if you are a girl; or acted Ivanhoe and Rob Roy, if you are a boy,—then you have missed something that belonged by right to your youth. I remember how the child-gang in our neighborhood used to act Scott; the boy-

leader was Robin Hood, and the fat boy, with the largest appetite, was Friar Tuck.

Many love history more through Scott than through any other medium; perhaps it is not the most authentic history, but it is history gloriously alive. And many more have learned from him to be tender to the "under dog." It may be a real dog, like Fangs; it may be a court fool, or a gipsy, or some member of the once-despised race of Jews; but Scott will always make you "square" to the "fellow who is down." He may even make you love someone whom the rest of the world has forgotten to love.

Rich in sympathy and tingling with courage as the "Waverley Novels" are, they were written, most of them, at a great price,—not of money but of effort. Before entering on Scott's life of darkening struggle however, let us see him in the glow of peace. Some years after his marriage, we find him quietly settled at Abbotsford with four happy children round him.

It would be interesting to visit the place where most of those wonderful novels were written, Scott had bought the farm of one hundred and ten acres in a rough condition. Many of the trees growing there to-day were planted by his hands, and he and Tom Purdie used to tramp over the place on windy days to straighten up the young saplings. Little by little the farm changed to a noble estate, beautiful without and within, and the Abbotsford of to-day, robbed of its master, is more like a museum than a home. The footsteps of sight-seers echo through its great rooms,—their walls enriched with suits of armor, with tapestry, and relics; and their floors so slippery you can "almost skate on them." There is the portrait of Scott's great-grandfather, Beardie, that loyal Tory who refused to have his beard cut after Charles I was executed; and there is a portrait of

Scott's son, Walter, who died of India fever just after being made Colonel. The grim armory speaks of many battles; the relics recall many stories. Among these are a brace of Bonaparte's pistols; the purse of Rob Roy; a silver urn given to Scott by Byron; and a gold snuff-box given him by George IV.

From the time of Scott's first land purchase, the estate grew from one hundred and ten acres to fifteen hundred. If we had gone to Abbotsford with merry-hearted Irving, during Scott's lifetime, and even before he was made Baronet, we should have seen it less as the great castle, which it is to-day, than as a "snug gentleman's-cottage" beaming from the hillside above the Tweed. The branching elk-horns over the door gave it the look of a hunter's lodge; but the scaffolding surrounding the walls, and great piles of hewn stone, hinted a grander future. As Irving entered, "out sallied the warder of the castle, a black greyhound, and, leaping on one of the blocks of stone, began a furious barking." This was Hamlet. "His alarm brought but the whole garrison of dogs—all open-mouthed and vociferous." Then, up the gravel path limped the master of the house, moving along rapidly with the help of a stout walking-stick. We can almost see him—his broad, freckled face and sandy hair; his eyes "sparkling blue" under the old white hat; his big figure dressed in a dingy green shooting-coat and brown pantaloons; and his worn shoes tied at the ankles. By the master's side, with great dignity, jogs the gray stag-hound, Maida, trying to display gravity enough for all that yelping pack. It would hardly be a welcome without this gathering at the gate.

"Come, drive down, drive down, ye're just in time for breakfast," urges Scott, and then adds, when Irving explains that he has had his breakfast, "Hoot, man, a ride

in the morning in the keen air of the Scotch hills is warrant enough for a second breakfast."

And so, with Irving, we see the great "minstrel" at his chief meal, and with Irving we are expected to eat huge slices of the sheep's head and of the big brown loaf at Scott's elbow. Of course, at the table, there is no discussion of the children; but a short visit displays their natures: Sophia, joyous and musical; Anne, quiet; Walter, his father's pride because he is such a fine shot; and Charles, a lovely boy of twelve. Scott said there were just three things he tried to teach his children: "to ride, to shoot, and to speak the truth." And when they rode he taught them to think nothing of tumbles. "Without courage there can be no truth," he would say, "and without truth there can be no other virtue."

The dogs are allowed in the dining-room: Maida, beside Scott; the pet spaniel, Finette, with soft, silky hair, close to "Mama"; and a large gray cat, stealing about with velvet steps, expects delicate bits of breakfast from all the family, and cuffs the dogs in a friendly way with his paw.

After breakfast, they all set out through the sweet, rough country, Scott limping rapidly ahead as usual, pointing out the badgers' holes and sitting hares (which he is always the first to see) while the dogs beat about the glen, barking and leaping, or boundingly answer the call of the ivory whistle that swings from their master's buttonhole. The little terriers, Pepper and Mustard, are as excited as Maida is dignified. Snuffing among the bushes, they have started a hare, and Hinse, the cat, joins the chase in hot pursuit.

By and by a shower springs up, and Scott shares with Irving the tartan plaid which Tom Purdie has been carrying. And so the two great men, congenial as old

friends, snuggle under the Scotchman's warm shelter; and while rain soaks the pink heather and mist folds the hills, they talk of trees and nations, homes and dogs, now and then matching each other's legends. Their hearts are in wonderful harmony. Irving tells Scott of the grand American forests, and Scott answers: "You love the forests as much as I do the heather. If I did not see the heather at least once a year, I think I should die."

So cordial and out-doorish is our host, so ready to guide in our rambles, "overwalking, overtalking, and overfeeding his guests", as his wife used to say, that we may easily forget his business in life, or that he has anything else to do but entertain. But Scott rose, presumably, this day, as all others, at five o'clock and was writing away rapidly by six, so that he "broke the neck of the day's work before breakfast." This was his regular program. While he bathed and dressed, his thoughts were "simmering" in his brain, so that he dashed them off "pretty easily" when his pen was in his hand. With no interruption except breakfast, he worked steadily till eleven or twelve. By this system, very rarely broken, he could afford a ride after lunch, and, at one o'clock, rain or shine, he could mount his big horse for a gallop over the hills. The pictures he saw on these rides are in his books, and so is the joyous out-door spirit. One of his first poems, "Marmion," was practically written on horseback, the lines coming into his brain while he trained his regiment, raced over the moors, or plunged through floods.

And just as he would not let his work cheat his outdoor life, so he would not let it cheat his children or his friends. When Irving visited him, he had to excuse himself after breakfast to correct proof; but often he wrote in a room filled with people. Perhaps he used manuscript sheets the

same size as letter-paper, so that he might write his books and yet seem to be writing a common letter. The shouts of his children playing marbles or ninepins around him, or his dogs sleeping at his feet or even leaping in and out of the open window, could not interrupt his thought, though occasionally the father stopped to tell a story to the pleading pets who talked, or to give an affectionate pat to those who only looked their love. And then his active hand drove on, laying aside sheet after sheet.

Let us stop a few minutes to speak of Scott's affection for all his dumb friends. It cannot easily be exaggerated. Of his horses, neither Captain nor Lieutenant nor Brown Adam liked to be fed by any one but him. When Brown Adam was saddled and the stable door opened, he would trot to the "leaping-on stone" (a help to his lame master), and there he would stand, firm as granite, till Sir Walter was well in the saddle, when he would neigh trumpetingly and almost dance with delight. Under Scott's hand, he was perfectly trustworthy; but he broke one groom's arm and another's leg with his wild capers. The beautiful snow white horse, Daisy, proved less faithful than Brown Adam. He was as full of jealousy as he was of life. When Sir Walter came back from a trip to the Continent, he found Daisy had changed toward him. Instead of standing still to be mounted, he "looked askant at me like the devil," said Scott; "and when I put my foot in the stirrup, he reared bolt upright, and I fell to the ground." For any of the grooms the horse stood perfectly; but Scott tried, again and again, always with the same result. At last he had to give Daisy up. When some one suggested that the snowy animal might have felt hurt at being left in the stable, Scott said: "Aye, these creatures have many thoughts of their own. Maybe some bird had whispered Daisy that I had been to

see the grand reviews at Paris on a little scrag of a Cossack, while my own gallant trooper was left behind bearing Peter and the post-bag to Melrose."

Among Scott's dogs, his earliest friends were his bull terrier, Camp, and two greyhounds, Douglas and Percy. These used to race over the hills beside their galloping master, and nose round in the bushes while he stopped to fish. Of the three, Camp had most perfectly his master's confidence. Scott used to talk to him just as if he were a human being; and the servant, setting the table for dinner, would say: "Camp, my good fellow, the Sheriff's coming home by the ford," or: "The Sheriff's coming home by the hills," and, even when Camp was old and sick, he would pull himself up from the rug and trot off as nimbly as his strength would let him, to meet his master by the Tweed or the Glenkinnon burn.

Dear old Camp! He was buried by moonlight in the garden just opposite Scott's study-window. "Papa cried about Camp's death," Sophia Scott told Irving. Indeed, we all know that the affectionate master felt so bereft that he broke an engagement at dinner that evening and gave as his perfectly honest excuse "the death of a dear old friend." Other spots on the estate remind us of other dogs. Maida's grave at Abbotsford is between Sir Walter's bedroom window and the garden. There is a life-sized statue with the head raised as if looking toward the window for his master's face. The Latin inscription means:

"BENEATH THE SCULPTURED FORM WHICH LATE YOU WORE,
SLEEP SOUNDLY, MAIDA, AT YOUR MASTER'S DOOR"

Percy was buried not very far away with the epitaph:

"HERE LIES THE BRAVE PERCY"

Scott had one dog, a Highland terrier, that sometimes grew tired of the chase, or "pretended to be so," and would

whine to be taken up on his master's horse, where he would sit as happy as a child. And there was a large wolf-greyhound which had posed for so many artists that he would get up and saunter out of the room at the sight of brushes and a palette—portrait-painting was a great bore!

One last story, and we must leave Scott's kennels and stables for a closing study of the man himself. One clear September morning, boys and girls, dogs and ponies, Scott, Laidlaw, Mackenzie, and many others set out for a day's fishing. Maida gamboled about the prancing Sibyl Grey who tossed his mane in glee at the thought of a day's sport. Just as the joyous party was ready to gallop away, Anne Scott shouted delightedly: "Papa, Papa, I knew you could never think of going without your pet." At her merry laughter, Scott turned, and there, in the roadway, frisking about his pony's feet, was his little black pig. It took only a moment to lasso the eager little grunter, and drag him away from the sportsmen; but Scott said, with mock gravity:

"*What will I do gin my hoggie die—*
My joy, my pride, my hoggie?"

That pig was as ridiculous in his claim for a place in the inner circle as the hen that cackled for intimacy, or the two donkeys which used to trot to the edge of the pasture bars, and stretch out their long, hairy noses for a "pleasant crack with the laird."

After the dreadful business failure, however, Scott had little time for any of this playfulness. We need not postpone the sad story any longer, though we want to make it as short as possible. The crash came in 1826. Within six months of each other fell his two greatest sorrows: his wife's death and this business collapse. In the partnership with James and John Ballantyne, whom Scott had known

at school, Sir Walter had furnished nearly all the capital, and the Ballantynes had been made responsible for the accounts. It did not seem to occur to either of the brothers to keep the great author informed of the business situation, and Scott, who was overtrusting, did not demand an exact statement. There was, besides, a complication with Messrs. Constable, a publishing house in which the greater portion of Sir Walter's fortune was involved. Things are as tangled to the reader as they were to the business partners. Failure, which they did not know how to help, was closing round them. Both the Ballantynes seemed to postpone the evil day of facing facts. Scott might have examined the accounts; he should have; but he was not warned, and he did not suspect how serious the debt was, till, with Constable's failure, the crash came, and all were ruined. Let us tell the truth: Scott was blind; he was unbusinesslike; he was overhopeful; he was extravagant. He was always too ready to make loans, and far too ready to spend money on his life-hobby, his dear estate of Abbotsford. But, when he realized his dilemma, he came to the fore with a majesty of honor seldom, if ever, equaled in history. He refused all props, the loans urged by his friends; the offered pensions. "Now he worked double tides, depriving himself of out-door exercise altogether." "This own right hand shall work it off," reads his diary, though into that same diary creeps a note of discouragement: "I often wish I could lie down to sleep without waking. But I will fight it out if I can." On his sundial, he carved with his own hand: "I will work while it is yet day," and his brave motto was: "Time and I against any two."

The natural question comes, why did he not sell Abbotsford? It had grown to be a magnificent place. Well,

he did. He quitted the estate, leaving orders for sales of his entire collection of paintings, relics, and furniture; but it was the pride of his life, the home for which he had worked all his days, and which he had dreamed would belong to his children. As he said, his heart clung to what he had created; there was hardly a tree that did not owe its life to him. In 1830 his creditors gave him back fifteen thousand pounds' worth of his own books, furniture, and relics; he and his children returned; and again the place was beautiful, though there was little time to enjoy it.

Working at fearful pressure, the out-of-doors Sir Walter shut himself from savage hills and roaring streams, while his horse whinnied for him in the stable, and his dogs lay restless at his feet. Over page after page he raced, not stopping to dot an i, or cross a t, punctuating by a hurried dash, or not at all, and spelling, like Stevenson, with perfect carelessness. If, with a mental microscope, we can find a blessing in this agonizing business failure, it is in the fine collected edition, with its charming introductions, part of "Woodstock," "The Fair Maid of Perth," "Anne of Geierstein," "The Life of Napoleon," and "Tales of a Grandfather." But the effort of these works cost Scott his life.

He wrote till his fingers were covered with chil-blains and his brain was threatened with exhaustion. He had always been a rapid writer, and undeterred by sickness. "Guy Mannering" was struck off in six weeks at Christmas-time; "Ivanhoe" was dictated in great pain and punctuated with groans,—Scott's amanuensis, Laidlaw, begging him to stop. "Nay, Willie," came the heroic answer, "only see that the doors are fast. I would fain keep all the cry as well as all the wool to ourselves." One morning before breakfast he finished "Anne of

Geierstein", and, as soon as breakfast was over, set to work on his "Compendium of Scottish History." In a little over a week, immediately following the news of ruin, he wrote one whole volume of "Woodstock"; the entire book was written in less than three months. To these facts, literature gives no parallel. There was no waiting for inspiration. Conquering moods and weather, Scott made himself work at set times. Perhaps the drudging law, at which one time the young man had written a hundred and twenty folio pages without stopping for food and rest, trained into him this wonderful tenacity. The life-habit of work may have made this cruel need of work less irksome. But "a single season blanched his hair snow white."

All must not be told. Let us spare ourselves the painful details of the battle. We need to know not so much how deep the sword-thrust or how our hero lost in blood, as the heart of the man, the thing that made him will to fight and die for honor's sake. The failure that darkened, ennobled his life. Scott, the man, was even greater than his books. As with anxious watch we follow the struggle, twice we see him fall. But he rises again, gropingly reattacks his labor, and writes on, in spite of blood "flying to his head," a fluttering memory, and stiffened hands.

Haggard and thin, with hesitating steps and words, he would try to tell a story in his old, merry way, and, before he reached the point, would stop "with the blank anxiety of look that a blind man has when he has dropped his staff." "How gladly," says his diary, would he have compounded for "a little pain instead of the heartless muddiness of mind."

In October 1831, the doctors absolutely forbade work. Following their advice, he went to Italy, with the lame hope of cure. But not the blue sky of Naples, nor any sun-

filled breeze could take the place of his *dour* Scotland. With all its roughness, the land of the thistle was the land of his heart. The buffeting wind of a lifetime, the bleak hills cloaked in mist, the water of the Tweed rushing over its white stones—he needed them all. "Let us to Abbotsford," he begged.

And so they took him home. As they traveled, he showed little interest in anything but far-off Scotland. His sad eyes waited for his own trees, the plentiful heather, the climbing gorse that painted the hills with gold.

As they journeyed on, he grew more and more sure that his debts were all paid; and his friends, knowing how he had struggled, never told him that this was not quite true.

"I shall have my house, and my estate round it, free, and I may keep my dogs as big and as many as I choose, without fear of reproach." So he comforted himself.

When, about the middle of June, they reached London, Sir Walter was too weak to go on without rest. Outside his hotel, gathered begrimed day-laborers with the awed question; "Do you know, sir, if this is the street where he is lying?" By careful stages, early in July, he traveled on, crossed the last salt water, and was tenderly lifted into a carriage for the last drive. Unawake as he had been to everything else, the well-known roads and foaming streams roused his memory: "Gala Water, surely—Buckholm—Torwoodlee" he murmured expectantly. When, above the trees, they saw Abbotsford towers, he grew more and more excited, and when they crossed Melrose bridge over the Tweed, it took three men to hold him in the carriage. Pitifully weak though he was, he wanted to run to meet his home. Then, trembling, he saw Laidlaw; then his dogs, trying to kiss him with noses and tongues and paws, and to tell him how much they had

missed him. They were very gentle, though, as if in their loving hearts they knew the days of rough comradeship were over. Scott smiled and sobbed together at their welcome.

For a few days he lingered, to be wheeled about in a chair among his roses or under his own dear trees. Sometimes his grandchildren tried to help push.

"I have seen much," he would say again and again, "but nothing like my ain house—give me one turn more."

"My dear, be a good man...be a good man. Nothing else will give you any comfort when you come to lie here." This was his farewell to Lockhart, a few days before he died.

"Shall I send for Sophia and Anne?" Lockhart gently asked.

"No," with his old brave calm. "Don't disturb them. Poor souls! I know they were up all night. God bless you all."

The end came with its peaceful relief, September 21, 1832. It was a beautiful day. Through the open window streamed warm sunshine, and the Tweed sang on that soft, old music that would have suited its sleeping master better than the most wonderful requiem.

They say the line of carriages that followed Sir Walter to Dryburgh Abbey was over a mile long. But perhaps his heart would have been more pleased by the host of yeomen who followed behind on horseback; the villagers, with heads uncovered, gathered in sorrowful black crowds to say good-bye to the "Shirra"; or even the little act of one of his horses, which drew him on that final day. It halted of its own accord, at the end of the climb, on the very spot where horse and master had so often stood to view the steadfast hills.

Charles Lamb

(England: 1775-1834)
Tales from Shakespeare

To little Charles Lamb everything around him must have seemed old. He lived in an old house in an old street in the old city of London. All his books were dingy and queer. He was ten years younger than his sister, Mary, and eleven years younger than his brother, John; and next to his brother and sister and father and mother, the best friends he had were old Mr. Salt, old Aunt Hetty, and his Grandmother Field. But there is a sort of gentle tranquility about old surroundings that the shine of newness cannot give,—and as for old people, what little boys to please other little boys will do as much as a grandmother?

Charles was born in a small room in the Inner Temple in the year of our American Revolution. When he was still very little, before he knew much more than the alphabet, he would curl himself up in a corner with the "Book of Martyrs" on his lap and read its grim pictures of wonderful people who preferred to die rather than give up their religion. Charles felt a fascinated awe in the pictures of burnings at the stake. With his little hand laid boldly on the flames, he thought them hot and glowed with holy pride that he, too, was dying for his faith.

When Charles and Mary visited in the Hertfordshire country, they had a beautiful time, for they were partners in play before they were partners in pluck. Sometimes they went to see their Great Aunt Gladman at Mackery End; sometimes, Grandmother Field at Blakesware. When Charles was six or seven, Mary was sixteen or seventeen, and so she was old enough to take him on short trips.

How fresh the fields looked after murky London! They were full of sparkling flowers. The sun and grass and sky seemed all new-born. It must have been Mackery End which Mary described in "Mrs. Leicester's School": "hens feeding all over the yard" and "little yellow ducklings with a mother hen. She was so frightened if they went near the water." Then she told how the good-natured spotted cow let the children stroke her during the milking, and how, though they hunted for hens' eggs, they were never allowed to rob the birds. It was probably Aunt Gladman who said the "little birds would not sing any more, if their eggs were taken away from them," "A hen," she said, was "a hospitable bird, and always laid more eggs than she wanted, on purpose to give them to her mistress to make puddings and custards with." In currant and gooseberry time, old Spot, the shepherd, used to come in from sheep-shearing to toast his face and feet by the crackling fire, while the crickets chirped in the chimney-corner, and the room was filled with flickering light. Beautiful, peaceful Mackery End!

In one of Charles's Elia Essays we have the Blakesware picture,—lonely, but full of child-content. Grandmother Field was the paid housekeeper of the old mansion, and probably her thin little grandson, with the wistful brown eyes and queer stammer, was hardly noticed by the great people of the house. But their indifference could not cage his soaring imagination. The little boy dreamed long dreams. Everything, indoors and out, was his, as if he had been sole heir: the tapestried bedroom, the Marble Hall with its mosaics and "stately busts", the faded banner on the stairs with glory in its tattered folds. His was the fruit-garden, with its "sun-baked southern wall" and "murmuring pigeons"; his, the dear old gallery full of

family portraits. How he and Mary loved to roam there,—she wishing for a fairy's power to "call the children down from their frames to play."

From the magic of this Blakesware world, the children crept back into the dusky corners of their London home. In a few years Mary began to take in sewing for a living, and Charles was sent to "The Blue Coat School," called, too, "Christ's Hospital."

Though this school was for poor boys, it bore no brand of Charity. Instead, every boy felt proud to be in a school as honored as it was old. For one thing, he could not get in without some kind of "pull,"—as we should say to-day; that is, some man with money, had to vouch for his character, and promise to pay damages, if necessary, to the amount of $500. (Where boys play together, something does *sometimes* get broken.) A written statement was sent with each boy saying that his father was too poor to educate him. Probably Charles Lamb got into Christ's through his father's employer, Samuel Salt.

Within the last few years the fine old school has been moved from the heart of London, to the more open country; but in Lamb's day any one could have seen the Blue-Coat Boys playing in the solemnly-neighbored courtyard, with Newgate Prison opposite, Christ Church on one side, and an old burying-ground on the other. Perhaps, since ball was forbidden, Charles played battle-dore and shuttle-cock, and we can imagine him running about, hatless like the others and like them wearing a long blue coat something like a wrapper, a broad white band for a collar, bright yellow stockings, and a red leather belt into which he probably tucked the awkward skirt that *would* cling round his ankles when he ran. Below the skirt came strong, brown corduroy trousers, and below them, the

long, slim, yellow legs looked even longer and slimmer than they were.

From the noisy crowd we might have singled out Lamb's best friend—a quiet boy, Samuel Taylor Coleridge. They were "new boys" together. Coleridge was two years older than Lamb, and brighter in almost every way. "The inspired Charity boy," they used to call him. But young Lamb had no such nickname. Though he, too, could turn his Latin into graceful English, except for this, the most striking things about him were his thoughtful brown eyes and his bad stutter—which was never wholly cured. Coleridge, on the other hand, was positively brilliant.

In outward circumstances, however, he was less happy than Lamb. His family lived too far away for him to go home, like Charles, for the half or whole holidays, and he had no Grandmother Field. His best fun came through excursions to the New River when the boys would "strip under the first warmth of the sun, and wanton like young dace in the streams."

At the Blue Coat School their appetites were "damped", not satisfied. To Coleridge every day had its dish. Monday brought the faithful return of tasteless "blue milk porritch"; and Saturday, "pease soup, coarse and choking", while young Lamb on home holidays could vary his diet with "a slice of extraordinary bread and butter from the hot loaf of the Temple"; and sometimes Aunt Hetty, Lamb's second-mother—or third, if we count motherly little Mary, would "toddle" to school to bring him goodies. As she seated herself on the "old cole-hole steps", opened her apron, and took out her "bason", Coleridge would stand enviously by, "feeling alone among six hundred playmates," and Lamb, though he liked the

gift, would feel just a little ashamed of the giver; and, years later, bitterly ashamed of that shame. Once he gave an old beggar the "six-penny whole plum-cake" which Aunt Hetty had brought, smoking hot. He cried about it afterwards, not wholly for the cake, though he was not above the love of cake, but because he had cheated her; she had never saved her pennies for that old man, but in her generous love, had planned for small Charles Lamb to eat that cake. And he knew it.

If he was going to give his cake away at all, he might better have given it to one of the other boys instead of to that lazy beggar. There was one poor little fellow at school who used to save the scraps of meat left on the plates, carry them to his room, and hide them there. One "leave day" two of the other boys, who had already condemned him as half-ghoul, half-miser, saw him glide, solitary, through the great gate, carrying something in a blue-checked handkerchief. Too curious to resist, they slunk after him, through the gate, down the street, and up the four dark flights of stairs of an old house. There they found the boy's father and mother, hungrier than himself. From that day, to the credit of the boys at Christ's, the half-miser was counted as a hero.

From Coleridge, Lamb, Leigh Hunt, and others, we get combination pictures of some of the teachers at this school. The Rev. Mr. Field "came late of a morning; went away soon in the afternoon; and used to walk up and down, languidly bearing his cane, as if it were a lily." During his classes the school-room had the soothing air of "summer slumbers." Not so, stout little Boyer, with his "close and cruel" eye, condemning spectacles, and hands "ready for execution." Boyer was known by his wigs: "one, serene,

smiling, fresh powdered, betokening a mild day"; the other, "old, discolored, angry", threatening storm.

"Od's my life, Sirrah," he would roar, "I have a great mind to whip you." Then, after waiting long enough for the culprit to "forget the context", he would yell, "*and* I WILL *too!*"

This is Lamb's and Hunt's picture. Coleridge, with more zeal for learning, found Boyer as sensible as he was severe. He was a keen, though merciless critic of compositions: "Harp? Harp? Lyre?" he would demand. "Pen and ink, boy, you mean! Muse, boy, Muse? Your nurse's daughter, you mean! Pierian spring? Oh, aye! the cloister-pump, I suppose!"

One day, when Coleridge had just come back from his holidays, Boyer found him crying. "Boy! the school is your father! Boy! the school is your mother! Boy! the school is your brother! Boy! the school is your sister! the school is your first cousin, and your second cousin, and all the rest of your relations! Let's have no more crying." Wouldn't any boy be convinced by such sympathetic tenderness?

With time, however, all these school troubles grew smaller and smaller, to vanish, at last, entirely, or to be remembered dimly, as mere jokes; while one thing won at school would last forever—the beautiful friendship of Lamb with Coleridge. "Oh, it is pleasant," Lamb said years later, "as it is rare, to find the same arm linked in yours at forty which at thirteen helped it turn over the Cicero."

Lamb's days at Christ's Hospital ended when he was only fourteen. Then his old friend, Mr. Salt, got him a position at the South Sea House. Here, beginning at a salary of about two dollars and a half a week, he stayed for three years. When he left the South Sea House, it was to

work at a weary, monotonous clerkship in the East India House. For the first three years in this position, Lamb had no salary at all; it was considered privilege enough to learn the business. Once learned, however, his work was very fairly paid, and he was raised steadily and generously.

Though the office took his hours, it could not take his heart. Devotion to his home and family, particularly to his sister Mary, was his very life, compared to which his business, his love of books, and even his friends were of small account. And so, to understand him at all, we must think of him as at home; and a sad, hard place it was—to bear that name. Besides Mary, there were his father, once merry, but now an old man too feeble to work; his invalid mother, unable to walk; his brother John, who, though he had had some business success, chose to live independently and to enjoy life by lightly shirking its responsibilities; and old Aunt Hetty, bringer of his boyhood's plum-cake. Aunt Hetty had a small income; but, except for that, all the money that came into the Lamb household was earned by Charles's bookkeeping and by Mary's sewing. The oldest brother had left home without once offering to help. For the two who shared the load, it was a long, dreary struggle: for him, the desk all day and wearisome games of cards with his father at night; for her, nerve-wearing indoor life with two infirm old people. (She even slept with her mother.)

As the nettling littlenesses of house- and needle-work grew more and more irksome, Mary weakened in unseen ways. Still she endured until one day, September 22, 1796, when Charles was only twenty-one, there came a sudden, violent breakdown,—a fearful tragedy—which one may dimly imagine from Lamb's short letter to Coleridge, the only friend to whom he could turn in his overwhelming

grief: “My poor dear, dearest sister in a fit of insanity has been the death of her own mother. I was at hand only in time enough to snatch the knife out of her grasp. My poor father was slightly wounded, and I am left to take care of him and my aunt. Write as religious a letter as possible, but no mention of what is gone and done with. With me, ‘the former things are passed away,’ and I have something more to do than feel. God Almighty have us all in His keeping!”

How his friend longed to take him away from London and the ever-depressing walls of his “home” to the uplifting hills of the lake region! “I wish above measure,” he wrote, “to have you for a little while here; no visitants shall blow on the nakedness of your feelings; you shall be quiet, and your spirit may be healed. I charge you, my dearest friend, not to encourage gloom or despair. You are a temporary sharer in human miseries that you may be an eternal partaker of the Divine Nature.”

But of course Lamb could not make the proposed visit. There was for him no little holiday; there could be no hours under the strengthening hills; or in the sound companionship of his best-loved friend. Not even for a few days could he drop the burden. He must act,—stand at the wheel and steer. He took Mary to a private asylum at Islington, and, when business hours were over, made a home, as well as he could, for his father and Aunt Hetty. For a little while Aunt Hetty visited a rich relation, but she was soon returned as “indolent and mulish.”

It was a heavy weight and a fixed weight for a young man just out of boyhood; but he bore it, and perhaps only the one friend knew how his heart yearned sometimes for his sheltered youth. But he must be a man now, and a man

for life. And so, back to that "thorn of a desk" all day and the dull games of cards at night.

Imagine ourselves going with him some morning to the East India House, to the office where he clerked for the best hours of his life.

"I notice, Mr. Lamb," comments one of his superiors, "that you come very late every morning."

"Yes, but just see how early I go," is Lamb's logical answer.

Another day, one of the heads of the department asked:

"Pray, Mr. Lamb, what are you about?"

"Forty, next birthday."

"I don't like your answer."

"Nor I your question."

De Quincey has given us the best description of the circumstances under which Lamb worked. He sat on a high stool at his desk, railed in—in a kind of pen, with five other "quill-driving gentlemen"—from the main room. When De Quincey called, Lamb's first greeting was an unforgettable smile. Then, so as not to converse from a height, he began to dismount, turning his back as one would to come down a ladder, assuring De Quincey that he was not going to "fly", and laughing heartily as he made his steep descent.

Though he says comparatively little about his business, even to his best friends, it is easy to imagine how tedious he found it,—that young man, with his love of merriment, his strong impulse to write, his quivering fear of home disaster, all mixed up in mind and heart. No wonder that his "spirits showed gray before his hair"; no wonder if he found the single days at Christmas and at Easter too brief to commemorate the seasons, and the one week of summer too short to repair his strength.

Frequently, like many business-men of to-day, he had to stay at his office till almost seven o'clock every day for a week or so, "starving...without my dinner," and often, then, some young man hanger-on,—one of many to feel Lamb's charm,—would walk home with him. "The burs stuck to him," and, though "they were good; and loving burs," he would have been as comfortable burless. "I am never C.L., but always C.L. & Co.," he exclaimed. Young would-be writers pestered him. "One of them accompanies me home, lest I should be solitary for a moment; he at length takes his welcome leave at the door; up I go, mutton on table, hungry as a hunter...knock at the door...in comes somebody, to prevent my eating alone!—a process absolutely necessary to my poor, wretched digestion. Oh, the pleasure of eating alone!—eating my dinner alone! let me think of it."

Meanwhile, old Mr. Lamb, who had been sitting round through all the empty day planning Charles's evening full of cribbage, could hardly wait for his son to finish his meal, and, if the younger man showed the least reluctance to begin those "repeated games" would grumble out, "If you won't play with me, you might as well not come home at all."

Within three years after Mary's necessary exile, Aunt Hetty and Mr. Lamb both died, and then Charles, who was perfectly fearless for himself, brought his sister back home. So it was that they wrote the "Shakespeare Tales", as well as much else, in partnership—she managing the comedies, and he, the tragedies,—the work being divided so as to keep her mind only on happy things. In some of their other books it is hard to tell where he laid down the pen and she took it up. Meanwhile even the wearisome business life was turned by Lamb into something sunny.

Little by little he dropped into writing for the papers,—poems or bits of prose,—anything that darted into his mind. "The very parings of a counting-house," he said, "are in some sort the setting up of an author." The "Old Benchers of the Inner Temple," the "South Sea House," and the "Superannuated man" are nothing but descriptions of the old men he knew on the street or in the office. Piece together his essays and his letters and there is his autobiography—half sad, half playful. He takes our arm, in his intimate friendliness, and with him we laugh and reflect over all the little things that make the mighty world. Finding interest in trifles was one of his great gifts. He turned the common things of every day into literature and made them live. His "works" shine on our book shelves,—a ten-volume set; but these were really his "recreations." He who first wrote hiding behind the name of "Elia", called his works "the ledgers in the office." "There is nothing of the author about me but hunger."

Some lives brim with variety, others with drudgery. Aside from the over-shadowing gloom, whatever novelty there was in Charles Lamb's life he put there by his own sparkling interpretation. Of course, if frequent movings and change of address meant novelty, he had that. Mary's illness sometimes forced a move. As she grew older, her breakdowns lasted longer and came closer together. But neither of these partners in pluck would let the sunlight of the present be dimmed by a future cloud. Though both were all awake to cruel facts, they were both all alive to the need of joyousness. After each of her recoveries, she seemed better in every way,—as if the absence of the mind had kept its temple fresh. She had a quick wit, clear brain, and particularly strong memory. Healing brought with it marvelous serenity and new vigor. She wanted and needed

work, and, as the brother and sister worked together, she sagged no more than he. He spoke of her as a "prop," In their "sort of double singleness", the partnership was as sweet as it was solid. Charles said they were as inseparable as "gumboil and tooth-ache." They shared letters and they shared friends; they shared reading and writing and vacation. After wandering about the old grounds of Oxford and Cambridge in the holidays, they were full of imaginary learning. "Mary rode home triumphing as if she had been graduated."

Office and home then made up Lamb's humdrum days—dull enough they were, all of them, in the eyes of dull-hearted hundreds. Boil down the bare facts and we have his thirty-six years in business as a common clerk, "chained to the desk's dull wood," his browsings of leisure moments in old book-stores and old print-shops, evenings spent in reading, writing, smoking, card-playing, and talking,—cozy evenings with fire-light and candle-light and Mary; and—that was all,—that, and the fun and the pathos and the measureless fidelity with which the old bachelor watched over the old maid who was at once his care, his chum, his treasure, and his life. His greatest conquests were lowly ones. At twenty-one, he began a life-long campaign to conquer domestic difficulties. The giant Atlas held up the sky; this slim little man went about his day's business with a rainbow somewhere underneath his coat, that two hearts—and often many more—might grow strong in its promise.

The gloom overhanging him must not darken this sketch. He would not have wished it to. He smiled back at the blue sky above his head and he buried life's pathos in humor. Lamb's friends would take any amount of teasing from him. They laughed, and felt no hurt. He was like a

bee bearing honey but no sting; or, as he said of another, "All his whips were rods of roses."

When Martin Burney lounged back from a visit to the veal-pie and seated himself at the card table. Lamb quietly commented,

"M-Martin, if d-dirt was trumps, what a hand you'd hold!"

"Charles, have you ever heard me preach?" asked Coleridge.

"I've never heard you do anything else," came as swiftly as the stutter would allow.

And when Wordsworth said, "I believe I could write like Shakespeare, if I had a mind to try it", "Yes, n-nothing is w-wanting but the m-mind," was Lamb's equally keen answer.

"You rascally old Lake poet," he once called Wordsworth, and it is whispered that another time he even pulled Wordsworth's nose!

When Hazlitt's little boy was born. Lamb wrote: "Well, my blessing and heaven's be upon him, and make him like his father, with something a better temper and a smoother head of hair."

He and Mary made a fine team at teasing. Even when she had grown to look like a Quakerish old lady, he would slap her on the back, like a boy comrade. Though she was strikingly feminine, with her soft voice, small hands, busy with sewing or knitting, gray gown, and snowy kerchief, and though she was little and bent and had grown deaf, he treated her with a kind of tender roughness, as if, a "boy man" himself, he was afraid she might begin to feel old. Once when some one, out of courtesy, placed a comfortable armchair for her, he exclaimed, pulling the chair away:

"Don't take it, Mary. It looks as if you were going to have a tooth drawn."

One day he wrote a letter for her, explaining (sure that she would read his explanation): "The truth is, she writes such a pimping, mean, detestable hand, that she is ashamed of the formation of her letters." The words go "staggering up and down shameless as drunkards in the day-time. Her very blots are not bold like this (illustrated by a bold blot), but poor smears" (illustrated by a smear). He called himself, though, "the worst folder-up of a letter in the world, except certain Hottentots, in the land of Caffre, who never fold up their letters at all."

Don't imagine that Mary failed to fire back her fun. Laughingly she wrote of Charles's ear for music (or lack of it):

"Of common tunes he knows not anything
Nor 'Rule, Britannia' from'God save the King.'"

Meanwhile, the outside world shared the humor of the Lamb fireside. For a while, at sixpence a piece, Charles furnished jokes for a paper; but he hated this, as almost any one would—six jokes a day—out of the air, out of nowhere, price 75c: "Reader, try it for once, only for one short twelvemonth," he sighed. The joy of wit is that it is unstudied, unmeasured, unpaid for. When it becomes a little package "seven lines" long, it is spoiled. It was a mercy that Lamb could turn out this commercialized humor and still keep his spontaneity!

One day when he was returning from a dinner, the stage-coach made a short stop at Kentish Town.

"Are you full inside?" inquired a feminine voice. Lamb stuck his head out of the window:

"Yes, I am quite full inside; that last piece of pudding at Mr. Gillman's did the business for me."

One of the bright chapters in Lamb's story tells how, at the age of fifty, one April day in 1825, he came home from the office "For Ever," honorably discharged and pensioned for faithful service. This surprise of liberty was as great as it was joyful: "Every year to be as long as three—to have three times as much real time in it!" Yet, being Lamb, he missed his old office cronies and was half-homesick for the peg where his hat used to hang. He called himself rather sadly "A Superannuated Man."

Whether we look at his life before or after this retirement, one thing is true of it always: *He had time for people* and, unless they belonged to the immortal family of bores, he had a heart-welcome for them too. They might be only the "dim specks" of humanity, the grimy chimney-sweeps. But what then? They were children, feeling cold and hunger, loving the smell of sassafras-tea, and the taste of sizzling sausages, and knowing what to do with an unexpected coin or the savory dinners which Lamb and his friend Jem White beamingly served. We imagine how the dusky youngsters grinned at the feast, and how, when someone, Lamb himself probably, took a tumble in the street, one little face twinkled with mirth,—with "joy snatched out of desolation."

Perhaps it was the *people* of London, from its sweeps to its pastry-cooks, that made Lamb love it as he did: "O, her lamps of a night! All her streets are pavements of pure gold. A mob of men is better than a flock of sheep." Although, when he and Mary visited Coleridge, he learned to love the towering mountains—"Skiddaw and his broad-breasted brethren, all dark with clouds upon their heads,"—as a rule he was not "romance-bit about nature." He loved to scoff at Coleridge and Wordsworth, with their

passion for sky and hills, and declared that he was "more fond of mensects than insects."

Among his whimsical letters decorated with blots and smears,—and one of them was written in alternate red and black ink,—we find invitations for "mensects" to dine: "Leg of Lamb, as before, hot at 4. And the heart of Lamb ever"; and "Turkey and contingent plumb-pudding at four (I always spell plumb-pudding with a *b*, *p-l-u-m-b*, I think it sounds fatter and more suetty."

During their last years, Mary could not bear company, but during many previous ones she was a gracious hostess to the strange but interesting group that straggled in for their Wednesday or Thursday evenings. Tables for four were scattered about the room, and "whist" was salted with racy conversation. At about ten o'clock, Becky spread a white cloth for the supper of cold meat and porter and smoking baked potatoes, and, soon after, Hazlitt would drop in from a concert, Kenney, from his successful new comedy, and lovely Fanny Kelly, still fresh after an evening of acting. Meanwhile Mary moved gently among them, with a smile as winning as her brother's. She was a master of the *Live and Let Live Creed*, and as little disturbed by the rings of smoke as she was by the hearty cheer.

While the Lambs laughed at affected people, such as the woman who *would* talk French because they didn't understand it, they sympathized with all sorts of others. Mary's heart was half of many a kindness, though the *action* mainly had to come from Charles. His sympathy was of the practical kind that found a man a job, and tried to work up a little school for a woman. Scores of benefits to scores of people are written in the heart's indelible record. For years he gave an annual sum of $160 to one of

his old teachers, one who had taught him when he was a very *little* boy, and he was faithful in this till the day she died. His spontaneous giving showed itself in countless ways, from ready money for beggars,—the value of the coin unnoticed,—to the open gate through which he urged a hungry donkey to graze on the Lambs' front lawn.

Leigh Hunt, if no one else, knew that Lamb was no fair-weather friend. When Hunt was imprisoned in Surrey Gaol for his published ridicule of the Prince of Wales, Charles and Mary were among his most faithful visitors. They seemed to choose the gloomiest days to bring their sunlight in. Hunt wrote:

"When the sad winds told us rain would come down,
Or snow upon snow fairly digged up the town,
And dun yellow fogs brooded over its white,
So that scarcely a being was seen towards night,
Then, then said the lady yclept near and dear.
Now, mind what I tell you—the L—s will be here."

The "near and dear lady" was Mrs. Hunt. Perhaps the Lambs came to see four-year-old Thornton as much as his parents. They so loved children! No matter how bright the ever mirthful father could make his prison, it was a prison for all that, and no place for a little boy's home. Feelingly Lamb wrote:

"Gates that close with iron roar
Have been to thee thy nursery-door;
Chains that chink in cheerless cells
Have been thy rattles and thy bells."

Lamb's love of walking, added to his love of children, often led him twenty-two miles from London, to a girls' school kept by Miss Betsy and Miss Jane Norris. "His head would suddenly appear at the door in the midst of lessons, with 'Well, Betsy! How do, Jane?' 'Oh, Mr., Lamb!' they

would say, and that was the end of work for that day." He would tell the girls stories and generally either stay to dinner or eat some bread and cheese in his favorite seat in a tree. Then with a troop of children to the village shop. Leaning over the lower half of the Dutch door, he would beat his cane or umbrella on the floor, demanding, "Abigail Ives! Abigail Ives!"

"Ah, Mr. Lamb," in a delighted voice, "I thought I knew your rap."

"Yes, Abigail, and I've brought my money with me. Give these young ladies six pennyworth of Gibraltar rock." Then Mrs. Coe, who tells these stories of her childhood's friend, goes on to explain that "Gibraltar rock was Abigail Ives's specialty and six pennyworth was an unheard of amount except when Mr. Lamb was in the village. It had to be broken with a hammer!" We can imagine how the little storekeeper grew to look forward to his coming— the slim gentleman in rusty black, with the noble head and the "immaterial legs", the green umbrella under his arm, and the exhaustless wealth in his pocketbook. Wouldn't the children of to-day like to have him interrupt their school, with his holidays, his stories, and his candy! Whenever Hazlitt's little girl expected Lamb to visit her father, she would run into the street, stop any stranger she met, and exclaim, gleefully, "Mr. Lamb is coming to see me!" Charles and Mary used to throw books into a strawberry-patch for a certain boy to find.

It does not surprise us that these partners, with the hearts of a father and mother, adopted, in their old age, a young Italian orphan, Emma Isola. In a letter to Mrs. Shelley, Lamb joyfully describes her youthful struggles to learn Latin and her still greater struggles to write poems: "I am teaching Emma Latin to qualify her for a superior

governess-ship. Her prepositions are suppositions; her concords disagree; her interjections are purely English 'Ah!' and 'Oh!' with a yawn and a gape in the same tongue; and she herself is a lazy, block-headly supine. As I say to her, *ass in praesenti* rarely makes a wise man *in futuro*" Then in a letter to Dibdin, "Emma has just died, chok'd with a Gerund-in-dum. On opening her, we found a Participle-in-rus in the pericardium;" and to Hood, "Inclosed are verses which Emma sat down to write (her first) on the eve after your departure. What to call 'em I don't know. Blank verse they are not, because of the rhymes; rhymes they are not, because of the blank verse; heroics they are not, because they are lyric; lyric they are not, because of the heroic measure. They must be called Emmaics."

It took far more generosity to give Emma away on the day of her wedding, than it took to give her a home. The brother and sister were older now and needed her youth and mirth. If you can own, to read and re-read, only one of Charles Lamb's essays, let it be that exquisite hint of the hopes of his heart, "Dream Children." It is too perfect to be mangled by quotation or interpretation;—the only thing for us to do is to read it as a whole, to be silent, remembering and imagining, and then read again.

"Saint Charles!" exclaimed Thackeray when he read one of Lamb's letters; and Thackeray, from the hidden sadness of his own life, understood only too well Lamb's loyalty and cheer. But Lamb would have winced under any such title as Saint. His faithfulness was of the instinctive, doglike kind that did not recognize itself. If a halo had been made to fit him, he would probably have said it pricked! And he would have been the very last to want his virtues magnified. Hiding nothing but his goodness, in the

open book of his life he has engraved his faults and weaknesses, as if to invite our condemnation. We love or despise him according to what we are. Some, shaking their heads, sigh out: "Lamb must have been very irreligious. He hardly ever entered a church except when it was empty!"

But didn't he find silent worship there? Didn't he read his Bible, and say, "No book can have too much of silent scripture in it"? He shuddered at those who "make a mock of holy things." Is *life* no argument of faith?

A few years before Lamb died he wrote to a friend, "I shall go and inquire of the stone-cutter, that cuts tombstones here, what a stone with a short inscription will cost; just to say, 'Here C. Lamb loved his brethren of mankind.'" Two days after Christmas, in 1834, and a few months after Coleridge's death, Charles Lamb slipped quietly away. Before the end, he had been "brave enough and loving enough to live with his sister at the Asylum." The plain stone in Edmonton churchyard, to the memory of Charles and Mary, does not bear the inscription Charles laughingly chose. Inconspicuously cut at the base of the stone, on which a quaint jingle tries to suggest his nature, are the words, "Restored by a Member of the Christ's Hospital School." So the boys of the Blue Coat School remember him still, and other boys, and all the world. No one can pity him. He was too rich for that. In sweetness and strength, in mind and in friendships, in all the things that make money worthless, he had a wealth that almost any one might envy. His was a hard, steady pull; but he sang vigor into his muscles; and he kept the covenant with himself to guard his "*best* friend" to the end, saving enough money for her care if he should be the first to go. And he was. Mary outlived him twelve years.

Lucas has described one sweet memorial. Long, long after the tall grass had grown over the resting-place of these partners, a Blue Coat Boy walking on a London street, stopped and turned at the unexpected words, “Come here, boy. Come here.” A perfect stranger, bareheaded and old, stood on a door-step and was beckoning to him. The boy went. Oh, plumb-cake and Gibraltar rock! hot sausages for hungry sweeps! And sixpences for numberless small waifs! the gentleman had slipped a five-shilling piece into the little welcoming hand, “In Memory of Charles Lamb.”

Jane Austen

(England: 1775-1817)

Pride and Prejudice, Sense and Sensibility, Emma

It was a very happy family that lived in the Rectory at Steventon from Seventeen Hundred Seventy-five to Eighteen Hundred One. There were five boys and two girls, and the younger girl's name was Jane. Between her and James, the oldest boy, lay a period of twelve years of three hundred and sixty-five days each, not to mention leap-years.

The boys were sent away to be educated, and when they came home at holiday time they brought presents for the mother and the girls, and there was great rejoicing.

James was sent to Oxford. The girls were not sent away to be educated—it was thought hardly worth while then to educate women, and some folks still hold to that belief. When the boys came home, they were made to stand by the door-jamb, and a mark was placed on the casing, with a date, which showed how much they had grown. And they were catechized as to their knowledge, and cross-questioned and their books inspected; and so we find one of the sisters saying, once, that she knew all the things her brothers knew, and besides that she knew all the things she knew herself. There was plenty of books in the library, and the girls made use of them. They would read to their father "because his eyesight was bad," but I can not help thinking this a clever ruse on the part of the good Rector.

I do not find that there were any secrets in that household, or that either Mr. or Mrs. Austen ever said that children should be seen and not heard. It was a little republic of letters—all their own. Thrown in on

themselves, for not many of the yeomanry thereabouts could read, there was developed a fine spirit of comradeship among parents and children, brothers and sisters, servants and visitors, that is a joy to contemplate. Before the days of railroads, a "visitor" was more of an institution than he is now. He stayed longer and was more welcome; and the news he brought from distant parts was eagerly asked for. Nowadays we know all about everything, almost before it happens, for yellow journalism is so alert that it discounts futurity.

In the Austen household had lived and died a son of Warren Hastings. The lad had so won the love of the Austens that they even spoke of him as their own; and this bond also linked them to the great outside world of statecraft. The things the elders discussed were the properties, too, of the children.

Then once a year the Bishop came—came in knee-breeches, hobnailed shoes, and shovel hat, and the little church was decked with greens. The Bishop came from Paradise, little Jane used to think, and once, to be polite, she asked him how all the folks were in Heaven. Then the other children giggled and the Bishop spilt a whole cup of tea down the front of his best coat, and coughed and choked until he was very red in the face.

When Jane was ten years old there came to live at the Rectory a daughter of Mrs. Austen's sister. She came to them direct from France. Her name was Madame Fenillade. She was a widow and only twenty-two. Once, when little Jane overheard one of the brothers say that Monsieur Fenillade had kissed Mademoiselle Guillotine, she asked what he meant and they would not tell her.

Now Madame spoke French with grace and fluency, and the girls thought it queer that there should be two

languages—English and French—so they picked up a few words of French, too, and at the table would gravely say "Merci, Papa," and "S' il vous plait, Mamma." Then Mr. Austen proposed that at table no one should speak anything but French. So Madame told them what to call the sugar and the salt and the bread, and no one called anything except by its French name. In two weeks each of the whole dozen persons who sat at that board, as well as the girl who waited on table, had a bill-of-fare working capital of French. In six months they could converse with ease.

And science with all its ingenuity has not yet pointed out a better way for acquiring a new language than the plan the Austens adopted at Steventon Rectory. We call it the "Berlitz Method" now.

Madame Fenillade's widowhood rested lightly upon her, and she became quite the life of the whole household.

One of the Austen boys fell in love with the French widow; and surely it would be a very stupid country boy that wouldn't love a French widow like that! And they were married and lived happily ever afterward.

But before Madame married and moved away she taught the girls charades, and then little plays, and a theatrical performance was given in the barn. Then a play could not be found that just suited, so Jane wrote one and Cassandra helped, and Madame criticized and the Reverend Mr. Austen suggested a few changes. Then it was all rewritten. And this was the first attempt at writing for the public by Jane Austen.

Jane Austen wrote four great novels. "Pride and Prejudice" was begun when she was twenty and finished a year later. The old father started a course of novel-reading on his own account in order to fit his mind to pass

judgment on his daughter's work. He was sure it was good, but feared that love had blinded his eyes, and he wanted to make sure. After six months' comparison he wrote to a publisher explaining that he had the manuscript of a great novel that would be parted with for a consideration. He assured the publisher that the novel was as excellent as any Miss Burney, Miss Edgeworth, or any one else ever wrote.

Now publishers get letters like that by every mail, and when Mr. Austen received his reply it was so antarctic in sentiment that the manuscript was stored away in the garret, where it lay for just eleven years before it found a publisher. But in the meantime Miss Austen had written three other novels—not with much hope that any one would publish them, but to please her father and the few intimate friends who read and sighed and smiled in quiet.

The year she was thirty years of age her father died—died with no thought that the world would yet endorse his own loving estimate of his daughter's worth.

After the father's death financial troubles came, and something had to be done to fight off possible hungry wolves. The manuscript was hunted out, dusted, gone over, and submitted to publishers. They sniffed at it and sent it back. Finally a man was found who was bold enough to read. He liked it, but wouldn't admit the fact. Yet he decided to print it. He did so. The reading world liked it and said so, although not very loudly. Slowly the work made head, and small-sized London drafts were occasionally sent by publishers to Miss Austen with apologies because the amounts were not larger.

Now, in reference to writing books it may not be amiss to explain that no one ever said, "Now then, I'll write a story!" and sitting down at table took up pen and dipping it in ink, wrote. Stories don't come that way. Stories take

possession of one—incident after incident—and you write in order to get rid of 'em—with a few other reasons mixed in, for motives, like silver, are always found mixed. Children play at keeping house: and men and women who have loved think of the things that have happened, then imagine all the things that might have happened, and from thinking it all over to writing it out is but a step. You begin one chapter and write it this forenoon; and do all you may to banish the plot, the next chapter is all in your head before sundown. Next morning you write chapter number two, to unload it, and so the story spins itself out into a book. All this if you live in the country and have time to think and are not broken in upon by too much work and worry—save the worry of the ever-restless mind. Whether the story is good or not depends upon what you leave out.

The sculptor produces the beautiful statue by chipping away such parts of the marble block as are not needed.

Really happy people do not write stories—they accumulate adipose tissue and die at the top through fatty degeneration of the cerebrum. A certain disappointment in life, a dissatisfaction with environment, is necessary to stir the imagination to a creative point. If things are all to your taste you sit back and enjoy them. You forget the flight of time, the march of the seasons, your future life, family, country—all, just as Antony did in Egypt. A deadly, languorous satisfaction comes over you. Pain, disappointment, unrest or a joy that hurts, are the things that prick the mind into activity.

Jane Austen lived in a little village. She felt the narrowness of her life—the inability of those beyond her own household to match her thoughts and emotions. Love came that way—a short heart-rest, a being understood, were hers. The gates of Paradise swung ajar and she caught

a glimpse of the glories within, and sighed and clasped her hands and bowed her head in a prayer of thankfulness.

When she arose from her knees the gates were closed; the way was dark; she was alone—alone in a little quibbling, carping village, where tired folks worked and gossiped, ate, drank, slept. Her home was pleasant, to be sure, but man is a citizen of the world, not of a house.

Jane Austen began to write—to write about these village people. Jane was tall, and twenty—not very handsome, but better, she was good-looking. She looked good because she was. She was pious, but not too pious. She used to go calling among the parishioners, visiting the sick, the lowly, the troubled. Then when Great Folks came down from London to "the Hall," she went with the Rector to call on them too, for the Rector was servant to all—his business was to minister: he was a Minister. And the Reverend George Austen was a bit proud of his younger daughter. She was just as tall as he, and dignified and gentle: and the clergyman chuckled quietly to himself to see how she was the equal in grace and intellect of any Fine Lady from London town.

And although the good Rector prayed, "From all vanity and pride of spirit, good Lord, deliver us," it never occurred to him that he was vain of his tall daughter Jane, and I'm glad it didn't. There is no more crazy bumblebee gets into a mortal's bonnet than the buzzing thought that God is jealous of the affection we have for our loved ones. If we are ever damned, it will be because we have too little love for our fellows, not too much.

But, egad! brother, it's no small delight to be sixty and a little stooped and a trifle rheumatic, and have your own blessed daughter, sweet and stately, comb your thinning gray locks, help you on with your overcoat, find your cane,

and go trooping with you, hand in hand, down the lane on merciful errand bent. It's a temptation to grow old and feign sciatica; and if you could only know that, some day, like old King Lear, upon your withered cheek would fall Cordelia's tears, the thought would be a solace.

So Jane Austen began to write stories about the simple folks she knew. She wrote in the family sitting-room at a little mahogany desk that she could shut up quickly if prying neighbors came in to tell their woes and ask questions about all those sheets of paper! And all she wrote she read to her father and to her sister Cassandra. And they talked it all over together and laughed and cried and joked over it. The kind old minister thought it a good mental drill for his girls to write and express their feelings. The two girls collaborated—that is to say, one wrote and the other looked on. Neither girl had been "educated," except what their father taught them. But to be born into a bookish family, and inherit the hospitable mind and the receptive heart, is better than to be sent to Harvard Annex. Preachers, like other folks, sometimes assume a virtue when they have it not. But George Austen didn't pretend—he was. And that's the better plan, for no man can deceive his children—they take his exact measurement, whether others ever do or not—and the only way to win and hold the love of a child (or a grown-up) is to be frank and simple and honest. I've tried both schemes.

I can not find that George Austen ever claimed he was only a worm of the dust, or pretended to be more or less than he was, or to assume a knowledge that he did not possess. He used to say: "My dears, I really do not know. But let's keep the windows open and light may yet come."

It was a busy family of plain, average people—not very rich, and not very poor. There were difficulties to meet, and troubles to share, and joys to divide.

Jane Austen was born in Seventeen Hundred Seventy-five; "Jane Eyre" in Eighteen Hundred Sixteen—one year before Jane Austen died.

Charlotte Brontë knew all about Jane Austen, and her example fired Charlotte's ambition. Both were daughters of country clergymen. Charlotte lived in the North of England on the wild and treeless moors, where the searching winds rattled the panes and black-faced sheep bleated piteously. Jane Austen lived in the rich quiet of a prosperous farming country, where bees made honey and larks nested. The Reverend Patrick Brontë disciplined his children: George Austen loved his. In Steventon there is no "Black Bull"; only a little dehorned inn, kept by a woman who breeds canaries, and will sell you a warranted singer for five shillings, with no charge for the cage. At Steventon no red-haired Yorkshiremen offer to give fight or challenge you to a drinking-bout.

The opposites of things are alike, and that is why the world ties Jane Eyre and Jane Austen in one bundle. Their methods of work were totally different: their effects gotten in different ways. Charlotte Brontë fascinates by startling situations and highly colored lights that dance and glow, leading you on in a mad chase. There's pain, unrest, tragedy in the air. The pulse always is rapid and the temperature high.

It is not so with Jane Austen. She is an artist in her gentleness, and the world is today recognizing this more and more. The stage now works its spells by her methods—without rant, cant or fustian—and as the years

go by this must be so more and more, for mankind's face is turned toward truth.

To weave your spell out of commonplace events and brew a love-potion from every-day materials is high art. When Kipling takes three average soldiers of the line, ignorant, lying, swearing, smoking, dog-fighting soldiers, who can even run on occasion, and by telling of them holds a world in thrall—that's art! In these soldiers three we recognize something very much akin to ourselves, for the thing that holds no relationship to us does not interest us—we can not leave the personal equation out.

Jane Austen's characters are all plain, every-day folks. The work is always quiet. There are no entangling situations, no mysteries, no surprises.

Now, to present a situation, an emotion, so it will catch and hold the attention of others, is largely a knack—you practise on the thing until you do it well. This one thing I do. But the man who does this thing is not intrinsically any greater than those who appreciate it—in fact, they are all made of the same kind of stuff. Kipling himself is quite a commonplace person. He is neither handsome nor magnetic. He is plain and manly and would fit in anywhere. If there was a trunk to be carried upstairs, or an ox to get out of a pit, you'd call on Kipling if he chanced that way, and he'd give you a lift as a matter of course, and then go on whistling with hands in his pockets. His art is a knack practised to a point that gives facility.

Jane Austen was a commonplace person. She swept, sewed, worked, and did the duty that lay nearest her. She wrote because she liked to, and because it gave pleasure to others. She wrote as well as she could. She had no thought of immortality, or that she was writing for the ages—no more than Shakespeare had. She never anticipated that

Southey, Coleridge, Lamb, Guizot and Macaulay would hail her as a marvel of insight, nor did she suspect that a woman as great as George Eliot would declare her work flawless.

But today strong men recognize her books as rarely excellent, because they show the divinity in all things, keep close to the ground, gently inculcate the firm belief that simple people are as necessary as great ones, that small things are not necessarily unimportant, and that nothing is really insignificant. It all rings true.

And so I sing the praises of the average woman—the woman who does her work, who is willing to be unknown, who is modest and unaffected, who tries to lessen the pains of earth, and to add to its happiness. She is the true guardian angel of mankind!

No book published in Jane Austen's lifetime bore her name on the title-page; she was never lionized by society; she was never two hundred miles from home; she died when forty-two years of age, and it was sixty years before a biography was attempted or asked for. She sleeps in the cathedral at Winchester, and not so very long ago a visitor, on asking the verger to see her grave, was conducted thither, and the verger asked: "Was she anybody in particular? So many folks ask where she's buried, you know!"

But this is changed now, for when the verger took me to her grave and we stood by that plain black marble slab, he spoke intelligently of her life and work. And many visitors now go to the cathedral, only because it is the resting-place of Jane Austen, who lived a beautiful, helpful life and produced great art, yet knew it not.

Washington Irving

(1783-1859)

Rip Van Winkle, Legend of Sleepy Hollow

"Please, your Honor, here's a bairn was named after you." Lizzie, the Scotch nurse, pushed into the shop, dragging a short-legged boy by the arm till they were close to the President's side. "Here's a bairn was named after you," she repeated encouragingly. And then President Washington knew what she meant, and laid his hand on the child's tumbled hair in blessing. The boy who received that blessing was Washington Irving. He lived near-by, at 128 William Street, below Fulton Street, in New York City. Eight children were crowded into that two-story city house: William, Ann, Peter, Catharine, Ebenezer, John, Sarah, and Washington. Over the brood presided a stern father, with his "Catechism" and "Pilgrim's Progress",—and a gentle mother who loved and understood.

Doubtless, as the years advanced, that mother knew that her youngest child, Washington, would learn, like all other children, from every source that claimed his interest. Though he was taught hardly more than his alphabet, in the queer little school in Ann Street, he was taught much else by life in the city. He used to "haunt the pier-heads in fine weather" to watch the ships "fare forth" with lessening sails; and there at the wharves, from the smell of salt water, the call of sea birds, and the flapping canvas, he was learning a love of adventure, and was even planning to sail away as his father had done before the War. At home, he trained himself to the hardships of a sailor's life by eating salt pork, fat and greasy,—a thing he loathed; and by getting out of bed at night to lie on the hard floor. Monkey-like, he was learning to climb from roof to roof

of the city houses for the pure fun of dropping mysterious stones down mysterious chimneys, and clambering back, half giddy, but chuckling at the wonder he had roused, for he was always a roguish lad. From the queerly-dressed Dutch people, with their queerer language, he was learning that there were other lands besides his own. From the high-vaulted roof of Trinity Church, with its darkness and beauty and deep-swelling music, he was learning that there were other religions than the strict Scotch Presbyterianism of his father. He even learned, in time, that dancing and the theater, both forbidden by that father, had their own charms; and he secretly took lessons in the one and let himself down from the attic window to go to the other,—always timing himself exactly, to be back at nine for prayers. And then upstairs again and off, by the wood-shed roof, to the ground—and the play.

"Oh, Washington, if you were only good!" the dear impulsive mother used to say. And, yet, in her secret heart, she must have felt that the child was "good" who was always sweet and sunny and loving.

Perhaps it was because she shared his thirst for adventure that she won his confidence. Not allowed by his father to read "Robinson Crusoe" and "Sinbad the Sailor", Washington used to read them at night in bed, or under his desk at school. He liked those books better than his book of sums; such stories carried him into the wild world of his longing, and partly quenched his thirst for adventure—a taste that lasted a lifetime.

In 1800, when Irving was seventeen, he made his first voyage up the Hudson to Albany. In those days, a journey from New York to Albany was like a journey to Europe to-day. Washington's older sisters,—Ann and Catharine, who had married young, were living near Albany, and he

was to visit them. Boy-like, he packed his trunk at the first mention of the trip; but, as the sloop would not sail without a certain amount of freight and a certain number of passengers, he unpacked and re-packed many times before her cargo was ready and the wonderful journey began.

To almost any one, that first sail through the Hudson Highlands is a dream of beauty; to Irving, it was a marvel and a rapture. The stern mountains, crowned with forests; the eagles, sailing and screaming; the roar of "unseen streams dashing down precipices"; and then the anchoring at night in the darkness and mystery of the overhanging cliffs, and drifting asleep to the plaintive call of the whip-poor-will—it was all new to the worshiping city boy, who had never left the New York streets before, except to wander in the woods with dog and gun.

That journey was the beginning of his many travels. Though he went into Mr. Hoffman's office the next year to study law, he did not continue long at the work. An incessant cough soon developed into consumptive tendencies, and, in July 1803, his employer, who loved him like a father, invited him to join a party of seven on a trip to Canada.

The hardships of this journey, however, were a poor medicine. Beyond Albany, they traveled mainly by wagons, over roads so bad and through woods so thick, that they often had to get out and walk. "The whole country was a wilderness," writes Irving. "We floated down the Black River in a scow; we toiled through forests in wagons drawn by oxen; we slept in hunters' cabins, and were once four-and-twenty hours without food; but all was romance to me."

Naturally, when he returned home, his family found him worse rather than better. Accordingly, feeling that

something must be done to save him, the older brothers put their money together—William, who was best able, giving the greatest share—and engaged his passage on a ship sailing for Bordeaux, May 19, 1804. "There's a chap who will go overboard before we get across," hinted the captain, eying Irving suspiciously.

On ship, his sleeping-quarters were in the cabin with sixteen others "besides the master and mate." "I have often passed the greater part of the night walking the deck," Washington wrote to William; and again: "When I cannot get a dinner to suit my taste, I endeavor to get a taste to suit my dinner." His letters breathe a spirit of gaiety and are hopefully full of his own physical improvement, for he was never a man to complain. His worries were for others. Of his sister Nancy's health he wrote: "I wish to Heaven I had her with me...The rude shocks of the Western winters she has to encounter are too violent for a delicate constitution that is at the mercy of every breeze."

And yet his trip was not all joy: now we read of his Christmas at sea, in a dull, pouring rain, with the captain snoring in his berth; now of a "villainous crew of pirates" who attacked the ship.

After Irving reached port, life, like the sea, seemed smoother; but now he fell a prey to the tempting distractions of travel. His greatest fault was, no doubt, a lack of steadiness of aim. Like a bee, he flew from flower to flower, wherever honey seemed the sweetest. To be sure, he had gone abroad for his health; but his brothers, who had sent him, expected him to turn the time and money to some definitely good account. For a short time the art galleries in Rome fired him with an ambition to "turn painter", for he loved wild landscapes and color, declaring that "cold, raw tints" gave him rheumatism. This

art craze, however, amounted to a mere temporary dabbling, like his study of two other subjects. Though his expense-book gives account of two months' tuition in French and of the purchase of a Botanical Dictionary, we do not picture Irving as studying either French or botany very hard. His social instincts were a real impediment to any study. William, in bitter disappointment, declared that he was scouring through Italy in too short a time, "leaving Florence on the left and Venice on the right" for the sake of "good company." In fact, the younger brother's bump of sociability was very large. In Paris, according to his diary, he went to the theater five nights in succession; we do not imagine that he went alone. In London he met Mrs. Siddons and the Kembles. Fascinated with foreign life and foreign people, he hated the student side of travel, and was frankly tired of palaces and cathedrals. All his countries were *peopled*. That is why "Bracebridge Hall" and the "Sketch Book" are so alive.

We are not surprised, then, to find that on his return to New York he plunged into society life, though he still continued his life as an author, begun before he went to Europe. As a partner of Paulding and of William Irving, he issued in twenty numbers a series of brilliant and original papers called "Salmagundi." These were reprinted in London, in 1811.

While Irving was abroad, the harsh news of his father's and his sister Nancy's death had come, so that on his return we must picture him as living alone with his mother in the old house (now torn down) on the corner of William and Ann Streets. There he wrote his "Letters of Jonathan Oldstyle", "Salmagundi", and "History of New York by Diedrich Knickerbocker."

Right in the midst of this work came the most terrible bereavement of Irving's life. Under the encouragement of his employer, the fatherly Mr. Hoffman, Irving had attempted to continue the study of the law. Through Mr. Hoffman's friendship, too, and the openness of his hospitable home, the young man had learned a great deal on another subject. He had learned to love Mr. Hoffman's young daughter, Matilda. She was hardly more than a beautiful child, but he loved her for all that she was, and for all that she promised to be. Just when their love was happiest, however, Matilda caught a terrible cold and within two months died. That sorrow lay too deep for any of Irving's family or any of his friends to touch. During her last days of fevered delirium, when he was constantly with her, her soul had shown itself even more beautiful than it had ever seemed in health; and he never found words to utter his grief. He was twenty-six when she died, and she was only seventeen. But through all his long, lonely life, he cherished her dear love; and after his death, there was found among his treasures a lovely miniature, a lock of fair hair, and a slip of paper bearing her name, "Matilda Hoffman." Through all his travels he had taken her Bible and prayer-book with him, and through all the years, her memory. "I was naturally susceptible," we read in the memoranda, "but my heart would not hold on."

No one could have written of this faithful strength of love more beautifully than Thackeray in that gem of an appreciation, "Nil Nisi Bonum": "He had loved once in his life. The lady he loved died; and he, whom all the world loved, never sought to replace her. I can't say how much the thought of that fidelity had touched me. Does not the very cheerfulness of his after-life add to the pathos of the untold story? To grieve always was not his nature; or,

when he had a sorrow, to bring all the world in to condole with him and bemoan it. Deep and quiet he lays the love of his heart, and buries it; and grass and flowers grow over the scarred ground in due time."

Nearly thirty years after Matilda's death one of Mr. Hoffman's granddaughters, who was rummaging in a drawer for music, found a piece of faded embroidery. "Washington," said Mr. Hoffman, "this is a piece of poor Matilda's work." But Irving had grown suddenly grave and silent, and in a few moments had said good-night and gone home.

That Irving tried to lift the clouds from his own spirit is proved by his continuing, in the midst of his sorrow, his "Knickerbocker's History",—a book rippling and sparkling with merriment. "In his pilgrimage through the lanes and streets, the roads and avenues, of this uneven world," writes Irving, "the author refreshes himself with many a secret smile at occurrences that excite no observation from the dull trudging mass of mortals." He, himself, was Diedrich Knickerbocker, and it was he who "would sit by the old Dutch housewives with a child on his knee or a purring grimalkin on his lap." If some of the Dutch were nettled by his picture of their ways, others saw that he was writing in "pure wantonness of fun", and that none of his laughter left a sting. Years later, however, Irving wrote: "It was a confounded impudent thing in such a youngster as I was, to be meddling in this way with old family names."

Yet this special gift of finding fun in little things, and interest in nothings, filled his days with life. Except for wide traveling, there were few events to light his lonely way. The warmth of his family affections was always one of the sweetest and strongest things in his nature: now he

was helping Ebenezer and his many children; now bolstering Peter with money loans, always offered with that graciousness that was a part of his generous delicacy. "We certainly understand each other too well to have any consideration for the laws of *meum* and *tuum* between us," he would say, "or for either of us to care on which side the opportunity of profitable exertion lies." He seems to have had a constant fear that Peter would not "share his morsel with him"; he begs him not to be "squeamish", and pleads: "When you were in prosperity you made it a common lot between us." "I send you a couple of hundred pounds to keep you in pocket-money until the boat begins to pay better....Let it be as it should be, a matter of course between us." "Brotherhood," he believed, "is a holy alliance made by God...and we should adhere to it with religious faith."

He and Peter and Ebenezer formed a merchants' firm, to which Washington, though he detested the "drudgery of regular business", lent his time and interest till it was firmly on its feet. This required him to live for a few months in Washington, D.C. His spirit now, as in all his other travels, was the same. "I left home determined to be pleased with everything, or if not pleased, to be amused."

On his return to New York the following spring, he went into bachelor-quarters, with his friend Brevoort, on Broadway near Bowling Green. It was a jovial time, free and peaceful, but broken, with the peace of the nation, by news of the War of 1812. Irving, adventuresome and loyal, joined the Governor's staff posted at Sackett's Harbor. His letters of that time are full of "breastworks, and pickets of reinforced militia", but also of his own good health, "all the better for hard traveling", and of "love to Mother and the family."

Soon after the news of the victory of New Orleans and the tidings of peace, Irving sailed for Europe, little dreaming that he would stay for seventeen years. He had expected to return in a short time and settle down beside his dear old mother for the rest of her life. These plans and hopes, however, were suddenly broken by the news of her death in 1817. That was the saddest event of his travels; the happiest was his friendship with Scott.

At Abbotsford, Scott made Irving more than welcome, and found in him a kindred spirit. They were both glad, hearty, natural men who loved out-door life in the same boyish way. Besides this, Scott found that Irving was a man who needed nothing explained—a man who could tramp with him through his own Tweedside, and understand all its beauty. We can imagine how welcome the Scotchman's cordiality was to Irving's fireside heart! To be included as part of Scott's home, not only by the father and mother and four children, but by the cat, the packs of barking dogs, and the noble horses—that was what Irving loved; for, in spite of his outward cheer, he suffered from the loneliness of the inner self. As he said, he was not meant to be a bachelor; and when he writes letters of blessing on the wives and children of Brevoort and Paulding and others of the "knot of queer, rum old bachelors" (for seventeen years brought many changes), there is an undertone of pathos in the music. "You and Brevoort have given me the slip...I cannot hear of my old cronies, snugly nestled down with good wives and fine children round them, but I feel for the moment desolate and forlorn." "Heavens! what a haphazard, schemeless life mine has been, that here I should be, at this time of life, youth slipping away, and scribbling month after month and year after year, far from home."

That is all he *says* and he puts it jestingly then; but the unsaid thoughts lie deep. "Irving's smile is one of the sweetest I know," said a friend, "but he can look very, very sad."

We do not forget that forty years after Miss Hoffman's death, Irving had her miniature repaired because the case was *worn out*.

But enough of the hidden sadness of this *partner of the sunlight*. Let us go with the companionable Irving on his travels, and go in his spirit—as conquerors of loneliness.

Perhaps, like him, we shall yawn in palaces and shift restlessly on the "cursed stone benches" of the Tuileries, but we shall love the Hartz Mountains because their forests are like our own American forests and we shall love the columns of the vast cathedrals that reach upward like the dear old trees of home. What a mongrel tongue—of English, French, and German—Irving talks to the driver of the *diligence*; and what humor twinkles from his eyes at the "garrulous old lady" who shows us Shakespeare's home.

A rapid journey ours must be, a journey of seventeen years in part of an hour; and yet we must have time for slow steps in the silent Abbey—the most hallowed spot of all England—and time to bow our souls in reverence while the "deep-laboring organ" rolls its music up to Heaven. And we shall need time to enjoy the English Christmas as Irving enjoyed it "While I lay musing on my pillow," he writes, "I heard the sound of little feet pattering outside of the door, and a whispering consultation. Presently a choir of small voices chanted forth an old Christmas carol, the burden of which was

'Rejoice, our Savior He was born
On Christmas day in the morning.'

I rose softly, slipt on my clothes, opened the door suddenly, and beheld one of the most beautiful little fairy groups that a painter could imagine. It consisted of a boy and two girls, the eldest not more than six, and lovely as seraphs. They were going the rounds of the house and singing at every chamber door; but my sudden appearance frightened them into mute bashfulness. They remained for a moment playing on their lips with their fingers, and now and then stealing a shy glance from under their eyebrows, until, as if by one impulse, they scampered away, and as they turned an angle of the gallery, I heard them laughing in triumph at their escape."

Friendly and glad, Irving was heartily welcomed into the English home—to family prayers and church and the Christmas dinner with its wassail-bowl. And when he left that brother-land, with what a kindly feeling did he grace its memory to the world! How he has made us see its grass-plots and hanging blossoms and "little pots of flowers." And what a benediction he sheds in his "Peace be within thy walls, oh England! and plenteousness within thy palaces." "Do not destroy the ancient tie of blood." "We have the same Bible, and we address our common Father in the same prayer."

So much for his books of English travel; his books on Spain are no less charming. In fact, Spain must have been even more fascinating to a man of Irving's imagination; to the mind that conceived the mystic dwarfs and "wicked flagon" of Rip Van Winkle, and the headless horseman of Sleepy Hollow. Spain was a land rich in legend as well as steeped in beauty. The roads were infested with robbers. Every Andalusian carried a saber. There was often a lantern hidden beneath his cloak. Here and there a cross by the roadside or in a worn ravine, told where some muleteer

had been murdered. And there was a subterranean stable where lived a goblin horse.

Sometimes, as Irving rode through this threatening country, "the deep tones of the cathedral bell would echo through the valley." Then "the shepherd paused on the fold of the hill, the muleteer in the midst of the road; each took off his hat and remained motionless for a time, murmuring his evening prayer."

"Who wants water—water colder than snow?" came the carrier's cry as they neared the city. The shaggy little donkey, with water-jars hung on each side, was all too willing to wait.

Arrived at the Alhambra, Irving found it at once a fortress and a palace, every stone breathing poetry and romance. "A little old fairy queen lived under the staircase, plying her needle and singing from morning till night." The Andalusians lay on the grass or danced to the guitar, and everywhere were groves of orange and citron and the music of singing birds and tinkling fountains. It was an enchanted palace. In the evening, Irving took his lamp and, in a "mere halo of light", stole dreamily through the "waste halls and mysterious galleries." There were no sounds but echoes. Everything, even the garden, was deserted. Nevertheless the scent of roses and laurel, the shimmer of moonlight, the murmur of hidden streams, had made the garden a fairy-land, only it was a fairy-land where flitting bat and hooting owl were much at home. To Irving, the owl had a vast knowledge of "astronomy and the moon", and Irving respected the knowledge which he could not share. In short, the Alhambra just suited his fancy; and when, as he said, the summons came to return into the "bustle and business of the dusty world", that summons

ended one of the pleasantest dreams of his life—"a life perhaps you may think, too much made up of dreams."

But poets should not be bound, nor birds caged; nor do we need to take the poet at his own low estimate. Given to hospitality, and consequently open to many interruptions, inclined to postpone, and hating the labors of rewriting, Irving was, nevertheless, a hard worker. Those seventeen years were not all dreams. To them we owe "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow", written "by candle-light in foggy London"; "Bracebridge Hall," dashed off in Paris in six weeks; and "Rip Van Winkle," which was not, as some have supposed, drawn from life, but was an imagined picture: when Irving wrote that story, he had never visited the Catskills; he had merely seen them from the river on his boyhood's first journey. To these years, too, we owe a longer, harder work than any of the rest—"The Life of Columbus." When the poet Longfellow took his early morning walks in Madrid, he often saw Irving writing at his open study-window at six o'clock; he had risen at five to work on the "Life." "I must make enough money," he would say to himself, "to be sure of my bread and cheese."

As a rule, however, Irving had a great indifference to money-getting. Perhaps this will partly account for his rare generosity, though I think generosity was in his blood. With his customary faithfulness, he gave the "Sketch Book" to his old publisher, Moses Thomas, even at the risk of loss. Utterly without envy, he pushed Bryant's work before the public, popularized Scott in America, gave plots to Poe, and, most generous of all, resigned, in favor of Prescott, his whole scheme for writing on the Conquest of Mexico, though Irving had hugged the hope of such a work since childhood, and had definitely written on it for over a year. Perhaps, blessed with eyesight himself, he thought

he would do his blind friend this service. At all events, without consulting any one, he burned his own manuscript. It was a great sacrifice, but Prescott never knew.

Imagine how hard it was for such a warm nature as Irving's to be misjudged by his best friends. But he was misjudged. Some went so far as to think that those seventeen years spent abroad were a proof that he did not love his country and home; whereas Irving was all too weary of foreign society. He was, to quote his letters, "tired of being among strangers"; "sick of fashionable life and fashionable parties"; bored at having to "dress for court"; and altogether weary of mingling in all the "littleness and insipidity of city life." If ever there was a home-loving man it was Irving. During those seventeen long years he felt himself

"Strange tenant of a thousand homes
And friendless with ten thousand friends."

He called it what it was, "a poor, wandering life." "I have been tossed about 'hither and thither' and whither I would not; have been at the levee and the drawing-room, been at routs and balls, and dinners and country-seats, been hand and glove with nobility and *mob*-ility, until like *Trim*, I have satisfied the sentiment, and am now preparing to make my escape from all this splendid confusion."

But the world did not understand. The newspaper attacks hurt him. At last criticism became too keen for his sensitive nature to bear. Then began for him "sleepless nights and joyless days", with the sharp thought that the "kindness of his own countrymen was withering towards him." Even Brevoort and Paulding, even his brothers, began to chide him with not wanting to return.

When he did stand before them once again, however, with his truth-telling, sunlit face, they questioned his love no more. Irving's return to New York was heralded by a dinner in his honor. Now Irving, as Moore said, had never been "strong, as a lion", though he was "delightful, as a domestic animal." He himself said it was "physically impossible for him to make a speech." A manuscript under his plate did not help at all. When, at a dinner in England, he had been announced with loud cheers, he had simply responded: "I beg to return you my sincere thanks." And now when, before his fellow-countrymen, the toast was proposed, "To our illustrious guest, thrice welcome to his native land," the shy author who hated speech-making, could only stammer and blush. "I trembled for him," said one of his friends, "until I saw him seize the handle of a knife and commence gesticulating with that; then I knew he would get on."

"I am asked how long I mean to remain here," Irving said. "They know but little of my heart and feelings who can ask me that question. I answer: 'As long as I live!'" He hesitated, stood still, and looked about him, the old genial smile beaming from his dark gray eyes. Then a rousing cheer told him that he had won again the trust of all, and he sat down, satisfied—a tired exile welcomed home.

Except as Irving was twice sent to Europe by our nation, once to England as secretary of legation, and once as Minister to Spain, he did stay home all the rest of his life. It is as a home-maker and a home-lover that he was happiest and best known, and no part of life was so sweet to him as the life at Sunnyside. Let us visit him there in his own little house among the trees. Though the house is small, and already filled with his nieces, there is always

room for one more. We take the train from New York for Irvington, near Tarrytown. Sunnyside, a ten-acre farm, bought by Irving in 1835, is only about ten minutes' walk from the station. The grounds look out on the blue Hudson. There is a cove and a cozy beach, and a spring "welling up at the bottom of the bank." A stony brook, shaded by trees, "babbles down the ravine, throwing itself into the little cove." On the rock at the edge of the lawn, Irving often sits, resting in his love of the shining river, and building his "castles at seventy" as he did at seven. The house described by Irving, is a "little old fashioned stone mansion, all made up of gable ends, and as full of angles and corners as an old cocked hat." It used to be called "Wolfert's Roost" (or Rest) and over the door is an old motto meaning "Pleasure in Quiet", a motto that was written in its master's heart.

Though you may not find any of the old Indian arrow-heads about the place, nor Brom Bones's pumpkin in the garden, you will find the spirit of Wolfert's Roost unchanged. Crickets skip in the grass; humming-birds whirr among the trumpet-vines; the phœbe-bird and wren have built under the eaves. The thick mantle of Melrose ivy, which almost hides the eastern end of Sunnyside, grew from one of Scott's slips. Very lately Irving built the near-by cottage for his gardener.

Within, Sunnyside is plainly furnished; there are not even many books. Everything, however, looks comfortable and made for use. For instance, the writing-table is a mass of disorder. It is one of the sweet elements of our welcome that nothing is changed to receive us. As part of the family, we will have Tow-boat picnics on the Tappan Zee. We can perch by Irving on the old stone wall and chat with "Uncle Brom", or see Jesse Merwin—the

original *Ichahod Crane* in his old school of tough little Dutchers. We can visit Irving's "tree encircled farm." Those two elms on the lawn were planted by the author's own hands; he carried the saplings on his shoulder. The fruits and vegetables, he will tell you, were raised at "very little more than twice the market-price." Out in the pig pen is Fanny,—a fat pig of "peerless beauty", named for Fanny Kemble, the actress. Purring thunderously, Imp will come and rub his silky head against you, and Toby will bark a greeting and dash away to the other pets. There are cows and setting geese, cooing pigeons, and "squadrons of snowy" ducks. Dandy and Billy, the old coach horses, are as "sleek as seals" and "Gentleman Dick", Irving's saddle-horse, puts his cheek against his master's and lays his head on his shoulder. Though Irving will say nothing about it, perhaps you will notice that the saddle hanging near is an old one, furbished up. The father of so many borrowed children could not afford a new saddle.

"Dick now and then cuts daisies with me on his back; but that's to please himself, not me," laughs Irving, patting the horse's glossy side; and perhaps he may add that Gentleman Dick has thrown him once. It was after a second accident, when Irving was seventy-two, that his nieces forced him to sell this "Gentleman that had proved no Gentleman." "Poor Dick!" Irving said. "His character was very much misunderstood by all but myself."

That word "all" covered a big household. Irving's dearest brother, Peter, had died; and so had William and John; but Ebenezer, now growing very deaf, and his sister Catharine made their home at Sunnyside, and there were six adoring nieces who kept Irving "almost as happy" as if he were "a married man."

To see how happy he was, we should have visited him at Christmas when "The Tappan Zee was covered with sparkling ice and the opposite hills with snow," and when holly reddened the hearth of Sunnyside. Then, indeed, the cottage rang with shouts, while the king of the cottage tiptoed round to be first with his "Merry Christmas", acted a jovial Santa Claus, and filled all the stockings with presents. "Children who do not believe in Santa Claus are too wise to be happy," he used to say. "When I was a child, I believed in Santa Claus as long as I could, until they put snow-balls in my stockings."

His understanding of children was wonderful. Once when he had amused two fretful little things on a long train journey, the mother thanked him with "Any one can see you're the father of a large family." There are two delightful stories of Irving and the boys who robbed his orchard. One day a little fellow came up to him with winning secrecy and said: "I'll show you the old man's best tree, if you'll shake it for me." "Agreed!"—"By George, Sir," laughed Irving, "if he didn't take me to the very best tree on my own place!"

Another time, when he came unexpectedly on an apple squad, he said, picking out the leader, "Boys, these are very poor apples. I know a much better tree." Then he led them on, skulking in the shadows and dodging the gardener, in true boy style.

"Be quiet! Keep near the hedge!" he cautioned.

"We're afraid the old gentleman will catch us."

"He's not there now. There, the best tree's just beyond the hedge."

The prickly hedge tore the boys' trousers and faces and hands, but the seekers were too near their Hesperides to be daunted.

"Now, boys, this is the tree I spoke of, and I am the owner of it—Mr. Irving." There was a pause, during which the boys intently studied the grass. "Don't be afraid," Irving went on, "I sha'n't punish you; the prickly hedge has done that. I only wish that when you take my fruit, you would come to me and ask for it." He gave them a genial, forgiving smile, and was gone, the dear old man with the heart of a boy and the immortal spirit of play.

Up to the very end of life, at seventy-six, he could laugh at pain and sleeplessness, and at weariness of mind and body. Let no one underrate the heroism of those last years—the hard work wrought with aching hands. With the press dogging Irving's heels, the "Life of Goldsmith" was written in sixty days. "Are you sure it doesn't smell of apoplexy?" asked the doubting author, for "self-criticism was apt to beset him and cuff him down at the end of the work when the excitement of composition was over." He spoke of his writings as "literary babblings" or as "water spilt on the ground." Many times during the composition of the "Life of Washington"—his last work—he was at the point of putting it into the fire. His letters and journal show that writing had become a "toil of head and fagging of the pen." "I am still muddling with the 'Life of Washington'," we read. "It lags and drags." Often he would be scribbling in his study at half-past twelve at night, long after the family were in bed and asleep, or he would "rise at midnight, light his lamp, and write for an hour or two." If he rested in the evening, with the girls sewing round him, it was because he had "passed the whole morning in his study, hard at work" and had "earned his recreation." Feverish and full of fears, he thought: "I must get through with the work I have cut out for myself. I must weave my web and then die." The belief that he

might not live to finish the "Life" became a torment; and when, near the end, he sank into a kind of delirium, he was possessed with the idea that he had a "big book to write before he could sleep."

Through those last years, though he made a pitiful struggle for sleep, asthma and nervousness combined against him, except when he slept from pure exhaustion. Now we read that he got "a little sprinkling of sleep"; now that he had taken "sleeping potions enough to put a whole congregation to sleep." And still he made merry. Turning to one of his nieces, he said: "I am apt to be rather fatigued, my dear, by my night's rest," and again, as he took up his candle: "Well, as the ghost in Hamlet says, 'The time has come when I to sulphurous and tormenting flames must render up myself.'"

Besides this sleeplessness, Irving had an aggravated form of sickness that had warned him years before in Paris: a lameness of the ankles hindered walking and an inflammation of the wrists hindered writing. Without doubt Irving injured himself standing outdoors in the cold and wet while the builders were enlarging Sunnyside. Cheerful as ever, the dear old bachelor refused "to be bullied by a cold"; and of course the home must be enlarged that it might hold more people. He still hoped to be

"Once more able
To stump about my farm and stable."

And he did manage to hobble round, wearing his customary old slouch hat and muffled in a big gray shawl. Once when his lameness was at its worst, he spoke of getting well: "I shall feel like a boy with a new coat who thinks everybody will turn round and look at him and say, 'Bless my soul, how that gentleman has the use of his

legs,'—one cannot help being puffed up a little on having the use of one's legs." As a kind of benediction on surgeons and dentists he exclaimed: "May their good deeds be returned upon them a thousand-fold! May they have the felicity, in the next world, to have successful operations performed upon them to all eternity!"

His greatest fear of doctors was that they would prolong his life beyond his period of usefulness. "Strange that a harp of a thousand strings should keep in tune so long!" he would muse. He did not long to die; but he longed to go down "with all sails set." He dreaded being a burden to those about him; being "mewed up at home" like an "old fogy." "A man, as he grows old, must take care not to grow rusty or fusty or crusty,—an old bachelor especially." It was his daily prayer that his old age might be lovable; that he might keep his mind and keep his sunnyness. "Happy is he who can grow smooth as an old shilling as he wears out; he has endured the rubs of life to some purpose."

And he did grow smooth and tuneful and placid. Though his voice was hoarse and his step faltering, his gray eyes kept their twinkle and his heart was young and singing to the end.

It was, blessedly, a sudden end—just one sharp cry, a fall, and death. One frosty November day the solemn bells told the farmers and sailors, the boys who loved the apples, and all the waiting neighbors of the glen, that the Master of Sunnyside had gone. But the frost melted soon and gracious Indian summer filled the air. "It's one of his own days," thought the loving ones who stood beside the grave.

If you take the "lazy country road" that winds its drowsy way to Sleepy Hollow, you can find the place where Irving rests. Peter is buried there, and the mother;

and Washington's grave is where he asked to have it, close to hers. If his fame had never gone beyond the "old Dutch Church" and turnpike-road, the stone could not have been more simple:

WASHINGTON
Son of William and Sarah S. Irving
Died
Nov. 28, 1859
Aged 76 Years, 7 Mo., and 25 Days.

Sunnyside was left, as we might have expected, to Ebenezer and his daughters, "to be kept forever as an Irving rally place." But Irving left a far greater bequest: besides his books, rich in humor and kindliness, and written in "the language of the heart", he left the dear example of one who loved and lost, and smiled, and gave; of one who sought the good and found it, whether in music or pictures, free country, books, or people; and of one who sheds a constant blessing, even now, like the sunshine from the sky.

Hans Christian Andersen

(Denmark: 1805-1875)
Fairy Tales

The ancient town of Odeuse, in Denmark, seems almost as if it was situated on the borders of Fairyland, so full is it of old stories and traditions and curious legends. So it was really the exactly right birthplace for little Hans Andersen, "the future Fairy King," and there he was born on April 2, 1805.

No one could possibly have guessed that this baby held in his tiny mottled fist the golden key to Fairyland, or that he had any connection whatever with fairies. His home was not in the least like a palace, in fact it was only a poor cobbler's room, so small that quite half of it was taken up by the big bed on which the baby lay, while the other half had to serve for workshop, kitchen, and dining-room all in one.

It certainly was a very poor and very small room, but the baby learned to love it as soon as his quick eyes began to look about and take notice of things. There were shining glimpses to be caught of cups and glasses on the top of the chest of drawers, and on the panels of the door were painted beautiful gay pictures of hills and dales and flowers which delighted his heart. Then too, as soon as he grew old enough to toddle out by himself, he brought home all the wild flowers he could find, and with their dear faces smiling at him he thought this room the loveliest home in all the world.

In the evenings when he was tucked away into the big bed and the cotton curtains were drawn round it, he lay and listened to the tapping of the shoemaker's hammer, and the

busy life going on in the room, wide awake and perfectly contented.

"How nice and quiet he is, the blessed child," said his mother, peeping in through the curtains to see if he were asleep, and finding him with wide open eyes smiling happily to himself.

That must have been the beginning of the fairies' work, for they certainly kept him happy and amused all through his babyhood. People might have called those fairies the child's own thoughts and fancies, but any sensible child who knows anything at all about fairies knows better than that. The fairies may have come in with the wild flowers or lay hidden in the fresh birch branches that stood behind the polished stove, or swung to and fro in the branches of sweet herbs that hung from the rafters. At any rate there can be no manner of doubt that they must have lived up above in the roof-garden, although that garden was nothing more than a box of earth where parsley and sweet peas grew. Any one who doubts that has only to read "The Snow Queen" to find there an exact description of little Hans' roof-garden, and if there were no fairies there, how could it have found its way into a real fairy tale?

The father of little Hans was, as we have seen, a cobbler, but he was not very clever at his trade, and instead of mending shoes he was much fonder of building castles in the air or reading the books which crowded into the shelf hung close to the window where he worked. He had plenty of time to make toys for his little son, and Hans was the happy possessor of a mill that could work while the miller danced, a peep-show with puppets to act, and all kinds of pictures that changed into different shapes when they were pulled by a string.

Unfortunately this was not the best way of making money, and the cobbler did not grow rich. There came a day, however, when it looked as if fortune meant to smile upon him. The squire of a country village close by needed a shoemaker, and offered a house and a garden, and grass for a cow, to the man who could make a good pair of shoes.

There was great excitement in the cobbler's home when a piece of silk was sent by the squire's lady to be made into a pair of dancing-shoes, and every night Hans, when he said his evening prayers, said a special prayer asking God to help his father to make these shoes most beautifully, so that they might all go to the house with the garden, and the green field for the cow, and live happily ever after.

But when the shoes were finished and the cobbler carried them off rolled up in his apron to the great house, the squire's lady was not at all pleased with them. She said he had quite spoilt her beautiful piece of silk, and she could not think of having such a bungler for the shoemaker.

The poor cobbler listened in silence, and when she had finished he caught up his knife and in a great rage cut the pretty dancing-shoes into ribbons. Then he turned and went sorrowfully home.

So that dream-castle tumbled to pieces, and Hans wept bitterly because he thought God had paid no attention to his prayers. He was only a very little boy and did not know that God has many ways of answering children's prayers. Perhaps if Hans had gone to live happily in the country as he wished, then he would never have found his way into the much fairer country of Fairyland.

Hans had a mother too, as well as a father, but she was not a very wise mother, and she did not look after him very carefully. Sometimes she spoilt him sadly and allowed him

to do whatever he liked, whether it was bad or good, and sometimes she did not trouble herself much about him at all. His best and wisest friend was certainly his old grandmother, who lived close by, and who used to come every day to see her little grandson. All the nice old grandmothers in those fairy tales are just like that grandmother of his. She was always cheerful and kindly and very wise, with a tiny bent figure and the sweetest of blue eyes. Whenever she came she brought Hans a bunch of flowers, and Hans would climb up to the top of the chest and arrange them in the glasses that stood there. He had wonderful hands for arranging flowers, and he used to say, "Flowers know very well that I am fond of them; even if I were to stick a peg into the ground, I believe it would grow." That was quite true. Flowers know, almost as well as little boys and girls, who are fond of them and who are not.

All the old people who lived near the cobbler's house were fond of Hans, and he loved to go and see them and tell them all the things he knew, until they nodded their heads and said, "What a clever child it is;" then in return they would tell him all sorts of stories which they had heard when they were children, and Hans carefully stored them up in his mind, to tell many years afterwards to other children. There was "The Tinder Box," "The Travelling Companions," and many others that every child knows now.

But although the old people were fond of Hans he was always a lonely child, and never had anyone of his own age to play with. Even when he went to school he never played games with the other boys. They were so rough that they frightened him, and he was much happier sitting by himself and dreaming his dreams.

He did not stay very long at any school, for his parents allowed him to do very much as he liked, and school was not to his taste.

To begin with, his unwise mother had told the schoolmistress at his first school that Hans was never to be whipped, whatever happened, and the good dame quite forgot this one day and gave him a well-deserved tap with the birch-rod.

Hans said never a word, but got up at once, solemnly tucked his book and his slate under his arm, and marched out of the schoolroom. He went straight home and told his mother what had happened, and instead of sending him back to be whipped again, which would certainly have been wise, she took him away from the dame's school and sent him to another.

At this new school Hans was charmed to find a very little girl whom he thought much nicer than the rough boys, and with whom he immediately tried to make friends. The little girl told him that she wanted specially to learn arithmetic, that she might some day be a dairymaid at a grand castle.

Hans at once set to work and drew a splendid castle on his slate, and told her it was a picture of his very own castle, where she should be dairymaid some day.

"For you know," he said, "I am really a great nobleman, and the castle belongs to me, but when I was a baby the fairies came and took me out of my cradle and carried me off to the cobbler's cottage."

He thought his new friend would love his make-believe stories, just as the old people did, but the stolid little dairymaid looked at him coldly. She did not believe in fairies at all, and she thought that Hans was not telling the truth, or that he was quite mad and foolish.

Poor Hans never tried to tell any more tales after that, but he went on dreaming them all the same.

Of course if a boy spends his time dreaming about fairies he is apt to leave his lessons unlearned, and that was exactly what happened to Hans. He was always in disgrace and never knew his lessons, and his angry master did not feel in the least less angry when the boy presented him with large bunches of wild flowers. The flowers were beautiful, but they could not make up for idleness.

Hans could easily have learned his lessons if he had tried, but he was not fond of lessons and was a great deal too fond of only doing what he liked best. He loved to make doll's clothes and to sit in the yard near the gooseberry bush and watch its leaves unfolding from day to day. There he sat under a tent which he rigged up out of his mother's apron and a broomstick, as happy as a king, and no one sent him back to school or made him learn his lessons.

After the sad business of the dancing-shoes, the poor cobbler grew less and less inclined to work, and at last went off to be a soldier, hoping to return covered with glory. That castle also tumbled to pieces, for the poor man died before he began to fight. Then his widow married again, and little Hans was left more than ever to himself.

By this time the boy was eleven years old and was growing into a long, lanky, queer-looking lad, with a face that was almost comic in its ugliness.

If ever there was an Ugly Duckling it was Hans Andersen. All the other boys laughed at him, teased him, chased him away and shouted after him, until the poor awkward child longed to run away and hide himself from the cruel, unkind world.

No one understood him, no one knew all the wonderful things that he thought about and the great things that he meant to do. He had begun to read Shakespeare, and had made up his mind to be a great writer of plays, but when it was discovered that Hans Andersen was conceited enough to think he could write, the boys shouted all the more scornfully after him, "There goes the play-scribbler," and tormented him more cruelly than ever.

Hans had a dim idea that the higher born, nobler people would understand him better and treat him more kindly, and certainly one or two of the great families took an interest in the poor cobbler's son. It amused them to hear him recite whole plays from memory, and to see the poetry he tried to write when he knew little about spelling and less about grammar. The boy was certainly clever in some ways, but what could be done with a boy who had left school almost as ignorant as when he went to it?

About this time there dawned a great day in Hans Andersen's life, the day of his confirmation at St. Knut's Church. It was the Sunday after Easter, and the boy had been thinking a great deal of the promises he was about to make, eager to begin the new life, and anxious to become a true and loyal servant of God.

But it was so difficult to keep his mind from straying to other things. There was his new coat, which had been made for him out of his father's old one. The very thought of it filled him with pride, and above all there was his new pair of boots. He had never worn a pair of boots before, and these were quite new. His only fear was that the people might not notice them, and he was so glad when they creaked loudly as he walked up the aisle. They made so much noise that no one could help looking at them.

Then suddenly as he walked up, filled with delight over his coat and the creaking of his new boots, he remembered where he was and what he was doing, and he hung his head with shame to think that at such a time he should think more of his new boots than about God.

He never forgot how he felt that day, and he remembered it with sorrowful shame for many long years afterwards. Indeed it was the remembrance of those very confirmation boots which made him write the story of "The Red Shoes."

But now it was time that Hans set to work in earnest, for after being confirmed he was a child no longer. His mother did not know what to do with him, but Hans had quite made up his mind to go away to Copenhagen to make his fortune.

"You go through a frightful lot of hardships first," he explained, "and then you become famous."

So the Ugly Duckling set out to see the world, quite certain that he was going to live happily ever afterwards, as the fairy tales say.

He little guessed all that lay before him, and how truly "frightful" those hardships were to be. All that he had neglected to learn had still to be learned, he was to suffer hunger and cold and bitter want, and again, like the Ugly Duckling, to be driven away, laughed at, despised, and persecuted.

But the beautiful ending to the fairy tale was to be his too. Hans Andersen, the queer, uncouth boy, was to become Hans Andersen the author, whose beautiful thoughts and dream pictures made him famous throughout all lands, and who, with the golden key, unlocked for all children the gates of Fairyland.

Like the swan who had once been the Ugly Duckling, "he now felt glad at having suffered sorrow and trouble, because it enabled him to enjoy so much better all the pleasure and happiness around him."

At the end he forgot all the hardships and sorrows of his life. He only remembered the beautiful things, and kept always the sunny heart of a little child, so that he could say at the last, when he came to the very end of the fairy tale, "Oh, how happy I am! How beautiful the world is! Life is so beautiful! It is just as if I were sailing into a land far, far away, where there is no pain, no sorrow."

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

(America: 1807-1882)

Paul Revere's Ride, Song of Hiawatha, Evangeline

Henry had a grandfather who lived far away. This was his grandfather Wadsworth. He had been a soldier, and was once captured by the British. The boys were very fond of hearing him tell stories of the war.

They were a little afraid of the old gentleman, however. He dressed in what was to them a strange and old-fashioned way. He used to wear a red coat, yellow vest and "small-clothes," white ruffled shirt, white stockings, and silver-buckled shoes. His hair was powdered and braided into a queue. He was a good man, and had been so brave a soldier that he had been made a general.

Near General Wadsworth's house was a little lake called Lovell's Pond. Years before there had been an Indian fight on its shores. Henry had often heard the story and was deeply interested in it.

When he was thirteen years old he wrote a poem about it. As these verses were the first ever published by Henry W. Longfellow, you will perhaps enjoy reading them.

THE BATTLE OF LOVELL'S POND.

Cold, cold is the north wind and rude is the blast
That sweeps like a hurricane loudly and fast,
As it moans through the tall, waving pines loan and drear,
Sighs a requiem sad o'er the warrior's bier.

The war whoop is still, and the savage's yell
Has sunk into silence along the wild dell;
The din of the battle, the tumult, is o'er,

And the war clarion's voice is now heard no more.
The warriors that fought for their country—and bled,
Have sunk to their rest; the damp earth is their bed;
No stone tells the place where their ashes repose,
Nor points out the spot from the graves of their foes.

They died in their glory, surrounded by fame,
And Victory's loud trump their death did proclaim;
They are dead; but they live in each patriot's breast,
And their names are engraven on honor's bright crest.

Henry wanted very much to have his poem printed, so he sent it to *The Portland Gazette*. He told the secret to his sister, and you may imagine how eagerly they waited for the day on which the paper was to come.

Henry's father was the first to open *The Gazette* when it arrived. He slowly unfolded it and spread it before the fire to dry. The two children found it hard to wait in patience until he had finished reading it, so anxious were they to see whether the verses had been printed or not.

At last their time came, and, to their joy, they found the poem in "The Poets' Corner" of the paper. They read it again and again, thinking it better each time. But a great disappointment was in store for the young poet.

That evening Mr. Longfellow called on his friend Judge Mellon. He took his son with him as Henry and Frederic Mellon, the Judge's son, were friends.

The two gentlemen began to talk of poems and poetry. In the course of the conversation Judge Mellon said to Mr. Longfellow, "Did you see the piece in to-day's paper? Very stiff, remarkably stiff; moreover it is all borrowed, every word of it."

Poor Henry! We can only imagine what a mortification this was to him, but we can be sure he bore it bravely. Far from becoming discouraged he tried and tried again, until, as we know, he became one of our greatest American poets.

The Poet.

From his early youth Mr. Longfellow had been writing poems and other compositions for various papers and magazines.

The poems were collected and published in volumes later. Now most of the editions of *Longfellow's Poems* contain all his miscellaneous poetry, although there are many books in which are found single poems or a selected few.

One of the most familiar poems is *The Psalm of Life*. Mr. Longfellow wrote this on the back of an envelope, one bright sunny morning.

It came from the depths of his heart, and perhaps that is why it touched the depths of so many other hearts. It was no sooner published than it made a great stir in the literary world. It was copied, learned, sung and talked about everywhere. People of all ages, but young men especially, seemed to be impressed by it, and many of them wrote to Mr. Longfellow, telling him so.

The Reaper and the Flowers was written with tears in the eyes of its author. It has brought the same sort of tears to the eyes of many readers.

The Wreck of the Hesperus was written shortly after a terrible storm, which wrecked more than one ship on the reef of Norman's Woe.

Excelsior was suggested to him by the emblematic picture which formed part of the heading of a New York paper.

The Village Blacksmith worked in Cambridge, "under the spreading chestnut tree."

In the later years of Mr. Longfellow's life, a chair was made from the wood of this tree, and presented to him by the school children of Cambridge. Mr. Longfellow was so touched by this that it was for them the poem *"From My Arm-chair"* was written.

The *Poems on Slavery* were composed on the voyage home after the poet's third journey to Europe. They created a great deal of comment. He was both severely criticized and highly commended for writing them.

The Old Clock on the Stairs stood in a house in Pittstfield, Massachusetts, where lived relatives of Mrs. Longfellow. The poet and his second wife visited this house on their wedding journey, and often afterwards.

The story of the poem called *"The Arsenal at Springfield"* is a pleasant one.

It was during their wedding journey that Mr. and Mrs. Longfellow visited the arsenal. Charles Sumner was with them. He told his friends the money spent for munitions of war would be much better expended on books.

Mrs. Longfellow said that the shining gun barrels, ranged along the wall, reminded her of a great organ on which Death would one day make sad music.

It was this remark, and Mrs. Longfellow's urging her husband to write a peace poem rather than a war song, which suggested the verses.

"The Arrow and the Song" flashed into the poet's mind one Sunday morning, as he stood by the fire waiting

for church time. He wrote it down immediately just as it came to him.

The story of how the poem *Evangeline* came to be, will interest all who have read it, or will read it.

Mr. Longfellow's friend, Nathaniel Hawthorne, dined with him one day. He brought with him a Mr. Conolly.

This gentleman had been telling Hawthorne a story which had been told to him. It was about two Acadian lovers who, having been separated, sought vainly for each other for many years.

Mr. Conolly wanted Hawthorne to weave this story into one of his charming tales, but it did not strike the author's fancy.

Mr. Longfellow said that, if Hawthorne did not want it for a story, he would like it for a poem. Hawthorne was more than willing that he should have it, and thus it was that one of the most widely read of Longfellow's poems had its beginning.

While studying books of Indian legends and folklore in preparation for Hiawatha, Mr. Longfellow had the opportunity of seeing a large panorama, or moving picture, of the Mississippi River, which was exhibited in Boston. He enjoyed this very much, commenting on his good fortune in having the river brought to him when he could not go to the river.

The Children's Hour is a poem which allows us for the moment to go into the poet's home life.

We sit with him in the study; we hear the patter of little feet in the room above; we feel for the rest of our lives a love for and interest in "Grave Alice and laughing Allegra, and Edith with golden hair."

The poem beginning "Come to me, O ye children" was written in this same study to the music of these same pattering little feet in the chamber above.

I hope as you grow older you will read more and more of Longfellow's beautiful poetry. The words are full of music and of noble thoughts; the stories told in verse are as interesting as they are instructive; in reading what Longfellow has written we go with him into other times, other places and other lives; we also go deep down into one of the truest hearts that ever beat.

The Father.

Mr. and Mrs. Longfellow had six children. Charles and Ernest were the eldest two. Then came a daughter, Fanny, who died while she was a baby. It was after her death that the other three girls were born.

It is the eldest of these, Miss Alice, who is now living in Craigie House and who so often kindly welcomes visitors to this American shrine.

No children were ever blessed with a more loving mother and father than these, none ever had a more beautiful home, none ever received a more tender care. When they were ill Mr. Longfellow's distress was greater than their own; he found it impossible to write; he was not himself until they were well again.

He always took part in the birthday parties and holiday celebrations, of which there were many. He often recorded them in his journal. Some were in the summer, among the apple trees and haycocks. Others were held in winter in the warm, fire-lighted rooms.

At one of these Ernest took the part of the Old Year, wearing a great white beard and boots. His sister Alice, with a wreath on her head, was the little New Year.

At one of Charles' birthday parties the seat in the old apple tree, where Mr. Longfellow sat when he wrote *The Wreck of the Hesperus*, was turned into a fort.

It is pleasant to think of the great poet, whose name is so revered, building snowhouses, and buying hoops, railroad cars, velocipedes and dolls for the children he so tenderly loved. One envies them their walks through the shady streets of Cambridge, with so wise and good a companion.

We can imagine the many pleasant rambles among the ponds, brooks and hills of Pittsfield, and along the beach at Nahant, for the family often visited among the lovely Berkshire Hills, and spent many summers on the sea-shore.

During the winter they of course went often into Boston. The Longfellow children must have walked down historic Beacon Street many times. They must often have passed through Boston Common, and by the quaint old churches and burying grounds, which are in the heart of the city. Bunker Hill, Faneuil Hall, The State House and the Old South Church were familiar sights to them.

They went to museums and libraries, and even to the circus, in the company of the father who was so good a friend. With him, the boys saw the launchings of the ships Merrimac, Hartford and Minnehaha.

They went with him to Boston to see the celebration of the laying of the Atlantic cable, in 1858. They must have greatly enjoyed the ringing of bells, the bands of music, the flying flags and the marching soldiers.

The first school these boys attended was near the Washington Elm, in Cambridge. It was under this famous tree, which is still standing, that Washington took command of the American Army.

Mr. Longfellow went to school with the boys on their momentous "first day."

He very often read aloud to them, at home, and taught them to love good books. If you ever hear the Indian legend of the Red Swan, or the stories from a book called "The Parents' Assistant," you can think of the Longfellow children as having these very tales read to them by their father.

His love and sympathy were always with them, in his journal, which is so full of beautiful and noble thoughts, one finds the children's doings noted on Valentine's Day, April Fool's Day, and many other days besides.

After Mrs. Longfellow's death, Mr. Longfellow had to be father and mother both, to his children. He never allowed his own bitter grief to shadow their young lives.

He took his boys with him on a trip to Niagara Falls, which, of course, they enjoyed very much.

"Edith, with golden hair," at one time opened a correspondence with her father. The post-office was under her pillow, and it was there she found the answers to her letters in the morning.

During the Civil War, the eldest son Charles, joined the army. Though not yet twenty years old, he was made a lieutenant of Cavalry.

Later his father received a telegram saying that he had been severely wounded at the last battle on the Rapidan.

In company with his son Ernest, Mr. Longfellow left for Washington, expecting to find his son in a hospital there, but in this he was disappointed. He was obliged to wait for several days in great anxiety before the wounded men were sent up from the South.

Charles had been shot through both shoulders. The wound was a very serious one. The surgeons said he would

not be fit for service for at least six months. His father and brother brought him home, where he was most tenderly and carefully nursed back to health.

In writing to a friend, his father said of him: "How brave these boys are! Not a single murmur of complaint though he has a wound through him a foot long. He pretends that it does not hurt him."

Mr. Longfellow's love for his own children gave him a keen interest in those of other people.

He was much amused, one day in Portland, in watching a crowd of boys on the shore. They were capturing a wounded crane, and one small poet ran past shouting

"It was a crane
Flew down the lane."

It reminded him of one of his own boyhood days when, mounted on a stick, in company with two other boys, he dashed along with the cry

"We three
Champions be!"

In one of the journals Mr. Longfellow makes a tender mention of a little sick boy next door, whose funeral he attended later.

A little neighbor was one day visiting Mr. Longfellow in his library. He looked at the rows and rows of books, and then asked the poet if he had *Jack the Giant Killer*.

Mr. Longfellow said that he had not, and the next day the little fellow brought him some of his own money with which to buy a copy.

All over the United States the children had been learning to know and love the Cambridge poet.

In 1880 his birthday was celebrated in the public schools of Cincinnati. Fifteen thousand children took part in the commemoration.

This was the first of many similar celebrations, especially in the West. To-day Longfellow's birthday, the twenty-seventh of February, is known and honored by most of the children in the country.

The Man.

If "a man is known by the company he keeps," Henry W. Longfellow must stand for a very prince among men. He drew to himself throughout his whole life, the noblest and best from two continents. No man every had more or warmer friends than he; no man ever held them more firmly, or valued then more highly.

The list of their names would be a very long one, were it written. On it would appear Whittier, Holmes, Lowell, Prescott, Irving, Bryant and Hawthorne.

He knew Harriet Beecher Stowe, the author of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and also Daniel Webster and Henry Clay. Thackeray was a welcome guest at Craigie House. Tennyson was one of his correspondents. Charles Dickens was proud to be called his friend.

In England, during his last visit, Mr. Longfellow breakfasted with Mr. Gladstone, was entertained by the Queen at Windsor Castle, and called, by request, on the Prince of Wales.

During the patriot Kossuth's visit to this country in 1852, Longfellow was one of those invited to dine with the distinguished stranger. He took a prominent part in the entertainment provided for the Prince of Wales on his visit to Boston.

One of Mr. Longfellow's nearest and dearest friends was Charles Sumner, whose honorable career he followed with a loving and sympathetic interest.

Few men have exhibited so well-rounded a character as our great poet. He was much more than a poet. He was a man, in the highest sense of the word.

His social nature was strongly developed. He loved society, and was always a welcome figure in the social gatherings of Cambridge and Boston.

He was most hospitable in his home. The doors of Craigie House stood wide open, not only to friends, but to all who chose to call. No matter how occupied he was, Mr. Longfellow received often obtrusive and troublesome strangers with a courteous welcome.

From childhood he was a most loving and dutiful son, writing constantly to his parents in Portland, and often visiting them there.

He neglected none of his duties, even such as were irksome to him. He held his place in the community as a man and a citizen should.

He was especially kind to poor and distressed foreigners, many of whom found their way to his door.

He often tired himself out writing autographs for the many people who asked for them. He sometimes was asked for large quantities of them to be sold at church fairs.

In his later life his correspondence became a great burden to him. People from all over the world wrote to him on all sorts of subjects, and for all sorts of reasons.

He often received as many as sixty letters a day. Up to the last, he was invariably kind and courteous to these unknown writers and admirers. As long as he was able, he answered the letters himself, but toward the end of his life was obliged to have it done for him.

He was always fond of air and exercise. He took many long walks, and enjoyed both skating and bathing.

His poems tell us how fond he was of Nature, of music, of books and of study.

At one time, he had trouble with his eyes. They caused him much discomfort and inconvenience. With his wife's help, he kept on with his writing, his study and his work, bravely overcoming the difficulties as best he could.

One of the pleasantest stories told of Mr. Longfellow is of a disagreeable person who had caused him considerable annoyance, but to whom he was unfailingly kind.

Being told by one of his friends that he ought no longer submit to such impositions, he replied, "But, Charles, who will be kind to him if I am not?"

There was great sorrow in both America and Europe when the death of Henry W. Longfellow was made known.

He died on March twenty-fourth, having lived seventy-five beautiful and blameless years. He was buried in Mt. Auburn, by the side of his wife and little daughter.

Those who loved him in England have placed his marble image in the "Poets' Corner" of Westminster Abbey. Statues have been erected to his honor in both Portland and Cambridge.

His best monument, however, is in the hearts of the people—men, women and children, who know and love him through the poems which make him one of the first among our American Poets.

Edward Bok
Going to the Theatre with Longfellow

When Edward Bok stood before the home of Longfellow, he realized that he was to see the man around whose head the boy's youthful reading had cast a sort of halo. And when he saw the head itself he had a feeling that he could see the halo. No kindlier pair of eyes ever looked at a boy, as, with a smile, "the white Mr. Longfellow," as Mr. Howells had called him, held out his hand.

"I am very glad to see you, my boy," were his first words, and with them he won the boy. Edward smiled back at the poet, and immediately the two were friends.

"I have been taking a walk this beautiful morning," he said next, "and am a little late getting at my mail. Suppose you come in and sit at my desk with me, and we will see what the postman has brought. He brings me so many good things, you know."

"Now, here is a little girl," he said, as he sat down at the desk with the boy beside him, "who wants my autograph and a 'sentiment.' What sentiment, I wonder, shall I send her?"

"Why not send her 'Let us, then, be up and doing'?" suggested the boy. "That's what I should like if I were she."

"Should you, indeed?" said Longfellow. "That is a good suggestion. Now, suppose you recite it off to me, so that I shall not have to look it up in my books, and I will write as you recite. But slowly; you know I am an old man, and write slowly."

Edward thought it strange that Longfellow himself should not know his own great words without looking

them up. But he recited the four lines, so familiar to every schoolboy, and when the poet had finished writing them, he said:

"Good! I see you have a memory. Now, suppose I copy these lines once more for the little girl, and give you this copy? Then you can say, you know, that you dictated my own poetry to me."

Of course Edward was delighted, and Longfellow gave him the sheet as it is here:

Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.
Henry W. Longfellow

Then, as the fine head bent down to copy the lines once more, Edward ventured to say to him:

"I should think it would keep you busy if you did this for every one who asked you."

"Well," said the poet, "you see, I am not so busy a man as I was some years ago, and I shouldn't like to disappoint a little girl; should you?"

As he took up his letters again, he discovered five more requests for his autograph. At each one he reached into a drawer in his desk, took a card, and wrote his name on it.

"There are a good many of these every day," said Longfellow, "but I always like to do this little favor. It is so little to do, to write your name on a card; and if I didn't do it some boy or girl might be looking, day by day, for the postman and be disappointed. I only wish I could write my name better for them. You see how I break my letters? That's because I never took pains with my writing when I was a boy. I don't think I should get a high mark for penmanship if I were at school, do you?"

"I see you get letters from Europe," said the boy, as Longfellow opened an envelope with a foreign stamp on it.

"Yes, from all over the world," said the poet. Then, looking at the boy quickly, he said: "Do you collect postage-stamps?"

Edward said he did.

"Well, I have some right here, then," and going to a drawer in a desk he took out a bundle of letters, and cut out the postage-stamps and gave them to the boy.

"There's one from the Netherlands. There's where I was born," Edward ventured to say.

"In the Netherlands? Then you are a real Dutchman. Well! Well!" he said, laying down his pen. "Can you read Dutch?"

The boy said he could.

"Then," said the poet, "you are just the boy I am looking for." And going to a bookcase behind him he brought out a book, and handing it to the boy, he said, his eyes laughing: "Can you read that?"

It was an edition of Longfellow's poems in Dutch.

"Yes, indeed," said Edward. "These are your poems in Dutch."

"That's right," he said. "Now, this is delightful. I am so glad you came. I received this book last week, and although I have been in the Netherlands, I cannot speak or read Dutch. I wonder whether you would read a poem to me and let me hear how it sounds."

So Edward took "The Old Clock on the Stairs," and read it to him.

The poet's face beamed with delight. "That's beautiful," he said, and then quickly added: "I mean the language, not the poem."

"Now," he went on, "I'll tell you what we'll do: we'll strike a bargain. We Yankees are great for bargains, you know. If you will read me 'The Village Blacksmith' you can sit in that chair there made out of the wood of the old spreading chestnut-tree, and I'll take you out and show you where the old shop stood. Is that a bargain?"

Edward assured him it was. He sat in the chair of wood and leather, and read to the poet several of his own poems in a language in which, when he wrote them, he never dreamed they would ever be printed. He was very quiet. Finally he said: "It seems so odd, so very odd, to hear something you know so well sound so strange."

"It's a great compliment, though, isn't it, sir?" asked the boy.

"Ye-es," said the poet slowly. "Yes, yes," he added quickly. "It is, my boy, a very great compliment."

"Ah," he said, rousing himself, as a maid appeared, "that means luncheon, or rather," he added, "it means dinner, for we have dinner in the old New England fashion, in the middle of the day. I am all alone today, and you must keep me company; will you? Then afterward we'll go and take a walk, and I'll show you Cambridge. It is such a beautiful old town, even more beautiful, I sometimes think, when the leaves are off the trees.

"Come," he said, "I'll take you up-stairs, and you can wash your hands in the room where George Washington slept. And comb your hair, too, if you want to," he added; "only it isn't the same comb that he used."

To the boyish mind it was an historic breaking of bread, that midday meal with Longfellow.

"Can you say grace in Dutch?" he asked, as they sat down; and the boy did.

"Well," the poet declared, "I never expected to hear that at my table. I like the sound of it."

Then while the boy told all that he knew about the Netherlands, the poet told the boy all about his poems. Edward said he liked "Hiawatha."

"So do I," he said. "But I think I like 'Evangeline' better. Still," he added, "neither one is as good as it should be. But those are the things you see afterward so much better than you do at the time."

It was a great event for Edward when, with the poet nodding and smiling to every boy and man he met, and lifting his hat to every woman and little girl, he walked through the fine old streets of Cambridge with Longfellow. At one point of the walk they came to a theatrical bill-board announcing an attraction that evening at the Boston Theatre. Skilfully the old poet drew out from Edward that sometimes he went to the theatre with his parents. As they returned to the gate of "Craigie House" Edward said he thought he would go back to Boston.

"And what have you on hand for this evening?" asked Longfellow.

Edward told him he was going to his hotel to think over the day's events.

The poet laughed and said:

"Now, listen to my plan. Boston is strange to you. Now we're going to the theatre this evening, and my plan is that you come in now, have a little supper with us, and then go with us to see the play. It is a funny play, and a good laugh will do you more good than to sit in a hotel all by yourself. Now, what do you think?"

Of course the boy thought as Longfellow did, and it was a very happy boy that evening who, in full view of the large audience in the immense theatre, sat in that box. It

was, as Longfellow had said, a play of laughter, and just who laughed louder, the poet or the boy, neither ever knew.

Between the acts there came into the box a man of courtly presence, dignified and yet gently courteous.

"Ah! Phillips," said the poet, "how are you? You must know my young friend here. This is Wendell Phillips, my boy. Here is a young man who told me to-day that he was going to call on you and on Phillips Brooks to-morrow. Now you know him before he comes to you."

"I shall be glad to see you, my boy," said Mr. Phillips. "And so you are going to see Phillips Brooks? Let me tell you something about Brooks. He has a great many books in his library which are full of his marks and comments. Now, when you go to see him you ask him to let you see some of those books, and then, when he isn't looking, you put a couple of them in your pocket. They would make splendid souvenirs, and he has so many he would never miss them. You do it, and then when you come to see me tell me all about it."

And he and Longfellow smiled broadly.

An hour later, when Longfellow dropped Edward at his hotel, he had not only a wonderful day to think over but another wonderful day to look forward to as well!

He had breakfasted with Oliver Wendell Holmes; dined, supped, and been to the theatre with Longfellow; and to-morrow he was to spend with Phillips Brooks.

Boston was a great place, Edward Bok thought, as he fell asleep.

The Boyhood of John Greenleaf Whittier

(America: 1807-1892)

Barbara Frietchie

The life of Whittier may be read in his poems, and, by putting a note here and a date there, a full autobiography might be compiled from them. His boyhood and youth are depicted in them with such detail that little need be added to make the story complete, and that little, reverently done as it may be, must seem poor in comparison with the poetic beauty of his own revelations.

What more can we do to show his early home than to quote from his own beautiful poem, "Snow-bound"? There the house is pictured for us, inside and out, with all its furnishings; and those who gather around its hearth, inmates and visitors, are set before us so clearly that long after the book has been put away they remain as distinct in the memory as portraits that are visible day after day on the walls of our own homes. He reproduces in his verse the landscapes he saw, the legends of witches and Indians he listened to, the schoolfellows he played with, the voices of the woods and fields, and the round of toil and pleasure in a country boy's life; and in other poems his later life, with its impassioned devotion to freedom and lofty faith, is reflected as lucidly as his youth is in "Snow-bound" and "The Barefoot Boy."

He himself was "The Barefoot Boy," and what Robert Burns said of himself Whittier might repeat: "The poetic genius of my country found me, as the prophetic bard Elijah did Elisha, at the plow, and threw her inspiring mantle over me." He was a farmer's son, born at a time

when farm-life in New England was more frugal than it is now, and with no other heritage than the good name and example of parents and kinsmen, in whom simple virtues—thrift, industry, and piety—abounded.

His birthplace still stands near Haverhill, Mass.,—a house in one of the hollows of the surrounding hills, little altered from what it was in 1807, the year he was born, when it was already at least a century and a half old.

He had no such opportunities for culture as Holmes and Lowell had in their youth. His parents were intelligent and upright people of limited means, who lived in all the simplicity of the Quaker faith, and there was nothing in his early surroundings to encourage and develop literary taste. Books were scarce, and the twenty volumes on his father's shelves were, with one exception, about Quaker doctrines and Quaker heroes. The exception was a novel, and that was hidden away from the children, for fiction was forbidden fruit. No library or scholarly companionship was within reach; and if his gift had been less than genius, it could never have triumphed over the many disadvantages with which it had to contend. Instead of a poet he would have been a farmer like his forefathers. But literature was a spontaneous impulse with him, as natural as the song of a bird; and he was not wholly dependent on training and opportunity, as he would have been had he possessed mere talent.

Frugal from necessity, the life of the Whittiers was not sordid nor cheerless to him, moreover; and he looks back to it as tenderly as if it had been full of luxuries. It was sweetened by strong affections, simple tastes, and an unflinching sense of duty; and in all the members of the household the love of nature was so genuine that meadow,

wood, and river yielded them all the pleasure they needed, and they scarcely missed the refinements of art.

Surely there could not be a pleasanter or more homelike picture than that which the poet has given us of the family on the night of the great storm when the old house was snowbound:

"Shut in from all the world without,
We sat the clean-winged hearth about,
Content to let the north wind roar
In baffled rage at pane and door,
While the red logs before us beat
The frost-line back with tropic heat.
And ever when a louder blast
Shook beam and rafter as it passed,
The merrier up its roaring draught
The great throat of the chimney laughed.
The house-dog on his paws outspread,
Laid to the fire his drowsy head;
The cat's dark silhouette on the wall
A couchant tiger's seemed to fall,
And for the winter fireside meet
Between the andiron's straddling feet
The mug of cider simmered slow,
The apples sputtered in a row,
And close at hand the basket stood
With nuts from brown October's wood."

For a picture of the poet himself we must turn to the verses in "The Barefoot Boy," in which he says:

"O for boyhood's time of June,
Crowding years in one brief moon,
When all things I heard or saw,
Me, their master, waited for.
I was rich in flowers and trees,

Humming-birds and honey-bees;
For my sport the squirrel played,
Plied the snouted mole his spade;
For my taste the blackberry cone
Purpled over hedge and stone;
Laughed the brook for my delight
Through the day and through the night,
Whispering at the garden-wall,
Talked with me from fall to fall;
Mine the sand-rimmed pickerel pond,
Mine the walnut slopes beyond,
Mine on bending orchard trees,
Apples of Hesperides!
Still as my horizon grew,
Larger grew my riches, too;
All the world I saw or knew
Seemed a complex Chinese toy,
Fashioned for a barefoot boy!"

I doubt if any boy ever rose to intellectual eminence who had fewer opportunities for education than Whittier. He had no such pasturage to browse on as is open to every reader who, by simply reaching them out, can lay his hands on the treasures of English literature. He had to borrow books wherever they could be found among the neighbors who were willing to lend, and he thought nothing of walking several miles for one volume. The only instruction he received was at the district school, which was open a few weeks in midwinter, and at the Haverhill Academy, which he attended two terms of six months each, paying tuition by work in spare hours, and by keeping a small school himself. A feeble spirit would have languished under such disadvantages. But Whittier scarcely refers to them, and instead of begging for pity, he

takes them as part of the common lot, and seems to remember only what was beautiful and good in his early life.

Occasionally a stranger knocked at the door of the old homestead in the valley; sometimes it was a distinguished Quaker from abroad, but oftener it was a peddler or some vagabond begging for food, which was seldom refused. Once a foreigner came and asked for lodgings for the night—a dark, repulsive man, whose appearance was so much against him that Mrs. Whittier was afraid to admit him. No sooner had she sent him away, however, than she repented. "What if a son of mine was in a strange land?" she thought. The young poet (who was not yet recognized as such) offered to go out in search of him, and presently returned with him, having found him standing in the roadway just as he had been turned away from another house.

"He took his seat with us at the supper-table," says Whittier in one of his prose sketches, "and when we were all gathered around the hearth that cold autumnal evening, he told us, partly by words and partly by gestures, the story of his life and misfortunes, amused us with descriptions of the grape-gatherings and festivals of his sunny clime, edified my mother with a recipe for making bread of chestnuts, and in the morning, when, after breakfast, his dark sallow face lighted up, and his fierce eyes moistened with grateful emotion as in his own silvery Tuscan accent he poured out his thanks, we marveled at the fears which had so nearly closed our doors against him, and as he departed we all felt that he had left with us the blessing of the poor."

Another guest came to the house one day. It was a vagrant old Scotchman, who, when he had been treated to

bread and cheese and cider, sang some of the songs of Robert Burns, which Whittier then heard for the first time, and which he never forgot. Coming to him thus as songs reached the people before printing was invented, through gleemen and minstrels, their sweetness lingered in his ears, and he soon found himself singing in the same strain. Some of his earliest inspirations were drawn from Burns, and he tells us of his joy when one day, after the visit of the old Scotchman, his schoolmaster loaned him a copy of that poet's works. "I began to make rhymes myself, and to imagine stories and adventures," he says in his simple way.

Indeed, he began to rhyme very early and kept his gift a secret from all, except his oldest sister, fearing that his father, who was a prosaic man, would think that he was wasting time. He wrote under the fence, in the attic, in the barn—wherever he could escape observation; and as pen and ink were not always available, he sometimes used chalk, and even charcoal. Great was the surprise of the family when some of his verses were unearthed, literally unearthed, from under a heap of rubbish in a garret; but his father frowned upon these evidences of the bent of his mind, not out of unkindness, but because he doubted the sufficiency of the boy's education for a literary life, and did not wish to inspire him with hopes which might never be fulfilled.

His sister had faith in him, nevertheless, and, without his knowledge, she sent one of his poems to the editor of *The Free Press*, a newspaper published in Newburyport. Whittier was helping his father to repair a stone wall by the roadside when the carrier flung a copy of the paper to him, and, unconscious that anything of his was in it, he

opened it and glanced up and down the columns. His eyes fell on some verses called "The Exile's Departure."

"Fond scenes, which delighted my youthful existence,
With feelings of sorrow I bid ye adieu--
A lasting adieu; for now, dim in the distance,
The shores of Hibernia recede from my view.
Farewell to the cliffs, tempest-beaten and gray,
Which guard the loved shores of my own native land;
Farewell to the village and sail-shadowed bay,
The forest-crowned hill and the water-washed strand."

His eyes swam; it was his own poem, the first he ever had in print.

"What is the matter with thee?" his father demanded, seeing how dazed he was; but, though he resumed his work on the wall, he could not speak, and he had to steal a glance at the paper again and again, before he could convince himself that he was not dreaming. Sure enough, the poem was there with his initial at the foot of it,—"W., Haverhill, June 1st, 1826,"—and, better still, this editorial notice: "If 'W.,' at Haverhill, will continue to favor us with pieces beautiful as the one inserted in our poetical department of to-day, we shall esteem it a favor."

Fame never passes true genius by, and when it came it brought with it the love and reverence of thousands, who recognize in Whittier a nature abounding in patience, unselfishness, and all the sweetness of Christian charity.

Harriet Beecher Stowe

(American: 1811-1896)
Uncle Tom's Cabin

A glimpse at the life of a writer.

An amusing and at the same time most interesting account of her struggles to accomplish literary work amid her distracting domestic duties at this time is furnished by the letter of one of her intimate friends, who writes:—

"It was my good fortune to number Mrs. Stowe among my friends, and during a visit to her I had an opportunity one day of witnessing the combined exercise of her literary and domestic genius in a style that to me was quite amusing.

"'Come Harriet,' said I, as I found her tending one baby and watching two others just able to walk, 'where is that piece for the "Souvenir" which I promised the editor I would get from you and send on next week? You have only this one day left to finish it, and have it I must.'

"'And how will you get it, friend of mine?' said Harriet. 'You will at least have to wait till I get house-cleaning over and baby's teeth through.'

"'As to house-cleaning, you can defer it one day longer; and as to baby's teeth, there is to be no end to them, as I can see. No, no; today that story must be ended. There Frederick has been sitting by Ellen and saying all those pretty things for more than a month now, and she has been turning and blushing till I am sure it is time to go to her relief. Come, it would not take you three hours at the rate you can write to finish the courtship, marriage, catastrophe, eclaircissement, and al; and this three hours' labor of your brains will earn enough to pay for all the

sewing your fingers could do for a year to come. Two dollars a page, my dear, and you can write a page in fifteen minutes! Come, then, my lady housekeeper, economy is a cardinal virtue; consider the economy of the thing.'

"'But, my dear, here is a baby in my arms and two little pussies by my side, and there is a great baking down in the kitchen, and there is a "new girl" for "help," besides preparations to be made for house-cleaning next week. It is really out of the question, you see.'

"'I see no such thing. I do not know what genius is given for, if it is not to help a woman out of a scrape. Come, set your wits to work, let me have my way, and you shall have all the work done and finish the story too.'

"'Well, but kitchen affairs?'

"'We can manage them too. You know you can write anywhere and anyhow. Just take your seat at the kitchen table with your writing weapons, and while you superintend Mina fill up the odd snatches of time with the labors of your pen.'

"I carried my point. In ten minutes she was seated; a table with flour, rolling-pin, ginger, and lard on one side, a dresser with eggs, pork, and beans and various cooking utensils on the other, near her an oven heating, and beside her a dark-skinned nymph, waiting orders.

"'Here, Harriet,' said I, 'you can write on this atlas in your lap; no matter how the writing looks, I will copy it.'

"'Well, well,' said she, with a resigned sort of amused look. 'Mina, you may do what I told you, while I write a few minutes, till it is time to mould up the bread. Where is the inkstand?'

"'Here it is, close by, on the top of the tea-kettle,' said I.

"At this Mina giggled, and we both laughed to see her merriment at our literary proceedings.

"I began to overhaul the portfolio to find the right sheet.

"'Here it is,' said I. 'Here is Frederick sitting by Ellen, glancing at her brilliant face, and saying something about "guardian angel," and all that—you remember?'

"'Yes, yes,' said she, falling into a muse, as she attempted to recover the thread of her story.

"Ma'am, shall I put the pork on the top of the beans?' asked Mina.

"'Come, come,' said Harriet, laughing, 'You see how it is. Mina is a new hand and cannot do anything without me to direct her. We must give up the writing for today.'

"'No, no; let us have another trial. You can dictate as easily as you can write. Come, I can set the baby in this clothes-basket and give him some mischief or other to keep him quiet; you shall dictate and I will write. Now, this is the place where you left off: you were describing the scene between Ellen and her lover; the last sentence was, "Borne down by the tide of agony, she leaned her head on her hands, the tears streamed through her fingers, and her whole frame shook with convulsive sobs." What shall I write next?'

"'Mina, pour a little milk into this pearlash,' said Harriet.

"'Come,' said I. '"The tears streamed through her fingers and her whole frame shook with convulsive sobs." What next?'

"Harriet paused and looked musingly out of the window, as she turned her mind to her story. 'You may write now,' said she, and she dictated as follows:

"'Her lover wept with her, nor dared he again to touch the point so sacredly guarded"—Mina, roll that crust a little thinner. "He spoke in soothing tones"—Mina, poke the coals in the oven.'

"'Here,' said I, 'let me direct Mina about these matters, and write a while yourself.'

"Harriet took the pen and patiently set herself to the work. For a while my culinary knowledge and skill were proof to all Mina's investigating inquiries, and they did not fail till I saw two pages completed.

"'You have done bravely,' said I, as I read over the manuscript; 'now you must direct Mina a while. Meanwhile dictate and I will write.'

"Never was that a more docile literary lady than my friend. Without a word of objection she followed my request.

"'I am ready to write,' said I. 'The last sentence was: "What is this life to one who has suffered as I have?" What next?'

"'Shall I put in the brown or the white bread first?' said Mina.

"'The brown first,' said Harriet.

"'What is this life to one who has suffered as I have?"' said I.

"Harriet brushed the flour off her apron and sat down for a moment in a muse. Then she dictated as follows:—

"'Under the breaking of my heart I have borne up. I have borne up under all that tries a woman,—but this though,—oh, Henry!"'

"'Ma'am, shall I put ginger into this pumpkin?' queried Mina.

"'No, you may let that alone just now,' replied Harriet. She then proceeded:—

"'I know my duty to my children, I see the hour must come. You must take them, Henry; they are my last earthly comfort."'

"'Ma'am, what shall I do with these egg-shells and all this truck here?' interrupted Mina.

"'Put them in the pail by you,' answered Harriet. "'They are my last earthly comfort,'" said I. 'What next?'

"She continued to dictate,—

"'You must take them away. It may be—perhaps it must be—that I shall soon follow, but the breaking heart of a wife still pleads, 'a little longer, a little longer.'"

"'How much longer must the gingerbread stay in?' inquired Mina.

"'Five minutes,' said Harriet.

"Thus we went on, cooking, writing, nursing, and laughing, till I finally accomplished my object.

The piece was finished, copied, and the next day sent to the editor."

The writing of Uncle Tom's Cabin

Dr. Beecher had been the intimate friend and supporter of Lovejoy, who had been murdered by the slaveholders at Alton for publishing an anti-slavery paper. His soul was stirred to its very depths by the iniquitous law which was at this time being debated in Congress,—a law which not only gave the slaveholder of the South the right to seek out and bring back into slavery any colored person whom he claimed as a slave, but commanded the people of the free States to assist in this revolting business. The most frequent theme of conversation while Mrs. Stowe was in Boston was this proposed law, and when she arrived in Brunswick her soul was all on fire with indignation at this

new indignity and wrong about to be inflicted by the slave-power on the innocent and defenseless.

After the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act, letter after letter was received by Mrs. Stowe in Brunswick from Mrs. Edward Beecher and other friends, describing the heart-rending scenes which were the inevitable results of the enforcement of this terrible law. Cities were more available for the capturing of escaped slaves than the country, and Boston, which claimed to have the cradle of liberty, opened her doors to the slave-hunters. The sorrow and anguish caused thereby no pen could describe. Families were broken up. Some hid in garrets and cellars. Some fled to the wharves and embarked in ships and sailed for Europe. Others went to Canada. One poor fellow who was doing good business as a crockery merchant, and supporting his family well, when he got notice that his master, whom he had left many years before, was after him, set out for Canada in midwinter on foot, as he did not dare to take a public conveyance. He froze both of his feet on the journey, and they had to be amputated. Mrs. Edward Beecher, in a letter to Mrs. Stowe's son, writing of this period, says:—

"I had been nourishing an anti-slavery spirit since Lovejoy was murdered for publishing in his paper articles against slavery and intemperance, when our home was in Illinois. These terrible things which were going on in Boston were well calculated to rouse up this spirit. What can I do? I thought. Not much myself, but I know one who can. So I wrote several letters to your mother, telling her of various heart-rending events caused by the enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law. I remember distinctly saying in one of them, 'Now, Hattie, if I could use a pen as you can, I would write something that would make this whole

nation feel what an accursed thing slavery is.'…When we lived in Boston your mother often visited us…Several numbers of 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' were written in your Uncle Edward's study at these times, and read to us from the manuscripts."

A member of Mrs. Stowe's family well remembers the scene in the little parlor in Brunswick when the letter alluded to was received. Mrs. Stowe herself read it aloud to the assembled family, and when she came to the passage, "I would write something that would make this whole nation feel what an accursed thing slavery is," Mrs. Stowe rose up from her chair, crushing the letter in her hand, and with an expression on her face that stamped itself on the mind of her child, said: "I will write something. I will if I live."

This was the origin of "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

The purpose of writing a story that should make the whole nation feel that slavery was an accursed thing was not immediately carried out. In December, 1850, Mrs. Stowe writes: "Tell sister Katy I thank her for her letter and will answer it. As long as the baby sleeps with me nights I can't do much of anything, but I will do it at last. I will write that thing if I live."

January 12, 1851, Mrs. Stowe again writes to Professor Stowe at Cincinnati: "Ever since we left Cincinnati to come here the good hand of God has been visibly guiding our way. Through what difficulties have we been brought! Though we knew not where means were to come from, yet means have been furnished every step of the way, and in every time of need. I was just in some discouragement with regard to my writing; thinking that the editor of the 'Era' was overstocked with contributors, and would not

want my services another year, and lo! He sends me one hundred dollars, and ever so many good words with it. Our income this year will be seventeen hundred dollars in all, and I hope to bring our expenses within thirteen hundred."

It was in the month of February after these words were written that Mrs. Stowe was seated at communion service in the college church at Brunswick. Suddenly, like the unrolling of a picture, the scene of the death of Uncle Tom passed before her mind. So strongly was she affected that it was with difficulty she could keep from weeping aloud. Immediately on returning home she took pen and paper and wrote out the vision which had been as it were blown into her mind as by the rushing of a mighty wind. Gathering her family about her she read what she had written. Her two little ones of ten and twelve years of age broke into convulsions of weeping, one of them saying through his sobs, "Oh, mamma! slavery is the most cruel thing in the world." Thus Uncle Tom was ushered into the world, and it was, as we said at the beginning, a cry, an immediate, an involuntary expression of deep, impassioned feeling.

Twenty-five years afterwards Mrs. Stowe wrote in a letter to one of her children, of this period of her life: "I well remember the winter you were a baby and I was writing 'Uncle Tom's Cabin.' My heart was bursting with the anguish excited by the cruelty and injustice our nation was showing to the slave, and praying God to let me do a little and to cause my cry for them to be heard. I remember many a night weeping over you as you lay sleeping beside me, and I thought of the slave mothers whose babies were torn from them."

Uncle Tom's Cabin came from the heart rather than the head. It was an outburst of deep feeling, a cry in the

darkness. The writer no more thought of style or literary excellence than the mother who rushes into the street and cries for help to save her children from a burning house thinks of the teachings of the rhetorician or the elocutionist.

A few years afterwards Mrs. Stowe, writing of this story, said, "This story is to show how Jesus Christ, who liveth and was dead, and now is alive and forever-more, has still a mother's love for the poor and lowly, and that no man can sink so low but that Jesus Christ will stoop to take his hand. Who so low, who so poor, who so despised as the American slave? The law almost denies his existence as a person, and regards him for the most part as less than a man—a mere thing, the property of another. The law forbids him to read or write, to hold property, to make a contract, or even to form a legal marriage. It takes from him all legal right to the wife of his bosom, the children of his body. He can do nothing, possess nothing, acquire nothing, but what must belong to his master. Yet even to this slave Jesus Christ stoops, from where he sits at the right hand of the Father, and says, 'Fear not, thou whom man despiseth, for I am thy brother. Fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine.'"

Uncle Tom's Cabin is a work of religion.

Uncle Tom's Cabin made the enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law an impossibility. It aroused the public sentiment of the world by arousing in the concrete that which had been a mere series of abstract propositions. It was…an appeal to the imagination through a series of pictures. People are like children, and understand pictures better than words. Some one rushes into your dining-room

while you are at breakfast and cries out, "Terrible railroad accident, forty killed and wounded, six were burned alive."

"Oh shocking! Dreadful!" you exclaim, and yet go quietly on with your rolls and coffee. But suppose you stood at that instant by the wreck, and saw the mangled dead, and heard the piercing shrieks of the wounded, you would be faint and dizzy with the intolerable spectacle.

So "Uncle Tom's Cabin" made the crack of the slave-driver's whip, and the cries of the tortured blacks ring in every household in the land, till human hearts could endure it no longer.

Mrs. Stowe had no reason to hope for any large pecuniary gain from this publication, for it was practically her first book. "I did not know until a week afterward precisely what terms Mr. Stowe had made, and I did not care. I had the most perfect indifference to the bargain."

In writing of this critical period of her life Mrs. Stowe says:—

"After sending the last proof-sheet to the office I sat alone reading Horace Mann's eloquent plea for these young men and women, then about to be consigned to the slave warehouse of Bruin & Hill in Alexandria, Va,—a plea impassioned, eloquent, but vain, as all other pleas on that side had ever proved in all courts hitherto. It seemed that there was no hope, that nobody would hear, nobody would read, nobody pity; that this frightful system, that had already pursued its victimes into the free States, might at last even threaten them in Canada."

Filled with this fear, she determined to do all that one woman might to enlist the sympathies of England for the cause, and to avert, even as a remote contingency, the closing of Canada as a haven of refuge for the oppressed.

Then, having done what she could, and committed the result to God, she calmly turned her attention to other affairs.

In the mean time the fears of the author as to whether or not her book would be read were quickly dispelled. Three thousand copies were sold the very first day, a second edition was issued the following week, a third on the 1st of April, and within a year one hundred and twenty editions, or over three hundred thousand copies of the book, had been issued and sold in this country. Almost in a day the poor professor's wife had become the most talked-of woman in the world, her influence for good was spreading to its remotest corners, and henceforth she was to be a public character, whose every movement would be watched with interest, and whose every word would be quoted. The long, weary struggle with poverty was to be hers no longer; for, in seeking to aid the oppressed, she had also so aided herself.

In due time Mrs. Stowe began to receive answers to the letters she had forwarded with copies of her book to prominent men in England, and these were without exception flattering and encouraging. Lord Carlisle wrote:

"I return my deep and solemn thanks to Almighty God who has led and enabled you to write such a book. I do feel indeed the most thorough assurance that in his good Providence such a book cannot have been written in vain. I have long felt that slavery is by far the topping question of the world and age we live in, including all that is most thrilling in heroism and most touching in distress; in short, the real epic of the universe. The self-interest of the parties most nearly concerned on the one hand, the apathy and ignorance of unconcerned observers on the other, have left these August pretensions to drop very much out of sight.

Hence my rejoicing that a writer has appeared who will be read and must be felt, and that happen what may to the transactions of slavery they will no longer be suppressed."

To this letter, of which but an extract has been given, Mrs. Stowe sent the following reply:

"MY LORD—It is not with the common pleasure of gratified authorship that I say how much I am gratified by the receipt of your very kind communication with regard to my humble efforts in the cause of humanity. The subject is one so grave, so awful—the success of what I have written has been so singular and so unexpected—that I can scarce retain a self-consciousness and am constrained to look upon it all as the work of a Higher Power, who, when He pleases, can accomplish his results by the feeblest instruments."

Charles Dickens

(England:1812-1870)
A Christmas Carol, David Copperfield, Great Expectations, Oliver Twist, A Tale of Two Cities

The little fellow who worked all day long in the tumble-down old house by the river Thames pasting oil-paper covers on boxes of blacking fell ill one afternoon. One of the workmen, a big man named Bob Fagin, made him lie down on a pile of straw in the corner and placed blacking-bottles filled with hot water beside him to keep him warm. There he lay until it was time for the men to stop work, and then his friend Fagin, looking down upon the small boy of twelve, asked if he felt able to go home. The boy got up looking so big-eyed, white-cheeked and thin that the man put his arm about his shoulder.

"Never mind, Bob, I think I'm all right now," said the boy. "Don't you wait for me, go on home."

"You ain't fit to go alone, Charley. I'm comin' along with you."

"'Deed I am, Bob. I'm feelin' as spry as a cricket." The little fellow threw back his shoulders and headed for the stairs.

Fagin, however, insisted on keeping him company, and so the two, the shabbily-dressed undersized boy, and the big strapping man came out into the murky London twilight and took their way over the Blackfriars Bridge.

"Been spendin' your money at the pastry shops, Charley, again? That's what was the matter with you, I take it."

The boy shook his head. "No, Bob. I'm tryin' to save. When I get my week's money I put it away in a bureau drawer, wrapped in six little paper packages with a day of

the week on each one. Then I know just how much I've got to live on, and Sundays don't count. Sometimes I do get hungry though, so hungry! Then I look in at the windows and play at bein' rich."

They crossed the Bridge, the boy's big eyes seeming to take note of everything, the man, duller-witted, listening to his chatter. Several times the boy tried to say good-night, but Fagin would not be shaken off. "I'm goin' to see you to your door, Charley lad," he said each time.

At last they came into a little street near the Southwark Bridge. The boy stopped by the steps of a house. "Here 'tis, Bob. Good-night. It was good of you to take the trouble for me."

"Good-night, Charley."

The boy ran up the steps, and, as he noticed that Fagin still stopped, he pulled the door-bell. Then the man went on down the street. When the door opened the boy asked if Mr. Fagin lived there, and being told that he did not, said he must have made a mistake in the house. Turning about he saw that his friend had disappeared around a corner. With a little smile of triumph he made off in the other direction.

The door of the Marshalsea Prison stood open like a great black mouth. The boy, tired with his long tramp, was glad to reach it and to run in. Climbing several long flights of stairs he entered a room on the top story where he found his family, his father, a tall pompous-looking man dressed all in black, his mother, an amiable but extremely fragile woman, and a small brother and sister seated at a table eating supper. The room was very sparsely furnished; the only bright spot in it was a small fire in a rusty grate, flanked by two bricks to prevent burning too much fuel.

There was a vacant place at the table for Charles, and he sat down upon a stool and ate as ravenously as though he had not tasted food for months. Mean while the tall man at the head of the table talked solemnly to his wife at the other end, using strange long words which none of the children could understand.

Supper over Mr. and Mrs. Dickens (for that was their name) and the two younger children sat before the tiny fire, and Mr. Dickens talked of how he might raise enough money to pay his debts, leave the prison, and start fresh in some new business. Charles had heard these same plans from his father's lips a thousand times before, and so he took from the cupboard an old book which he had bought at a little second-hand shop a few days before, a small tattered copy of "Don Quixote," and read it by the light of a tallow candle in the corner.

The lines soon blurred before the boy's tired eyes, his head nodded, and he was fast asleep. He was awakened by his father's deep voice. "Time to be leaving, Charles, my son. You have not forgotten that my pecuniary situation prevents my choosing the hour at which I shall close the door of my house. Fortunately it is a predicament which I trust will soon be obviated to our mutual satisfaction."

The small fellow stood up, shook hands solemnly with his father, kissed his mother, and took his way out of the great prison. Open doors on various landings gave him pictures of many queer households; sometimes he would stop as though to consider some unusually puzzling face or figure.

Into the night again he went, and wound through a dismal labyrinth of the dark and narrow streets of old London. Sometimes a rough voice or an evil face would frighten him, and he would take to his heels and run as fast

as he could. When he passed the house where he had asked for Mr. Fagin he chuckled to himself; he would not have had his friend know for worlds that his family's home was the Marshalsea Prison.

Even that room in the prison, however, was more cheerful than the small back-attic chamber where the boy fell asleep for the second time that night. He slept on a bed made up on the floor, but his slumber was no less deep on that account.

The noise of workmen in a timber yard under his window woke Charles when it seemed much too dark to be morning. It was morning, however, and he was quickly dressed, and making his breakfast from the penny cottage loaf of bread, section of cream cheese and small bottle of milk, which were all he could afford to buy from the man who rented him the room. Then he took the roll of paper marked with the name of the day from the drawer of his bureau and counted out the pennies into his pocket. They were not many; he had to live on seven shillings a week, and he tucked them away very carefully in a pocket lest he lose them and have to do without his lunch.

He was not yet due at the blacking-factory, but he hurried away from his room and joined the crowd of early morning people already on their way to work. He went down the embankment along the Thames until he came to a place where a bench was set in a corner of a wall. This was his favorite lounging-place; London Bridge was just beyond, the river lay in front of him, and he was far enough away from people to be safe from interruption.

As he sat there watching the Bridge and the Thames a little girl came to join him. She was no bigger than he, perhaps a year or two older, but her face was already shrewd enough for that of a grown-up woman. She was the

maid-of-all-work at a house in the neighborhood, and she had fallen into the habit of stopping to talk for a few moments with the boy on her way to work in the morning. She liked to listen to his stories.

This was the boy's hour for inventing his tales; he could spin wonderful tales about London Bridge, the Tower, and the wharves along the river. Sometimes he made up stories about the people who passed in front of them, and they were such astonishing stories that the girl remembered them all day as she worked in the house. He seemed to believe them himself; his eyes would grow far away and dreamy and his words would run on and on until a neighboring clock brought him suddenly back to his own position.

"You do know a heap o' things, don't you?" said the little girl, lost in admiration. "I'd rather have a shillin' though than all the fairy tales in the world."

"I wouldn't," said Charles stoutly. "I'd rather read books than do anythin' else."

"You've got to eat though," objected his companion, "and books won't make you food. 'Tain't common sense." She relented in an instant. "It's fun though, Charley Dickens. Good-bye 'til to-morrow."

Charles went on down to the old blacking-factory by Hungerford Stairs, a ramshackle building almost hanging over the river, damp and overrun with rats. His place was in a recess of the counting-room on the first floor, and as he covered the bottles with the oil-paper tops and tied them on with string he could look from time to time through a window at the slow coal barges swinging down the river.

There were very few boys about the place; at lunch time he would wander off by himself, and selecting his meal from a careful survey of several pastry-cook's

windows invest his money for the day in fancy cakes or a tart. He missed the company of friends of his own age; even Fanny, his oldest sister, he saw only on Sundays when she came back to the Marshalsea from the place where she worked, to spend the day with her family. It was only grown-up people that he saw most of the time, and they were too busy with their own affairs to take much interest in the small, shabby boy who looked just like any one of a thousand other children of the streets. Of all the men at the factory it was only the big clumsy fellow named Fagin who would stop to chat with the lad.

So it was that Charles was forced to make friends with whomever he could, people of any age or condition, and was driven to spend much of his spare time roaming about the streets, lounging by the river, reading stray books by a candle in the prison or in the little attic where he slept. It was not a boyhood that seemed to promise much.

In spite of this hard life which he led, Charles rarely lost his love of fun or his natural high spirits. When he was about twelve years old his father came into a little money, which enabled him to pay his debts so that he was released from prison. He was also able to send his son to school. Here he quickly blossomed out into a leader among the boys. He was continually inventing new games, and queer languages, which were made by adding extra syllables to ordinary words. Frequently he and several of his school friends would go out into the street and talk to each other in this language of their own, understanding what each other said, but pretending to be foreigners to every one who heard them.

Charles was also continually writing short stories, which he lent to his friends on payment of marbles or slate-pencils or white mice, which the boys were very fond of

keeping in their desks. He and a few others built a small theatre and painted gorgeous scenery for it, and then gave regular plays, which he specially wrote for the theatre, to the great entertainment of the other boys and the masters. This comfortable school life was a great contrast to the hard knocks he had to endure when he was at the blacking factory, and he flourished under its influence and began to show something of his real talent for entertaining those about him.

Mr. Dickens, however, soon concluded that Charles ought to be making a start in some business, and so a few years after he had entered school he was placed as clerk in the office of a solicitor in Lincoln's Inn. Here he had to run errands through the busy streets of London's business life, copy all legal documents, and answer the clients who came to call on the firm.

The other clerks found young Dickens immensely entertaining. He could mimic every one who called at the office, and in addition he knew the different cockney voices of all the rabble of the London streets. He had learnt to know the queer types of people who drifted about the river banks and the poorer sections of the city. He knew every small inflection of their voices and their every trick and gesture, and now he acted them out to the great delight of the other clerks. But he could put his powers of mimicry to greater uses. He went to the theatre, particularly to hear Shakespeare's plays, as often as he could, and then would repeat long passages from the plays, giving the exact voice and manner of the leading actors. Many friends predicted that Charles would be a great actor himself some day, and so perhaps he might had not his interest all been drawn another way.

At the time he was so much charmed with the thought of becoming an actor that he wrote to the manager of the theatre at Covent Garden, telling him what he thought of his own gifts for the stage, and asking if he might have an appointment. The manager wrote that they were very busy at that time with a new play, but that he would write him soon when he might have a chance to meet him. A little later Charles was invited to go to the theatre and act a short piece in the presence of Charles Kemble, a very famous actor. When the day arrived, however, he was suffering from a very bad cold which had so swollen his throat that he could hardly speak at all. As a result he could not go to the theatre, and before he had another chance to try his luck he had made up his mind that he would rather be a writer than an actor.

It did not take Charles long to realize that the law was not to his taste. He did not like what he saw of lawyers, and was much more apt to make fun of than to imitate them. Looking about for some more interesting work, he took to studying short-hand in the evenings. He found it very hard to learn, particularly as he had to dig it out of books in the reading-room of the British Museum, but he persevered, and finally became very skilful, so that when he was sent by one of the newspapers to report a debate in the House of Commons he did so extremely well that experts stated "there never was such a short-hand writer before."

The life of a reporter had great charm for the youthful Dickens. He liked the adventurous side of it, the chance to see strange scenes and mix in interesting events. He had a great many strange adventures of his own, and told later how on one occasion soon after he had become a reporter, he was sent far out of London to take down a political

speech, and how coming back he had to write out his short-hand notes holding his paper on the palm of his hand, and by the light of a dull, flickering lantern, while the coach galloped at fifteen miles an hour through wild and hilly country at midnight.

In addition to reporting speeches Charles was sent to write notices of new plays in the theatres and also reviewed new books. He signed these reviews with his nickname "Boz," and it was not long before these articles by Boz attracted the attention of a great many judges of good writing. The chief editor of the *Morning Chronicle*, for which Charles wrote, said of the youth, "He has never been a great reader of books or plays and knows but little of them, but has spent his time in studying life. Keep 'Boz' in reserve for great occasions. He will aye be ready for them."

So it proved, and he might have been a prominent newspaper man just as he might have been a great actor had not the desire to see what he could do with a story seized upon him.

We have Dickens' own words to tell us how he wrote a little paper in secret with much fear and trembling, and then dropped it stealthily into "a dark little box, in a dark office, up a dark court in Fleet Street." A little later his story appeared in the magazine to which he had sent it, and he tells us how, as he looked at his words standing so gravely before him in all the glory of print, he walked down to Westminster Hall and turned into it for half an hour, because his eyes "were so dimmed with joy and pride that they could not bear the street and were not fit to be seen there." He had been very much excited over this venture of his little story. Now he took the fact of its

success to indicate that it was worth his while to practice using his pen as a writer of fiction.

After that Charles Dickens, although he continued working as reporter, spent his spare hours in writing comic accounts of the various scenes of London life which he knew so well. These were published as fast as they were written, over the pen name of "Boz." He was paid almost nothing for them, but he persevered, prompted by his inborn love of writing and the fun he had in describing curious types of people.

Then one day a young man who had just recently become a publisher called at Charles's lodgings and told him that he was planning to publish a monthly paper in order to sell certain pictures by Robert Seymour, an artist who had just finished some sporting plates for a book called "The Squib Annual." Seymour had drawn most of the pictures for this new venture, and they were almost all of a cockney sporting type. Now Charles was asked if he would write something to go with the pictures.

Some one suggested that he should tell the adventures of a Nimrod Club, the members of which should go out into the country on fishing and hunting expeditions which would suit the drawings, but this did not appeal to the young writer, as he knew very little about these country sports, and was much more interested in describing curious people. He asked for a day or two's time to think the matter over, and then finally sent the publishers the first copy of what he chose to call the "Pickwick Papers."

According to a common custom of the time, the author was allowed to write a story as it was needed by the printer, so that the first numbers of the "Pickwick Papers" appeared while Charles was still working on the next ones. This often put him to great inconvenience, as he

sometimes found it hard to invent new adventures to fit Seymour's pictures and yet had to have the story written by a certain time.

He wrote to a friend one night, "I have at this moment got Pickwick and his friends on the Rochester coach, and they are going on swimmingly, in company with a very different character from any I have yet described " (Alfred Jingle), "who I flatter myself will make a decided hit. I want to get them from the ball to the inn before I go to bed; and I think that will take till one or two o'clock at the earliest. The publishers will be here in the morning, so you will readily suppose I have no alternative but to stick to my desk."

The public was slow in appreciating the humor of the "Pickwick Papers," and the series dragged until Part IV appeared, and with it the character of Sam Weller. This original and very entertaining figure turned the scales, and almost instantly there was the greatest demand for the "Pickwick Papers." By the time the series was finished the name of "Boz" was constantly on almost every English tongue. Here again fortune had had much to do with deciding Dickens' career. Had the series failed, he might have continued merely a reporter, but the humorous figure of Weller tipped the scales in favor of his adopting the profession of novelist.

From that time on one novel after another flowed from Dickens' pen. For many of their most vivid pictures he was indebted to the hard life of his boyhood, and the strange people he had known in the days when he worked in the blacking factory finally grew into some of his greatest characters. The little maid-of-all-work became the Marchioness in the "Old Curiosity Shop," Bob Fagin loaned his name to "Oliver Twist," and in "David

Copperfield" we read the story of the small boy who had to fight his way through London alone.

Those days of boyhood had given him a deep insight into human nature, into the humor and pathos of other people's lives, and it was that rare insight that enabled him to become in time one of the greatest of all English writers, Charles Dickens, the beloved novelist of the Anglo-Saxon people.

Charlotte Brontë

(England: 1816-1855)
Jane Eyre

The February winds were blowing across the Yorkshire hills and sweeping down the steep street of the little village of Haworth, as the heavily-laden carts piled with the furniture of the "new parson" came slowly up towards the parsonage. Above the street the moors rose higher and higher towards the round hills beyond, and there was scarcely a tree or hedge for the mad winds to wrestle with, as they swept the snow into long drifts by the side of the grey dykes and passed disdainfully over the stunted shrubs that struggled to hold their own on the bleak hillside. At the top of the steep village street the church, with its square tower, stood out clear against the moor and sky, and sheltering beside it was the low stone parsonage with its strip of garden, shut in on both sides by the silent churchyard.

There was curiosity astir in the village that day, for the new parson and his family were expected to arrive and several people were looking out of their doors and windows as the carts came slowly on, the horses' feet slipping and stumbling over the roughly-paved flagstones. Not that any of the villagers meant to show any interest or had the least intention of welcoming the new comers. The people of the West Riding were not given to welcoming strangers, and were certainly no respecters of persons. They were a rough independent folk, inclined to mind their own business and to expect other people to mind theirs, while they looked with a good deal of suspicion on any unknown thing or person. Their manners and appearance were as rugged as the wild country around, but there were

good loyal hearts hidden away under the rough exterior, and kindly ways were there too.

Slowly the carts were dragged upwards by the tired horses until, in front of the church, they turned aside into a narrow alley and drew up at the gate of the parsonage. The new parson, Patrick Brontë, was bringing his wife and six little children to make their home there in the hillside village on the edge of the moors, and this was the first sign of their arrival.

Patrick Brontë was an Irishman, tall, strong, and handsome, quite a contrast to his small delicate wife, who looked almost too fragile to face the strong moorland breezes. The six children were as delicate-looking as their mother, and were like little rungs of a ladder, beginning highest up with Maria, who was six years old, and ending with Baby Anne, who was scarcely to be counted by years as yet. The children had all been born at Thornton, in Bradford parish, except the two elder girls, Maria and Elizabeth. Charlotte, following fast upon the heels of Elizabeth, was born on the 21st of April 1816, and then followed in quick succession Patrick, Emily, and Anne.

It was after little Anne was born that the mother's health began to fail, and when the family arrived at Haworth it was plainly seen that she had not very long to live. It had been no easy task to look after and clothe and care for those six little ones, especially when money was not too plentiful. Now it had grown to be a task quite beyond her strength.

From the very first there was a shadow over the parsonage, and the children, young as they were, felt it in their strange old-fashioned way. They were wonderfully good, quiet children, never the least inclined to be noisy or troublesome, and with their mother ill they grew even

quieter. Maria, feeling the heavy responsibility of being the eldest, and bearing the weight of seven years, was like a little mother to the younger ones and easily kept them in order. She was very small for her age, but she was her mother's right hand, and had long ago learned to be useful in the nursery and in household concerns. Their father was not particularly fond of children and was always afraid they would trouble their mother, so Maria kept them all out of sight as much as possible, and they were as quiet as little mice.

"You would not have known there was a child in the house," said one of the old servants, "they were such still, noiseless, good little creatures."

The parsonage was not very large, but there was a small spare room above the front door, which was called "the children's study," although the eldest student was scarcely seven years old. Here Maria kept the little ones amused, and when it was fine took them out for walks over the moors. That heathery moorland was the great delight of the children's hearts, and they would wander out hand in hand, a solemn little procession of six, the elder ones carefully helping those toddlers whose steps were still somewhat unsteady.

After one year at the Haworth parsonage the invalid mother died, and the lonely children grew even quieter and more lonely. Their father saw but little of them, for he had even his meals by himself, but he laid down strict rules that they should be brought up to be hardy and not think too much of clothes or food. It was not difficult to keep that rule, for there were very few luxuries in the parsonage.

Mrs. Brontë had been too ill to make friends with anyone within reach of Haworth, so there was no one now to take an interest in the children, but before very long an

elderly aunt came from Cornwall to live with them and take charge of the household. The children, however, clung to one another and were quite content to be left alone. They seemed to need no one if they could only be together, and they lived entirely apart in a world of their own, making their own pleasures and interests.

Books were scarce, and Maria had begun early to read the newspapers and to tell the younger ones any news which she thought was suited to their understanding. There was always a great deal to be read about the Duke of Wellington; he was Charlotte's special hero, and any news about him was eagerly discussed. As soon as the children could read and write they made up little plays and acted them together, the characters usually being the Duke of Wellington, Napoleon, Hannibal, or Cæsar. Sometimes serious disputes arose as to which was the greatest hero, and as it was seldom that there was any disturbance in "the children's study," their father strode upstairs at once to see what was the matter and to settle the dispute.

He wondered sometimes what these children were really like, and what thoughts they had in their minds, and one day he hit on a curious plan of examining them. He was quite sure if their faces were hidden they would answer more freely and without any shyness, so he got an old mask which was in the house, and each child was told in turn to hide behind it and answer out boldly.

He began with little four-year-old Anne.

"What does a child like you want most?" he inquired.

The childish treble from behind the mask answered promptly, "Age and experience."

Emily came next.

"What should be done with your brother when he is a naughty boy?" was the question.

"Reason with him, and when he won't listen to reason, whip him," was the firm answer.

When Charlotte's turn came she was asked which was the best book in the world, and the answer came unhesitatingly, "The Bible."

"What is the next best book?" asked her father.

"The book of nature," answered the sedate little student.

Maria, then ten years old, was asked what was the best way of spending time. "By laying it out for a happy eternity," answered the anxious-minded little sister-mother who had wasted very little of her time on childish pleasures.

It was no wonder that the father felt rather puzzled and thought that somehow they were unlike other children.

It was just about that time, when Maria was ten years old, that it was decided to send the two elder girls to a school which had been started for poor clergymen's daughters at Cowan Bridge. Maria and Elizabeth were the first to be sent off into this new unknown world of school, but a few months later Charlotte and Emily joined their sisters there.

It was a sad change for the children. Home-sick and wretched, the four little girls went through a most miserable time. It was not at all a suitable school for such delicate children, and the hardships and misery were almost more than they could bear. In wintertime it was specially hard, and even the strongest and most healthy children suffered greatly.

The getting-up bell rang long before it was light, and the poor little shivering mortals had to huddle on their clothes, brown stuff frocks and long holland pinafores, by candle-light, very often unable to wash at all, as the water

in the basins was frozen hard. Hair had all to be brushed very flat and very straight back from the face, and there was no excuse made for chapped and chilblained hands if everything was not as neatly arranged as possible. Then came prayers, and there were lessons too, to be done before it was time for breakfast.

The hungry shivering little sisters found it difficult to eat the food provided for them, not because it was simple, but because it was so badly cooked and unclean, and often they went without their breakfast of burnt porridge and had nothing to eat until dinner-time.

But worst of all, perhaps, were the long walks in the bitter cold winds, when chilblains made every step painful, and the grey frieze cloaks were not half thick enough to keep out the piercing cold.

It was Maria who first began to show signs of failing health, and when at last her father was sent for, and he came to take her home, it was too late. She died a few days after reaching the parsonage, and before the summer was over the next little girl, Elizabeth, was also laid to rest in the old grey churchyard which had always seemed part of the children's home.

Charlotte and Emily were still left to endure the school life for some months longer, but it was considered advisable that they should not face another winter there, and so to their great joy they were allowed to come home and take up again the old dreamy, peaceful life with Patrick and Anne. The heathery moors were like old friends welcoming them back, and brought comfort to their sore little hearts as they wandered out again hand in hand, only four now instead of six.

Although Charlotte was not much older than the rest, she at once became the responsible elder sister, trying as

best she could to fill Maria's place. Much too anxious-minded and old for her nine years, she was, like Martha, "careful and troubled about many things," and seemed to have left childhood far behind her.

All the children's regular lessons were now done with their aunt, but they learned a great deal more from their father's conversation out of lesson hours. He had a habit of talking over all kinds of public news that interested him, and the children listened eagerly, for they loved politics and any kind of out-of-the-way information. For the rest they were well cared for by Tabby, the elderly maid, who ruled them most strictly but really loved them devotedly, and took a great deal of trouble to give them any little treat she could provide.

So the next few years were perhaps the happiest the children had known, and they began once more to invent their own pleasures and interests, and to write out their "original compositions" together.

Pennies were never very plentiful at the parsonage, and the children were obliged to be careful about writing-paper, so the stories were written, mostly by Charlotte, in the smallest possible handwriting, to take up the smallest possible space; handwriting which it is now almost impossible to read without a magnifying glass. These sheets, stitched together and put into covers of stout sugar-paper, formed quite a little library of at least a hundred volumes, containing tales, romances, poems, dramas, historical novels, and all kinds of adventures.

The Duke of Wellington, still Charlotte's hero, figured largely in these books, and everything of interest was carefully noted by one or other of the children, although it was Charlotte who did the greater part of the "compositions." The quiet lonely life and the hours spent

on the moors studying "the back of nature" were apt to make Charlotte somewhat dreamy and romantic, but there was plenty of "the daily round, the common task," to keep her practical and energetic too. Besides her lessons she had to dust the rooms, help with the cooking, look after the younger ones and sew diligently under the stern eye of her aunt, but in spite of everything she always found time to write out those beloved little books. She was small for her age, very slight and fragile, with soft thick brown hair and rather a plain little face, adorned, however, with a pair of wonderful reddish-brown eyes. When anything interested her greatly it seemed as if a lamp was lit behind those eyes, and her whole soul suddenly shone out. There was nothing merry or childlike about her, for she was a solemn small maiden much weighed down by her responsibilities, and her neat tidy ways and quiet manners, added to her rather quaint dress, might well have been described by those who knew her as "old-fashioned."

Five years of this peaceful life in the old parsonage passed by, and then, when Charlotte was fourteen, she was once more sent away to school, but to a very different kind of school this time.

There were only ten pupils at Roe Head, Dewsbury, and the mistress, Miss Wooler, was so kind and motherly that it seemed more like a large family than a school, and Charlotte need not have dreaded beginning her school life again. Long afterwards, one of the pupils wrote a description of her arrival in these words:

"I first saw her coming out of a covered cart, in very old-fashioned clothes, and looking very cold and miserable. She was coming to school at Miss Wooler's. When she appeared in the schoolroom her dress was changed, but just as old. She looked a little old woman, so

short-sighted that she always appeared to be seeking something, and moving her head from side to side to catch a sight of it. She was very shy and nervous, and spoke with a strong Irish accent. When a book was given her, she dropped her head over it till her nose nearly touched it, and when she was told to hold her head up, up went the book after it, still close to her nose, so that it was not possible to help laughing."

At first Charlotte was desperately home-sick, and she did not seem at all to fit in with the other girls. The lessons she should have known she knew but little about, and all the curious knowledge she possessed on other subjects only made the odd-looking girl seem all the more odd to her companions. She did not care for games, for she did not know how to play them, and was quite content to stand alone under the trees in the garden, where she could watch the sky through the branches and dream her dreams while the others played. She was extremely fond of drawing, and every picture that came her way she studied so long and so carefully that the other girls would begin to tease her and ask impatiently what it was she saw in it.

Then, if Charlotte was inclined to talk and explain what she was looking at, the girls began to discover that it was well worth while to listen to what the odd-looking little girl had to say. By degrees she became a great favourite with them, and whenever they wanted a story it was Charlotte who was always called upon to tell it.

It was at bedtime, perhaps, that those tales of Charlotte's were particularly in demand, for her stories always sounded specially thrilling in the dark. Indeed one evening they were thrilled overmuch by one of these tales, and frightened almost out of their wits, so that someone

screamed out loud and brought Miss Wooler to see what could possibly be the matter.

The little girls of the old parsonage and wild moorland had a wonderful power within them. Those schoolgirls shivering in their beds, as they listened to the quiet voice that held them spellbound in the darkness, felt the strange fascination of the little storyteller, just as afterwards the world stopped to listen, and listening fell also under the spell of the genius of the sisters of Haworth parsonage.

George Eliot

(England: 1819-1880)
Middlemarch, Silas Marner, The Mill on the Floss

Scarcely anyone to-day ever thinks of the brilliant authoress by her real name of Mary Ann Evans. It is still as "George Eliot" she is known, the name she took when she first began to write her books, and did not care to let the world know who it was who wrote them.

But although the day was to come when the great world should ring with the fame of George Eliot, there was no stir in the little world about Arbury Farm when Farmer Evans' youngest child, little Mary Ann Evans, was born. Her birthday was on the 22nd of November, S. Cecilia's Day, and it might have been thought that her father, being a good churchman, would have named the baby Cecilia, but it was by the good old English name of Mary Ann that she was baptized in the church at Chilvers Coton, known afterwards as "Shapperton Church."

It was a very peaceful home to which the baby came, and when she was four months old and the family moved to the charming old house of Griff, with its red brick walls so cosily covered with ivy, she was like a bird in "the warm little nest where her affections were fledged."

Griff was on the Arbury estate in Warwickshire, and the quiet country-house was far away from the noise and bustle of towns, with only the daily coach as a link between it and the busy world. For in 1819, when little Mary Ann Evans was born, it was the stage-coach that carried travellers from place to place, brought the news, and had charge of the post-bags. Not that there were many letters to carry, for postage stamps had not even been invented then, and it was so expensive to send a letter that

people never wrote unless they had something very important to say.

The life at Griff was very quiet and uneventful for the three children who lived there with their invalid mother and busy father, who was always working with both head and hands. Chrissy, the eldest, was rather a prim little girl, a great favourite with her aunts, who lived near, and with whom she spent a great deal of her time, but Isaac and Mary Ann were the best of friends and always played together. The boy was three years older than his little sister, but she followed him about like a shadow wherever he went, and whatever he did, she tried to do as well. She loved Isaac with all the strength of her warm little heart, and thought there was no one in the world like him.

Mary Ann was fond of her grey-haired father too, he was so tall and strong, just like a giant, and yet he was as gentle as a woman with his "little wench." He carried her about in his arms as if she were but a feather-weight, and could tell her the most exciting tales, tales of things that had really happened, to which she listened with breathless attention.

The days of the French Revolution were not long past, and many a story did the child hear of that dreadful time and of what the great Napoleon was now doing.

There never was a stauncher little Tory than Mary Ann as she listened to her father's views on revolutions and rebels. There was something in the very way he said the word "government," when he talked of what a good strong government should do, that thrilled her, and the word "rebel" had a tremendous sound of evil, even if she was not quite sure what it meant.

Driving about the country, the busy land-agent and farmer would sometimes take his little girl out with him,

and the child, standing between his knees as he drove, watched everything with wide open eyes of interest, and listened to all the country talk with eager attention, always quite ready to give her opinion on any subject, if she was asked. She was like a little elf standing there, with her bright eyes and her hair flying in all directions, those untidy elf-locks that were the despair of her careful mother's heart.

The mother was very delicate and quite unable to look after the children, so they were sent very early to school, Isaac and Mary Ann being sent to a dame's school close at hand, when Mary Ann was only just four.

It was no hardship for the little girl to go to school as long as she could be with her beloved brother, and lessons did not trouble her much. Although she was so old-fashioned she was not at all sharp, or quick at learning to read, but that was perhaps because she was much more fond of play. She had quite made up her mind that she was going to be very great and grand when she grew up, and she was anxious that people should know this. It was worth while even trying to impress the servants, and when the farm maid came into the parlour where the piano stood, Mary Ann climbed up on to the music-stool with an air of great importance and began to play very grandly, although she did not know a note of music.

It was a sad day for the little sister when her brother was sent away to a school at Coventry. Home would indeed have been a very desolate place without him if she had been left alone, but even one little chattering tongue and one pair of restless feet were too much for the invalid mother, and Mary Ann was also sent away to a boarding-school to join her sister at Attleboro, not far from Griff. She was only five years old and was but a little child to go

into a world of big schoolgirls, but she was not on that account unhappy, for the girls were very kind to her.

Only school was a very, very cold place and the schoolroom fire was very small, and only those who were lucky enough or strong enough to secure a foremost place had any chance of keeping warm. Outside the circle round the fire, the poor little shivering child wrapped her arms in her pinafore and felt the cold creeping creeping up, until she wondered if she was ever going to feel warm again.

But the nights were worse than the days, for although it was warm in bed, it was more dreadful to feel frightened than to feel cold. There was nothing really to frighten her, but every night her fears came trooping out in the darkness and attacked the poor little quaking figure in her small bed. She never told anyone about them, but both cold and fears helped to hurt her in many ways.

The holidays of course were a time of wild delight, when she had Isaac to play with again, and cold and quaking fears were left behind. When a little girl spends her days playing hide-and-seek in the great barns, fishing in the pond, driving round the country and enjoying herself until she is tired, fears have not a chance when bedtime comes, for before they can troop out and seize her, she is safe and happy in the land of dreams.

Books were also beginning to give Mary Ann a good deal of pleasure about this time, although she had very few of them. There was *The Linnet's Life*, the first book her father gave her, which she read over and over again until she knew it by heart, and then came the gift from a kind old gentleman of *Æsop's Fables*, which made her feel as if she had entered into a new and wonderful land of delight.

There was only one little cloud in the blue sky of those holiday times, and that was the fact that Isaac had a pony given to him and he seemed to love that pony more than he loved Mary Ann. The games in the garden, the fishing in the pond, all the delights they had shared together were neglected when there was a pony to ride, and he would gallop away without one regret while his poor deserted little sister watched him go, with eyes full of tears and a sob in her throat. It was always the one desire of her heart to stand first with those she loved, and who would have thought that a pony could have taken her place?

Mary Ann was almost nine years old when she was sent to her next boarding-school at Nuneaton, and here her school-days were a great deal happier. To begin with, she was very fond of her governess, Miss Lewis, and love always spelled happiness to the child. Then, too, she began to live in a new world, the world of books, and when she once entered that enchanted country she was as happy as the day was long. Every book that came her way was a treasure, and whether she was deep in the *Pilgrims Progress* or Defoe's *History of the Devil* she was equally interested and equally happy. At home it vexed her careful mother's heart that she should burn so many candles and hurt her eyes by reading in bed, but if that was stopped, she always found some other way of spending her time with her beloved books. Even Isaac and his pony were forgotten when she entered her enchanted land.

At school she made few friends, her books were all the friends she wanted, but she was fond of her lessons too, and did her work well, and specially loved writing her compositions.

Up in Scotland the Wizard of the North had been weaving his spells, and the little girl in the Midlands of

England was just beginning to feel the magic of his touch. A volume of *Waverley* had been lent by a family friend, and Mary Ann was just in the middle of the enchantment when the book was returned, no one guessing that she was reading it.

What was to be done? *Waverley* must be finished somehow, so the child set herself carefully to write out the story as far as she had read it, and then made up the rest for herself, writing it all out in the childish handwriting that was so like spider's legs.

It was childish writing then, but the thoughts came already from a fruitful store garnered in the depth of her childish mind, a store which in after years, worked by her splendid genius, was to supply the world with such stories as only " George Eliot" could write.

Edward Everett Hale

(America: 1822-1909)
The Man Without a Country

The boyhood of Edward Everett Hale reads like a chapter in one of his own stories of home life. There was nothing miraculous or romantic in it; no prodigious feats of learning, no martyrdom, and no canonization of saints.

His father and mother were just the kind of people that he holds up to admiration in his books,—full of good sense, liberality, and originality; controlling their children with a secure hand, but directing instead of driving them, and reasoning with them instead of scolding. Piety in that household never wore a long face; benevolence worked in deeds and not in words.

At the end of his first month in the Boston Latin School, the boy came home with a report which showed that he was ninth in a class of fifteen; and he dreaded handing it to his mother, as he thought she would be displeased to find him so low in the class. "Oh," she said, "that is no matter. Probably the other boys are brighter than you. God made them so, and you cannot help that. But the report says that you are among the boys who behave well. That you can see to, and that is all I care about."

This little incident shows the reasonableness which guided the conduct of the Hale household. A boy was expected to do all in his power, but no more; and if he could not do it one way, he was allowed to attempt it by some new method, which often proved to be no less successful on account of its novelty. He was not forced to conform to patterns, simply because they fitted other boys, though there was no lack of discipline and no toleration of

the wilful misuse of time. The motto that has since become famous was so closely lived up to, that it might have been as unceasingly in the ears of the family as the ticking of the clock:—

"*Look up, and not down;*
Look forward, and not back;
Look out, and not in;
Lend a hand."

The boy who was born in Boston on April 3, 1822, came of a stock which justified the expectation of a brilliant and useful career for him. His grand-uncle was Nathan Hale, who, when he was led out to execution as a spy in the Revolutionary war, said with his last breath, "I regret that I have only one life to surrender for my country;" and his uncle on his mothers side was Edward Everett the orator, after whom he was named. His father was a man who combined scholarship with activity in public affairs, and it was through his advocacy that the first steam railway was built in Massachusetts.

Great are the changes that have taken place in Boston since then. The boy is a man, and looking back says, "I have sailed my bark boat on the salt waters, where I now can sit in the parlors of my parishioners. I have studied botany on the marshes, where I now sit in my own study to prepare the notes which I read to you. I rode in triumph on the locomotive which hissed over the first five miles that were ready of that highway to the West, where now she might run five thousand."

A good half of Boston is built on land recovered from the sea; and there are solid streets and houses where, less than half a century ago, the water flowed, sinking and rising with the tides.

He was sent to a dame-school while he was still an infant; but he learned little there, and probably was not expected to learn. As the children droned through their lessons, he sat quietly watching the motes of dust dancing in the sunbeams that streamed through the blinds, and his greatest interest was in the making of sand-pies on the floor. When he was placed in a big yellow chair in the middle of the room, he could not be made to understand that it was for some misconduct.

Then he was sent to a school kept by a man who was amiable but incompetent, and he gathered scarcely more here than he did in watching the sunbeams. "A feather-pillow sort of a man was 'Simple' the master,—a good-natured, innocent fellow, who would neither set the bay on fire nor want to, who could and would keep us out of mischief for five or six hours a day, and would never send us home mad with rage, or injustice, or ambition."

He was sometimes late in coming to school; and in order to reproach him, Edward Everett Hale, then a small and audacious lad, marshalled all the boys in their seats, and had a class out to recite before he arrived.

This saucy boy had strong opinions on many subjects at this early age, and he put little value on schools and schoolmasters. But he was a great reader, and his reading fertilized his mind as a field is fertilized before the sower scatters the seed.

Grimm's "Fairy Stories" opened the world of magic to him; and the poems of Sir Walter Scott had such a fascination for him, that there never was a time after he had read them, when he could not quote long passages from memory. As with all imaginative boys, a book of travels transported him to the very spot described; and as he read an account of the Arctic regions, the house melted

into air, and he seemed to be fitting in the cabin of an ice-bound ship, held fast in the jaws of the polar sea, with the aurora flashing up and down the sky. Happy is the boy whose imagination has such a spread of wing that he can leave every care on earth behind, and forget himself in a book! Life has no greater boon than this, and it is the special gift of youth which age can seldom claim.

When he was nine years of age he was sent to the Boston Latin School, where Benjamin Franklin, Samuel Adams, John Hancock, Edward Everett, and Charles Sumner had been educated. It is the oldest school in America, and one of the best; and in it the subject of our sketch made substantial progress, though he seldom stood higher than ninth in a class of fifteen. Unlike most budding authors, he was fond of arithmetic; and another peculiarity of his was, that he could not for the life of him see why his opinions on matters of education were not regarded with as much consideration as the master's. "I had a very decided feeling that it was as fitting that he should consult me as I him," he says with charming frankness.

All the while he was reading diligently; and two summers he was taken out of school to read at home, an excellent plan when a boy is growing fast, though it would be a pity if he should miss the hardening and sharpening which come from association with other boys.

Another privilege he had which any boy who aspires to become an author or a journalist might well envy. Who that is stirred with such an ambition has not looked up with awe and longing, to the front of a great newspaper-office, wishing that he might be admitted to its secrets, its labors, and its honors? Nothing in the world has seemed so glorious, not even the Capitol, pillars, steps, dome, and all, as a newspaper-building in some by-street of the city, with

its lights shining in the upper story where the compositors are setting type, the presses rattling in the basement, and the entrance with editors, reporters, and messengers coming and going at all hours of the day and night.

Well, the father of Edward Everett Hale was the editor of the Boston "Advertiser," and the offices of that paper resembled a nursery to his son, who, like William Dean Howells, learned to set type almost as soon as he had learned to read. He not only mastered the mechanical parts of the business of making a newspaper, but wrote articles for the "Advertiser" while he was still a boy, and he translated an article from a French paper for it before he was eleven: a good beginning for one who in after-life was to fill in turn every position, from that of a reporter, to the much loftier perch of the controlling editor.

In 1835 he entered Harvard University, where Lowell was already a student; and his literary tastes were fostered there by Edward Tyrrel Channing, the professor of English language and literature, who also taught Dana, Story, Holmes, Parkman, and many others who have since made their mark in authorship. Longfellow was another of the professors. "He came to Cambridge in our first years. He was not so much older than we as to be distant, was always accessible, friendly, and sympathetic. All poor teachers let the book come between them and the pupil. Great teachers never do: Longfellow never did. We used to call him 'Head,' which meant head of the modern language department."

Hale was graduated in 1839, and about that time he made the acquaintance of two new authors through their books. One was Alfred Tennyson, and the other John Ruskin. The first copy of Tennyson that fell into his hands had been brought from England by Emerson, who was

always kind to young people, and lent his books freely. Then Ruskin appeared, and his writings developed the love of the beautiful in the young student, and gave him the habit of a close observation of nature out of doors. Scarcely any thing in the shape of a book was uninteresting or unprofitable to him; but he confesses that he could not enjoy Locke's "Essay on the Human Understanding," and that he went to sleep over it.

After his graduation, he taught Latin and Greek for two years, and at the same time wrote articles and stories for the papers. He is as widely known now as an author as he is as a preacher; but when he was twenty-four he entered the Christian ministry, and he has never given it up. The best of his endeavors have been devoted to it, and in his life he has been governed by a principle which he uttered before a college society,—"We professional men must serve the world, not, like the handicraftsman, for a price accurately representing the work done; but as those who deal with infinite values, and confer benefits as freely and nobly as Nature."

General Lew Wallace

(America: 1827-1905)
Ben-Hur

In his study, a curiously-shaped building without the accompaniment of a window, and combining in equal proportions the Byzantine, Romanesque and Doric styles of architecture, the gray-haired author of "Ben Hur," surrounded by his pictures, books and military trophies, is spending, in serene and comfortable retirement, the evening of his life. As I sat beside him and listened to the recital of his earliest struggles and later achievements, I could not help contrasting his dignified bearing, careful expression, and gentle demeanor, with another occasion in his life, when, a vigorous, black-haired young military officer, in the spring of 1861, he appeared, with flashing eye and uplifted sword, at the head of his regiment, the gallant and historic Eleventh Indiana Volunteers.

General Wallace never repels a visitor, and his greeting is cordial and ingenuous.

"If I could say anything to stimulate or encourage the young men of today," he said, when I had explained the object of my visit, "I would gladly do so, but I fear that the story of my early days would be of very little interest or value to others. So far as school education is concerned, it may be truthfully said that I had but little, if any; and if, in spite of that deficiency, I ever arrived at proficiency, I reached it, I presume, as Topsy attained her stature,—'just growed into it.'"

He Was a Careless Student.

"Were you denied early school advantages?" I asked.

"Not in the least. On the contrary, I had most abundant opportunity in that respect. My father was a lawyer, enjoying a lucrative practice in Brookville, Indiana,—a small town which bears the distinction of having given to the world more prominent men than any other place in the Hoosier state. Not long after my birth, he was elected lieutenant-governor, and, finally, governor of the state. He, himself, was an educated man, having been graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point, and having served as instructor in mathematics there. He was not only an educated man, but a man of advanced ideas generally, as shown by the fact that he failed of a reelection to congress in 1840, because, as a member of the committee on commerce, he gave the casting vote in favor of an appropriation to develop Morse's magnetic telegraph. Of course, he believed in the value, and tried to impress upon me the necessity of a thorough school training; but, in the face of all the solicitude and encouragement which an indulgent father could waste on an unappreciative son, I remained vexatiously indifferent. I presume I was like some man in history,—it was Lincoln, I believe,—who said that his father taught him to work, but he never quite succeeded in teaching him to love it.

"My father sent me to school, and regularly paid tuition,—for in those days there were no free schools; but, much to my discredit, he failed to secure anything like regular attendance at recitations, or even a decent attempt to master my lessons at any time. In fact, much of the time that should have been given to school was spent in fishing, hunting and roaming through the woods."

He Loved to Read.

"But were you thus indifferent to all forms of education?"

"No, my case was not quite so hopeless as that. I did not desert the schools entirely, but my attendance was so provokingly irregular and my indifference so supreme, I wonder now that I was tolerated at all. But I had one mainstay; I loved to read. I was a most inordinate reader. In some lines of literature, especially history and some kinds of fiction, my appetite was insatiate, and many a day, while my companions were clustered together in the old red brick schoolhouse, struggling with their problems in fractions or percentage, I was carefully hidden in the woods near by, lying upon my elbows, munching an apple, and reveling in the beauties of Plutarch, Byron or Goldsmith."

"Did you not attend college, or the higher grade of schools?"

"Yes, for a brief period. My brother was a student in Wabash College,—here in Crawfordsville,—and hither I also was sent; but within six weeks I had tired of the routine, was satiated with discipline, and made my exit from the institution. I shall never forget what my father did when I returned home. He called me into his office, and, reaching into one of the pigeonholes above his desk, withdrew therefrom a package of papers neatly folded and tied with the conventional red tape. He was a very systematic man, due, perhaps, to his West Point training, and these papers proved to be the receipts for my tuition, which he had carefully preserved. He called off the items, and asked me to add them together. The total, I confess, staggered me."

A Father's Fruitful Warning.

"'That sum, my son,' he said, with a tone of regret in his voice, 'represents what I have expended in these many years past to provide you with a good education. How successful I have been, you know better than anyone else. After mature reflection, I have come to the conclusion that I have done for you in that direction all that can reasonably be expected of any parent, and I have, therefore, called you in to tell you that you have now reached an age when you must take up the lines yourself. If you have failed to profit by the advantages with which I have tried so hard to surround you, the responsibility must be yours. I shall not upbraid you for your neglect, but rather pity you for the indifference which you have shown to the golden opportunities you have, through my indulgence, been enabled to enjoy.'"

"What effect did this admonition have on you? Did it awaken or arouse you?"

"It aroused me, most assuredly. It set me to thinking as nothing before had done. The next day, I set out with a determination to accomplish something for myself. My father's injunction rang in my ears. New responsibilities rested on my shoulders, as I was, for the first time in my life, my own master. I felt that I must get work on my own account. After much effort, I finally obtained employment from the man with whom I had passed so many afternoons strolling up and down the little streams in the neighborhood, trying to fish. He was the county clerk, and he hired me to copy what was known as the complete record of one of the courts. I worked for months in a dingy, half-lighted room, receiving for my pay something like ten cents per hundred words. The tediousness and regularity of the work was a splendid drill for me, and taught me the

virtue of persistence as one of the avenues of success. It was at this time I began to realize the deficiency in my education, especially as I had an ambition to become a lawyer. Being deficient in both mathematics and grammar, I was forced to study those branches evenings. Of course, the latter was a very exacting study, after a full day's hard work, but I was made to realize that the time I had spent with such lavish prodigality could not be recovered, and that I must extract every possible good out of the golden moments then flying by all too fast."

His First Literary Effort.

"Had you a distinct literary ambition at that time?"

"Well, I had always had a sort of literary bent or inclination. I read all the literature of the day, besides the standard authors, and finally began to devote my odd moments to a book of my own,—a tale based on the days of the crusades. When completed it covered about three hundred and fifty pages, and bore the rather high-sounding title, 'The Man-at-Arms.' I read a good portion of it before a literary society to which I belonged; the members applauded it, and I was frequently urged to have it published. The Mexican War soon followed, however, and I took the manuscript with me when I enlisted; but before the close of my service it was lost, and my production, therefore, never reached the public eye."

"But did not the approval which the book received from the few persons who read it encourage you to continue writing?"

"Fully fifty years have elapsed since then, and it is, therefore, rather difficult, at this late day, to recall just how such things affected me. I suppose I was encouraged thereby, for, in due course of time, another book which

turned out to be 'The Fair God,'—my first book to reach the public,—began to shape itself in my mind. The composition of this work was not, as the theatrical people would say, a continuous performance, for there were many and singular interruptions, and it would be safe to say that months, and, in one case, years, intervened between certain chapters. A few years after the war, I finished the composition, strung the chapters into a continuous narrative, leveled up the uneven places, and started East with the manuscript. A letter from Whitelaw Reid, then editor of the New York 'Tribune,' introduced me to the head of one of the leading publishing houses in Boston. There I was kindly received, and, delivered my manuscript, which was referred to a professional reader, to determine its literary, and also, I presume, its commercial value.

"It would be neither a new nor an interesting story to acquaint the public with the degree of anxious suspense that pervaded my mind when I withdrew to await the reader's judgment. Every other writer has, I assume, at one time or another, undergone much the same experience. It was not long until I learned from the publisher that the reader reported in favor of my production. Publication soon followed, and for the first time, in a literary sense, I found myself before the public, and my book before the critics."

"How long after this did 'Ben Hur' appear, and what led you to write it?"

The Origin of "Ben Hur."

"I began 'Ben Hur' about 1876, and it was published in 1880. The purpose, at first, was a short serial for one of the magazines, descriptive of the visit of the wise men to

Jerusalem as mentioned in the first two verses of the second chapter of Matthew. It will be recognized in 'Book First' of the work as now published. For certain reasons, however, the serial idea was abandoned, and the narrative, instead of ending with the birth of the Savior, expanded into a more pretentious novel and only ended with the death scene on Calvary. The last ten chapters were written in the old adobe palace at Sante Fe, New Mexico, where I was serving as governor. It is difficult to answer the question, 'what led me to write the book?' or why I chose a piece of fiction which used Christ as its leading character. In explanation, it is proper to state that I had reached an age in life when men usually begin to study themselves with reference to their fellowmen, and reflect on the good they may have done in the world. Up to that time, never having read the Bible, I knew nothing about sacred history; and in matters of a religious nature, although I was not in every respect an infidel, I was persistently and notoriously indifferent. I did not know, and, therefore, did not care. I resolved to begin the study of the good book in earnest.

Converted While Writing His Own Book.

"I was in quest of knowledge, but I had no faith to sustain, no creed to bolster up. The result was that the whole field of religious and biblical history opened up before me, and, my vision not being clouded by previously formed opinions, I was enabled to survey it without the aid of lenses. I believe I was thorough and persistent. I know I was conscientious in my search for the truth. I weighed, I analyzed, I counted and compared. The evolution from conjecture into knowledge, through opinion and belief, was gradual but irresistible; and at length I stood firmly

and defiantly on the solid rock. Upward of seven hundred thousand copies of 'Ben Hur' have been published, and it has been translated into all languages from French to Arabic; but, whether it has ever influenced the mind of a single reader or not, I am sure its conception and preparation, if it has done nothing more, has convinced its author of the divinity of the lowly Nazarene who walked and talked with God."

Leo Tolstoy

(Russia:1828-1910)
War and Peace, Fables for Children

"It is a very great secret, and I have written it on a little green stick and buried the stick near the edge of yonder deep valley."

"What does it say on the green stick, Nicholas?"

"'Sh! that is the secret. But when men know it they will not quarrel any more or be angry, and they will be happy."

This was what Nicholas Tolstoi said to his little brother Leo.

Leo was born in 1828 at Bright Glade (Yasnaya Polyana) in the plain of Russia—a place where a river ran, and four lakes glistened, and birch trees grew, and the Tolstoi family lived in a large house and the farm-laborers in huts.

While Leo and his brothers were returning homeward one day from a walk they saw near the barn the fat steward Andrew, followed by a serf named Squinting Kouzma, and the serf had a most dismal face. Andrew said Kouzma was being taken to the barn to be flogged for a fault. Young Leo felt wretched, though no blow fell upon him. He told his Aunt Tatiana of the scene.

"Why," she cried—"why did you not stop him?"

She hated to see one human being strike another. Leo was, indeed, too young to stop the steward; but the idea was lodged in his little mind that cruelty was not only to be looked at and hated, it was to be stopped.

Leo Tolstoi became a soldier in the Russian army, and he fought in the Crimean War.

"Mortar!" called a sentinel on the walls of the fortress of Sevastopol—meaning that a bombshell was flying hither, shot from an English or French mortar.

A man groaned. Stretchers were brought to carry away the wounded sailor whose breast was cut open by the shell. The sailor was borne to the hospital covered with blood and dirt. Tolstoi and the Russians aimed shot and shell at the enemy, and rejoiced when Englishmen and Frenchmen were wounded like the Russian sailor.

Rejoiced. But the tenderness in the child's heart which had sorrowed at the pain suffered by the serf Kouzma was not dead; it lived still. When the war was ended, Tolstoi traveled in many lands—Italy, Germany, Switzerland, France, and for a few weeks visited London. He wrote tales, and thousands of people read them eagerly. He came home to the Bright Glade and carried on a school. A strange school, indeed, where the children sat where they liked, on benches, tables, window-sills, floor, or in the arm-chair, and sometimes romped and rolled over and fought! But they loved their lessons, and would beg the teacher to go on long past the hour for ending a subject; so that Tolstoi says:

"During lessons I have never seen them whispering, pinching, giggling, laughing behind their hands, or complaining of one another to the teacher."

You see, what Tolstoi wished to do was to carry on a school where there should be a love of learning, and no birch, cane, boxing of ears, or punishments. We need not wonder that not many people try to conduct such schools. Perhaps they need the secret of the little green stick.

Tolstoi was married in 1862 to Miss Sophia Behrs. But when children were born to them, and what with the family and the estate, there was plenty to fill up Tolstoi's mind;

his thoughts wandered to a great world of things and thoughts beyond Yasnaya Polyana—the great God, and the Gospel, and Love, and the sorrows of the common people, and the wrong of killing animals for food, and the wickedness of war, and of mistaken plans of ruling men by police and prisons. And lest his mind should be led away by thoughts of rank and wealth, he would dress in a rough sheepskin coat and sheepskin cap and greased high boots, like a peasant; and he would chop wood, draw water, plow fields, make boots, clean boots, so that he might know the hard labor of the poor and the chill and heat of the weather as they, unsheltered, have to feel it. When a friend who had once been a boy in the strange school visited Yasnaya Polyana, about 1885, he heard this story from an old aunt, eighty years old:

"I have nothing, not a stick of my own. But the Count be thanked, and God give him health! He stands up for us forlorn ones; he has brought in my hay, and carted the manure, and plowed the fallow, and done the sowing. God give him health and strength! And see now! He is rebuilding our homestead. He brought the timber himself. The old hut was ready to fall in on us altogether."

And there was Leo Tolstoi, shirt-sleeves turned up, hair tousled, chisel stuck in belt, hand-saw hung at his waist, wielding an ax, and cutting a beam of wood, so as to fit the rafters crosswise for the roof.

Was this, then, the secret of the little green stick—this spirit of love and service toward one's neighbor?

Not that Tolstoi's way was certain to be the best or wisest. A man to whom the Count had given a pair of boots, made by himself, was asked by Mr. Aylmer Maude whether they were well made.

"Could not be worse," was the reply.

But at the same time it was true that the boots were made and given in the spirit of brotherly kindness.

Tolstoi often repeated the Gospel words, "Resist not evil." To him it was wrong to wound or kill an enemy; wrong to drill, to train, to fight as a soldier. One winter's day in 1894 a schoolmaster died in a Russian prison. Some three years before his death he had been called to the ranks under the law of conscription, or military service. As a Christian he said he dared not handle weapons for slaying his fellow-men. He was kept in a prison, in a cell by himself, for a year. Then he was sent to another prison for fifteen months, suffering cold, hunger, and loneliness. The doctors agreed that he was unfit for military service, but he was nevertheless sentenced to a further term of nine years' imprisonment. On the way to the prison he was kept standing for a long time in the street, on a very cold day. His lungs were injured, and he died in three weeks. Tolstoi heard of the death with much grief. In Russia and in other countries young men have often refused to do what is called a citizen's duty or soldier's duty. They were willing to do innocent work that might be a danger to themselves, such as laboring in mines or on railways, but they were unwilling to do injury to other men. For this cause they have borne contempt and hardship. Less than a year before his death Tolstoi—an old man over eighty—wrote to a Japanese and spoke of religion; his faith being that men should live, not for the things of the body, and for property, and for power over other people, but for the spirit, for brotherhood, and love:

"To my great joy I, now, before my death, see every day an increasing number of such people, living not by the body, but by the spirit; who calmly refuse the demands made by those who form the government, to join them in

the ranks of the murderers; and who joyfully accept all the external, bodily tortures inflicted on them for their refusal. There are many such in Russia. Men still quite young who have been kept for years in the strictest imprisonment experience the happiest and most tranquil state of mind—as they recount in their letters, or personally to those who see them. I have the happiness to be in close touch with many of them and to receive letters from them."

Tolstoi died in 1910; and millions of people all over the earth gave a grateful thought to all the good he had taught during his long life.

This noble Russian pointed his finger to the time afar off—the time of peace; and he bade men do what is very hard to do—to give up all armies, all weapons of war, all the bright array of the soldier, all the plans for keeping the world in order by prison and truncheons and violence. We know, indeed, that this great change cannot be brought about as quickly as he wished and hoped. We cannot all of a sudden pull down the old rules and laws and customs. But of one thing we may be quite sure—that it is the duty of all common-sense women and men to hasten as fast as possible toward the newer and better society when war shall be no more, and the secret of the green stick—love and union and harmony—shall be the open law and gospel of the world.

Mary Mapes Dodge

(America: 1831-1905)
Hans Brinker, of the Silver Skates

Mrs. Dodge had already proved herself a clever essayist and capital story-teller for grown-up readers when she published her first book, a collection of short tales for children, under the name of "Irvington Stories." It was a modest little muslin-covered duodecimo, with three or four illustrations by Darley; a book quite out of print now, but dear to the heart of many a young man and woman who were children eighteen years ago. So successful was it as not only to pass through several editions, and receive the warmest encomiums of the press, but to elicit praise from the "North American Review," at that time the "big bow-wow" of our literature, which saw that the stories had just enough of improbability to suit the minds of children, for whom the age of fancy and fable renews itself in every generation. "They are not sermons in words of two syllables," said Rhadamanthus, "they are not prosy, but what is gracious and lovely in childhood is appealed to indirectly, with something of motherly tenderness in the tone. Good books for children are so rare, and books to make little spoonies so common, that this should be praised."

The publisher begged for a second series of "Irvington Stories." Mrs. Dodge, meantime, had begun another story, as a short serial, to run through several numbers of the juvenile department of a weekly religious paper.

Like the rest of the reading world, she had been thrilled and fascinated by the lately-published histories of Motley, the "Rise of the Dutch Republic," and the "History of the United Netherlands." She resolved to make Holland the

scene of a juvenile tale, and give the youngsters so much of the history of that wonderful country as should tell itself, naturally, through the evolution of the story. The subject fascinated her, and grew upon her hands. It passed the limits which the weekly paper set, and developed into a volume. The publisher, disappointed at not receiving a second collection of short stories, was tempted to reject the manuscript offered him. But the author had nothing else ready, he could not afford to forego the prestige of her former success, and so, reluctantly and doubtfully, he issued the most successful juvenile tale of our time, "Hans Brinker; or, The Silver Skates." No tenderer, sweeter, loftier story was ever told. Boys' hearts beat quicker as they read it, with the thrill and stir of action, and old eyes dimmed with tears over the unwritten pathos of the humble lives it recorded. The critics seemed to take it for granted that a new book by the author of "Irvington Stories" would be worthy of its parentage, and praised the story in a matter-of-course way, but with one accord dwelt on the perfection of the local coloring, which, as the work of an artist who had never seen the Low Countries, was a marvellous achievement. On closing the book one did not seem to have been reading about Holland, but to have been living in Holland; nay, to have been born and bred there; and to have grown so familiar with the queer customs of that queer country that neither customs nor country any longer seemed queer.

From the moment of its publication, sixteen years ago, the success of "Hans Brinker" was instant and assured, and today it is one of the books of steady sale. It has had a very large circulation in America; has passed through several editions in England: and has been published in French, at Paris; in German, at Leipsic; in Russian, at St. Petersburg;

and in Italian, at Rome. A version in French under the title of *"Patins d'Argent"* was awarded one of the Monthyou prizes, of fifteen hundred francs, by the French Academy. But the crowning tribute to its excellence is its perennial sale in Holland in a Dutch edition, which, when Mrs. Dodge was in Amsterdam a few years ago, was recommended to one of her party by a zealous bookseller, as the most attractive juvenile in his collection.

This success, of course, was no lucky hit, but the merited reward of the hardest work. Mrs. Dodge ransacked libraries, public and private, for books upon Holland; made every traveller whom she knew tell her his tale of that unique country; wrote to Dutch acquaintances in Amsterdam and Haarlem; and submitted every chapter to the test of the criticism of two accomplished Hollanders living near her. It was the genius of patience and toil, the conscientious touching and retouching of the true artist, which wrought the seemingly spontaneous and simple task.

Lewis Carroll

(England: 1832-1898)

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, Through the Looking-Glass

The Rev. Charles Lutwidge Dodgson died when he was sixty-six years old, and when his famous book, "Alice in Wonderland," had been published for thirty-three years. He was born at Daresbury, in Cheshire, and his father was the Rev. Charles Dodgson. The first years of his life were spent at Daresbury, but afterwards the family went to live at a place called Croft, in Yorkshire. He went first to a private school in Yorkshire and then to Rugby, where he spent years that he always remembered as very happy ones. In 1850 he went to Christ Church, Oxford, and from that time till the year of his death he was inseparably connected with "The House," as Christ Church college is generally called, from its Latin name "Ædes Christi," which means, literally translated, the House of Christ.

There he won great distinction as a scholar of mathematics, and wrote many abstruse and learned books, very different from "Alice in Wonderland." There is a tale that when the Queen had read "Alice in Wonderland" she was so pleased that she asked for more books by the same author. Lewis Carroll was written to, and back, with the name of Charles Dodgson on the title-page, came a number of the very dryest books about Algebra and Euclid that you can imagine.

Still, even in mathematics his whimsical fancy was sometimes suffered to peep out, and little girls who learnt the rudiments of calculation at his knee found the path they had imagined so thorny set about with roses by reason of the delightful fun with which he would turn a task into a joy. But when the fun was over the little girl would find

that she had learnt the lesson (all unknowingly) just the same. Happy little girls who had such a master. The old rhyme—

"Multiplication is vexation,
Division is as bad,
The rule of three doth puzzle me,
And Practice drives me mad,"

would never need to have been written had all arithmetic lessons been like the arithmetic lessons given by Charles Dodgson to his little friends.

As a lecturer to his grown-up pupils he was also surprisingly lucid, and under his deft treatment the knottiest of problems were quickly smoothed out and made easy for his hearers to comprehend. "I always hated mathematics at school," an ex-pupil of his told me a little while ago, "but when I went up to Oxford I learnt from Mr. Dodgson to look upon my mathematics as the most delightful of all my studies. His lectures were never dry."

For twenty-six years he lectured at Oxford, finally giving up his post in 1881. From that time to the time of his death he remained in his college, taking no actual part in the tuition, but still enjoying the Fellowship that he had won in 1861.

The personal characteristic that you would notice most on meeting Lewis Carroll was his extreme shyness. With children, of course, he was not nearly so reserved, but in the society of people of maturer age he was almost old-maidishly prim in his manner. When he knew a child well this reserve would vanish completely, but it needed only a slightly disconcerting incident to bring the cloak of shyness about him once more, and close the lips that just before had been talking so delightfully.

I shall never forget one afternoon when we had been walking in Christ Church meadows. On one side of the great open space the little river Cherwell runs through groves of trees towards the Isis, where the college boat-races are rowed. We were going quietly along by the side of the "Cher," when he began to explain to me that the tiny stream was a tributary, "a baby river" he put it, of the big Thames. He talked for some minutes, explaining how rivers came down from hills and flowed eventually to the sea, when he suddenly met a brother Don at a turning in the avenue.

He was holding my hand and giving me my lesson in geography with great earnestness when the other man came round the corner.

He greeted him in answer to his salutation, but the incident disturbed his train of thought, and for the rest of the walk he became very difficult to understand, and talked in a nervous and preoccupied manner. One strange way in which his nervousness affected him was peculiarly characteristic. When, owing to the stupendous success of "Alice in Wonderland" and "Alice Through the Looking-Glass," he became a celebrity many people were anxious to see him, and in some way or other to find out what manner of man he was. This seemed to him horrible, and he invented a mild deception for use when some autograph-hunter or curious person sent him a request for his signature on a photograph, or asked him some silly question as to the writing of one of his books, how long it took to write, and how many copies had been sold. Through some third person he always represented that Lewis Carroll the author and Mr. Dodgson the professor were two distinct persons, and that the author could not be heard of at Oxford at all. On one occasion an American

actually wrote to say that he had heard that Lewis Carroll had laid out a garden to represent some of the scenes in "Alice in Wonderland," and that he (the American) was coming right away to take photographs of it. Poor Lewis Carroll, he was in terror of Americans for a week!

The tale has been often told of how "Alice in Wonderland" came to be written, but it is a tale so well worth the telling again, that, very shortly, I will give it to you here.

Years ago in the great quadrangle of Christ Church, opposite to Mr. Dodgson, lived the little daughters of Dean Liddell, the great Greek scholar and Dean of Christ Church. The little girls were great friends of Mr. Dodgson's, and they used often to come to him and to plead with him for a fairy tale. There was never such a teller of tales, they thought! One can imagine the whole delightful scene with little trouble. That big cool room on some summer's afternoon, when the air was heavy with flower scents, and the sounds that came floating in through the open window were all mellowed by the distance. One can see him, that good and kindly gentleman, his mobile face all aglow with interest and love, telling the immortal story.

Round him on his knee sat the little sisters, their eyes wide open and their lips parted in breathless anticipation. When Alice (how the little Alice Liddell who was listening must have loved the tale!) rubbed the mushroom and became so big that she quite filled the little fairy house, one can almost hear the rapturous exclamations of the little ones as they heard of it.

The story, often continued on many summer afternoons, sometimes in the cool Christ Church rooms, sometimes in a slow gliding boat in a still river between

banks of rushes and strange bronze and yellow water flowers, or sometimes in a great hay-field, with the insects whispering in the grass all round, grew in its conception and idea.

Other folk, older folk, came to hear of it from the little ones, and Mr. Dodgson was begged to write it down. Accordingly the first MS. was prepared with great care and illustrated by the author. Then, in 1865, memorable year for English children, "Alice" appeared in its present form, with Sir John Tenniel's drawings.

In 1872 "Alice Through the Looking-Glass," appeared, and was received as warmly as its predecessor. That fact, I think, proves most conclusively that Lewis Carroll's success was a success of absolute merit, and due to no mere mood or fashion of the public taste. I can conceive nothing more difficult for a man who has had a great success with one book than to write a sequel which should worthily succeed it. In the present case that is exactly what Lewis Carroll did. "Through the Looking Glass" is every whit as popular and charming as the older book. Indeed one depends very much upon the other, and in every child's book-shelves one sees the two masterpieces side by side.

Lewis Carroll

We generally speak of Oxford-on-the-Thames. Indeed, if we were to journey by water from London to Oxford, we would certainly go by way of the Thames, and a pleasant journey that would be, too, gliding between well-wooded, fertile shores with charming landscape towns on either side and bits of history peeping out in unexpected places. But into the heart of Oxford itself the Thames sends forth its tributaries in opposite directions; the Isis on one side, the Cherwell on the other. The Cherwell is what is called a "canoe river," the Isis is the race course of Oxford, where all the "eights" (every racing crew consists of eight men) come to practice for the great day and the great race, which takes place sometimes at Henley, sometimes at Oxford itself, when the Isis is gay with bunting and flags.

On one side of Christ Church Meadow is a long line of barges which have been made stationary and which are used as boathouses by the various college clubs; these are situated just below what is known as Folly Bridge, a name familiar to all Oxford men, and the goal of many pleasant trips. The original bridge was destroyed in 1779, but tradition tells us that the first bridge was capped by a tower which was the study or observatory of Roger Bacon, the Franciscan Friar who invented the telescope, gunpowder, and many other things unknown to the people of his time. It was even hinted that he had cunningly built this tower that it might fall instantly on anyone passing beneath it who proved to be more learned than himself. One could see it from Christ Church Meadow, and doubtless Lewis Carroll pointed it out to his small companions, as they

strolled across to the water's edge, where perhaps a boat rocked lazily at its moorings.

It was the work of a moment to steady it so that the eager youngsters could scramble in, then he stepped in himself, pushing off with his oar, and a few long, steady strokes brought them in mid-stream. This was an ordinary afternoon occurrence, and the children alone knew the delights of being the chosen companions of Lewis Carroll. He would let them row, while he would lounge among the cushions and "spin yarns" that brought peals of merry laughter that rippled over the surface of the water. He knew by heart every story and tradition of Oxford, from the time the Romans reduced it from a city of some importance to a mere "ford for oxen to pass over," which, indeed, was the origin of its name, long before the Christian era.

He had a story or a legend about every place they passed, but most of all they loved the stories he "made up" as he went along. He had a low, well-pitched voice, with the delightful trick of dropping it in moments of profound interest, sometimes stopping altogether and closing his eyes in pretended sleep, when his listeners were truly thrilled. This, of course, produced a stampede, which he enjoyed immensely, and sometimes he would "wake up," take the oars himself, and pull for some green shady nook that loomed invitingly in the distance; here they would land and under the friendly trees they would have their tea, perhaps, and then they *might* induce him to finish the story if they were *ever* so good.

It was on just such an occasion that he chanced to find the golden key to Wonderland. The time was midsummer, the place on the way up the river toward Godstow Bridge; the company consisted of three winsome little girls,

Lorina, Alice, and Edith Liddell, or *Prima, Secunda,* and *Tertia,* as he called them by number in Latin. He tells of this himself in the following dainty poem—the introduction to "Alice in Wonderland":

All in the golden afternoon
Full leisurely we glide;
For both our oars, with little skill,
By little arms are plied,
While little hands make vain pretence
Our wanderings to guide.

Ah, cruel Three! In such an hour,
Beneath such dreamy weather,
To beg a tale, of breath too weak
To stir the tiniest feather!
Yet what can one poor voice avail
Against three tongues together?

Imperious Prima flashes forth
Her edict "to begin it"—
In gentler tone Secunda hopes
"There will be nonsense in it"—
While Tertia interrupts the tale,
Not more than once a minute.

Anon, to sudden silence won,
In fancy they pursue
The dream-child moving through a land
Of wonders wild and new,
In friendly chat with bird or beast—
And half believe it true.

And ever as the story drained
The wells of fancy dry,
And faintly strove that weary one
To put the subject by,
"The rest next time"—"It is next time!"
The happy voices cry.

Thus grew the tale of Wonderland:
Thus slowly one by one,
Its quaint events were hammered out—
And now the tale is done,
And home we steer, a merry crew,
Beneath the setting sun.

Alice! a childish story take,
And with a gentle hand
Lay it where Childhood's dreams are twined
In Memory's mystic band,
Like pilgrims' withered wreath of flowers
Plucked in a far-off land.

It was a very hot day, the fourth of July, 1862, that this special little picnic party set out for its trip up the river. Godstow Bridge was a quaint old-fashioned structure of three arches. In the very middle it was broken by a tiny wooded island, and guarding the east end was a picturesque inn called *The Trout*. Through the middle arch they could catch a distant glimpse of Oxford, with Christ Church spire quite plainly to be seen. They had often gone as far as the bridge and had their tea in the ruins of the old nunnery near by, a spot known to history as the burial-place of Fair Rosamond, that beautiful lady who was supposed to have been poisoned by Queen Eleanor, the

jealous wife of Henry II. But this day the sun streamed down on the little party so pitilessly that they landed in a cool, green meadow and took refuge under a hayrick. Lewis Carroll stretched himself out at full length in the protecting shade, while the expectant little girls grouped themselves about him.

"Now begin it," demanded Lorina, who was called *Prima* in the poem. *Secunda* [Alice] probably knew the story-teller pretty well when she asked for nonsense, while tiny *Tertia*, the youngest, simply clamored for "more, more, more," as the speaker's breath gave out.

Now, as Lewis Carroll lay there, a thousand odd fancies elbowing one another in his active brain, his hands groping in the soft moist earth about him, his fingers suddenly closed over that magic Golden Key. It was a queer invisible key, just the kind that fairies use, and neither Lorina, Alice, nor Edith would have been able to find it if they had hunted ever so long. He must have found it on the water and brought it ashore quite by accident, for there was the gleam of sunlight still upon it, and it was very shady under the hayrick. Perhaps there was a door somewhere that the key might fit; but no, there was only the hayrick towering above him, and only the brown earth stretching all about him. Perhaps a white rabbit *did* whisk by, perhaps the real Alice *really* fell asleep, at any rate when *Prima* said "Begin it," that is how he started. The Golden Key opened the brown earth—in popped the white rabbit—down dropped the sleeping Alice—down—down—down and while she was falling, clutching at things on the way, Lewis Carroll turned, with one of his rare sweet smiles, to the eager trio and began the story of "Alice's Adventures Underground."

The whole of that long afternoon he held the children spellbound. He did not finish the story during that one sitting. Summer has many long days, and the quiet, prudent young "don" was not reckless enough to scatter *all* his treasures at once; and, besides, all the queer things that happened to Alice would have lost half their interest in the shadow of a hayrick, and how could one conjure up *Mock Turtles* and *Lorys* and *Gryphons* on the dry land? Lewis Carroll's own recollection of the beginning of "Alice" is certainly dated from that "golden afternoon" in the boat, and any idea of publishing the web of nonsense he was weaving never crossed his mind. Indeed, if he could have imagined that his small audience of three would grow to be as many millions in the years to come, the book would have lost half its charm, and the real child that lay hidden under the cap and gown of this grave young Student of thirty might never have been known to the world.

Into his mind, with all the freshness of unbidden thought, popped this story of *Alice* and her strange adventures, and while he chose the name of Alice in seeming carelessness, there is no doubt that the little maid who originally owned the name had many points in common with the Rev. Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, never suspected save by the two most concerned.

To begin with, the real Alice had an Imagination; any child who demands nonsense in a story has an Imagination. Nothing was too impossible or absurd to put into a story, for one could always "make believe" it was something else you see, and a constant "make believe" made everything seem quite real. Dearly as he loved this posy of small girls, Lewis Carroll could not help being just the *least* bit partial to Alice, because, as he himself might

have quaintly expressed it, she understood everything he said, even before he said it.

She was a dear little round, chubby child, a great camera favorite and consequently a frequent visitor to his rooms, for he took her picture on all occasions. One, as a beggar child, has become quite famous. She is pictured standing, with her ragged dress slipping from her shoulders and her right hand held as if begging for pennies; the other hand rests upon her hip, and her head is bent in a meek fashion; but the mouth has a roguish curve, and there is just the shadow of a laugh in the dark eyes, for of course it's only "make believe," and no one knows it better than Alice herself. Lewis Carroll liked the little bit of acting she did in this trifling part. A child's acting always appealed to him, and many of his youngest and best friends were regularly on the stage.

He took another picture of the children perched upon a sofa; Lorina in the center, a little sister nestling close to her on either side, making a pretty pyramid of the three dark heads. Yet in studying the faces one can understand why it was Alice who inspired him. Lorina's eyes are looking straight ahead, but the lids are dropped with a little conscious air, as if the business of having one's picture taken was a very serious matter, to say nothing of the responsibility of keeping two small sisters in order. Edith is staring the camera out of countenance, uncertain whether to laugh or to frown, a pretty child with curls drooping over her face; but Alice, with the elf-locks and the straight heavy "bang," is looking far away with those wonderful eyes of hers; perhaps she was even then thinking of Wonderland, perhaps even then a light flashed from her to Lewis Carroll in the shape of a promise to take her there some day. At any rate, if it hadn't been for Alice

there would have been no Wonderland, and without Wonderland, childhood is but a tale half-told, and even to this day, nearly fifty years since that "golden afternoon," every little girl bearing the name of Alice who has read the book and has anything of an imagination, firmly believes that *she* is the sole and only Alice who could venture into Lewis Carroll's Wonderland.

After he had told the story and the original Alice had expressed her approval, he promised to write it out for her to keep. Of course this took time, because, in the first place, his writing was not quite plain enough for a child to read easily, so every letter was carefully printed. Then the illustrations were troublesome, and he drew as many as he could, consulting a book on natural history for the correct forms of the queer animals *Alice* found. *The Mock Turtle* was his own invention, for there never *was* such an animal on land or sea.

This book was handed over to the small Alice, who little dreamed at that time of the treasure she was to have in her keeping. Over twenty years later, when Alice had become Mrs. Reginald Hargreaves, the great popularity of "Alice in Wonderland" tempted the publishers to bring out a reproduction of the original manuscript. This could not be done without borrowing the precious volume from the original Alice, who was willing to trust it in the hands of her old friend, knowing how over-careful he would be, and, as he resolved that he would not allow any workman to touch it, he had some funny experiences.

To reproduce a book it must first be photographed, and of course Lewis Carroll consulted an expert. He offered to bring the book to London, to go daily to his studio and hold it in position to be photographed, turning over the pages one by one, but the photographer wished to do all that

himself. Finally, a man was found who was willing to come to Oxford and do the work in Lewis Carroll's own way, while he stood near by turning over the pages himself rather than let him touch them.

The photographer succeeded in getting a fine set of negatives, and in October, 1880, Lewis Carroll sent the book in safe custody back to its owner, thinking his troubles were over. The next step was to have plates made from the pictures, and these plates in turn could pass into print. The photographer was prompt at first in delivering the plates as they were made, but, finally, like the *Baker* in "The Hunting of the Snark," he "softly and suddenly vanished away," holding still twenty-two of the fine blocks on which the plates were made, leaving the book so far—incomplete.

There ensued a lively search for the missing photographer. This lasted for months, thereby delaying the publication of the book, which was due Christmas. Then, as suddenly as he had disappeared, he reappeared like a ghost at the publishers, left eight of the twenty-two zinc blocks, and again vanished. Finally, when a year had passed and poor Lewis Carroll, at his wits' end, had resolved to borrow the book again in order to photograph the remaining fourteen pages, the man was frightened by threats of arrest, and delivered up the fourteen negatives which he had not yet transferred to the blocks.

The distracted author was glad to find them, even though he had to pay a second time for getting the blocks done properly. However, the book was finished in time for the Christmas sale of 1886, just twenty-one years after "Alice" made her first bow, and the best thing about it was that all the profits were given to the Children's Hospitals and Convalescent Homes for Sick Children. It was

thoroughly illustrated with thirty-seven of the author's own drawings, and the grown-up "Alice" received a beautiful special copy bound in white vellum; but pretty as it was, it could not take the place of that other volume carefully written out for the sole pleasure of one little girl. Nothing was too much trouble if it succeeded in giving pleasure to any little girl whom Lewis Carroll knew and loved; even those he did not really know, and consequently could not love, he sought to please, just because they were "little girls."

Alice was among the chosen few who retained his friendship through the years. She was his first favorite, and she was indirectly the source of his good luck, and we may be sure there was a certain winsomeness about her long after the elf-locks were gathered into decorous coils of dark hair.

True, the formal old bachelor came forward in their later association, and the numerous letters he wrote her always began "My dear Mrs. Hargreaves," but his fondness for her outlived many other passing affections.

To go back to the little Alice and the fair smiling river, and that wizard Lewis Carroll, who told the wonder tales so long ago. Once the children had a taste of "Alice," she grew to be a great favorite; sometimes a chapter was told on the river, sometimes in his study, often in the garden or after tea in Christ Church Meadows—in fact, wherever they caught a glimpse of the grave young man in cap and gown, the trio of small Liddells fell upon him, and in this fashion, as he tells us himself, "the quaint events were hammered out."

When he presented the promised copy it might have passed forever from his mind, which was full of the higher mathematics he was teaching to the young men of Christ

Church, but he chanced one day to show the manuscript to George Macdonald, the well-known writer, who was so charmed with it that he advised his friend to send it to a publisher. He accordingly carried it to London, and Macmillan & Co. took it at once. This was a great surprise. He never dreamed of his nonsense being considered seriously, and growing suddenly about as young as a great, big, bashful boy, he refused to allow his own rough illustrations to appear in print, so he hunted over the long list of his artist friends, for the genius who could best illustrate the adventures of his dream-child. At last his friend, Tom Taylor, a well-known dramatist, suggested Mr. Tenniel, the clever cartoonist for *Punch*, who was quite willing to undertake this rather odd bit of work, and on July 4, 1865, exactly three years since that memorable afternoon, Alice Liddell received the first printed copy of "Alice in Wonderland," the name the author finally selected for his book.

His first idea, as we know, was "Alice's Adventures Underground," the second was " Alice's Hour in Elfland," but the last seemed best of all, for Wonderland might mean any place where wonderful things could happen. And this was Lewis Carroll's idea; anywhere the dream "Alice" chose to go would be Wonderland, and none knew better than he did how eagerly the child-mind paints its own fairy nooks and corners.

He was not at all excited about his first big venture; no doubt Alice herself took much more interest. To feel that you are about to be put into print is certainly a great experience, almost as great as being photographed; and, knowing how conscientious Lewis Carroll was about little things, we may be quite sure that her suggestions crept into many of the pictures, while it is equally certain that the few

additions he made to the original "Alice" were carefully considered and firmly insisted upon by this critical young person.

The first edition of two thousand copies was a great disappointment; the pictures were badly printed, and all who had bought them were asked to send them back with their names and addresses, as a new edition would be printed immediately and they would then receive perfect copies. The old copies Lewis Carroll gave away to various homes and hospitals, while the new edition, upon which he feared a great loss, sold so rapidly that he was astonished, and still more so when edition after edition was demanded by the public, and far from being a failure, "Alice in Wonderland" brought her author both fame and money.

From that time forward, fortune smiled upon him; there were no strenuous efforts to increase his income. "Alice" yielded him an abundance each year, and he was beset by none of the cares and perplexities which are the dragons most writers encounter with their literary swords. He welcomed the fortune, not so much for the good it brought to him alone, but for the power it gave him to help others. His countless charities are not recorded because they were swallowed up in the "little things" he did, not in the great benefits which are trumpeted over the world. His own life, so simple, so full of purpose, flowed on as usual; he was not one to change his habits with the turn of Fortune's wheel, no matter what it brought him.

Of course, everyone knew that a certain Lewis Carroll had written a clever, charming book of nonsense, called "Alice in Wonderland"; that he was an Oxford man, very much of a scholar, and little known outside of the University. What people did *not* know was that this same

Lewis Carroll had for a double a certain "grave and reverend" young "don," named Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, who, while "Alice" was making the whole world laugh, retired to his sanctum and wrote in rapid succession the following learned pamphlets: "The Condensation of Determinants," "An Elementary Treatise on Determinants," "The Fifth Book of Euclid, treated Algebraically," "The Algebraic Formulæ for Responsions."

Now, whatever these may be, they certainly did not interest children in the least, and Charles Lutwidge Dodgson did not care in the least, so long as he could smooth the thorny path of mathematics for his struggling undergraduates. But Lewis Carroll was quite a different matter. So long as the children were pleased, little he cared for algebra or geometry.

A funny tale is told about Queen Victoria. It seems that Lewis Carroll sent the second presentation copy of "Alice in Wonderland" to Princess Beatrice, the Queen's youngest daughter. Her mother was so pleased with the book that she asked to have the author's other works sent to her, and we can imagine her surprise when she received a large package of learned treatises by the mathematical lecturer of Christ Church College.

Who can tell through what curious byways the thought of the dream-child came dancing across the flagstones of the great "Tom Quad." Yet across those same flagstones danced the little Liddells when they thought there was any possibility of a romp or a story; for Lewis Carroll lived in the northwest angle, while the girls lived in the beautiful deanery in the northeast angle, and it was only a "puss-in-the-corner" game to get from one place to the other.

"Alice" was written on the ground floor of this northwest angle, and it was in this sunny room that Lewis Carroll and the real Alice held many a consultation about the new book.

All true fame is to a certain extent due to accident; an act of heroism is generally performed on the spur of the moment; a great poem is an inspiration; a great invention, though preceded possibly by years of study, is born of a single moment's inspiration; so "Alice" came to Lewis Carroll on the wings of inspiration. His study of girls and their varying moods has left its impress on a world of little girls, and there is scarcely a home to-day, in England or America, where there is not a special niche reserved for "Alice in Wonderland," while this interesting young lady has been served up in French, German, Italian, and Dutch, and the famous poem of *Father William* has even been translated into Arabic. Whether the Chinese or the Japanese have discovered this funny little dream-child we cannot tell, but perhaps in time she may journey there and amuse the little maids with the jet-black hair, the creamy skin, and the slanting eyes. Perhaps she may even stir them to laughter.

Surely all must agree that the *Gryphon* himself bears a strong resemblance to the Chinese dragons, and it *might be*, such are the wonders of Wonderland, that the *Mock Turtle* can be found in Japan. Who knows! At any rate the little English Alice never thought of the consequences of that "golden afternoon"; it was good to be in the boat, to pull through the rippling waters and stir a faint breeze as the oars

"with little skill—
By little arms are plied";

then to gather under the friendly shade of the hayrick and listen to the wonder tale "with lots of nonsense in it."

Dear little Alice of Long Ago! To you we owe a debt of gratitude. All the little Alices of the past and all the little Alices of the future will have their Wonderland because, while floating up and down the river with the real Alice, Lewis Carroll found the Golden Key.

"I do not believe God means us to divide life into two halves to wear a grave face on Sunday, and to think it out of place even so much as to mention Him on a week-day...Surely the children's innocent laughter is as sweet in His ears as the grandest anthem that ever rolled up from 'the dim religious light' of some solemn cathedral; and if I have written anything to add to those stores of innocent and healthy amusement that are laid up in books for the children I love so well, it is surely something I may hope to look back upon without shame or sorrow...when my turn comes to walk through the valley of shadows."

Louisa M. Alcott

(America: 1832-1888)
Little Women, Little Men, Jo's Boys

In a pleasant, shady garden in Concord, Massachusetts, under a gnarled old apple-tree, sat a very studious looking little person, bending over a sheet of paper on which she was writing. She had made a seat out of a tree stump, and a table by laying a board across two carpenter's horses, whose owner was working in the house, and no scholar writing a treatise on some deep subject could have been more absorbed in his work than was the little girl in the garden.

For a whole long hour she wrote, frequently stopping to look off into the distance and bite the end of her pencil with a very learned look, then she would bend over her paper again and write hard and fast. Finally, she laid down her pencil with an air of triumph, jumped up from the stump and rushed toward the house.

"Mother! Anna! I've written a poem about the robin we found this morning in the garden!" Dashing into the library she waved the paper in the air with a still more excited cry: "Listen!" and dropped on the floor to read her poem to a much thrilled audience of two. With great dramatic effect she read her lines, glancing up from time to time to see that she was producing the proper effect. This is what she read:

TO THE FIRST ROBIN

Welcome, welcome, little stranger,
Fear no harm and fear no danger,
We are glad to see you here,
For you sing "Sweet Spring is near."
Now the white snow melts away,

Now the flowers blossom gay,
Come, dear bird, and build your nest,
For we love our robin best.

She finished with an upward tilt of her voice, while her mother excitedly flourished the stocking she was darning over her head, crying: "Good! Splendid!" and quiet Anna echoed the words, looking with awe at her small sister, as she added, "It's just like Shakespeare!"

The proud mother did not say much more in praise of the budding poetesses's effort, for fear of making her conceited; but that night, after the verses had been read to a delighted father, and the young author had gone happily off to bed, the mother said:

"I do believe she is going to be a genius, Bronson!"

Yet, despite the prediction, even an appreciative parent would have been more than surprised had she been able to look into the future and had seen her daughter as one of the most famous writer of books for young people of her generation. The little girl who sat under the apple-tree on that day in early spring and wrote the verses was no other than Louisa May Alcott, and her tribute to the robin was to be treasured in after years as the first evidence of its writer's talent.

Louisa, the second daughter of Amos Bronson and Abba May Alcott, was born in Germantown, Pa., on the 29th of November, 1832, and was fortunate in being the child of parents who not only understood the intense, restless and emotional nature of this daughter, but were deeply interested in developing it in such a way that her marked traits would be valuable to her in later life. To this unfailing sympathy of both father and mother the turbulent nature owed much of its rich achievement, and Louisa Alcott's home surroundings and influences had as much to

do with her success as a writer as had her talent, great as that was.

At the time of her birth her father was teaching school in Germantown, but he was a man whose ideas were original and far in advance of his time, and his way of teaching was not liked by the parents of his pupils, so when Louisa was two years old and her older sister, Anna, four, the family went to Boston, where Mr. Alcott opened his famous school in Masonic Temple, and enjoyed teaching by his own new methods, and when he was happy his devoted wife was equally contented.

Louisa was too young to go to school then, except as a visitor, but her father developed her young mind at home according to his own theories of education, and during the remainder of the all-too short days the active child was free to amuse herself as she chose. To play on the Common was her great delight, for she was a born investigator, and there she met children of all classes, who appealed to her many-sided nature in different ways. Louisa was never a respecter of class distinctions—it did not matter to her where people lived, or whether their hands and faces were dirty, if some personal characteristic attracted her to them, and from those early days she was unconsciously studying human nature, and making ready for the work of later years.

In her own sketch of those early days, she says:

"Running away was one of my great delights, and I still enjoy sudden flights out of the nest to look about this very interesting world and then go back to report!"

On one of her investigating tours, she met some Irish children whose friendliness delighted her, and she spent a wonderful day with them, sharing their dinner of cold potatoes, salt fish and bread crusts. Then—delightful

pastime—they all played in the ash-heaps for some time, and took a trip to the Common together. But when twilight came, her new friends deserted her, leaving her a long way from home, and little Louisa began to think very longingly of her mother and sister. But as she did not know how to find her way back she sat down on a doorstep, where a big dog was lying. He was so friendly that she cuddled up against his broad back and fell asleep. How long she slept she did not know, but she was awakened by the loud ringing of a bell, and a man s deep voice calling:

"Little girl lost! Six years old—in a pink frock, white hat and new green shoes. Little girl lost! Little girl lost!"

It was the town crier, and as he rang his bell and gave his loud cry, out of the darkness he heard a small voice exclaim:

"Why, dat's *me*!"

With great difficulty the crier was able to pursuade the child to unclasp her arms from the neck of the big friendly dog, but at last she left him, and was taken to the crier's home and "feasted sumptuously on bread and molasses in a tin plate with the alphabet round it," while her frantic family was being notified. The unhappy ending to that incident is very tersely told by Louisa, who says: "My fun ended the next day, when I was tied to the arm of the sofa to repent at leisure!"

That the six years spent in Boston were happy ones, and that the budding spirit of Louisa was filled with joy at merely being alive, was shown one morning, when, at the breakfast table, she suddenly looked up with an all-embrasive smile and exclaimed:

"I love everybody in *dis* whole world!"

Despite the merriment which was always a feature of the Alcott home, as they were all blessed with a sense of

humor which helped them over many a hard place, there was an underlying anxiety for Mr. and Mrs. Alcott, as the school was gradually growing smaller and there was barely enough income to support their family, to which a third daughter, Elizabeth, the "Beth" of *Little Women*, had been added recently. During those days they lived on very simple fare, which the children disliked, as their rice had to be eaten without sugar and their mush without butter or molasses. Nor did Mr. Alcott allow meat on his table, as he thought it wrong to eat any creature which had to be killed for the purpose. An old family friend who lived at a Boston hotel sympathized strongly with the children's longing for sweets, and every day at dinner she saved them a piece of pie or cake, which Louisa would call for, carrying a bandbox for the purpose. The friend was in Europe for years, and when she returned Louisa Alcott had become famous. Meeting her on the street one day, Louisa greeted her old friend, eagerly:

"Why, I did not think you would remember me!" said the old lady.

"Do you suppose I shall ever forget that bandbox!" was the quick reply.

As time went on, Mr. Alcott s school dwindled until he had only five scholars, and three of them were his own children. Something new had to be tried, and quickly, so the family moved out of the city, into a small house at Concord, Mass., which had an orchard and a garden, and, best of all, the children had a big barn, where they gave all sorts of entertainments; mostly plays, as they were born actors. Their mother, or "Marmee," as the girls called her, loved the fun as well as they did, and would lay aside her work at any moment to make impossible costumes for fairies, gnomes, kings or peasants, who were to take the

principal parts in some stirring melodrama written by the girls themselves, or some adaptation of an old fairy tale. They acted Jack the Giant-killer in fine style, and the giant came tumbling headlong from a loft when Jack cut down the squash-vine running up a ladder and supposed to represent the immortal beanstalk. At other performances Cinderella rolled away in an impressive pumpkin, and one of their star plays was a dramatic version of the story of the woman who wasted her three wishes, in which a long black pudding was lowered by invisible hands and slowly fastened onto her nose.

But though the big barn often echoed with the sound of merry voices, at other times the girls dressed up as pilgrims, and journeyed over the hill with scrip and staff, and cockle shells in their hats; fairies held their revels among the whispering birches, and strawberry parties took place in the rustic arbor of the garden.

And there we find eight-year-old Louisa writing her verses to the robin, with genius early beginning to burn in the small head which later proved to be so full of wonderful material for the delight of young people.

"Those Concord days were the happiest of my life," says Miss Alcott. "We had charming playmates in the little Emersons, Channings, Goodwins and Hawthornes, with the illustrious parents and their friends to enjoy our pranks and share our excursions...My wise mother, anxious to give me a strong body to support a lively brain, turned me loose in the country and let me run wild, learning of Nature what no books can teach, and being led—as those who truly love her seldom fail to be—'through Nature up to Nature's God.'"

The Alcott children were encouraged to keep diaries in which they wrote down their thoughts and feelings and

fancies, and even at that early age Louisa's journal was a record of deep feelings and of a child's sacred emotions. In one of her solemn moods, she makes this entry:

"I had an early run in the woods before the dew was off the grass. The moss was like velvet, and as I ran under the arch of yellow and red leaves I sang for joy, my heart was so bright and the world so beautiful. I stopped at the end of the walk and saw the sunshine out over the wide 'Virginia meadows.'

"It seemed like going through a dark life or grave into heaven beyond. A very strange and solemn feeling came over me as I stood there, with no sound but the rustle of the pines, no one near me, and the sun so glorious, as for me alone. It seemed as if I *felt* God as I never did before, and I prayed in my heart that I might keep that happy sense of nearness all my life."

To that entry there is a note added, years later: "*I have*, for I most sincerely think that the little girl 'got religion' that day in the wood, when dear Mother Nature led her to God."—L.M.A. 1885.

That deep religious note in Louisa Alcott's nature is very marked and is evident in all of her work, but, on the other hand, she had a sparkling wit and such a keen sense of humor that in her blackest moods she could always see something funny to amuse her, and frequently laughed at her own expense.

That her conscience was as active as her mind and her body is shown by one of her "private plays," which she makes Demi describe in *Little Men*. He says:

"I play that my mind is a round room, and my soul is a little sort of creature with wings that lives in it. The walls are full of shelves and drawers, and in them I keep my thoughts, and my goodness and badness and all sorts of

things. The goods I keep where I can see them, and the bads I lock up tight, but they get out, and I have to keep putting them in and squeezing them down, they are so strong. The thoughts I play with when I am alone or in bed, and I make up and do what I like with them. Every Sunday I put my room in order, and talk with the little spirit that lives there, and tell him what to do. He is very bad some times and won't mind me, and I have to scold him."

Truly a strange game for a child to play, but the Alcotts were brought up to a reverent knowledge of their souls as well as their bodies, and many a sober talk at twilight did mother or father have with the daughters to whom the experience of the older generation was helpful and inspiring. A very happy family they were, despite frequent lack of luxuries and even necessities, but loyalty and generosity as their marked characteristics. No matter how little money or food an Alcott had, it was always shared with any one who had less, and the largest share was usually given away.

On Louisa's fourth birthday, she tells of a feast given in her honor in her father's school-room in Masonic Temple. All the children were there, and Louisa wore a crown of flowers and stood upon a table to give a cake to each child as they all marched around the table. "By some oversight," says Louisa, "the cakes fell short, and I saw that if I gave away the last one, *I* should have none. As I was queen of the revel, I felt that I ought to have it, and held on to it tightly, until my mother said: 'It is always better to give away than to keep the nice things; so I know my Louy will not let the little friend go without.'" She adds: "The little friend received the dear plummy cake, and I...my first lesson in the sweetness of self-denial—a

lesson which my dear mother illustrated all her long and noble life."

At another time a starving family was discovered, when the Alcotts, forming in a procession, carried their own breakfast to the hungry ones. On one occasion, when a friend had unexpected guests arrive for dinner, too late to secure any extra provisions, the Alcotts with great glee lent their dinner to the thankful hostess, and thought it a good joke. Again, on a snowy Saturday night, when their wood-pile was extra low, and there was no way of getting any more that week, a poor child came to beg a little, as their baby was sick and the father on a spree with all his wages. At first Mrs. Alcott hesitated, as it was bitterly cold and Abba May, the little baby sister, was very young, but Mr. Alcott decided the matter with his usual kindly optimism.

"Give half our stock and trust in Providence; the weather will moderate or wood will come," he declared. And the wood was lent, Mrs. Alcott cheerily agreeing: "Well, their need is greater than ours. If our half gives out we can go to bed and tell stories!"

A little later in the evening, while it was still snowing heavily, and the Alcotts were about to cover their fire to keep it, a farmer who was in the habit of supplying them with wood knocked at the door and asked anxiously:

"Wouldn't you like me to drop my load of wood here? It would accommodate me, and you need not hurry to pay for it. I started for Boston with it but the snow is drifting so fast, I want to go home."

"Yes," answered Mr. Alcott, and as the man went away, he turned to his wife and exclaimed: "Didn't I tell you that wood would come if the weather didn't moderate?"

Again, a tramp asked Mr. Alcott to lend him five dollars. As he had only a ten-dollar bill, the dear man at once offered that, asking to have the change brought back as soon as possible. Despite the disbelief of his family in the tramp's honesty, the man did bring the five-dollar bill soon with profuse thanks, and the gentle philosopher's faith in human nature was not crushed.

Still another experiment in generosity proved a harder one in its results to the Alcotts, when Mrs. Alcott allowed some poor emigrants to rest in her garden while she treated them to a bountiful meal. Unfortunately for their generous benefactor, in return they gave small-pox to the entire family, and, although the girls had light cases, Mr. and Mrs. Alcott were very sick and, as Miss Alcott records later: "We had a curious time of exile, danger and trouble." She adds: "No doctors and all got well."

When Louisa Alcott was almost ten years old, and Anna twelve, Mr. Alcott took a trip to England, hoping to interest the people there in his new theories of education and of living. So enthusiastically and beautifully did he present his theories that he won many converts, and one of them, a Mr. Lane, returned to America with him to help him found a colony on the new ideas, which were more ideal than practical, and so disapproved of by Mr. Alcott's friends, who thought him foolish to waste time and money on them.

However, after months of planning, Mr. Alcott, Mr. Lane and other enthusiasts decided to buy an estate of one hundred acres near Harvard Village, Mass., and establish the colony. The place was named "Fruitlands," in anticipation of future crops, and the men who were to start the community were full of hope and enthusiasm, in which Mrs. Alcott did not share, as she knew her husband's

visionary nature too well not to fear the result of such an experiment. However, she aided in making the plan as practical as she could, and drew such a rosy picture of their new home to the children that they expected life at Fruitlands to be a perpetual picnic.

Alas for visions and for hopes! Although life at Fruitlands had its moments of sunshine and happiness, yet they were far overbalanced by hard work, small results and increasing worry over money matters, and at last, after four years of struggle to make ends meet, Mr. Alcott was obliged to face the fact that the experiment had been an utter failure, that he had exhausted his resources of mind, body and estate. It was a black time for the gentle dreamer, and for a while it seemed as if despair would overwhelm him. But with his brave wife to help him and the children's welfare to think of, he shook off his despondency bravely, and decided to make a fresh start. So Mrs. Alcott wrote to her brother in Boston for help, sold all the furniture they could spare, and went to Still River, the nearest village to Fruitlands, and engaged four rooms. "Then on a bleak December day the Alcott family emerged from the snowbank in which Fruitlands, now re-christened *Apple Stump* by Mrs. Alcott, lay hidden. Their worldly goods were piled on an ox-sled, the four girls on the top, while father and mother trudged arm in arm behind, poorer indeed in worldly goods, but richer in love and faith and patience, and alas, experience."

After a winter in Still River they went back to Concord, where they occupied a few rooms in the house of a sympathetic friend—not all their friends were sympathetic, by any means, as most of them had warned Mr. Alcott of this ending to his experiment. But all were kindly as they saw the family take up life bravely in

Concord again, with even fewer necessities and comforts than before. Both Mr. and Mrs. Alcott did whatever work they could find to do, thinking nothing too menial if it provided food and clothing for their family. Naturally the education of the children was rather fragmentary and insufficient, but it developed their own powers of thinking. Through the pages of their diaries in which they wrote regularly, and which were open to their mother and father, they learned to express their thoughts clearly on all subjects. Also they were encouraged to read freely, while only the best books were within their reach. Louisa's poetic and dramatic efforts were not ridiculed, but criticized as carefully as if they had been masterpieces, so she had no fear of expressing her deepest thoughts, but acted out her own nature freely and fearlessly.

In fact the four daughters were happy, wholesome, hearty girls, whose frolics and pastimes took such unique forms that people wondered whether they were the result of Mr. Alcott's theories, and Miss Alcott tells of one afternoon when Mr. Emerson and Margaret Fuller were visiting her mother and the conversation drifted to the subject of education. Turning to Mr. Alcott, Miss Fuller said:

"Well, Mr. Alcott, you have been able to carry out your methods in your own family; I should like to see your model children."

A few moments later, as the guests stood on the door step, ready to leave, there was a wild uproar heard in the near distance and round the corner of the house came a wheel-barrow holding baby May, dressed as a queen; Miss Alcott says: "I was the horse, bitted and bridled, and driven by my sister Anna, while Lizzie played dog and barked as loud as her gentle voice permitted.

"All were shouting and wild with fun, which, however, came to a sudden end, for my foot tripped and down we all went in a laughing heap, while my mother put a climax to the joke by saying with a dramatic wave of the hand:

"Here are the model children, Miss Fuller!"

When Mrs. Alcott's father, Colonel May, died, he left his daughter a small property, and she now determined to buy a house in Concord with it, so that whatever the varying fortunes of the family might be in future they would at least have a roof over their heads. An additional amount of five hundred dollars was added by Mr. Emerson, who was always the good angel of the family, and the place in Concord known as "Hillside" was bought, where life and work began in earnest for Louisa and her sisters, for only too clearly they saw the heavy weight that was being laid on their mother s shoulders.

Louisa was growing in body and spirit in those days, stretching up physically and mentally, and among the sources of her finest inspiration was the gentle reformer, philosopher and writer, Ralph Waldo Emerson, who was ever her father's loyal friend and helper. Louisa's warm little heart enshrined the calm, great-minded man who always understood things, and after she had read Goethe's correspondence with Bettine, she, like Bettine, placed her idol on a pedestal and worshipped him in a truly romantic fashion. At night, after she had gone to her room, she wrote him long passionate letters, expressing her devotion, but she never sent the letters—only told him of them in later years, when they laughed together over her girlish fancy. Once, she confessed to having sat in a tall cherry-tree at midnight and sung to the moon until the owls scared her to bed; and of having sung Mignon's song under his window in very bad German, and strewed wild flowers over his

door-step in the darkness. This sounds very sentimental and silly, but Louisa was never that. She had a deep, intense nature, which as yet had found no outlet or expression, and she could have had no safer hero to worship than this gentle, serene, wise man whose friendship for her family was so practical in its expression. Also at that period, which Louisa herself in her diary calls the "sentimental period," she was strongly influenced by the poet and naturalist, Thoreau. From him she learned to know Nature in a closer and more loving intimacy. Thoreau was called a hermit, and known as a genius, and more often than not he could be found in his hut in the woods, or on the river bank, where he learned to look for the bright-eyed "Alcott girl," who would swing along his side in twenty-mile tramps, eager and inquisitive about everything, learning new facts about flowers and trees and birds and insects from the great man at her side. Truly a fortunate girl was Louisa, with two such friends and teachers as the great Emerson and Thoreau. Hawthorne, too, fascinated her in his shy reserve, and the young girl in her teens with a tremendous ability to do and to be something worth while in life could have had no more valuable preface to her life as a writer than that of the happy growing days at Concord, with that group of remarkable men.

At that time she did not think seriously of having talent for writing, as she had only written a half-dozen pieces of verse, among them one called "My Kingdom," which has been preserved as a bit of girlish yearning for the best in religion and in character, sweetly expressed, and some thrilling melodramas for the "troupe" in the barn to act. These were overflowing with villains and heroes, and were lurid enough to satisfy the most intense of her audience.

Later some of them were collected under the title of "Comic Tragedies"—but at best they only serve to show how full of imaginative possibilities the girl's nature was.

Although the Alcotts had their own home in Concord now, it was yet almost impossible to make ends meet, and with the sturdy independence which proved to be one of her marked traits, Louisa determined to earn some money and add to the family income. It was no easy thing to do, for there were few avenues of work open to girls in that day. But she could teach, for it was quite a popular resource to open a small school in some barn, with a select set of pupils. Louisa herself had been to one of these "barn schools," and now she opened one in Mr. Emerson's barn, but it paid very poorly, as did everything which the Alcotts attempted to do. The brave mother was so completely discouraged, that when one day a friend passing through Concord called on her, Mrs. Alcott confessed the state of her financial affairs. As a result of that confession, the family once more migrated to Boston, leaving the Hawthornes as occupants of "Hillside." In the city Mrs. Alcott was given a position as visitor to the poor by a benevolent association, and she also kept an employment agency—a more respectable occupation than it was in later years. Once more there was money in the treasury, and with their usual happy optimism the family cheered up and decided that life was worth living, even under the most trying circumstances. While his wife was busy in that way, Mr. Alcott gradually drew a circle of people around him to whom his theories of life were acceptable, and who paid a small price to attend the "conversations" he held on subjects which interested him to discuss. Being appreciated, even by a small audience, was balm to the wounded spirit of the gentle philosopher, whose

"Fruitlands" experiment had been such a bitter one, and now he was as happy as though he were earning large amounts by his work, instead of the meager sum paid by his disciples to hear him talk of his pet theories. But he was contented, and his happiness was reflected by his adoring family. Mrs. Alcott, too, was satisfied with the work she was doing, so for a time all went well with the "Pathetic Family" as Louisa had christened them.

Louisa, meanwhile, was learning many lessons as she traveled slowly up the road to womanhood—learning courage and self-denial, linked with cheerfulness from mother and father, and enjoying a wholesome comradeship in the home life with her sisters.

Anna, the oldest daughter, was much like her father. She never worried about her soul or her shortcomings as Louisa did; she accepted life as it came, without question, and was of a calm nature, unlike turbulent, questioning Louisa, who had as many moods as there were hours in a day and who found ruling her tempestuous nature the hardest piece of work life offered her. She confesses in her diary: "My quick tongue is always getting me into trouble, and my moodiness makes it hard to be cheerful when I think how poor we are, how much worry it is to live, and how many things I long to do—I never can. So every day is a battle, and I'm so tired I don't want to live, only it's cowardly to die till you have done something." Having made this confession to an unresponsive page of her journal, the restless nature gave up the desire to be a coward, and turned to achieving whatever work might come to her hand to do, little dreaming what was before her in the coming years. She was very fine looking, of which she evidently was conscious, for she says in her diary:

"If I look in my glass I try to keep down vanity about my long hair, my well-shaped head, and my good nose." Besides these good points of which she speaks so frankly, she was tall and graceful, with a heavy mass of glossy, chestnut-brown hair. Her complexion was clear and full of color, and her dark-blue eyes were deep-set and very expressive.

During those years in Boston, the Alcotts spent two summers in an uncle's roomy house, where they enjoyed such comforts as had not before fallen to their lot, and calm Anna, sweet retiring Beth, or Betty, as she was called, and artistic May, the youngest of the flock, revelled in having rooms of their own, and plenty of space for their own belongings. May was a pretty, golden-haired, blue-eyed child with decided tastes, and an ability to get what she most wanted in life without much effort—an ability which poor Louisa entirely lacked, for her success always came as the result of exhausting work.

Louisa was now seventeen years old, and Anna nineteen. At that time came the small-pox siege, and after Anna had recovered partially she was obliged to take a rest, leaving her small school in Louisa's charge. There were twenty scholars, and it was a great responsibility for the girl of seventeen, but she took up the work with such enthusiasm that she managed to captivate her pupils, whose attention she held by illustrating many of their lessons with original stories, telling them in a way they would never forget. When Anna came back the school was so flourishing that Louisa continued to help with the teaching, and it seemed probable that she had found her greatest talent, although little did she guess how many interesting avenues of experience were to widen before her

wondering eyes before she was to settle down to her life-work.

Meanwhile she kept on helping Anna with her school, and to liven up the daily routine of a rather dull existence she began to write thrilling plays, which she always read to Anna, who criticized and helped revise them with sisterly severity. The plays were acted by a group of the girls' friends, with Anna and Louisa usually taking the principal parts. From creating these wonderful melodramas, which always won loud applause from an enthusiastic audience, and because of her real ability to act, Louisa now decided that she would go on the real stage. "Anna wants to be an actress, and so do I," she wrote in her diary. "We could make plenty of money perhaps, and it is a very gay life. Mother says we are too young, and must wait."

Wise mother, and firm as wise! The girls were obliged to accept her decree, and Louisa was so depressed by it that for a time she made every one miserable by her down-cast mood. Then, fortunately, an interested relative showed one of her plays to the manager of the Boston Theater. He read "The Rival Prima Donnas" with kindly eyes, and offered to stage it. Here was good luck indeed! The entire Alcott family held as great a jubilation when they heard the news as if they had fallen heir to a fortune, and Louisa at once forgot her ambition to act, in her ambition to be known as a successful play-wright.

Unfortunately, there was some hitch in the arrangements, and the play was never produced, but the manager sent Louisa a free pass to the theater, which gave her a play wright's pride whenever she used it, and her enjoyment in anticipating the production had been so great that she was able to bear the actual disappointment with

real philosophy. And by that time her mood had changed. Although she always loved to act, and acted well, her own good sense had asserted itself, and she had set aside a dramatic career, realizing that it included too many difficulties and hardships.

Her next adventure was quite different. To her mother's employment office came a gentleman who wished a companion for his old father and sister. The position offered only light work, and seemed a good one in every respect, and impulsive Louisa, who happened to hear the request, asked her mother, eagerly: "Can't I go? Oh, do let *me* take it!" Her mother, thinking the experience would not be harmful, let her accept the position, and as a result she had two of the most disillusioning and hard months of her life. She had her revenge later by writing a story called "How I Went Out to Service," in which she described the experience in a vivid way.

An extract from her "heart journal," as she now called her diary, is a revelation of home life which gave to Louisa much of that understanding of human nature which has made her books so popular. She says: "Our poor little home had much love and happiness in it, and was a shelter for lost girls, abused wives, friendless children and weak or wicked men. Father and mother had no money to give, but gave their time, sympathy, help, and if blessings would make them rich they would be millionaires. This is practical Christianity."

At that time they were living in a small house, with Beth as housekeeper, while Anna and Louisa taught, May went to school, and the mother attended to her own work. Mr. Alcott, too, was doing all he could to add to the family income by his lectures, and by writing articles on his favorite subjects, so all together, they managed to live in

some sort of fashion. But Louisa had now made up her mind that she must do more for the comfort of the beloved mother, who was always overworked and worried, despite her courage and cheery manner, and she decided to try to publish a story.

Full of the intention, one night, she sat down on the floor and searched through the pile of papers which included most of her "scribblings" since her first use of a pen. Plays, poems and many other closely written sheets were thrown aside. At last she found what she was looking for, and read and re-read it three times, then set it aside until morning, when, with the greatest possible secrecy, she put it in an envelope, sealed, addressed and mailed it. From that time she went about her work with the air of one whose mind is on greater things, but she was always wide awake enough when it came time for some one to go for the mail, and her sisters joked her about her eagerness for letters, which she bore good-naturedly enough. Then came a wonderful day when she was handed a letter from a well-known firm of publishers. Her hand shook as she opened it, and she gave a suppressed cry of joy as she read the short note, and looked with amazement at the bit of paper enclosed.

Later in the day, when the housework was done and school was over, she sauntered into the room where the family was gathered in a sewing-bee. Throwing herself into a chair with an indifferent air, she asked:

"Want to hear a good story?"

Of course they did. The Alcotts were always ready for a story, and Louisa read extremely well. Her audience listened to the thrilling tale with eager attention, and at the end there was a chorus of cries: "How fine! How lovely! How interesting!" Then Anna asked: "Who wrote it?"

With shining eyes and crimson cheeks Louisa jumped to her feet and, waving the paper overhead, cried:

"*Your sister! I wrote it!* Yes, I really did!"

One can imagine the great excitement of the group who then clustered around the authoress and asked questions all at once.

That first published story was pronounced by its creator to be "great rubbish," and she only received the sum of five dollars for it, but it was a beginning, and from that time in her active brain plots for stories long and short began to simmer, although she still taught, and often did sewing in the evenings, for which she was fairly well paid.

In mid-winter of 1853 Mr. Alcott went West on a lecture tour, full of hope for a financial success. He left the home group as busy as usual, for Mrs. Alcott had several boarders, as well as her employment office. Anna had gone to Syracuse to teach in a school there, Louisa had opened a home school with ten pupils, and the calm philosopher felt that he could leave them with a quiet mind, as they were all earning money, and this was his opportunity to broaden the field in which the seeds of unique ideas were sown.

So off he went, full of eager courage, followed by the good wishes of the girls, who fondly hoped that "father would be appreciated at last." Alas for hopes! On a February night, when all the household were sleeping soundly, the bell rang violently. All were awakened, and Louisa says, "Mother flew down, crying 'my husband!' We rushed after, and five white figures embraced the half-frozen wanderer who came in tired, hungry, cold and disappointed, but smiling bravely, and as serene as ever. We fed and warmed and brooded over him," says Louisa, "longing to ask if he had made any money, but none did

till little May said, after he had told all the pleasant things: 'Well, did people pay you?' Then, with a queer look, he opened his pocketbook and showed one dollar, saying with a smile that made our eyes fill: 'Only that!' My overcoat was stolen, and I had to buy a shawl. Many promises were not kept, and traveling is costly, but I have opened the way, and another year shall do better.'

"I shall never forget," adds Louisa, "how beautifully mother answered him, though the dear hopeful soul had built much on his success; but with a beaming face she kissed him, saying, 'I call that doing *very* well. Since you are safely home, dear, we don't ask anything more.'

"Anna and I choked down our tears, and took a lesson in real love which we never forgot...It was half tragic and comic, for father was very dirty and sleepy, and mother in a big night-cap and funny old jacket."

Surely no one ever had a better opportunity to probe to the heart of the real emotions that make up the most prosaic as well as the most heroic daily lives than a member of that generous, happy, loving Alcott family.

And still Louisa kept on doing other things besides the writing, which was such a safety valve for her intense nature. For a short time she worked for a relative in the country, and she also taught and sewed and did housework, and made herself useful wherever her strong hands and willing heart could find some way of earning a dollar.

The seven years spent in Boston had developed her into a capable young woman of twenty-two, who was ready and eager to play her part in the great drama of life of which she was an interested spectator as she saw it constantly enacted around her.

Even then, before she had stepped across the threshold of her career, she unconsciously realized that the home stage is the real background of the supreme world drama, and she shows this by the intimate, tender domestic scenes which made all of her stories bits of real life, with a strong appeal to those whose homes are joyous parts of the present, or sacred memories.

When she was determined to achieve an end, Louisa Alcott generally succeeded, even in the face of obstacles; and now having decided to take on her own broad shoulders some of the burdens which were weighing heavily on her beloved mother, she turned to the talent which had recently yielded her the magnificent sum of five dollars. In the days at Concord she had told many stories about fairies and flowers to the little Emerson children and their friends, who eagerly drank in all the mystic tales in which wood-nymphs, water sprites, giants and fairy queens played a prominent part, and the stories were thrilling, because their teller believed absolutely in the fairy creatures she pictured in a lovely setting of woodland glades and forest dells. These stories, which she had written down and called "Flower Fables," she found among her papers, and as she read them again she felt that they might interest other children as they had those to whom they were told. She had no money to publish them, however, and no publisher would bear the expense of a venture by an untried writer. But it took more than that to daunt Louisa when her mind was made up. With great enthusiasm she told a friend of the family, Miss Wealthy Stevens, of her desire, and she generously offered to pay for publication, but it was decided not to tell the family until the book should come out. Then in radiant secrecy Louisa burned the midnight oil and prepared the little book

for the press. One can fancy the proud surprise of Mrs. Alcott when, on the following Christmas morning, among her pile of gifts she found the little volume with this note:

December 25, 1854.

DEAR MOTHER:

Into your Christmas stocking I have put my first-born, knowing that you will accept it with all its faults (for grandmothers are always kind) and look upon it merely as an earnest of what I may yet do; for with so much to cheer me on, I hope to pass in time from fairies and fables to men and realities. Whatever beauty or poetry is to be found in my little book is owing to your interest in, and encouragement of, my efforts from the first to the last, and if ever I do anything to be proud of, my greatest happiness will be that I can thank you for that, as I may do for all the good there is in me, and I shall be content to write if it gives you pleasure.

Jo is fussing about,
My lamp is going out.

To dear mother, with many kind wishes for a Happy New Year and Merry Christmas,

I am ever your loving daughter,

LOUY.

Recompense enough, that note, for all a loving mother's sacrifices and attempts to give her daughter understanding sympathy and love—and it is small wonder if that Christmas gift always remained one of her most precious possessions.

Six hundred copies of the little "Flower Fables" were published, and the book sold very well, although their author only received the sum of $32 for them, which was in sharp contrast, she says in her journal, "to the receipts of six months only in 1886, being *eight thousand dollars*

for the sale of books and no new one; but" she adds, "I was prouder over the thirty-two dollars than the eight thousand."

Louisa Alcott was now headed toward her destiny, although she was still a long way from the shining goal of literary success, and had many weary hills yet to climb.

As soon as *Flower Fables* was published, she began to plan for a new volume of fairy tales, and as she was invited to spend the next summer in the lovely New Hampshire village of Walpole, she thankfully accepted the invitation, and decided to write the new book there in the bracing air of the hill town. In Walpole, she met delightful people, who were all attracted to the versatile, amusing young woman, and she was in great demand when there was any entertainment on foot. One evening she gave a burlesque lecture on "Woman, and Her Position, by Oronthy Bluggage," which created such a gale of merriment that she was asked to repeat it for money, which she did; and so there was added to her store of accomplishments another, from which she was to reap some rewards in coming years.

Her enjoyment of Walpole was so great that her family decided to try its fine air, as they were tired of city life and needed a change of scene. A friend offered them a house there, rent free, and in their usual impromptu way they left Boston and arrived in the country village, bag and baggage. Mr. Alcott was overjoyed to have a garden in which to work, and Mrs. Alcott was glad to be near her niece, whose guest Louisa had been up to that time.

Louisa's comment on their arrival in her diary was:

"Busy and happy times as we settle in the little house in the lane, near by my dear ravine—plays, picnics, pleasant people and good neighbors." Despite the good

times, it is evident that she was not idle, for she says, "Finished fairy book in September…Better than *Flower Fables*. Now, I must try to sell it."

In September Anna had an offer to become a teacher in the great idiot asylum in Syracuse. Her sensitive nature shrank from the work, but with real self-sacrifice she accepted it for the sake of the family, and went off in October. Meanwhile Louisa had been thinking deeply about her future, and her diary tells the story of a decision she made, quite the most important one of her life. She writes:

"November; decided to seek my fortune, so with my little trunk of home-made clothes, $40 earned by stories sent to the *Gazette*, and my MSS., I set forth with mother's blessing one rainy day in the dullest month in the year."

She went straight to Boston, where she writes:

"Found it too late to do anything with the book (the new one she had written at Walpole) so put it away and tried for teaching, sewing, or any honest work. Won't go home to sit idle while I have a head and a pair of hands."

Good for you, Louisa—you are the stuff that success is made of! That her courage had its reward is shown by the fact that her cousins, the Sewalls, generously offered her a home for the winter with them which she gratefully accepted, but insisted on paying for her board by doing a great deal of sewing for them. She says in her diary: "I sew for Mollie and others and write stories. C. gave me books to notice. Heard Thackeray. Anxious times; Anna very home-sick. Walpole very cold and dull, now the summer butterflies have gone. Got $5 for a tale and $12 for sewing; sent home a Christmas box to cheer the dear souls in the snow-banks."

In January she writes: "C. paid $6 for *A Sister's Trial*, gave me more books to notice, and wants more tales." The entries that follow give a vivid picture of her pluck and perseverance in that first winter of fortune-seeking, and no record of deeds could be more graphic than the following entries:

"Sewed for L.W. Sewall and others. Mr. Field took my farce to Mobile to bring out; Mr. Barry of the Boston Theater has the play. Heard Curtis lecture. Began a book for summer, *Beach Bubbles*. Mr. F. of the *Courier* printed a poem of mine on 'Little Nell'. Got $10 for 'Bertha' and saw great yellow placards stuck up announcing it. Acted at the W's. March; got $10 for 'Genevieve'. Prices go up as people like the tales and ask who wrote them...Sewed a great deal, and got very tired; one job for Mr. G. of a dozen pillow-cases, one dozen sheets, six fine cambric neck-ties, and two dozen handkerchiefs, at which I had to work all one night to get them done,...I got only $4.00." The brave, young fortune-seeker adds sensibly, "Sewing won't make my fortune, but I can plan my stories while I work."

In May she had a welcome visit from Anna on her way home from Syracuse, as the work there was too hard for her, and the sisters spent some happy days together in Boston. Then they were obliged to go home, as dear little Beth was very sick with scarlet-fever which she caught from some poor children Mrs. Alcott had been nursing. Both Beth and May had the dangerous disease, and Beth never recovered from the effects of it, although she lived for two years, a serene, patient invalid, who shed a benediction on the sorrowing household. That summer was an anxious time for the family. In her usual way Louisa plunged head-long into housework and nursing, and when night came she would scribble one of the stories

which the papers were now glad to accept whenever she could send them. So with varying degrees of apprehension and rejoicing, the weary months passed, and as Beth was slowly improving and she was not needed at home, Louisa decided to spend another winter in the city. Her diary says:

"There I can support myself and help the family. C. offers $10 a month and perhaps more…Others have plenty of sewing; the play may come out, and Mrs. R. will give me a sky-parlor for $3 a week, with fire and board. I sew for her also." With practical forethought, she adds, "If I can get A.L. to governess I shall be all right."

Then in a burst of the real spirit which had animated her ever since she first began to write and sew and teach and act, and make over old clothes given her by rich friends that she need not spend any money on herself, she declares in her diary:

"I was born with a boy's spirit under my bib and tucker. I *can't wait* when I *can work*; so I took my little talent in my hand and forced the world again, braver than before, and wiser for my failures."

That the decision was no light one, and that the winter in Boston was not merely an adventure, is shown by her declaration:

"I don't often pray in words; but when I set out that day with all my worldly goods in the little old trunk, my own earnings ($25) in my pocket, and much hope and resolution in my soul, my heart was very full, and I said to the Lord, 'Help us all, and keep us for one another,' as I never said it before, while I looked back at the dear faces watching me, so full of love, and hope, and faith."

Louisa Alcott's childhood and girlhood, with all the hardships and joys which went into the passing years, had been merged in a triumphant young womanhood—a fitting

preface to the years of fame and fortune which were to follow. A brave, interesting girl had become a courageous older woman, who faced the untried future with her small earnings in her pocket, her worldly goods in her trunk, and hopeful determination in her heart to do some worth-while thing in the world, for the sake of those she dearly loved. She had started up the steep slope of her life's real adventuring, and despite the rough paths over which she must still travel before reaching her goal, she was more and more a sympathetic comrade to the weak or weary, ever a gallant soldier, and a noble woman, born to do great deeds. So enthusiastic was she in playing her part in the world's work, that when she was twenty-seven years old, and still toiling on, with a scant measure of either wealth or fame, she exclaimed at a small success:

"Hurrah! My story was accepted and Lowell asked if it was not a translation from the German, it was so unlike other tales. I felt much set up, and my fifty dollars will be very happy money...I have not been pegging away all these years in vain, and I may yet have books and publishers, and a fortune of my own. Success has gone to my head, and I wander a little.

"Twenty-seven years old and very happy!"

The prediction of "books, publishers and a fortune" came true in 1868, when a Boston firm urged her to write a story for girls, and she had the idea of describing the early life of her own home, with its many episodes and incidents. She wrote the book and called it *Little Women*, and was the most surprised person in the world, when from her cozy corner of Concord she watched edition after edition being published, and found that she had become famous. From that moment Louisa Alcott belonged to the

public, and one has but to turn to the pages of her ably edited *Life, Letters and Journals,* to realize the source from which she got the material for her "simple story of simple girls," bound by a beautiful tie of family love, that neither poverty, sorrow nor death could sever. Four little pilgrims, struggling onward and upward through all the difficulties that beset them on their way, in Concord, Boston, Walpole and elsewhere, had provided human documents which the genius of Louisa Alcott made into an imperishable story for the delight and inspiration of succeeding generations of girls.

Little Women was followed by *Little Men, Old Fashioned Girl, Eight Cousins, Rose in Bloom, Under the Lilacs,* and a long line of other charming books for young people. And, although the incidents in them were not all taken from real life as were those of her first "immortal," yet was each and every book a faithful picture of every-day life. That is where the genius of Louisa Alcott came in. From the depicting of fairies and gnomes, princes and kings, she early turned to paint the real, the vital and the heroic, which is being lived in so many households where there is little money and no luxury, but much light-hearted laughter, tender affection for one another, and a deep and abiding love of humanity.

Well may all aspiring young Americans take example from the author of *Little Women*, and when longing to set the world on fire in the expression of their genius, learn not to despise or to turn away from the simple, commonplace details of every-day life.

And for successful life and work, there is no better inspiration than the three rules given Louisa Alcott in girlhood for her daily guidance:

Rule yourself;

Love your neighbor;
Do the duty which lies nearest you.

Glimpses of Mark Twain

(America: 1835-1910)
Tom Sawyer, Huckleberry Finn, The Prince and the Pauper, Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc

School Days

But he must have "book-learning," too, Jane Clemens said. On his return to Hannibal that first summer, she decided that Little Sam was ready for school. He was five years old and regarded as a "stirring child."

"He drives me crazy with his didoes when he's in the house," his mother declared, "and when he's out of it I'm expecting every minute that some one will bring him home half dead."

Mark Twain used to say that he had had nine narrow escapes from drowning, and it was at this early age that he was brought home one afternoon in a limp state, having been pulled from a deep hole in Bear Creek by a slave girl.

When he was restored, his mother said: "I guess there wasn't much danger. People born to be hanged are safe in water."

Mark Twain's mother was the original of Aunt Polly in the story of *Tom Sawyer*, an outspoken, keen-witted, charitable woman, whom it was good to know. She had a heart full of pity, especially for dumb creatures. She refused to kill even flies, and punished the cat for catching mice. She would drown young kittens when necessary, but warmed the water for the purpose. She could be strict, however, with her children, if occasion required, and recognized their faults.

Little Sam was inclined to elaborate largely on fact. A neighbor once said to her: "You don't believe anything that child says, I hope."

"Oh yes, I know his average. I discount him ninety per cent. The rest is pure gold."

She declared she was willing to pay somebody to take him off her hands for a part of each day and try to teach him "manners." A certain Mrs. E. Horr was selected for the purpose.

Mrs. Horr's school on Main Street, Hannibal, was of the old-fashioned kind. There were pupils of all ages, and everything was taught up to the third reader and long division. Pupils who cared to go beyond those studies went to a Mr. Cross, on the hill, facing what is now the public square. Mrs. Horr received twenty-five cents a week for each pupil, and the rules of conduct were read daily. After the rules came the A-B-C class, whose recitation was a hand-to-hand struggle, requiring no study-time.

The rules of conduct that first day interested Little Sam. He wondered how nearly he could come to breaking them and escape. He experimented during the forenoon, and received a warning. Another experiment would mean correction. He did not expect to be caught again; but when he least expected it he was startled by a command to go out and bring a stick for his own punishment.

This was rather dazing. It was sudden, and, then, he did not know much about choosing sticks for such a purpose. Jane Clemens had commonly used her hand. A second command was needed to start him in the right direction, and he was still dazed when he got outside. He had the forests of Missouri to select from, but choice was not easy. Everything looked too big and competent. Even the smallest switch had a wiry look. Across the way was a cooper's shop. There were shavings outside, and one had blown across just in front of him. He picked it up, and, gravely entering the room, handed it to Mrs. Horr. So far

as known, it is the first example of that humor which would one day make Little Sam famous before all the world.

It was a failure in this instance. Mrs. Horr's comic side may have prompted forgiveness, but discipline must be maintained.

"Samuel Langhorne Clemens," she said (he had never heard it all strung together in that ominous way), "I am ashamed of you! Jimmy Dunlap, go and bring a switch for Sammy." And the switch that Jimmy Dunlap brought was of a kind to give Little Sam a permanent distaste for school. He told his mother at noon that he did not care for education; that he did not wish to be a great man; that his desire was to be an Indian and scalp such persons as Mrs. Horr. In her heart Jane Clemens was sorry for him, but she openly said she was glad there was somebody who could take him in hand.

Little Sam went back to school, but he never learned to like it. A school was ruled with a rod in those days, and of the smaller boys Little Sam's back was sore as often as the next. When the days of early summer came again, when from his desk he could see the sunshine lighting the soft green of Holliday's Hill, with the glint of the river and the purple distance beyond, it seemed to him that to be shut up with a Webster spelling-book and a cross teacher was more than human nature could bear. There still exists a yellow slip of paper upon which, in neat, old-fashioned penmanship is written:

Miss PAMELA CLEMENS

Has won the love of her teacher and schoolmates by her amiable deportment and faithful application to her various studies.

E. HORR, Teacher.

Thus we learn that Little Sam's sister, eight years older than himself, attended the same school, and that she was a good pupil. If any such reward of merit was ever conferred on Little Sam, it has failed to come to light. If he won the love of his teacher and playmates, it was probably for other reasons.

Yet he must have learned somehow, for he could read, presently, and was a good speller for his age.

The Writing of Tom Sawyer

It was at the end of January, 1874, when Mark Twain returned to America. His reception abroad had increased his prestige at home. Howells and Aldrich came over from Boston to tell him what a great man he had become—to renew those Boston days of three years before—to talk and talk of all the things between the earth and sky. And Twichell came in, of course, and Warner, and no one took account of time, or hurried, or worried about anything at all.

"We had two such days as the aging sun no longer shines on in his round," wrote Howells, long after, and he tells how he and Aldrich were so carried away with Clemens's success in subscription publication that on the way back to Boston they planned a book to sell in that way. It was to be called *Twelve Memorable Murders*, and they had made two or three fortunes from it by the time they reached Boston.

"But the project ended there. We never killed a single soul," Howells once confessed to the writer of this memoir.

At Quarry Farm that summer Mark Twain began the writing of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. He had been planning for some time to set down the story of those far-

off days along the river-front at Hannibal, with John Briggs, Tom Blankenship, and the rest of that graceless band, and now in the cool luxury of a little study which Mrs. Crane had built for him on the hillside he set himself to spin the fabric of his youth. The study was a delightful place to work. It was octagonal in shape, with windows on all sides, something like a pilot-house. From any direction the breeze could come, and there were fine views. To Twichell he wrote:

It is a cozy nest, and just room in it for a sofa, table, and three or four chairs, and when the storm sweeps down the remote valley and the lightning flashes behind the hills beyond, and the rain beats on the roof over my head, imagine the luxury of it!

He worked steadily there that summer. He would begin mornings, soon after breakfast, keeping at it until nearly dinner-time, say until five or after, for it was not his habit to eat the midday meal. Other members of the family did not venture near the place; if he was wanted urgently, a horn was blown. His work finished, he would light a cigar and, stepping lightly down the stone flight that led to the house-level, he would find where the family had assembled and read to them his day's work. Certainly those were golden days, and the tale of Tom and Huck and Joe Harper progressed. To Dr. John Brown, in Scotland, he wrote:

I have been writing fifty pages of manuscript a day, on an average, for some time now,...and consequently have been so wrapped up in it and dead to everything else that I have fallen mighty short in letter-writing.

Sketches New and Old went very well, but the book had no such sale as *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, which

appeared a year later, December, 1876. From the date of its issue it took its place as foremost of American stories of boy life, a place that to this day it shares only with *Huck Finn*. Mark Twain's own boy life in the little drowsy town of Hannibal, with John Briggs and Tom Blankenship—their adventures in and about the cave and river—made perfect material. The story is full of pure delight. The camp on the island is a picture of boy heaven. No boy that reads it but longs for the woods and a camp-fire and some bacon strips in the frying-pan. It is all so thrillingly told and so vivid. We know certainly that it must all have happened. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* has taken a place side by side with *Treasure Island*.

The Writing of The Prince and the Pauper

Meantime he had renewed work on a story begun two years before at Quarry Farm. Browsing among the books there one summer day, he happened to pick up *The Prince and the Page*, by Charlotte M. Yonge. It was a story of a prince disguised as a blind beggar, and, as Mark Twain read, an idea came to him for an altogether different story, or play, of his own. He would have a prince and a pauper change places, and through a series of adventures learn each the trials and burdens of the other life. He presently gave up the play idea, and began it as a story. His first intention had been to make the story quite modern, using the late King Edward VII (then Prince of Wales) as his prince, but it seemed to him that it would not do to lose a prince among the slums of modern London—he could not make it seem real; so he followed back through history until he came to the little son of Henry VIII, Edward Tudor, and decided that he would do.

It was the kind of a story that Mark Twain loved to read and to write. By the end of that first summer he had finished a good portion of the exciting adventures of *The Prince and the Pauper*, and then, as was likely to happen, the inspiration waned and the manuscript was laid aside.

The Inspiration for Joan of Arc

It was just at this time that an incident occurred which may be looked back upon now as a turning-point in Samuel Clemens's life. Coming home from the office one afternoon, he noticed a square of paper being swept along by the wind. He saw that it was printed—was interested professionally in seeing what it was like. He chased the flying scrap and overtook it. It was a leaf from some old history of Joan of Arc, and pictured the hard lot of the "maid" in the tower at Rouen, reviled and mistreated by her ruffian captors. There were some paragraphs of description, but the rest was pitiful dialogue.

Sam had never heard of Joan before—he knew nothing of history. He was no reader. Orion was fond of books, and Pamela; even little Henry had read more than Sam. But now, as he read, there awoke in him a deep feeling of pity and indignation, and with it a longing to know more of the tragic story. It was an interest that would last his life through, and in the course of time find expression in one of the rarest books ever written.

The first result was that Sam began to read. He hunted up everything he could find on the subject of Joan, and from that went into French history in general—indeed, into history of every kind. Samuel Clemens had suddenly become a reader—almost a student. He even began the study of languages, German and Latin, but was not able to go on for lack of time and teachers.

At Villa Viviani, an old, old mansion outside of Florence, on the hill toward Settignano, Mark Twain finished *Tom Sawyer Abroad*, also *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, and wrote the first half of a book that really had its beginning on the day when, an apprentice-boy in Hannibal, he had found a stray leaf from the pathetic story of Joan of Arc. All his life she had been his idol, and he had meant some day to write of her. Now, in this weather-stained old palace, looking down on Florence, medieval and hazy, and across to the villa-dotted hills, he began one of the most beautiful stories ever written, *The Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc*. He wrote in the first person, assuming the character of Joan's secretary, Sieur Louis de Conte, who in his old age is telling the great tale of the Maid of Orleans. It was Mark Twain's purpose, this time, to publish anonymously. Walking the floor one day at Viviani, and smoking vigorously, he said to Mrs. Clemens and Susy:

"I shall never be accepted seriously over my own signature. People always want to laugh over what I write, and are disappointed if they don't find a joke in it. This is to be a serious book. It means more to me than anything else I have ever undertaken. I shall write it anonymously."

So it was that the gentle Sieur de Conte took up the pen, and the tale of Joan was begun in the ancient garden of Viviani, a setting appropriate to its lovely form.

He wrote rapidly when once his plan was perfected and his material arranged. The reading of his youth and manhood was now recalled, not merely as reading, but as remembered reality. It was as if he were truly the old Sieur de Conte, saturated with memories, pouring out the tender,

tragic tale. In six weeks he had written one hundred thousand words—remarkable progress at any time, the more so when we consider that some of the authorities he consulted were in a foreign tongue. He had always more or less kept up his study of French, begun so long ago on the river, and it stood him now in good stead. Still, it was never easy for him, and the multitude of notes that still exist along the margin of his French authorities show the magnitude of his work. Others of the family went down into the city almost daily, but he stayed in the still garden with Joan. Florence and its suburbs were full of delightful people, some of them old friends. There were luncheons, dinners, teas, dances, and the like always in progress, but he resisted most of these things, preferring to remain the quaint old Sieur de Conte, following again the banner of the Maid of Orleans marshaling her twilight armies across his illumined page.

Twain's Support of Ulysses S. Grant's Memoirs

Mark Twain was now a successful publisher, but his success thus far was nothing to what lay just ahead. One evening he learned that General Grant, after heavy financial disaster, had begun writing the memoirs which he (Clemens) had urged him to undertake some years before. Next morning he called on the General to learn the particulars. Grant had contributed some articles to the Century war series, and felt in a mood to continue the work. He had discussed with the *Century* publishers the matter of a book. Clemens suggested that such a book should be sold only by subscription and prophesied its enormous success. General Grant was less sure. His need of money was very great and he was anxious to get as much return as possible, but his faith was not large. He was

inclined to make no special efforts in the matter of publication. But Mark Twain prevailed. Like his own Colonel Sellers, he talked glowingly and eloquently of millions. He first offered to direct the general to his own former subscription publisher, at Hartford, then finally proposed to publish it himself, offering Grant seventy per cent, of the net returns, and to pay all office expenses out of his own share.

Of course there could be nothing for any publisher in such an arrangement unless the sales were enormous. General Grant realized this, and at first refused to consent. Here was a friend offering to bankrupt himself out of pure philanthropy, a thing he could not permit. But Mark Twain came again and again, and finally persuaded him that purely as a business proposition the offer was warranted by the certainty of great sales.

So the firm of Charles L. Webster & Co. undertook the Grant book, and the old soldier, broken in health and fortune, was liberally provided with means that would enable him to finish his task with his mind at peace. He devoted himself steadily to the work—at first writing by hand, then dictating to a stenographer that Webster & Co. provided. His disease, cancer, made fierce ravages, but he "fought it out on that line," and wrote the last pages of his memoirs by hand when he could no longer speak aloud. Mark Twain was much with him, and cheered him with anecdotes and news of the advance sale of his book. In one of his memoranda of that time Clemens wrote:

To-day (May 26) talked with General Grant about his and my first great Missouri campaign, in 1861. He surprised an empty camp near Florida, Missouri, on Salt River, which I had been occupying a day or two before.

How near he came to playing the d— with his future publisher.

At Mount McGregor, a few weeks before the end, General Grant asked if any estimate could now be made of the sum which his family would obtain from his work, and was deeply comforted by Clemens's prompt reply that more than one hundred thousand sets had already been sold, the author's share of which would exceed one hundred and fifty thousand dollars. Clemens added that the gross return would probably be twice as much more.

The last notes came from Grant's hands soon after that, and a few days later, July 23, 1885, his task completed, he died. To Henry Ward Beecher Clemens wrote:

One day he put his pencil aside and said there was nothing more to do. If I had been there I could have foretold the shock that struck the world three days later.

In a memorandum estimate made by Mark Twain soon after the canvass for the Grant memoirs had begun, he had prophesied that three hundred thousand sets of the book would be sold, and that he would pay General Grant in royalties $420,000. This prophecy was more than fulfilled. The first check paid to Mrs. Grant—the largest single royalty check in history—was for $200,000. Later payments brought her royalty return up to nearly $450,000. For once, at least, Mark Twain's business vision had been clear. A fortune had been realized for the Grant family. Even his own share was considerable, for out of that great sale more than a hundred thousand dollars' profit was realized by Webster & Co.

Frances Burnett Hodgson

(England: 1849-1924)

A Little Princess, The Secret Garden, Little Lord Fauntleroy

First Writing Venture

She was reading these absorbing replies to the correspondents one day when a thought floated into her mind, and after a few moments of indefiniteness took shape and presented itself before her. She blushed a little at first because it had such an air of boldness. She rather thrust it aside, but after a while she found herself contemplating it—as if from afar off.

"I wonder how much they pay for the stories in magazines," she said, reflectively, to Edith.

Edith did not know, naturally, and had not formed any opinion.

"I wonder if they pay much," the Small Person continued; "and—what sort of people write them?" It seemed impossible that ordinary, every-day people could write things that would be considered worth paying for and publishing in magazines. It seemed to imply immense talents and cultivation and training and enormous dignity.

She did not think this because she found the stories invariably brilliant, but because she felt that there must be some merit she was not clever enough to detect; if not they would never have been published.

"Sometimes they are not so *awfully* clever," she said.

"Well," said Edith, boldly, "I've seen lots of them not half as nice as yours."

"Ah!" she exclaimed, conscious of being beset by her sheepish feeling; "that's because you are my sister."

"No, it isn't," said the valiant Edith, with her favorite little pucker of her forehead. "I don't care whether I'm your sister or not. Some of your stories are beautiful!"

The Small Person blushed, because she was of the Small Persons who are given to superfluous blushing. "I wonder," she said, "if the magazine people would think so."

"I don't know anything about magazine people," said Edith; "but I don't see why they shouldn't think so."

"They wouldn't," said the Small Person, with a sudden sense of discouragement. "Of course they wouldn't."

But she could not help the thought of the answered correspondents returning to her afterward. She found herself wondering about them as she rambled through the woods or lay on the grass in the Bower. How did they send their stories to the magazines? Was it by post or by express? If it was by post how many stamps would it take? How could one find out? It would be important that one should put on enough. She remembered "answers" such as this: "March Hare.—We cannot receive MSS. on which insufficient postage has been paid." It was evidently necessary to make a point of the postage.

Then there was the paper. To meet the approval of an august being it seemed as if something special must be required. And more than once she had read instructions of such a nature as: "Airy, Fairy Lilian.—Write in a clear hand on ordinary foolscap paper."

She was only fifteen, and her life had been spent between the Square and the Bower. Her horizon had not been a broad one, and had not embraced practical things. She had had no personal acquaintance with Ordinary Foolscap. If the statement had demanded extraordinary foolscap she would have felt it only natural.

Somehow she found a timid, but growing interest in the whole subject. She could not quite get away from it. And when circumstances occurred which directed her attention specially to the results of the reduced resources she was led to dwell on it with a certain sense of fascination.

"Something *must* be done!" she said to herself, desperately. "We can't go on like this. Someone *must* do something."

The three little girls talked together at times quite gloomily. They all agreed that Somebody must do something. The Boys were doing their best, but luck did not seem to be with them.

"Something *must* be done," the Small Person kept repeating.

"Yes," replied Edith, "but what must it be and Who will do it?"

The people whose stories were bought and printed must some time have sent their first stories. And they could not have known whether they were really good or not until they had asked and found out. The only way of finding out was to send one—written in a clear hand on one side of ordinary foolscap—having first made quite sure that it had stamps enough on it. If a person had the courage to do that, he or she would at least hear if it was worth reading—if a stamp was enclosed.

These were the reflections with which the Small Person's mind was occupied.

And if it was worth reading—if the August Being deigned to think it so—and was not rendered rabid and infuriate by insufficient postage, or indistinct writing, or by having to read on both sides of the ordinary foolscap, if

he was in need of stories for his magazine, and if he was in a good temper he might accept it—and buy it.

If the Listeners had liked her stories so much, if Edith and Edwina liked them, if Edith thought they were as nice as some she had read in *Godey's Lady's Book*, might it not be just possible that—that an Editor might deign to read one and perhaps even say that it "had merit," even if it was not good enough to buy. If he said that much, she could study the stories in the *Lady's Book*, etc., assiduously enough, perhaps, to learn the secret of their success, and finally do something which might be worthy to compete with them.

She was a perfectly unassuming child. She had never had any feeling about her story-telling but that it seemed part of herself—something she could not help doing. Secretly she had been afraid, as time went by, that she had been Romantic with the Doll, and in private she was afraid that she was Romantic about the stories. The idea that anyone but the Listeners and Edith and Edwina would be likely to care to hear or read them had never entered her mind. The cheerful derision of the Boys added to her sensitive shyness about them, and upon the whole she regarded her little idiosyncrasy as a thing to be kept rather quiet. Nothing but actual stress of circumstances would have spurred her to the boldness of daring to hope for them. But in those days Noah's Ark found itself lacking such common things—things which could not be dispensed with even by the most decayed of ladies and gentlemen.

So one day after many mental struggles she found herself sitting with Edith and the little cat, in the small room with the bare walls and rafters. And she gathered her courage in both hands.

"Edith," she said, "I've been thinking about something."

Edith looked at her with interest. She was a lovely little person and a wonderful friend for her years—which were thirteen.

"What is it?" she said.

"Do you think—do you *think* it would be silly to send one of my stories—to a magazine—and see if they would take it?"

I cannot help believing that at the first moment Edith rather lost her breath. The two were English children, brought up in a simple English nursery in the most primitively conventional way. Such a life is not conducive to a spirit of boldness and enterprise. In matters of point of view they would have seemed to the American mind incredibly young for their years. If they had been American children they would have been immensely cooler and far less inclined to ultra respectful attitudes toward authority.

"Do you?" said the Small Person. "Do you?"

Edith gathered herself together also. Across a lifetime the picture of her small face rises with perfect distinctness. She was a fair little person, with much curling blond hair and an expressive little forehead which had a habit of puckering itself. She was still startled, but she bore herself with a courage which was heroic.

"No," she answered, "I don't!"

If she had said that she did, the matter might have ended there, but as it was, the Small Person breathed again. She felt the matter might be contemplated and approached more nearly. One might venture at least to talk about it in private.

" I have been thinking and thinking about it," she said. "Even if they are not good enough to be published it would not do any harm just to try. They can only be sent back—and then I should know. Do you think we dare do it?"

"If I were you I would," said Edith.

"I believe," hesitated the Small Person, "I do believe I will."

Edith began to become excited.

"Oh," she said, "I think it would be splendid! What would you send?"

"I should have to write something new. I haven't anything ready that I should care to send. I'd write something carefully—just as well as I could. There's a story I began to write when we lived in the Square, three years ago. I never finished it, and I only wrote scenes out of it in old account-books; but I remember what it was about, and the other day I found an old book with some scraps of it in. And I really do think it's rather nice. And I might finish it, perhaps." She began to tell the story, and became exhilarated with the telling, as she always did, and Edith thought it an enchanting story, and so it was decided that it should be finished and put to the test.

"But there's one thing," she said, "I would not have the Boys know for anything in the world. They would laugh so, and they would think it such a joke if it was sent back again. I'm going to put in stamps to send it back with, because if you put on stamps enough they will send it back. And perhaps they wouldn't take the trouble to write a letter if they didn't like it and I didn't send the extra stamps. You often see in magazines a notice that manuscript will be returned if stamps are sent. So in that way I shall be sure to find out. But I must get them without the Boys knowing."

"Yes, you must," said Edith. "They *would* tease you so if it came back. But what are you going to do? You know there isn't any money now but what the Boys get. And that's little enough, goodness knows."

"We shall have to think about it," said the Small Person, "and contrive. It will take a good deal of contriving, but I have to write the story first."

"Do you think it will take many stamps?" asked Edith, beginning to pucker her expressive little forehead, anxiously.

"Yes, a good many, I'm afraid," was the Small Person's answer. "And then we have to buy the foolscap paper—ordinary foolscap. But of all things promise and swear you won't breathe a word before the Boys."

It was a marvel that they did not betray themselves in some way. It was so thrilling a secret. While the story was being written they could think and talk of nothing else. The Small Person used to come down from the raftered Temple of the Muses with her little cat under her arm, and her cheeks a blaze of scarlet. The more absorbed and interested she was the more brilliant her cheeks were.

"How red your cheeks are, my dear," Mamma would say. "Does your head ache?"

But her head did not ache, though it would have done, if she had not been a splendidly strong little animal.

"I always know when you've been writing very fast," Edith used to say; "your cheeks always look so flaming red."

It was not long, of course, before Mamma was taken into confidence. What she thought it would be difficult to say, but she was lovable and sustaining as usual.

"It won't do any harm to try, dear," she said. "It seems to me you write very nice things, for one so young, and

perhaps some of the editors might like them; and, of course, it would be a great help if they would pay you a little money."

"But the Boys mustn't know one word," said the Small Person. "I'll tell them if it's accepted, but if it isn't, I'd rather be dead than that they should find out."

And so the story went on, and it was read aloud under the rafters, and Edith revelled in it, and the little cat lay curled up in the Small Person's left arm, quite undisturbed by the excitement in the atmosphere around her. And as the work went on the two plotters discussed and planned and contrived.

First, how to get the ordinary foolscap to copy out the manuscript in a beautiful clear hand; next, how to get the address of the Editor to be approached; next, how to address him; next, how to find out how many stamps would be necessary to carry the fateful package and bring it back, if such was to be its doom.

It had all to be done in such secrecy and with such precautions. To walk to town and back was a matter of two or three hours, and the Boys would wonder if they did not hear why a journey had been made. They always saw the person who went to town. Consequently no member of the household could go without attracting attention. So some outsider must be found who could make the journey to visit a book-store and find the address required. It would have been all so simple if it had not been for the Boys.

But by the time the story was finished an acquaintance who lived on a neighboring farm had procured the address and some information about the stamps, though this last could not be applied very definitely, as the weight of the package could only be guessed at, in the absence of letter-scales.

The practical views of the Small Person at this crisis impress me greatly. They were so incompatible with her usual vagueness and romancings that they strike me as rather deliciously incongruous.

"I must have the right kind of paper," she argued, "because if I sent something that seemed queer to them they would think me silly to begin with. And I must write it very plainly, so that it will be easy to read, and on only one side, because if they are bothered by anything it will make them feel cross and they will hate me, and hate my story too. Then, as to the letter I send with it, I must be very careful about that. Of course they have a great many such letters and they must be tired of reading them. So I must make it very short. I would send it without a letter, but I must make them understand that I want it sent back if they don't like it, and call their attention to the stamps and let them know I am doing it for money and not just for the fun of getting the story published."

"How will you tell them that?" asked Edith, a trifle alarmed. It seemed so appalling and indelicate to explain to an Editor that you wanted money.

The Small Person felt the same thing. She felt this sordid mention of an expectation of receiving dollars and cents in return for her work a rather gross thing—a bold thing which might cause the Editor to receive a severe shock and regard her with cold disgust as a brazen Small Person. Upon the whole, it was the most awful part of the situation. But there was no help for it. Having put her hand to the plough she could not turn back, or trifle with the chance that the Editor might think her a well-to-do Small Person, who did not write stories for publication through sheer need, but for amusement.

"I shall have to think that over," she said, seriously. "I don't want to offend them, of course, but I *must* tell them that!"

If it were possible to depict in sufficiently strong colors her mental impressions of the manners, idiosyncrasies, and powers of an Editor, the picture would be an interesting one. It was an impression so founded upon respect and unbounded awe. Between an utterly insignificant little girl in the mountains of East Tennessee and an Editor in a princely official apartment in Philadelphia or New York, invested by Fate with the power to crush people to the earth and reduce them to impalpable dust by refusing their manuscripts—or to raise them to dizziest pinnacles of bliss by accepting them—there was a gulf imagination could not cross. Buddha himself, sitting in rapt passiveness with folded hands and down-dropped lids, was not so marvellous or so final. Editors presented themselves to her as representing a distinct superhuman race. It seemed impossible that they were moved by the ordinary emotions and passions of mankind. Why she was pervaded with a timorousness, with regard to them, which only Mad Bulls or Tigers with hydrophobia would have justified, it is not easy to explain. Somehow the picture of an Editor rendered infuriate—"gone *must*," as it were—in consequence of an inadequacy of stamps, or a fault in punctuation, or as a result of indistinct handwriting covering *both* sides of the ordinary foolscap, was a thing which haunted both her waking and sleeping hours. He would return the manuscript with withering comment, or perhaps not return it at all, and keep all the stamps, which might be considered perfectly proper for an Editor if one broke his Mede and Persian laws. Such a being as this must

be approached with salaams and genuflections, and forehead touching the dust.

Poor, little, anxious girl; I find her—rather touching at this distance—sitting in her raftered room, scribbling hotly, with her little cat in her arm, and her cheeks like scarlet flame. But she could not write the explanatory letter to the Editor until she had got the money to buy the paper to copy the story and the stamps to send it. And how to do this without applying to the Boys? The rafters and the little cat presided over hours of planning and discussion. What could be done.

"If we could make some money ourselves," said the Small Person, mournfully.

"But we can't," said Edith. "We've tried, you know."

"Yes," said the Small Person. "Embroidery—and people don't want it. Music lessons—people think I'm too young. Chickens—and they wouldn't hatch, and when they did they died of the gapes; besides the bother of having to sit on the hen to make her sit on the nest, and *live* at full speed round the yard chasing them back into the coops when they get through holes. Out of all that setting of goose-eggs only one hatched, and that wasn't a goose—it was a gander—and a plank fell on it and killed it."

They both indulged in a rueful giggle. The poultry-raising episode had been a very trying and exciting one.

"If we had something to sell," she went on.

"We haven't," said Edith.

The Story touched the Small Person sadly on the shoulder.

"It would be awfully mournful," she said, "if I really *could* write stories that people would like and if I could sell them and get money enough to make us quite comfortable—if all that good fortune was in me—and I

never found it out all my life—just because I can't buy some paper and postage-stamps."

It seemed too tragic. They sat and looked at each other in gloom. The conversation ended after a short time in desperate discouragement, and the Small Person was obliged to wander out to her hollow on the woodland road and stand for a long time looking at the changing trees, listening with a strange feeling to the sorrowful plaining of the doves on the tops of the pine-trees.

As the leaves were changing then, it cannot have been very long before the inspiration came which solved the problem. Who gave the information which gave rise to it is not a detail which anyone can remember. Something or other makes it seem probable that it was Edwina, who came into the writing-room one day and sat down, saying, *à propos* of nothing in particular:

"Aunt Cynthy's two girls made a dollar yesterday by selling wild grapes in the market. They got them in the woods over the hill."

"Which hill?" asked the Small Person.

"The hill near the house—the one you can see out of the window. They say there are plenty there."

"Are there?" said the Small Person.

"I wonder how much they got a gallon?" said Edith.

"I don't know," said Edwina. "But they sold a dollar's worth, and they say they are going to gather more."

"Edith!" exclaimed the Small Person, "Edith!" A brilliant idea had come to her. She felt her cheeks grow hot.

"Suppose," she said, "suppose *we* went and gathered some—a whole lot—and suppose we gave the girls part of the money to sell them for us in the market—perhaps we should get enough to buy the stamps and paper."

It seemed an inspiration of the gods. It was as if some divine chance had been given to them. Edith and Edwina clapped their hands. If wild grapes had been sold they would sell again; if the woods were full of them why should they not gather them—quarts, gallons, bucketfuls of them—as many as necessity required.

There arose an excited, joyous gabbling at once. It would be delightful. It would be fun in itself. It would be like going gypsying. And if there were really a great many grapes, they might be sold for more money than would pay for the stamps.

"It's a good thing we are not living in the Square now," said the Small Person. "We couldn't go and gather wild grapes in Back Sydney Street."

Suddenly they felt rich and hopeful. *If* they found grapes enough—*if* they were sold—*if* the Editor was in a benign humor, who could tell what might happen.

"If they buy this one," said the Small Person, "I can write others, and perhaps they will buy those too. I can always make up stories. Wouldn't it be queer if it turned out *that* was the thing I have to do. You know how we have kept saying, 'Something *must* be done.' Oh! Edith, wouldn't it be beautiful!"

"Of course it would be beautiful," answered Edith.

"Perhaps," sighed the Small Person, "it is too nice to be true. But we'll go and get the wild grapes."

And so they did.

It was Edith who arranged the detail. She saw the little mulatto girls and talked with them. They were greatly pleased at the idea of selling the grapes. They would pilot the party to places where they believed there were vines, and they would help in the gathering, themselves. The

expedition began to wear the air of an exhilarating escapade.

It would have been a delightful thing to do, even if it had been arranged merely as a holiday. They issued forth to conquer in the wildest spirits. Each one carried a tin bucket, and each wore a cotton frock, and a sun-bonnet or a utilitarian straw hat. The sun was rather hot, but the day was a golden one. There was gold in the trees, gold in the air, gold in the distances. The speculators had no decorum in their method. They chased about the warm, yellowing woods like wild things. They laughed and shouted to each other when they scrambled apart. They forced their way through undergrowth, and tore their way through brambles; they clambered over great logs; they uttered wild little shrieks at false alarms of snakes; they shouted with joy when they came upon vines; they filled their buckets, and ate grapes to repletion, and swung on the rope like vines themselves.

The Small Person had never been less sober. At intervals she roamed away a little, and stood in some warm, golden place, with young trees and bushes closed about her, simply breathing the air, and enraptured with a feeling of being like a well-sunned Indian peach. Her cheeks had such an Autumn heat in them—that glow which is not like the heat of summer. And what a day of dreams. If—if—if! "If" is such a charming word—such a benign one—such a sumptuous one. One cannot always say with entire sense of conviction, "I have a kingdom and a princely fortune, and I will build a palace of gold"—but who cannot say, "*If* I had a kingdom and the fortune of a prince, I would build a palace of gold." The golden palace rises fair, and one almost hears the courtiers speak. "If"

gives a shadow, the substance of which would be a poorer thing.

She built her palaces that day, and furnished them, and *lived* in them, as she searched for her wild grapes. They were innocent palaces, and small ones, for she was a very young and vague thing; but they were things of light and love and beauty, and filled with the diaphanous forms of the beliefs and dreams only such young palaces can hold.

The party went home at sunset with its tin pails full to the brim and covered with fresh vine-leaves.

"We shall get two or three dollars fer these," said one of the pilots. "Me an' Ser'phine didn't have nigh onto as many that other time."

"Now if they sell them," said Edith and the Small Person when they got home, "we shall have the paper and the postage-stamps."

It seems to be regretted that the amount they sold for cannot be recalled—but it was enough to buy the postage-stamps and paper and pay all expenses, and even leave something over. The business part of the speculation was a complete success.

With what care the ordinary foolscap was chosen; with what discreet precautions that it should be of the right size and shade, and should not enrage the Editor the instant he saw it. How large and round and clear each letter was made in the copying. An Editor who was afflicted with cataract might have read it half-way across his palatial sanctum. And then the letter that was written to accompany the venture! How it was reflected upon, and reasoned about, and discussed! "An Editor does not want to know anything about *me*" the Small Person said. "He does not know me, and he doesn't care about me, and he won't want to be bothered. I shall just say I have enclosed the stamps to send

the manuscript back with, if he does not want it. And I shall have to speak about the money. You see, Edith, if the stories are worth writing, they must be worth reading, and if they are worth printing and reading they must be worth paying for, and if they are not worth publishing and reading they are not worth writing, and I had better not waste my time on them." Whence this clear and practical point of view it would be difficult to say. But she was quite definite about it. The urgency of the situation had made her definite. Perhaps at a crisis she became practical—but it was only at a crisis.

And after serious deliberation and much rewriting and elimination the following concise and unmistakable epistle was enclosed in a roll of manuscript with enough extra stamps to have remailed an Editor:

"SIR: I enclose stamps for the return of the accompanying MS., 'Miss Desborough's Difficulties,' if you do not find it suitable for publication in your magazine. My object is remuneration.

"Yours Respectfully,
"F. HODGSON."

This was all except the address, which was that of the post-office of the neighboring town. Both Edith and herself were extremely proud of the closing sentence. It sounded so business-like. And no Editor could mistake it. And if this one was offended it positively could not be helped.

"And it's true," she said. "I never should have dreamed of sending a thing to an Editor if I hadn't been *obliged* to. My object *is* remuneration."

And then they could not help breaking into childish giggles at the comical aspect of their having done a thing so bold, and their ideas of what the Editor would think if

he could see the two curly and innocent Small Persons who had written that unflinchingly mercenary sentence.

It is a simple enough matter to send a story with a serene mind to Editors one knows, and of whom one is aware that they possess the fine intellectual acumen which leads them to appreciate the boon bestowed upon them, and the firmness to contemplate with some composure the fact that one's "object is remuneration." But it is quite a different affair to send one's timid and defenceless first-born into the cave of an unknown dragon, whose fangs may be dripping with the blood of such innocents.

Oh, the counting of the hours which elapse before it reaches its destination, and the awful thrill of realizing that perhaps at the very hour one is living through, the Editor is Reading it! The Small Person did not lose any quakings or heartbeats to which she was entitled by the situation. She experienced them all to the utmost, and even invented some new ones. She, and Edith quaked together.

It was so awful not to know anything whatever, to be so blankly ignorant of editorial habits and customs. How long did an Editor keep a manuscript before he accepted it, or put all the stamps on with a blow and sent it back? Did he send it back the day after he had read it, or did he keep it for months or years? Might one become old and gray without knowing whether one's story was accepted or rejected? If he accepted it, would he send the money at once or would he wait a long time, and how much would it be when it came? Five dollars—ten—twenty—a hundred? *Could* it possibly be as much as a hundred! And if it *could* be a hundred—oh! what things could be done with it, and how every body could live happily forever after!

"I could write one in a week," the Small Person said. "That would be *four hundred* dollars a month! Oh! no, Edith," breathlessly, "it *couldn't* be a hundred!" This was because it seemed impossible that any one could make four hundred dollars a month by her stories and really retain her senses.

She felt it was better to restrain such frenzy and discipline herself by putting it as low as possible.

"Suppose it is only about a dollar," she said. "I'm sure it's worth more, but they might be very stingy. And we want money so much—we are so *obliged* to have it, that I suppose I should be forced to let them have it for a dollar and even go on writing more."

"It *couldn't* be as little as that," said Edith.

"It would be rather cheap even for me," said the Small Person, and she began to laugh a little hysterically. "A dollar story!"

Then she began to make calculations. She was not at all good at calculations.

"The magazine costs two dollars a year," she pondered. "And if they have fifty thousand subscribers, that would make a hundred thousand dollars a year. They haven't *many* stories in each number. Some of the magazines have more than fifty thousand subscribers! Edith," with a little gasp, "suppose it was a thousand dollars!"

They vibrated like pendulums from light-headed ecstasy to despair.

"They'll send it back," she said, in hopeless downfall, "or they'll keep the stamps and they won't send it back at all, and I shall wait weeks, and weeks, and weeks, and never know *anything* about it. And all this thinking and

hoping and contriving will have gone for worse than nothing!"

She ended with tears in her eyes, half-laughing at herself because they were there, and she was an emotional Small Person, who had also a sense of the humor of her own exaggerations. She was a creature who laughed a great deal, and was much given to making her sisters and brothers laugh. She liked to say ridiculous things and exaggerate her views of a situation until they became grotesque and she was obliged to laugh wildly at them herself. "The family's Ups and the family's Downs" were a source of unbridled jokes which still had a touch of usefulness in them.

"I laugh instead of crying," she used to say. "There *is* some fun in laughing and there isn't any in crying, and it *is* ridiculous in one way."

She made many of these rueful jokes in the days that followed. It seemed as if these were months of days and the tension became more than was bearable. It is likely that only a few weeks passed.

But at last—at last something came. Not the manuscript with all the stamps in a row, but a letter.

And she and Edith and Mamma and Edwina sat down panting to read it.

And when it was read they could not understand it!

The letter was not preserved, but the memory of the impression it created preserved itself.

Somehow it seemed strangely vague to their inexperienced minds. It began—thank God—by praising the story. It seemed to like it. It plainly did not despise it at all. Its sole criticisms were on the unceremonious abbreviation of a name, and an intimation that it was rather long. It did not say it was refused, but neither Edith nor the

Small Person were at all sure that it meant that it was accepted, and it said nothing about the Remuneration.

"Have they accepted it?" said the Small Person.

"They haven't rejected it," said Edith.

"They evidently think it is rather good," said Mamma.

"I don't know exactly what they mean," the Small Person finally decided, "but I believe it has something to do with the Remuneration."

Perhaps it had, and perhaps it had not. Perhaps greater experience might have been able to reach something technical in it they could not see. They read and re-read it, thought and reasoned, and invented translations. But the only conclusion they could reach was that perhaps Remuneration not being the Editor's object, was his objection, and that he thought that by adroit encouragement and discouragement he might obtain the prize without the Object.

So after a little waiting the Small Person wrote to ask for its return. In after years she was frequently puzzled by her memory of that first letter. She never knew what it had meant. Experience taught her that it was curiously unbusiness-like, and inclined her to believe that in some way it was meant to convey that the objection was the Remuneration.

Then the story was sent to another Editor.

"I'll try two or three times," the Author said to Edith. "I won't give up the first minute, but I won't keep on forever. If they don't want it, that must mean that it isn't good enough."

The story—whose real name was not "Miss Desborough's Difficulties," but something rather like it—was one she had planned and partially written in her thirteenth year, in the Square. One or two cherished scenes

she had written in the old account-books. Many years later, on being exhumed from among old magazines in the Congressional Library, and read again, it revealed itself quite a respectable, but not in the least striking, story of love, estrangement, and reconciliation between a stately marvel of English young lady beauty and good-breeding, and the stalwart, brave, and masculine British officer, who was separated and suffered with her in high-bred dignity and fine endurance. It was an evident—though unconscious—echo of like stories in *Cornhill, Temple Bar,* and *London Society.* The Small Person had been much attached to these periodicals. Its meritorious features were a certain reality of feeling in the people who lived in it, and a certain nice quality in the feeling itself. However trifling and romantic the plot, the officer was a nice fellow and a gentleman, the beauteous English maiden had good manners, and her friends, the young-married people, were sympathetic and sweet-tempered. It moved with some dramatic touch and had an air of conviction. Otherwise it had no particular qualities or originality.

Did months elapse again before they heard from the second Editor—or was it years? Perhaps it was only weeks, but they contained several protracted lifetimes.

And then! Another letter! Not the manuscript yet!

"SIR: (They were immensely edified at being called Sir.) Your story, 'Miss Desborough's Difficulties,' is so distinctly English that our reader is not sure of its having been written by an American. We see that the name given us for the address is not that of the writer. (The Samaritan friend had lent his name that the mail might evade the Boys.) Will you kindly inform us if the story is original?

"Yours, truly," etc.

This was the letter in effect. It would be impossible to recall the exact words.

Shaken to the centre of her being the Small Person replied by the next mail.

"The story is original. I am English myself, and have only been a short time in America."

The Editor replied quite promptly:

"Before we decide will you send us another story?"

How they were elated almost to delirium! How delighted Mamma's smile was! How the two unliterary ones exulted and danced about.

"It will be Accepted! It will be Accepted! It will be Accepted!" they danced about exclaiming.

"Perhaps the Editor will buy them both!" said Edith. "That will be *two* instead of one!"

The Small Person went up to the raftered room positively trembling with joy and excitement. The Editor did not believe she had written her own story. He would not believe it until she wrote another. He would see! She would show him!

The little cat lay curled up in her arm for three days, seeming lulled by the endless scratching of the pen. She said nothing, but perhaps in some occult feline way she was assisting. The Small Person's cheeks blazed hotter and hotter. She felt as if she were running a race for life or death. But she was not tired. She was strung up to the highest and intensest pitch. The Story was good to her. Her best beloved, who had stood by her all her vivid short life—making dull things bright and bright things brilliant—who had touched the face of all the world with a tender, shining hand—who had never deserted her—did not desert her now. Faithful and dear fair shadow of things, how passionately she loved it! In three days the new story

was finished. It was shorter than "Miss Desborough," but she knew it was as good, and that the Editor would see it was written by the same hand. But she made it an American story without a touch of English coloring. And the grapes had brought enough money for more postage-stamps.

She did not walk for the next few days—she danced. She chased about the woods wildly, gathering more flowers and leaves and following more birds than ever. Sometimes when she went to the hollow in the road she felt as if she might be lifted from her feet by the strange exhilaration within her, and carried away over the variegated tree-tops into the blue.

Her stories were of some use after all. They were not altogether things to be laughed at because they were Romantic. Somehow she felt almost as if she were vindicating and exalting a friend who had been kind and tender, and yet despised. Ah, how *good* it was! *If* all would go well—if she might go on—if she need be ashamed no longer—but write openly as many stories as she liked—how *good* to be alive! She was so young and ardent, she knew nothing and believed *everything*. It might have been arranged by Fortune that she should get the fullest, finest flavor of it. When the answer came they were passing through one of "the Family's Downs." That was their manner of describing the periods when everything seemed at its worst; when even the Boys, who were robustly life-enjoying creatures wished "something would turn up." Nothing is more trying than to feel that one's sole hope is that "something may turn up." The something usually turns down.

And on one of these days the Letter came. Standing by a table in the bare little room, the Small Person opened it

with quivering hands, while Mamma and Edith looked tremblingly on.

She read it, rather weakly, aloud.

"SIR: We have decided to accept your two stories, and enclose payment. Fifteen dollars for 'Aces or Clubs,' and twenty dollars for 'Miss Desborough's Difficulties.' We shall be glad to hear from you again.

"Yours, truly," etc.

She gave a little hysterical laugh, which was half a gasp.

They—they've accepted it," she said, rather obviously to Edith, "and they've sent me thirty-five dollars."

"Well, my dear," said Mamma, quite tremulously, "they really were very nice tales. I could not help thinking so."

"They are Accepted," cried Edith, quite shrill with ecstasy. "And they will take more. And you can go on writing them all your life."

And just at that moment—as if it had been arranged like a scene in a play, one of the Boys came in. It was the elder one, and rather an intimate of the Small Person, of whom he was really quite fond, though he considered her Romantic, and having a strong sense of humor, his witticisms on the subject of the stories had been well worth hearing.

"What's up?" he said. "What is the matter with you all?"

"Come out on the Porch," said the Small Person.

Why she was suddenly overwhelmed with a sort of shyness, which embraced even Mamma and Edith, she could not have told.

"Well," he said, when they stood outside.

"I've just had a letter," said the Small Person, awkwardly. "It's—it's from an Editor."

"An Editor!" he repeated. "What does that mean?"

"I sent him one of my stories," she went on, feeling that she was getting red. "And he wouldn't believe I had written it, and he wrote and asked me to send another, I suppose to prove I could do it. And I wrote another—and sent it. And he has accepted them both, and sent me thirty-five dollars."

"Thirty-five dollars!" he exclaimed, staring at her.

"Yes," she answered. "Here's the check."

And she held it out to him.

He took it and looked at it, and broke into a good-natured, delighted, boyish laugh.

"Well, by Jove!" said he, looking at her, half-amused and half-amazed. "That's first-class, isn't it? By Jove!"

"Yes," she said, "it is. And they want some more. And I am going to write some—as many as I can—a whole lot!"

And so she did.

But she had crossed the delicate, impalpable dividing line. And after that, Life itself began, and memories of her lose the meaning which attaches itself to the memories of the Mind of a Child.

Eugene Field

(America: 1850-1895)

Poems(: Wynken, Blynken and Nod, Gingham Dog and Calico Cat

There are a few men and women in this world who look from the outside just like grown-ups, with gray hair and perhaps a few wrinkles, and yet really they are in their hearts just little boys and girls.

About sixty years ago, in the big city of Saint Louis, there was born a little boy who was to be like this. His name was Eugene Field, and he lived to be a tall man with little sons and daughters of his own, but still he never really grew up all his life long.

There were some very queer things about this queer boy, and here is one of them. He did not know what day his birthday was! And queerer still, none of the family could remember whether it was September 1st or September 2d, so the poor boy had to grow up without a birthday at all. And, worse than that, the four other Field children died one by one, and so Eugene and his brother Roswell had to grow up without them. And worst of all, Eugene had to grow up as well as he could without any mother. He was only six when she died. He and his brother were sent on the cars to New England to live with their Aunt Mary and their Cousin Mary in a sleepy little village among the Pelham Hills. Here Eugene spent his schooldays and his playdays and his churchdays as other boys do, with this difference: Eugene Field never did anything just like other people, even when he played “Hi Spy” with his boy friends after school.

In the first place most boys do not love animals as much as Eugene loved them. Every pet that he owned, from the goat to the tame squirrel, had a queer name of its

own, and Eugene believed that the animals knew their names and could talk among themselves in dog-and-cat-and-goat language as well as he could talk in human fashion. Some of the funny names of his pets were Finniken-Minniken, Dump, and Poog Boog. His first poem was written about a dog that he called the Dooly-Dog, and began like this:—

Dooly-Dog speaks,—

"Oh, had I wings like a dove I would fly
Away from this world of fleas,
I'd fly all around Miss Emerson's yard,
And light on Miss Emerson's trees."

When he was a grown-up boy, Eugene Field had a little fox terrier, Jessie, with an excited white tail and yellow ears, who used to sit very still on guard while her master wrote, and who growled very fiercely when any one came into the room to disturb him. All his life Eugene loved his pets, and he used to read his poems aloud to them. He even thought that they knew enough to smile at the funny places. His canaries used to hop across the paper while he wrote, getting mixed up with the pen and ink. He hatched out little fuzzy wuzzy chickens in his cellar against the furnace, and kept butterflies and soft silver moths in his closet instead of clothes. One of the poems that he wrote when he grew up began this way,—

"I wouldn't give much for the boy 'at grows up,
With no friendship subsistin' 'tween him and a pup."

With all his liking for pets and poetry Eugene was an active boy, full of life and spirit. He was the chosen leader of all the boys in the village, and invented such queer amusements and such lively adventures that the good fathers and mothers of the town would sigh, shake their

heads, and say, “The Field boys are good boys, but full of the Old Nick.”

His pranks in school nearly turned his teacher’s hair gray. He would set the whole school laughing with the funny pictures he made in his books, and then when the poor teacher came down from the platform to see what he was doing, he always had a history book innocently open before him and seemed to be studying very hard. Sometimes the book was upside down, but Eugene studied it nearly as hard in that way as in any other.

He and five friends built a castle of tree trunks and bushes on a hill behind the schoolhouse. They dug a deep ditch around the foot of the castle and covered it with boughs and leaves so that it looked just like the solid ground round about. One day the teacher followed them up the hill to see what new mischief they were up to. Over the narrow strip of ground they had left across the moat the boys ran into the fort. But when the professor started after them,—crash! He fell through the twigs, down into the ditch till he was half buried in the mud and bushes below.

Of course this was a very naughty performance and richly deserved punishment. But Eugene was always sorry for his tricks afterwards, and this time he went to the teacher with such a manly apology that the good man forgave all the small rascals, and merely laughed, “These boys *are* boys, sure enough.” Although he did not like to study as well as he did to play,—and after all, who does?—Eugene was very bright and quick to learn when he set his mind upon his work. He could write verses, draw pictures, and recite “A Soldier of the Legion” better than any other boy or girl in the school.

One of the greatest treats of his childhood was to be allowed to visit his grandmother in the big, white, old-fashioned house in Amherst. Six days in the week he and his brother and cousins could romp about the fields, hunting for hidden stores of wintergreen, or nuts, or go fishing for trout and dace in the shallows of the silver Connecticut, or play hide-and-go-seek in the crannies and nooks of the woodshed. But at six o'clock on Saturday the house was swept and dusted, and Sunday began. And there could be no more merriment for a long twenty-four hours. For his grandmother thought that it was almost wrong for a boy to smile on Sunday. Eugene used to carry his grandmother's foot-stove to church for her and light it with coals from the vestry-room fire. Then while grandmother sat with her feet warm and comfortable on the stove and nibbled cassia cakes and wintergreen lozenges to keep from falling asleep, poor Eugene would shiver and nod in the hard pew through the long sermons and Sunday school. He used to watch the sounding-board over the pulpit quiver and shake when the preacher shouted very loudly, as the preachers used to do in those days. Then he would watch the choir-master pitch the tune for the singers with a tuning-fork, and wonder drowsily why it was all right for nice old ladies to eat wintergreen and peppermints in church and not all right for little boys to do the same.

But the sermons and the Bible reading and the hymns all made a great impression on the little boy. When he was nine years old, he wrote a sermon himself called "The Way of the Transgressor is Hard,"—a very good sermon, too, for a child to write. But, as I said at the beginning, Eugene Field was not like most boys. And perhaps that is why everybody loved him so well.

Even when he was a mischievous little boy, his aunt and chums and teacher all loved him. And when he was a grown-up boy, the whole world loved him, old folks and middle-aged folks, but most of all the children, his own four children, Trotty, Melvin, Daisy, and Pinny, and all other little boys and girls who have ever read his poems. He wrote about Shuffle-Shoon, Winken, Blinken, and Nod, about the terrible Flubdub, the queer Bingo Bird, the horrid Flimflam, the charming Dinkie Bird and the Doodle Do, and a host of strange beasts and beings, dear to the heart of every child.

Sometimes he wrote funny prose also. Here is something about the Wasp:—

"See the Wasp. He has pretty yellow stripes around his body, and a darning-needle in his tail. If you will Pat the Wasp upon the Tail We will give you a nice Picture Book."

And sometimes it was funny verse that he wrote, like this:—

"Down through the snowdrifts in the street
With blustering joy he steers.
His rubber boots are full of feet
His tippit full of ears."

It was partly because Eugene Field wrote such amusing and pretty poems for the children, partly because he told them such splendid stories, as they perched on his knee, and partly because he knew such happy games to teach them that they all loved him so well, but the greatest reason why the children loved Eugene Field was because he was a child himself always, and never forgot the wonderful secret of how to play.

Orison Swett Marden

(America: 1848-1924)
Inspirational self-help books.

My struggles began when, a double orphan at the age of seven, I was bound out by my guardian, successively, in five different families in the backwoods of New Hampshire. There I began the training and experience in the School of Hard Knocks which ultimately led to the writing of my first book, "Pushing to the Front."

All the year around, with the exception of short periods in winter, when I attended the district school, I had to work very hard for a bare living. Even when I was nearly of age I got only thirteen dollars a month in summer and in winter nothing but my board and clothes.

In a very sparsely settled country twenty-four miles from the nearest railroad station. Books were very scarce, and I saw few of any kind outside the school text-books, until I was grown up. Then, one fateful red-letter day, I happened to get hold of Smiles' "Self Help."

That day marked the turning point in my life. I read and re-read the wonderful book. It was a revelation to me. The stories of poor boys climbing to the top so inspired me that I resolved to get out of the woods, get an education at any cost, and make something of myself.

Up to this time my ambition had not been stirred, and I had not begun to realize that I was such an ignoramus, not having even a decent common school education. I never dreamed that I could get a college education or that there would ever be any chance for me to do anything more than make a very poor living at hard work as others all about me were doing.

But after reading "Self Help," something kept saying to me "There is a chance for you, and you can do something and amount to something." The picture of Samuel Smiles talking to poor boys, gathered from the streets of London in an old shed, about success in life, showing them their possibilities and trying to arouse their ambition by pointing out that though they were poor and apparently had no opportunity, they might become great men even as other boys as poor as they, had thrilled my imagination. It not only awakened me to a knowledge of my own possibilities but created in me a burning desire to develop them, with the object of one day doing something that would stimulate and encourage struggling American lads like myself, who had no money, no friends or relatives, to develop and make the most of all the powers Nature had given them.

In fact, I resolved then to begin to get together material for a book which I hoped would some time be to the American boy what Smiles' "Self Help" had been to the English boy.

By dint of extra hard work and the most rigid economy I managed to scrape together two dollars, every cent of which I spent for a large blank note book. On the opening page I printed in big letters the motto I had adopted: *"Let every occasion be a great occasion, for you cannot tell when fate may be taking your measure for a larger place"*; and in it I planned to jot down every thought and suggestion which came to me as material for my dream book. Nothing that came into my life afterward meant quite so much, was quite so precious to me as that blank note book, in which was outlined the first rough beginnings of "Pushing to the Front."

Not yet being of age when I appealed to my guardian to let me go away somewhere to school, he objected very seriously, and threatened to post me in the county paper if I attempted to leave where I was. But in spite of threats and opposition, dressed in my best suit, consisting of a woolen shirt, a shabby coat and trousers and a pair of cowhide boots, I started one day for the Colby Academy, New London, New Hampshire, some fifty miles away.

This being my first exit from the wilderness, I was surprised to find how many well-dressed boys and girls there were at the Academy, many of them from the city, and all infinitely further advanced in their studies than I was. In fact, I was ashamed to start in where I belonged, which was pretty far back even in a district school. But I managed to push ahead, paying my way by waiting on the table in the students' boarding house, chopping cord wood in the woods, sawing wood, etc. And always, in reading, and in my odd leisure moments, I was thinking of and working on my dream book, adding new material, filling new note books, from every possible source.

This continued all the way up from my academy days through my college course and post-graduate courses at different universities, until after receiving my degrees I went to Kearny, Nebraska. There I finished the manuscript of "Pushing to the Front," and prepared the manuscripts for several other books.

Then came the tragedy which in a few hours wiped out all the results of years of hard work.

The hotel in which I was living and of which I was proprietor was burned to the ground. Everything I had, including my precious manuscripts and all my valuable note books, was destroyed. Clad only in my underclothing, I barely escaped from the building with my life, being

knocked down the stairs from the top floor by burning timbers from the roof.

When I found that every scratch of a pen, all of my precious note books, and everything I had was gone, while the hotel was still smouldering I went down the street and bought a twenty-five cent note book in which I began to re-write whatever I could remember of the lost manuscripts. This was done in a room over a livery stable, where I boarded myself.

While never losing sight of my first ambition, up to this time I had been a business man. But after the fire and the terrible Nebraska drought in which I lost all of my savings, nearly fifty thousand dollars, I decided to give up business, return to Boston and finish re-writing the manuscript of "Pushing to the Front," and try to start *The Success Magazine.*

Not being familiar with publishers' methods, when my manuscript was completed, thinking it might take me many months, perhaps a year, to get a publisher to accept it, I made three copies and submitted one to each of three different publishing houses at the same time— Houghton, Mifflin & Co., T.Y. Crowell Co., and another Boston house. To my great surprise, all three wanted the book. I finally gave it to Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

So doubtful was I of the success of "Pushing to the Front" that even after I had signed a contract I went to the publishers and asked them to let me have the manuscript and re-write it. Mr. Horace Scudder, then editor of *The Atlantic Monthly,* who had passed upon the manuscript, advised me not to touch it. But even then I was not satisfied, and thought I never again would give a publisher such a poor book.

It went through twelve editions in the first year of publication, however, and has since been translated into practically all the leading languages of the world. Mr. Gladstone offered to write the introduction to the London edition, but unfortunately he died before this was completed. "Pushing to the Front" has been used for many years as a text book in the government schools of Japan and in the schools of many other countries. It has probably gone through more than two hundred and fifty editions, many more than any other of my forty-odd books.

My experience with "Pushing to the Front" convinced me that no author can really gauge his own work. I would have been glad to sell the manuscript for a thousand dollars. I did sell the German rights for a song, and the German publishers have sold in the neighborhood of seventy-five thousand copies.

Laura E. Richards

(America:1850-1943)
Captain January, Children's Stories

By far the easiest thing for an author to do, in response to a request for a maiden effort is to send one of those Daisy Ashfordings of which every author has been guilty.

My own concerned a "Marion Gray, a lovely girl of thirteen," the youngest daughter of "a celebrated nobleman in great favor with the king." She was stolen by the gypsies. After five years, when the new king was sitting on his throne condemning a band of gypsies, one young girl stood with downcast eyes before him and, when sentenced, raised her dark flashing eyes upon the king.

Then—"a piercing shriek is heard, the crown and sceptre roll down the steps of the throne, and Marion Gray is clasped in her father's arms!"

As for my first published work:

I made my literary debut in *St. Nicholas* in the goodly company of John Ames Mitchell, founder and for so many years proprietor and editor of *Life.* "Johnny" Mitchell was at that time a young architect working in the same office with my husband, that of Messrs. War and Van Brunt. The two were warm friends and "Johnny" Mitchell was often at our home. I was then (the early '70's) a young mother making nonsense songs for my babies and crooning them to more or less tuneful airs which were born with the songs.

I think it was my husband who first suggested that Johnny should illustrate some of my jingles. He took a parcel of them home and returned a week later, bringing the pictures of "The Shark" "Little John Bottlejohn," etc., which delighted a generation of *St. Nicholas* boys and

girls. We sent our joint productions to kind Mrs. Mary Mapes Dodge, then editor-in-chief of *St. Nicholas*, and were most warmly received.

Under the wing of the children's saint, therefore, we both made our bow. For quite a number of years we continued to work more or less together, I sending him a rhyme now and then, he occasionally despatching a picture for me to furnish words. Increasing years and varying cares broke up the delightful partnership of work, but the three of us were always warm friends.

This should, I suppose, be called my maiden effort. I might add a word about one of my early prose efforts, "Captain January," a little story which, after being rejected by every publisher of repute in this country and by several in England, at last fell into the friendly hands of Mr. Dana Estes and had some little success.

Robert Louis Stevenson

(Scotland:1850-1894)

A Child's Garden of Verses, Treasure Island, Kidnapped

"My tea is nearly ready, and the sun has left the sky;
It's time to take the window and see Leerie going by;
For every night at tea-time and before you take your seat,
With lantern and with ladder he comes posting up the street."

"What luck it is to have a lamp before our very own door," thought little Louis Stevenson as he stood by the nursery window to watch for the lamplighter.

One by one the lamps along Howard Place were touched into points of light, until the lamplighter reached No. 8, and then came the crowning joy of all, when Leerie stopped to light that special lamp. Would he look up and see the small face pressed against the window, and nod "good evening," or would he be too busy to think of little boys?

It was no wonder that the coming of the lamplighter was so eagerly looked for! The winter days were often long and wearisome to the little child shut up in the nursery there, and everything he could see from his window was interesting and exciting.

Louis, or "Smout" as his father called him, was so often ill, and caught cold so easily in the bitter cold Edinburgh winds, that he was often kept indoors the whole winter through, and all that he saw of the outside world was through his nursery window. They were happy days indeed when he was well enough to play about the nursery, to lie flat on the floor chalking and painting his pictures,

and to watch for Leerie when the gloaming came. But there were many other days spent in bed, when Louis was obliged to make-believe a good deal to keep himself happy, as he sat up with a little shawl pinned round his shoulders and his toys arranged on the counterpane beside him.

It was all very well to make-believe in the daytime, when he could drill his soldiers and sail his ships and build his cities on "the pleasant land of counterpane," but when night came on it was weary work to lie long hours awake with a cough that hurt, dreaming half-waking dreams of wild terrors that were worst of all.

The wintry winds shrieked as they swept past, thumping at the window and howling away into the distance, and they sounded to the shivering child like a horseman galloping up into the town, thundering past with jingling spurs in fearful haste on some dreadful errand, only to turn and gallop back again with the same mysterious haste. Louis in his little bed, shaken with terrified sobs, said his prayers over and over again, and longed for the morning to come. It was so difficult to be brave when the night was so dark and he was so full of aches and pains.

But there was always someone at hand ready to comfort the child through those long dreadful hours. His nurse, Alison Cunningham, "Cummie" as he called her, never failed him. She was always there to drive away the terrors and soothe the pain, always patient and always gentle with the poor little weary boy. His nurseries changed first to Inverleith Row and then to No. 17 Heriot Row, but Cummie was always there. She was his sure refuge from terrors at night and the sharer of his joys by day; the feeling of "her most comfortable hand" he never

forgot. Sometimes on those long watchful nights, when his wide-open eyes began to see fearful shapes, he would ask:

"Why is the room so gaunt and great?
Why am I lying awake so late?"

She would wrap a blanket round him and carry him over to the window, where he could look across the dark trees of the gardens beneath and see a few lights shining in the windows of the houses in Queen Street opposite. Safe in her arms, no shadows could touch him, and together they gravely discussed the question as to whether the lights meant that another wee laddie was awake watching with his nurse for the morn to come.

"When will the carts come in?" was the question always on his lips those weary nights. For the coming of the carts always meant that daybreak was at hand and the world was astir once more.

"Out in the city sounds begin,
Thank the kind God, the carts come in!
An hour or two more, and God is so kind,
The day shall be blue in the window blind."

But it was not only Cummie who watched over and cared for little Louis, there were his father and his mother too. Often during the night the nursery door would open gently, and his father would come in and sit by his bedside and tell him story after story, until the child forgot his pain and weariness and drifted away into the land of dreams. His father's tales always had a special charm for him and helped him through one terrible hour which he never forgot. He had been left alone in a room and by mistake had locked himself in, and then was unable to unlock the door. Evening was coming on, all his terrors of the dark began to gather round as the shadows crept nearer.

"All the wicked shadows coming tramp, tramp, tramp,
With the black night overhead."

But his father was close at hand, and his voice came through the keyhole talking about such delightful, interesting things that Louis held his breath to listen and quite forgot the shadows and the darkness until the locksmith arrived to open the door.

Then there was his young mother, "my jewels of mothers" as he called her, who was so ready to play with him and who always made even the dull nursery a sunshiny, happy place. She was not very strong, and Louis began early to try to take care of her. One day when he was only three years old, he was left alone with her after dinner and remembered that Cummie always wrapped a shawl about her; there was no shawl to be found, but he reached up and took a doyly off the table, carefully unfolded it, and spread it over as much of her as it would cover.

"That's a wee bittie, mama," he said comfortingly.

Cummie was very strict about Sunday, but his "jewelest of mothers" had a way of overcoming the difficulty, and if he promised to play nothing but the "Pilgrim Progress" game she sewed a patch on the back of one of his wooden figures, and lo! there was Christian, ready to flee from the City of Destruction, with all his exciting adventures ahead.

There was of course the Shorter Catechism to be learned, and there was no way of avoiding that, but afterwards came long chapters out of the Bible which Louis loved to listen to, and Cummie would read parts of the old writings of the Covenanters, and everything she read to him she managed to make most interesting. Louis himself learned to repeat long passages out of the Bible, besides Psalms and hymns, and he always recited them

with a great deal of action, his small hands scarcely ever still, and his dark eyes shining with excitement.

With mother and Cummie to amuse him all day long, he was rather like a small prince in the nursery, and it was his will and pleasure that someone should constantly read to him. He never could listen quietly to any story, but must always try to act it, slaying dragons, attacking the enemy, galloping off on a fiery horse to carry news to the enemy, until he was tired out, and Cummie would smooth back the hair from his hot forehead, and try to persuade him to rest.

"Sit down and bide quiet for a bittie," she said, and coaxed him to sew a piece of his kettle-holder, or knit the garter that was as black as only a child's grimy little hands could make it.

When spring came it brought new life to little Louis, and the long nights of pain and cold winter days were forgotten, as he played about the garden of his grandfather's manse at Colinton. Like the flowers, he began to lift up his head and grow strong in the sunshine. It was a different world to him when the sun shone and the sky was blue, and the splendid colours of the flowers made his days a rainbow riot of delight. There was no more lying in bed, no more coughs and wakeful nights, but instead, long warm summer days spent in the garden, or down by the river, where there was the joy of Louis's heart—a mill.

There were cousins there too, in the sunny garden, ready to play all the games that Louis invented, to lie behind the bushes with toy guns watching for a drove of antelopes to go by, to be shipwrecked sailors on a desert island, where the only food to be had to keep them from starvation was buttercups, and even to eat those buttercups and suffer the after effects rather than spoil the pretending game.

There too was the kind aunt who brought out biscuits and calves'-foot jelly at eleven o'clock from her store-room, which always had so delicious a smell of raisins and soap and spices. Never was there so kind an aunt, and never did anything taste so good as those biscuits and that calves'-foot jelly.

The children stood rather in awe of their grandfather, for he was very strict, and woe betide any small foot that left its mark on the flower-beds of the manse garden. It was whispered that their grandfather made a nightly round and examined each little muddy shoe put out to be cleaned at night, ready to fit it into the track which the evildoer had left on the flower-bed. It was enough to make them very careful where they stepped. It was awe-inspiring, too, to see their grandfather in the pulpit every Sunday, and though they admired his beautiful face and his white hair, there was something rather terrifying about him, and the cold dark room where he sat solemnly writing his sermons was seldom invaded by any of his grandchildren.

But there was something in that dark room which Louis longed with all his heart to possess. On the walls hung some very highly-coloured Indian pictures, just the sort of gorgeous colouring that Louis loved, and he wanted one more than anything else in all the world. At last there came a day when he was sent into the awesome room to repeat a Psalm to his grandfather, and his heart beat high with hope. Perhaps if he said his Psalm very nicely, his grandfather might reward him with a gift of one of those coloured pictures.

"Thy foot He'll not let slide, nor will
He slumber that thee keeps"

quavered the little voice, while Louis kept one eye on his grandfather's solemn face, and one on the Indian picture.

When the Psalm was finished, his grandfather lifted him on his knee, and kissing him gave him "a kindly little sermon" which so surprised Louis, who had a very loving little heart, that he quite forgot his disappointment about the gaily-coloured pictures he had longed for.

When those sunny summer days came to an end and Louis went back to Heriot Row, he had a companion with him now who made even the grey days cheerful. His cousin Robert Alan Stevenson spent a whole winter with him, and together they lived in a make-believe world of their own. Disagreeable things were turned into delightful plays, and even their meals were interesting. Instead of having to eat up a plateful of uninteresting porridge for breakfast, the magic of make-believe turned it into a foreign land, covered with snow (which was the sugar of course) or an island that was threatened by the encroaching sea (that was the cream), and the excitement of seeing the dry land disappearing or the snow mountains being cleared was so entrancing that the porridge was eaten up before the magic came to an end. Even cold mutton could be charmed into something quite delicious when Louis called it red venison, and described the mighty hunter who had gone forth and shot down the deer after many desperate adventures. Jelly was always a kind of golden globe of enchantment to him, and he was sure the spoon might at any moment reveal a secret hollow, filled with amber light.

The boys possessed also very grand make-believe kingdoms which kept them very busy with the affairs of the nation. The kingdoms were called Encyclopædia and Nosingtonia, and were both islands, for Louis loved islands then as much as afterwards when "Treasure Island" took the place of Nosingtonia.

But perhaps the greatest joy of all was when Saturday afternoons came round and the boys went down to Leith to look at the ships, always the chief delight of their hearts. Passing down Leith Walk they came to a stationer's shop at the corner, where in the window there stood a tiny toy theatre, and piled about it a heap of playbooks, "A penny plain and twopence coloured."

Happy indeed was the child who had a penny to spend (for of course no self-respecting boy with paint-box at home ever thought of buying a "Twopence coloured"), who could walk into the shop with assurance and ask to see those books. Many a time did Louis stand outside, having no penny to spend, and try to see the outside pictures and to read as much of the printing as could be seen at such a disadvantage.

It was no use going in unless the penny was forthcoming, for Mr. Smith kept a stern eye on little boys, and seemed to know at a glance whether they were "intending purchasers" or not. Inside the dark little shop which "smelt of Bibles" he stood, and seemed to grudge them the pleasure of even turning over the pages of those thrilling plays.

"I do not believe, child, that you are an intending purchaser at all," he growled one day, sweeping the precious books away when Louis had "swithered" over his choice so long that no wonder dark suspicions were aroused.

It was those little books which opened to Louis the golden world of romance, the doors of which were never closed to him again.

It was not until Louis was eight years old that he began to read. His mother and Cummie had always been ready to read to him, and that, he thought, was the pleasanter way.

But quite suddenly he discovered that it was good to be able to read stories to himself, and it was a red-letter day when he first got possession of the *Arabian Nights*.

Long before he could write, he was fond of dictating stories to anyone who would write them for him, and poor patient Cummie would write sheet after sheet of nonsense, all of which she treasured and read to his mother afterwards. Sitting over the fire at night while Louis lay sleeping in his little bed, the mother and nurse whispered together over the cleverness of their boy, and anxiously tried to reassure each other that he was growing stronger, while they built their castles in the air always for Louis to dwell in as king.

Louis's school-days made but little impression upon him. He was so often kept away by ill-health, and the schools were so often changed, that he never won many laurels there. Whatever he liked to learn he learned with all his heart, and to the rest he gave very little attention whatever. He was not very fond of games, for he was not strong enough to play them well, and it was only when the make-believe magic began that he was in his element. He played football, but had to invent a tale of enchantment which changed the ball into a talisman, and the players into two Arabian nations, before he could enjoy it.

Far more exciting than any football was the business of being a lantern-bearer, that game of games, which he described with his magic pen long afterwards.

Picture Louis, stealing out of the house at North Berwick on a late September evening, his overcoat buttoned up tightly over something that bulged at the waist, his very walk betokening an errand of mystery. Presently, coming over the wind-swept shore, another dark

figure is seen, also with a buttoned-up overcoat, and the same kind of bulge at the waist.

"Have you got your lantern?" breathed Louis.

"Yes," comes the answer. All is well. Over the links and away to the shore the mysterious figures wend their way and are joined by others equally mysterious, and one by one they climb into an old boat and crouch together there at the bottom. The wind whistles and shrieks overhead, but down there they are sheltered, and the overcoats are slowly and carefully unbuttoned, and what seemed to be but a bulge is shown to be a tin lantern burning brightly, which quite accounts for the strong smell of toasting tin which has been hanging in the air about them.

In the dim light of these lanterns the lantern-bearers sit, and wild and exciting is the talk that mingles with the shriek of the wind, while the sky is black overhead, and the sound of the sea is in their ears.

No one can talk as Louis does, he lays a spell upon them all with his make-believe magic, but after all it is not the talk that is so fascinating, but rather the buttoning up of those overcoats over the lighted lanterns, the exquisite joy of knowing that unseen and unsuspected a hidden light is burning brightly there—that was the joy of being a lantern-bearer.

So it was that the make-believe magic kept Louis happy in his childhood's games, and when he grew up to be a man and left the games behind him, the make-believe magic was never left behind, but gave a great happiness to the world as well as to himself.

"Be good and make others happy" was his own particular rule, for he believed that everyone should be as

happy as ever they could, and even children should remember that—

"The world is so full of a number of things,
I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings."

Robert Louis Stevenson
The Lighthouse-Builder's Son

If you had lived in Edinburgh sixty years ago you might have met, coming out of the first house on Inverleith Terrace, a four-year-old boy in a blue coat, trimmed with fur, and a big beaver bonnet You would have noticed nothing very remarkable about this child except that he had a pale, delicate, little face and enormous, shining eyes, and that he seemed very fond of his pleasant-looking nurse. This little boy was Robert Louis Stevenson, the only child of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Stevenson.

Mr. Stevenson, Louis's father, was a lighthouse builder, and belonged to a family of famous lighthouse builders. His father, Louis's grandfather, built the Bell Rock Lighthouse, off the eastern coast of Scotland. How hard this was to build you can imagine when you remember that it stood on a dangerous reef, which the sea uncovered for only a few hours at low tide, so that the men had to have a special little workshop built on supports which were fixed in the rock. Then, too, as they worked on the iron foundation of the lighthouse, up would roll the sea and put out their fire. Yet Stevenson's grandfather had the determination and skill to push the work forward. He felt the grave need of a lighthouse there, for this was the dangerous reef described in "The Inchcape Rock." Off the opposite coast of Scotland, on the island of Tiree, stands another famous lighthouse which the Stevensons built. Eleven years before Louis was born, his Uncle Allan had begun work on the lighthouse of Skerryvore. For its foundation his men had to blast a hole forty feet square in the solid rock. Twice, storm and sea combined defeated

Mr. Stevenson's plans, and swept away the work of his faithful builders. At last, however, in 1844, the labor was completed, and the wheeling gleam of Skerryvorelight shines on the ocean to this day.

We want to know all this, not only because it is interesting, but because it helps us to understand Robert Louis's life. He loved the sea and felt at home on it; and perhaps he would have learned to build lighthouses himself, if he had not wanted so much more to build stories. His love of writing must have come from his mother's side of the family. Although Mrs. Stevenson did not write, she was very fond of other people's writing, especially of poetry,—and she taught her son to love it, too. Besides this, her father, Louis's other grandfather, was a minister, so that he wrote sermons, although he did not write books. Stevenson said of himself, however, that he was like this grandfather in only one respect,—that he would rather preach sermons than hear them.

From his mother's side of the family Stevenson inherited something else too, and that was a frail body and weak lungs; so that from his very babyhood he was delicate, and when he grew older he was ordered to travel and to spend much of his time out of doors, in order to live at all.

There is no better way to get the story of Stevenson's life than from his own writings. It is possible to get it almost from the beginning. His "Child's Garden of Verses", although it is not every word about himself, gives us a good idea of his sickly and lonely childhood. Nearly every poem is a little picture. If you read the "Land of Counterpane" you will see him amusing himself when he is sick; you can imagine how, with a little shawl pinned round him, he would sit up, propped against the pillows,

to play with his lead soldiers. In others you find out that he was sent to bed early, and that he often lay there listening to the wind or to the people passing in the street below. In "Winter Time" you will find that he had to be all muffled up so as not to take cold. In almost every one, though, you feel how fond he was of play; how he loved the wild March wind, which did him harm, and the garden and the sunshine, which could harm no one; and how, in every way, he yearned to be as rugged as other boys.

Although he had the most loving care, still we cannot help feeling that he was often lonely, if we judge so only from the pathetic poem called "The Lamplighter." We can imagine him sitting, with his thin little face against the pane, waiting for Leerie, and saying perhaps, as many Scotch lads were taught to say, "God bless the lamplighter," and then thinking wistfully,—

"And O! before you hurry by with ladder and with light,
O Leerie, see a little child and nod to him to-night!"

If we can take all the poems in "The Child's Garden" as true, we find that Louis was not always meek and patient. Once he even ran away, unnoticed, out under the stars, and was just delighting in his freedom, when, as he says,

"They saw me at last, and they chased me with cries,
And they soon had me packed into bed."

His father and mother probably led in this chase, but I feel sure that his nurse, Alison Cunningham, or "Cummy", as he called her, was not far behind. She was one of his best friends, and did much to keep him from being lonely. She read to him and told him stories; she recited poems; she took him to walk and showed him the beauty of the world; she sang, she even danced, for "her boy." Not only was she such a jolly playmate; she was a most patient

nurse. Sometimes Louis would lie awake for hours coughing; then Cummy would be awake with him. "How well I remember," Stevenson wrote when he was a man, "her lifting me out of bed, carrying me to the window, and showing me one or two lit windows, where also, we told each other, there might be sick little boys and nurses waiting, like us, for the morning."

One of the things that we like best about Stevenson is that when he grew up he did not forget this nurse, but wrote her many letters, which, although he was a grown man, he often signed, "Your Laddie", and in which, again and again, he expressed his thanks to her. Sometimes he even called her his "second mother." Although he became a well-known author, he was never ashamed of the "woman who had loved him", but kept up the friendship; and we can imagine old Cummy with her eyes full of tears, reading and re-reading this part of a letter:—

"If you should happen to think that you might have had a child of your own, and that it was hard you should have spent so many years taking care of some one else's prodigal, just you think this: you have made much that there is in me, and there are sons who are more ungrateful to their own mothers than I am to you. For I am not ungrateful, my dear Cummy, and it is with a very sincere emotion that I write myself your little boy,

Louis."

In another letter we get a picture of them together:

"Do you remember when you used to take me out of bed in the early morning, carry me to the back windows, show me the hills of Fife, and quote to me?

'O, the hills are all covered with snaw
An' winter's noo come fairly!'"

The sweetest thing that Stevenson did for Cummy, however, was the dedicating "The Child's Garden of Verses" to her. The poem of dedication is full of love and tenderness, and all the more manly for that. It begins,—

"*For the long nights you lay awake*
And watched for my unworthy sake,"

and ends

"*From the sick child, now well and old,*
Take, nurse, the little book you hold!

And grant it, Heaven, that all who read
May find as dear a nurse at need,
And every child who lists my rhyme,
In the bright, fireside, nursery clime,
May hear it in as kind a voice
As made my childish days rejoice!"

Yet, with all his parents' companionship and Cummy's sympathy and playfulness, Louis would have missed a good deal of childish fun if he had not had over fifty cousins.

In the summers a crowd of them visited at the "Manse", the home of his minister grandfather; there were two, especially, that he loved to play with most, a boy and a girl about his own age. One of their favorite games was that they were fleeing from a giant, whom in the end, of course, they always killed. Sometimes they played that they were on exploring tours. A favorite place for this game was a sandy isle in Allan Water where they "waded in butter-burrs" and where, with the plashy water all round them, they felt delightfully secure from grown-up people. On Sundays they went to church, where they heard the beautiful white-haired grandfather preach. When he was in the pulpit, he seemed very great and far-away to Louis;

but when he was at home the child was not afraid of him. He tells us that once he learned a psalm perfectly, by heart, in the hope that his grandfather would give him one of the bright Indian pictures which hung on his walls and which he had brought with him from his travels. When, after the psalm was recited, the old man only gathered him in his arms and kissed him, Louis was much disappointed. Just at that time, a picture had a real value; a kiss a most uncertain one.

Part of the summer was usually spent, not at this grandfather's manse, but at the seashore. There, of course, Louis found the same delight that other children find in the beating and roaring of the waves, and in the natural fountains of spray that played on the rocks. One of his friends says that he often built "sea-houses", or great holes with the sand banked all round, in which he and his playmates would hide, there to wait, all excitement, until the creeping tide, coming ever nearer, should at last wash over their bulwark of sand and soak the children intrenched behind it. We cannot help wondering where Mr. and Mrs. Stevenson and Cummy were when delicate little Louis led his friends in this charming game.

From these stories you will see that, on the whole, Stevenson had as much playtime as most children. But, of course, he had to go to school. His school-life was broken, however, because his parents, who had to travel for their health, took him with them to Germany, Holland, Italy, and many places in Scotland. Stevenson was sent to private schools in these different countries, and for the rest of the time he had tutors. There was really only one lesson, however, that Stevenson thoroughly enjoyed, and that was "composition." His compositions were remarkable for their bad spelling. He could not spell well even when he

was a man, and yet writing was almost a passion with him. When he was four years old he had a strange dream—that he "heard the noise of pens writing." When he was five he dictated to his mother what he called "The History of Moses." His uncle had offered a prize of a sovereign to the niece or nephew who wrote the best story. Stevenson's was not the best, and so he did not get the prize, but his uncle gave him an extra prize because it was so good for his age.

You will notice that Stevenson dictated his "History"; he did not write it himself. That was because he did not know how, for he was not taught to write when he was very young; he could not even read till he was eight. His pretty young mother, however, and faithful Cummy read and told him stories. He said that he lived in a "Land of Story Books." Speaking of his love of poetry, he said that he remembered, when he was very little, repeating these lines over and over for their music:

"*In pastures green Thou leadest me*
The quiet waters by."

When he did read for himself, he read a good deal of Scott, although he was less enthusiastic than most boys over "The Waverley Novels."

Nearly everything he read made him want to write, himself. He enjoyed all his "composition" work, but he did not enjoy the writing that he did in school nearly so much as what he did of his own accord. In his other lessons, his teachers considered him thoroughly lazy. All through his boyhood, Stevenson tells us, he was "pointed out as the pattern of an idler," and yet all the time he was eagerly trying to write. When he grew older he always carried with him two books, one to read, and one to write in; and as he walked on the heathy hills, through the woods, or by the

sea, his mind was busy trying to fit his thoughts to words. Sometimes he tried to describe exactly the thing he was looking at; sometimes he wrote down conversations from memory; sometimes he wrote on the same subject first in one man's style and then in another's. Thus he wrestled with his own brain; tried, criticized, and tried again. He says he practised to learn to write as boys practise to learn to whittle.

All this time, while Louis was growing from childhood to boyhood, his father was watching him closely and planning for him to follow his own profession and that of so many in the family—the brave profession of lighthouse-building. With this in view, from the time Louis was fourteen his father took him on sea-trips in the *Pharos* all among the rock-bound islands off the Scottish coast. While Mr. Stevenson inspected the lighthouses or studied the "ugly reefs and black rocks" where there was a "tower to be built and a star to be lighted," Louis talked with the captains or watched the brave builders, whom he heartily admired,—so eager they were in their perilous work. He was happy, too, tossing about on the deep water, and he knew no fear in the great storms. He felt the power of it all. He saw the shimmering beauty in the deep path of light, the beacon of safety over the black sea. These thoughts, however, did not turn his mind to lighthouse-building, but to story-building, and it was this life on the ocean which helped him to write "Treasure Island" and "Kidnapped," so popular with all young people.

We are glad Stevenson's interest turned to writing; but his father was bitterly disappointed. He thought that success in an author's profession was too uncertain. Accordingly, in the hope of rousing Louis's interest in lighthouses instead of stories, he sent him to Edinburgh

University to take a course in engineering. This made not the least difference. At last his father said to himself; "It is no use to try to make a lighthouse-builder of this boy," and so he decided that Louis should study law. So it was that Stevenson, at twenty-one, began his law study; but half-heartedly.

This course, like the courses of his childhood, was hindered by much sickness. Within two years Stevenson was ordered to Italy for the sake of his nerves and lungs. Two years later he went back to England, passed examinations, and was admitted to the bar; but he never practised, because all the rest of his life was spent in searching for health in many lands. And yet, with all his weakness, he was not idle. Everywhere he went he found something worth seeing and worth writing about; and again the story of his young manhood may be read in his own books, just as the story of his childhood may be read in the "Garden of Verses." And we find him full of cheer, as a child and as a man. The little boy said,—

"The world is so full of a number of things
I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings."

The man wrote: "I have so many things to make life sweet to me, it seems a pity I cannot have that other thing, health. But though you will be angry to hear it, I believe, for myself at least, 'what is, is best.'"

The year after he left the University he took a canoeing-trip with one of his friends. This is described in "An Island Voyage." In the *Arethusa* and the *Cigarette* they paddled up the river which Stevenson said ran as though it "smelt the sea." They spent their nights and took their meals at farm-houses. Sometimes they rested on the grass beneath the trees. From a recent storm the river was unusually turbulent; trees had been uprooted, and here and

there the wind had thrown them across the stream. Stevenson's canoe caught on one of these trees, capsized, and he himself barely escaped by clinging to the tree, while his canoe "went merrily down stream." When he had the strength, be pulled himself ashore by the tree-trunk, while his friend paddled off after the canoe. Of course such a struggle, combined with a wetting, was no help to Stevenson's health.

Two years later he took another interesting trip. This time it was a walking-trip in France and his only companion was a little donkey named "Modestine." Modestine was not taken along to ride on, but to carry his baggage, which he describes as a big sleeping-sack,—"a bed by night, a portmanteau by day." It was "a long roll or sausage of green water-proof cloth without, and blue sheep's-fur within." The sheep's fur made it warm and it was long enough for him to "bury himself in it up to the neck." When he was traveling he used it to pack things in, for he took with him a "revolver, a little spirit-lamp and pan, a lantern, and some half-penny candles, a jack-knife, and a large leather flask, besides clothing, books, cakes of chocolate, and cans of Bologna sausage."

Modestine's natural pace was "as much slower than a walk as a walk is slower than a run" and "she stopped to browse by the way." As they journeyed on, Stevenson met a peasant who taught him to say "Proot!" which in French donkey-language is "Get up!" To urge her on still more, he gave him a whip. Another peasant, at whose house Stevenson stopped, made him a goad, with which he "pushed Modestine along." As their way led through the shaggy mountains of France, you can imagine that they did not travel fast. Yet they went a hundred and twenty miles or so, in twelve days; and when, at the end of this time,

Stevenson sold his donkey-friend, who could go no further, it was not without genuine regret, for she had been grateful, eating the black bread out of his hand, and she had been companionable. When he lay awake at night under the spicy pines, listening to the roaring wind or looking up at the glittering stars, it had been pleasant to hear Modestine pawing by his side, or walking round and round at the end of her tether.

The next year, when Stevenson was twenty-nine, he decided to go to California, and, partly to save money and partly for experience, he traveled by emigrant ship and train. In "An Amateur Emigrant" he gives his impressions of his rough companions on the sea-voyage, and also what were, perhaps, their impressions of him. The sailors called him "mate"; the officers "my man"; the workmen in the steerage considered him one of their own class; a certain mason, even, believed that he was a mason. What they all wondered at was that he should spend so much time writing.

In "Across the Plains" Stevenson pictures the trip by train to California. At night they made their beds by putting straw cushions on the boards which reached from bench to bench. Stevenson slept and "chummed" with a Dutchman from Philadelphia. These two and one other clubbed together to buy washing-materials—a tin basin, a towel, and a bar of soap. They washed on the rear platform. They bought, too, a few cooking-utensils and coffee and sugar, so that they could get their own breakfasts now and then.

On this trip Stevenson found one firm friend in the newsboy. The child had noticed how pale he looked and that he held the door open with his foot so as to get a little fresh air instead of the stale air of the crowded car. So, one

day when Stevenson was reading, the newsboy slipped a large juicy pear into his hand. In fact, the little fellow "petted" him all the rest of the way.

After he reached California, Stevenson had two serious attacks of illness. The first was the result of his long, tiresome journey. He was too weak to live the life he had planned—to camp out alone in the woods of the Coast Range. After he had been lying for two nights in a half-stupor, under a tree, a bear-hunter found him and carried him in his arms to a goatherd's hut near-by. There he was taken care of for two weeks till he grew strong enough to go on to Monterey. From there he went to San Francisco, where the next year he was taken sick again. This time his illness was caused by exhausting himself with nursing his landlady's little four-year-old child. He saved the child's life; but it almost cost him his own.

When Stevenson was in France he had met a Mrs. Osbourne, who was now in California with her son. When she heard of Stevenson's illness she came to help take care of him, and after Stevenson grew well they were married; so it was that his next trip was taken with her and with his stepson, Lloyd Osbourne (now himself a well-known writer).

These three camped out on Mount St. Helena, near the Silverado Mine, and called themselves by the same name which Stevenson chose for his book,—"Silverado Squatters",—because without legal claim they had taken possession of a Silverado miner's disused house. Stevenson and his wife called themselves the King and Queen, Lloyd was the Crown Prince, and "Chuchu", the dog, was honored as the "Grand Duke." Incidentally, the dog honored himself with their softest cushions.

After the house was cleaned and repaired it was a sweet, airy place, "haunted by the perfumes of the glen." They had filled in the doors and windows with white cotton cloth; they had brought their own stove; and they made their beds of clean hay. Though the cañons were full of rattlesnakes, none of the squatters were afraid, except "Chuchu." "Every whiz of the rattle made him bound. His eyes rolled; he trembled; he would be often wet with sweat." Stevenson, however, "took his sun-baths and open-air calisthenics, without fear, though the rattlers were buzzing all around," And he was no more afraid of the brown bears and mountain lions, though once an old grizzly visited a poultry-yard in the village below. No; none of these creatures made him leave his mountain camp; it was the old, old enemy, sickness, away off there so many miles from civilization or a doctor's help. Even "so far above the world" the seafogs found him out.

A few months later, Stevenson and his wife returned to Scotland. Mrs. Stevenson was a jolly, courageous companion, as well as a capable nurse. She had need to be both, for by this time her husband's lung-trouble had become settled. They still traveled, trying the different climates of the Scotch Highlands, the Alps, Edinburgh, and finally the South of France. Sick as he was, for the next seven years, Stevenson somehow found strength, between the attacks of illness, to write with vigor and eagerness. Besides many books for grown people, he wrote during this time his best two books for boys—"Treasure Island" and "Kidnapped." "Treasure Island" was his first book that was popular enough to pay well. Stevenson's father helped him a good deal with this, by drawing on his experiences at sea.

The death of his father, two years later, was the deepest sorrow Stevenson ever had. They had been chums together, almost like two boys, with all the added love between father and son. This grief had such a bad effect on Stevenson's health that three months later, in August, he and his family, including his mother, went to the Adirondacks in America. Until the next summer they lived there, near Lake Saranac, in a wooden house on a hilltop overlooking a stream of running water. "Highland," wrote Stevenson to one of his friends, "all but the dear hue of peat—and of many hills—Highland also but for the lack of heather."

While they were in the Adirondacks, an American publisher offered Stevenson ten thousand dollars for an account of a voyage in the South Seas. The trip might do him good; he needed the money; and, as always, he loved the sea. The whole family went with him; and even his mother enjoyed it, although they had a stormy voyage. When Stevenson was seventeen, an old Highland sibyl had prophesied that he was to be "very happy, to visit America, and to be much at sea." It had all come true. He was happy, because he was determined to be so. As for his life on the sea, he tells it best himself. "I cannot say why I like the sea; no man can be more cynically and constantly alive to its perils; I regard it as the highest form of gambling; and yet I love the sea as much as I hate gambling. Fine, clean emotions; a world all and always beautiful; air better than wine; interest unflagging: there is, upon the whole, no better life;" and again: "These two last years I have been much at sea, and never once did I lose my fidelity to blue water and a ship."

One of the interesting things that Stevenson did on this trip was to visit the leper-settlement on one of the

Hawaiian Islands. None of his family went with him. He was one passenger in two boat-loads of lepers. In the boat with him were two sisters who tried hard to be brave; but one of them could not help crying softly all the way. Stevenson, in his big sympathy, was soon crying with her.

A crowd of other lepers swarmed down to the shore to meet them. They were in all stages of the disease. some very loathsome. Still they held out their hands in welcome. Rather than hurt their feelings by offering a gloved hand, Stevenson pretended not to see, and so did not shake hands at all. He stayed at "the lazaretto", as it was called after Lazarus in the Bible, for eight days and seven nights. The whole experience was a great drain on his sympathies, actually living with those poor people, "still breathing, still thinking, still remembering," and yet dying by inches of a most dreadful disease. But though Stevenson pitied the lepers, he did not let them see his pity. After the first break-down, he was bright as ever. He played croquet with seven leper-girls, and told stories to the old leper-women in the hospital.

His love for children never failed. From the little California boy whom he nursed through sickness at the risk of his own life, to many small waifs in city streets, his love was the same. He said himself that he almost coveted the children, he wished so much that they were his, especially "the wee ones." Once we find him formally willing his birthday to a little girl who was born on February 29, and so had only one birthday in four years; and from the island of Honolulu, he wrote to a friend of his,—another man of about forty; "The girls here all have dolls and love dressing them. You, who know so many dressmakers, please make it known it would be an acceptable gift to send scraps for doll dress-making to the

Reverend Sister Mary Ann, Bishop Home, Kilaupapa, Milokai, Hawaiian Islands." This letter shows not only Stevenson's love of children, but his willingness to take trouble over little things, although by this time he was a busy and prominent man.

In April 1889, Stevenson's mother returned to Scotland, and he, his wife, and Lloyd continued their exploring tour to the Gilbert Islands, the Marquesas, the Carolines, Australia, and finally Samoa.

His life in Samoa is, in some ways, the most interesting story of all, and here again you can find that story in his own writings; this time, though, it is not in his books but in his letters. These are so vivid, that you feel as if you were right in Samoa with him. You are living in his spotless little box of a house, called *Vailima*, which means "five rivers", and so reminds you that it is within sound of flowing streams. There, from the broad veranda—and the house is almost half veranda,—you can look straight up, on one side, at the wooded Vaea Mountain; and on the other, six hundred feet below you gleams the sea, "filling the end of two vales of forest." The house is built in a clearing in the jungle. The trees about it are twice as tall as the house; the birds about it are always talking or singing, and here and there among the trees echoes "the ringing sleigh-bell of the tree toad."

During the first six months that Stevenson and his family lived at Vailima there was much to be done. They built three houses, a big barn, two miles of road (this road three times, for the roads were continually being destroyed by heavy rains), "cleared many acres of bush and made some miles of path, planted quantities of food, and enclosed a horse-paddock and some acres of pig-run."

Sometimes Stevenson calls this property a farm, and sometimes a plantation. It was a little of both. He had horses, pigs, and chickens, and raised nearly all the common vegetables. Besides these, he had the fruits of the tropics—his own banana-patch, his hedge of lemon-trees, and plenty of pineapples, bread-fruit, and cocoanuts. Stevenson enjoyed the life of a farmer as much as he had enjoyed everything else. Sometimes, as he said, he played the "game of patience" by weeding all the morning. Things often went wrong; but he took bad luck merrily. Occasionally his pigs were stolen; once his horse "kicked him in the shin" when he was taking off her saddle; once the carpenter's horse stepped in a nest of fourteen eggs and, as Stevenson said, made "an omelette of all their hopes." Still, with perfect honesty, he could sign his letter "The Well-pleased South Sea Islander"; for here in Samoa he could be out of doors, whereas in Scotland he would have been in bed. The longer he stayed there, the stronger he felt. He rode horseback for hours without getting tired, and sometimes he rode very fast

Riding, walking, bathing, and sailing were his chief recreations. Like the natives, much of the time he went barefoot. The roads, such as they were, were cut through a forest of fruit-trees between the noisy sea and the silent mountain. Palms waved overhead; tangled "ropes of liana" hung from the trees. The strong sun had brought out the richest, brightest colors in all the flowers; Stevenson himself was browned by its heat. Sometimes he gave himself up, like a child, to idle pleasures, such as wading for hours up to his knees in the salt water searching for shells. Once or twice he tried lawn-tennis; but after that had brought on a hemorrhage he gave it up. He usually went to bathe in the river just before lunch.

He loved his work too much, however, and was too determined to succeed in it, to spend a great deal of time even in recreation. After he had been there a few months he set himself a rigid program, and after the addition was built on the house, from his room in an out-of-the-way part of it he tells us that he saw the sunrise nearly every morning, had breakfast at six, worked till eleven, and after lunch usually worked again until four or five. Sometimes he played cards in the evening. At eight o'clock he had prayers for his own family and the Samoans of his household, a Samoan woman leading in the singing. He went to bed early, often reading himself to sleep, and sleeping on a chest covered with mats and blankets.

This program he kept so strictly that I think he must have continually said to himself: "Now I can see and enjoy," and "Now I must work." He did actually say that it was "hard to keep on grinding." Still he did keep on, and in addition to his work as a farmer and an author he found time to teach. He gave regular lessons to Austin Strong, his step-daughter's little son, and taught arithmetic and "long expressions" to Henry, the son of one of the Samoan chiefs.

Henry was the first Somoan who really loved Stevenson. The affection of the natives was not very easy to win. They were naturally lazy; ignorant, of course; inclined to steal; and somewhat suspicious. Stevenson, nevertheless, saw in them not only much that was interesting, but much that was good. They were very clean people,—that attracted him in the first place,—and they were people with a genuine love of beauty. Very wisely, Stevenson saw that he could only win them by being one of them. Accordingly, he learned their language as soon as he could. He went, also, to their little church, although they

were Roman Catholics and he was a Protestant, and there he knelt on the white-sanded floor among the almost naked men, the women in their gracefully draped garments of fine silk, and the little brown children with no clothing at all except girdles and large, gorgeous hats trimmed, some of them, with blue ribbon and pink roses.

When Stevenson knew their language well enough, he told them stories, and so he won from them the name of "Tusitala", which means "teller of tales"; his wife was called "Aolele" or "beautiful as a flying cloud." Thus, gradually but surely, the natives grew to know and care for their friends at Vailima. They tried to do for Stevenson what they never did for any one else,—they tried to hurry. "You never see a Samoan run except at Vailima", visitors would sometimes say. Occasionally, Stevenson took charge of a big gang of road-makers, and they went through the forest marking their path by bending down the wild cocoa-nut trees and sitting on them to break them off.

At first many of the men were tricky and ran away; but by and by they grew to care for the slender, white master, with the bright eyes and winning smile, and they really wanted to work for him. "Once Tusitala's friend, always Tusitala's friend," they would say.

When the war broke out between two chiefs, the Samoans showed their trust in Stevenson by bringing a bag full of coins, which they had saved for the roof of their church, and asking him to keep them till the fight was over. During this war Stevenson often went to see the prisoners, told them stories, heard their troubles, got them doctors, and was at last instrumental in having a large number set free without having to work out their freedom by road-building. A few days after this, Stevenson was surprised and touched to learn that the freed prisoners had agreed in

gratitude to work on his road as a "free gift." It was to be his own private road, they specified, the road that led from his house to the public way. The chiefs, themselves, drew up the inscription in the newspaper. It was headed "The Road of Loving Hearts" and it read as follows:

"Considering the great love of Tusitala in his loving care of us in our distress in the prison, we have therefore prepared a splendid gift. It shall never be muddy, it shall endure forever, this road that we have dug."

They had given him the one thing they could give, and, as far as they knew, the one thing he wanted, and they insisted that they would not take presents of any kind, much less pay.

In a life so full of pleasure, work, and interest as this, it is sometimes hard to realize that Stevenson ever had hours of great despondency; but he often did. Although he was much better, he knew in his heart that he could never be well. It was his one great principle, however, to keep himself sunny, to wear a smiling face, "to make, upon the whole, a family happier for his presence." "The sea, the islands, the islanders, the island life and climate, make and keep me truly happier," he wrote bravely to a friend; but another time, when he had been thinking of his dear Scotland, with its "hills of sheep" and "winds austere and pure," and realizing that he could never see it again, he wrote a pathetic little poem from which these lines are taken:

"*Red shall the heather bloom over hill and valley,*
Fair shine the day on the house with open door;
Birds come and cry there and twitter in the chimney,
But I go forever and come again no more."

and in a letter to a friend he wrote:

"For fourteen years I have not had a day's real health; I have wakened sick and gone to bed weary; and I have done my work unflinchingly. I have written in bed and written out of it, written in hemorrhages, written when my head swam for weakness, and for so long it seems to me I have won my wager. The Powers have so willed that my battlefield should be this dingy, inglorious one of the bed and the physic bottle. At least I have not failed but I would have preferred a place of trumpetings and the open air over my head."

During his last years he sometimes had "scrivener's cramp" so that he could not do his writing himself, but had to dictate his stories to his stepdaughter, Mrs. Strong. This, of course, was hard on his voice, and sometimes he lost the power of speech, altogether, and had to use the deaf and dumb alphabet.

One day, December 3rd, 1894, when he had felt particularly well, he came downstairs a little while before supper to help his wife make a salad, and together they set the table on the veranda. On pleasant days, they often had their meals there, for Samoa is a land of eternal summer. Stevenson had been joking with his wife about something, when suddenly he put his hand to his head with the cry: "What's that? Do I look strange?" and then he fell unconscious beside her. Doctors were quickly summoned, but they could not help him. For about two hours he lay, still unconscious, still breathing. Around the room knelt or stood a dozen or more Samoans, longing to give their service; but they, too, could do nothing. Stevenson died a few minutes past eight that night.

Half understanding that this was death and half hoping it was only sleep, the natives stayed beside him all night—some praying, some sitting in silence, others going away

to return with gifts of fine, woven mats to cover him. In the morning still others came, loaded with bright flowers, till the room was glowing with color. There was nothing about that room to suggest death except the dumb, sad watchers. Among them; came an old Mataafa chief, who, crouching beside the body, broke out with "I am only a poor Samoan, and ignorant. Others are rich and can give Tusitala the parting presents of rich, fine mats; I am poor and can give nothing this last day he receives his friends."

Stevenson had asked to be buried on the summit of Vaea Mountain. There was no path to this summit, and so the chiefs assembled their men and about forty set out with knives and axes to cut a path up the steep mountain side. At one o'clock that day when all was ready, they came back, unwearied by their hard service, and a few of the strongest were chosen to carry their friend on their shoulders. Gravely and sturdily again they set out on the steep climb, followed by the family, the minister, and many Samoans and friends.

At the grave the minister read the prayer which Stevenson, himself, had offered the night before he died,—

"We beseech Thee, Lord, to behold us with favor, folk of many families and nations gathered together in the peace of this roof. Bless to us our extraordinary mercies; if the day come when these must be taken, brace us to play the man, under affliction. Go with each of us to rest and, when the day returns, return to us our sun and comforter, and call us up with morning faces and with morning hearts—eager to labor, eager to be happy, if happiness shall be our portion—and if the day be marked for sorrow, strong to endure it."

So, his last prayer was characteristic. He had "braced himself to play the man"; he had "awaked with smiles, he had labored smiling." And the gathering at the grave was characteristic—the friends who laid him there were of all classes, many, and full of deep affection.

Even the last sleeping-place of this brave, bright, nature-loving man was just what he had chosen—within sight of the "besieging sea," which he had played by as a child and never failed to love, and within sound of God's great wind "that bloweth all day long."

"*Under the wide and starry sky,*
Here he lies where he longed to be;
Home is the sailor, home from the sea,
And the hunter home from the hill."

Henry Van Dyke

Story of the Author's Life from a Child's Point of View

(America: 1852-1933)

The Mansion, The Other Wise Man

My father was born in Germantown, Pennsylvania, on November 10, 1852; but when he was very young the family moved to Brooklyn, and it was there that most of his boyhood was spent. From the first his relationship with his father was a particularly beautiful one, for besides the natural trust and reverence, there grew up the closest kind of a friendship. It was as comrades that they went off for their day's holiday, escaping from the city and its flag pavements and brownstone fronts and getting out into the fresh country air, to walk through the woods and watch the leaves turn red and gold and brown and drop to the ground, or to skate in the winter, or to listen for the song of the first returning bluebird in the spring. It was under the wise and tender guidance of his father that the boy's instinctive love of nature grew and developed. The stages of this growth are seen in the chapter entitled "A Boy and a Rod."

Boys went to college earlier in those days than they do now, and my father, who had prepared at the Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute, was ready to enter Princeton at the age of sixteen. Before he went to college he had tried his hand at writing a little. During his college course he became deeply interested in it, and took the Clio Hall prizes for essays and speeches, besides writing along other lines. Thus his enthusiasm for literature was increasing all the time, and from the first the idea of writing was uppermost in his mind. He was Junior orator in 1872, and

at graduation in 1873 his classmates elected him for a class-day speaker. He also received honors from the faculty in belles-lettres and the English Salutatory in recognition of his general scholarship, besides the class of 1859 Prize in English Literature. Through all his course he was a leading man in the classroom, gymnasium, and all class and college affairs.

After teaching for a year in Brooklyn he entered Princeton Theological Seminary, and graduated in 1877. He spent the following year studying at the University of Berlin and in travel, and after being ordained in 1879 he was called to the United Congregational Church at Newport, R.I. In 1881 he married my mother, and a few years later was called to the Brick Presbyterian Church in New York, where he gave seventeen years of the hardest and most untiring labor to a work which did not end with his own congregation or the city itself, but touched thousands of people all over the country. But these years of his life were only a step aside to give a helping hand to two churches which were fast running down, and through it all he felt that his real work was literature, and it was in that field that his best work could be done, though the rush of city life at that time gave him very little chance to do it.

So we were city children, but the woods were our inheritance and fishing became our favorite sport. Our earliest recollections of my father are in connection with fishing or camping expeditions. For when work pressed too heavily and his health showed signs of too much wear and tear, he would take a few days in the spring and spend them catching the first trout of the season out of the Swiftwater, a little river in the Alleghany Mountains in Pennsylvania. When he was away we always thought that he had “gone fishing,” and our earliest ambition was to go

with him. Somehow, the fact that I was a girl never seemed to make any difference in my castles in the air, and all of us, boys and girls alike, grew up with the idea that to be like father was the highest possible attainment.

As soon as we were able to read we read his stories of camping that came out in the magazines. The article on "Ampersand" was the first and appeared in *Harper's Magazine* in 1885. But we were too young then, of course, to appreciate them, and I am afraid we preferred the story of "The Little Girl in the Well" and "Tommy Lizard and Frankie Frog," and other wonderful tales that he invented and told us between supper and bedtime.

Every Sunday we sat all in a row up in the second pew in the big church and heard him preach. Then in the afternoon, or on stormy Sundays, we put the chairs in the nursery in rows and one of us would preach while the others were congregation or choir. This was the nearest we ever came to appreciating the sermons that were all the time being made down in the study just below us. During this time he published "The Reality of Religion," "The Story of the Psalms," "God and Little Children," and "The Poetry of Tennyson," besides many magazine articles. The sermons we liked best, though, were the Christmas sermons, which were always stories, and which were afterward published. Among them were "The Other Wise Man," "The Lost Word," and "The First Christmas-Tree." When we saw his books coming out we were fired with the ambition to publish books too, so we had a "Book Company" which he encouraged by his patronage. We wrote stories, laboriously printed them with pen and ink, illustrated them in watercolors, and bound them in cardboard and colored paper. We soon had quite a library,

with contributions from all the family, and in all this my father was our wisest friend and critic.

So the making of books was a reality to us, and we were interested not only in the writing, but in the illustrations and binding. I remember one afternoon my father had gone out in a hurry, leaving his study in great disorder. I was always more fond of the study than of any room in the house, probably because entrance was forbidden most of the time when he was working; so taking advantage of his absence, I slid in and found the floor covered with photographs and prints and piles of books. It looked like a veritable workshop, and the disorder delighted my heart; so I spent the afternoon there, and finally persuaded myself that there would be nothing wrong in taking one small photograph of the Madonna and child, which I especially liked, if I put it back soon. I remember what a time I had returning it to its place the next day, and then with what interest, many months later, I saw the picture reproduced on one of the pages of the "Christ Child in Art" which came out in 1894. I really felt that I had had a part in the making of that book.

Of the making of rhymes, too, there was no end. Sometimes at the dinner-table my father would sit perfectly quiet for ten minutes, apparently wrapped in thought, while we chattered and discussed the doings of the morning or planned for the afternoon; and then if we stopped for a moment and looked at him we would see a smile dawning on his face, and a new-made nonsense rhyme was recited much to our delight. We often tried to persuade him to write a book for children, but although he seemed to have plenty of time to make it up, he was always too busy to write it down.

The best times of all, though, were the summer months, when we left the hot, dusty city and went down to the little white cottage on the south shore of Long Island. Here he first taught us the gentle art of fishing, and how well I remember the mornings he spent showing us how to catch the minnows for bait in a mosquito-net (for catching the bait was always part of the game), and then how he stood with us for hours on the high drawbridge across the channel, showing us the easy little twitch of the wrist that hooks the fish, and how to take him off the hook and save the bait. They were only young bluefish, or little "snappers," as we called them, and seldom more than eight inches long, but we were as proud as though they were salmon. Real trout we had never caught, though we had often jumped up from the supper-table and run to meet him when he came in after dark with his basket full of wet, shiny, speckled ones. Then how exciting it was to weigh the biggest one and hear about the still *bigger* one that got away. That was always a good reason for going back the next day, and sometimes, if we had been very good, he would take one or two of us up under the bridge, and up the narrow, winding stream, till we came to where the branches interlaced overhead and the boat would go no farther. There he left us at the little rustic bridge and waded up the stream above, while we sat breathless to hear his halloo, which meant he was coming back, and to find out what luck he had had in those mysterious mazes above the bridge.

Those were the happiest days of our summer, and, as my father says, it was the stream which made them so.

But these were only day's trips, and I longed for real camping out. Every fall my father went hundreds of miles away up to Canada where there were real bears and wolves

in the woods and where you travelled for days without seeing a house or a person. I had often heard him tell his experiences much as they are now recorded in "Camping Out" in this book. Especially did we become interested in the French guides, whose letters to him I read eagerly, though slowly, for they were written in French.

Finally, to my earnest entreaties, there came a sort of half promise that I might go some time when I was bigger and stronger, but it seemed so indefinite that I quite despaired, and great was my surprise and joy one day when my father asked me if I would like to go camping that very day. The tent and the great heavy blankets and rubber sheets were taken out of their canvas wrapping where they were lying waiting for the fall and Canada. My father put on his corduroys and homespun and his old weather-stained gray felt hat, with the flies stuck all around the band, and I donned my oldest sailor suit, and with a few pots and pans, a small supply of provisions which the family helped us get together, and our two fishing-rods, we were ready for the start. We took the long trip (about a mile) in an old flat-bottomed row-boat, and my mother and little brothers came with us to see us settled. Our camping ground was in a pine grove near a small inlet to the salt-water bay on which our cottage faced, so that, although the stream was blocked with weeds and stumps, the easiest way to get there was by water. We reached the place about four in the afternoon, moored the boat, and carried the tent and provisions up a little hill to the place my father had chosen. It seemed miles and miles from home, and very wild. We had nothing for supper, and I remember wondering whether my father would shoot some wild animal or whether we would catch some fish. The latter course was chosen, much to my disappointment,

and after the tent was pitched, the provisions unpacked, and my mother and brothers had left us all alone, we started out with rods and tackle to catch our supper. Fortunately the fish were biting well, and with my rising appetite they came more and more frequently, until we had a basketful. Then we had to stop by the stream to prepare them for the pan, so it was almost dark when we threaded our way back through the deep forest of pines to the little white tent. But we soon built the fire and made things look more cheerful. How good the fish looked as they sizzled away over the glowing fire, and they tasted even better, eaten right out of the same pan they were cooked in. That was one of the best suppers I ever recall eating, and surely half the pleasure came from the comradeship of a father who shared and sympathized with my thoughts and entered into my fun with the spirits of a boy.

It was an experience which I shall never forget, and which, like most of the delightful "first" things I have done, I shall always associate with my father. For he was our guide in everything; and besides the fishing trips, there were long Sunday afternoon walks through the woods and a growing acquaintance with the songs of the birds and with the wild flowers. He made us listen for the first notes of the bluebird in spring and to the "Sweet—sweet—sweet—very merry cheer" of the song sparrows that sang in the lilac hedge around our cottage. It was there that he wrote "The Song Sparrow" and a good many of the poems that came out later in a book called "The Builders and Other Poems." But my first realization that my father was a poet came when my two brothers and myself were brought down here to Princeton in 1896 to hear him read the ode at the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Princeton College. How proud we felt to be the only

children in that grave assembly of gowned and hooded scholars, and how fine it was to see our own father standing there on the platform and reciting the ode for his Alma Mater, the college we had cheered for and whose colors we had worn through defeat or victory every spring and fall. To be sure we were interested in Harvard too, because he had often been elected preacher to the university there, and in Yale, because he had been Lyman Beecher Lecturer there, and in other colleges where he had received academic honors; but we were ever loyal to Princeton, where he and our grandfather and our great-grandfather had been students.

Our Dutch ancestry was brought to our minds the year he was President of the Holland Society, and our Presbyterianism emphasized when he became Moderator of the General Assembly of that church and brought home a fine white ivory gavel which some Alaskan mission church had sent to him and which he now keeps on one of the library bookcases. Thus in all his work, as well as in his fishing, we have followed him, and he takes us into his plans and tells us as much as we can understand of what he is doing.

In 1900 he was called to be the first occupant of the Murray chair of English Literature in Princeton University, and we now have, what we have always wanted, a home in the country. Here, though he has left the strain and rush of city life, he seems busier than ever, for he still preaches every Sunday, usually at university and college chapels, and his calendar is always filled with lecture engagements all over the country. Preacher, poet, lecturer— his professions are many, though his aim is one, to lift the world up and make it a better, happier one than he found it.

But with all this work there is a shelf in the library at Avalon on which the line of books is steadily increasing. That is the shelf where my father's books, each one of which he has especially bound and gives to my mother, are kept. Two of the latest additions to this shelf are the books of short stories, "The Ruling Passion" and "The Blue Flower," and I think we have been more interested in the making of these two than in any others. For we have seen the stories grow and have known many of the characters that he has so faithfully drawn. The scenes of some are laid in places that we are very familiar with and many of the incidents have taken place before our eyes. My father keeps a small black leather note-book, one that would fit in a jacket pocket. When a story comes to him he jots down a word or two—a phrase, or something that suggests what is in his mind and would call up the same train of thought—then puts the notebook away till he has had time to think the story out in full, or, more often, until he has time to write it down. Sometimes it is only a catchword, sometimes half a page, but he always seems to have two or three stories ahead of him waiting to be written.

About three summers ago there were so many stories on his waiting-list that my father knew they would give him no peace of mind until written down in black and white. We were spending that summer on an island off the coast of Massachusetts, and our little cottage was in the midst of all the merry-making, near the ocean, and facing a field where all sizes of boys played base-ball every afternoon. It was not at all an atmosphere for writing, so my father, on one of his walks of discovery to the middle of the island, found an old deserted farm-house standing back from the road on a little rise of ground. There were apple-trees around it and a grape-vine straggling over the

trellised porch, and from the window of what once was probably the sitting-room there was a tiny glimpse of the blue sea far away in the distance. No discordant sounds reached this quiet spot, and here my father spent a good part of the summer writing a great many of the stories in "The Blue Flower." He would go out to his farm-house study every morning, returning in body, though not in spirit, to lunch, and then go out again to work for the rest of the afternoon. As soon as a story was finished, we would gather, after supper, around the lamp and he would read it to us. What a delight it was to recognize some of our old friends or familiar places, or to make the acquaintance of new and even better ones. We were sorry when the stories were all finished and the book had gone to the publisher.

My father's latest book is "Music, and Other Poems," and most of these were written here in his study at Avalon, though some he wrote down in Augusta, Ga., where he spent part of last winter. The "Ode to Music" he was almost two years in writing, taking up, of course, other things in the mean time. Several days ago the following came to my father from James Whitcomb Riley:

"*Music! yea, and the airs you play—*
Out of the faintest Far-away
And the sweetest, too; and the dearest here,
With its quavering voice but its bravest cheer—
The prayer that aches to be all expressed—
The kiss of love at its tenderest.
Music—music with glad heart-throbs
Within it; and music with tears and sobs
Shaking it, as the startled soul
Is shaken at shriek of the fife and roll
Of the drums;—then as suddenly lulled again

By the whisper and lisp of the summer rain.
Mist of melodies, fragrance fine—
The bird-song-flicked from the eglantine
With the dews where the springing bramble throws
A rarer drench on its ripest rose,
And the winged song soars up and sinks
To a dove's dim coo by the river brinks,
Where the ripple's voice still laughs along
Its glittering path of light and song.
Music, O poet, and all your own
By right of capture, and that alone—
For in it we hear the harmony
Born of the earth and the air and the sea,
And over and under it, and all through,
We catch the chime of the Anthem, too.

But in spite of his many duties he still finds time to fish, and since we have lived here he has taken me on a real camping trip in Canada and taught me to catch real salmon, as well as showing me the scenes of a good many of his stories in "The Ruling Passion." So now I know what real fisherman's luck is, for though "we sometimes caught plenty and sometimes few, we never came back without a good catch of happiness," and my father has taught me the real meaning of the last stanza of "The Angler's Reveille":

"Then come, my friend, forget your foes and leave your fears behind,
And wander out to try your luck with cheerful, quiet mind;
For be your fortune great or small, you'll take what God may give,

And through the day your heart shall say,
'Tis luck enough to live."

Brooke van Dyke.

Avalon, Princeton, N.J.,
January 21, 1905.

Kate Douglas Wiggin

(America: 1856-1923)
Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm, The Birds' Christmas Carol, Mother Carey's Chickens

My real advent into print was a three-part story, accepted by *The St. Nicholas*, and paid for (*mirabile dictu*) to the extent of $150.

I was seventeen; and why I did not consider myself a full-fledged author embarked upon a successful career I can hardly tell; but a period of common-sense overtook me with considerable severity. I examined myself and though I discovered an intense desire to write I discovered nothing to write about. I had neither knowledge nor experience, nor yet the genius which supplies at a pinch the place of both; so somewhat regretfully, I turned my back on literature (the muse showing a most unflattering indifference) and took a peep into life.

All my instincts led me towards work with children, so I studied educational methods for a year and a half, finishing with a course of kindergarten theory and practice. Then most unexpectedly I found myself in the position of organizing the first free kindergarten work west of the Rocky Mountains, my sphere of effort being a precinct in San Francisco known as "Tar Flat."

This is not the place to describe that experiment which under favoring circumstances took root, blossomed and bore fruit all up and down the Pacific Coast. Suffice it to say I was too busy with living to think of writing. I was helping, in my woman's way (I fear at first it was but a girl's way) to do my share of the world's work, and it absorbed all my energies of mind, body and soul.

But though the public was generous there was never money enough! Fifty children under school age, between four and six, were enrolled, but the procession of waiting mothers grew longer daily. Patrick's mother, Henri's, Levi's, Angelo's, Leo's, Katarina's, Selma's, Alexandria's stood outside asking when there would be room for more children.

On a certain October day I wondered to myself could I write a story, publish it in paper covers and sell it here and there for a modest price, the profits to help towards the establishment of a second kindergarten?

Preparations for Christmas were already in the air, and as I sat down at my desk in a holiday spirit, I wrote in a few days my real first book, "The Birds' Christmas Carol." It was the simplest of all possible simple tales, the record of a lame child's life; a child born on Christmas Day and named Carol by Mr. and Mrs. Bird, her father and mother.

The Dark Ages in which I wrote were full of literary Herods who put to death all the young children within their vicinity, and I was no exception. What saved me finally was a rudimentary sense of humor that flourished even in the life I was living; a life in which I saw pain and suffering, poverty and wretchedness, cruelty and wickedness struggling against the powers for good that lifted their heads here and there, battling courageously and often overcoming.

If Carol Bird and her family were inclined to sentimentality (as I have reason to fear), the Ruggles brood who lived "in the rear" were perhaps a wholesome antidote. Mrs. Ruggles, and the nine big, middle-sized and little Ruggleses, who inhabited a small house in an alley that backed on the Bird mansion—these furnished a study

of contrasts and gave a certain amount of fun to counteract my somewhat juvenile tendency to tears.

All this was more than thirty-five years ago. How could one suppose that the unpretentious tale would endure through the lapse of years? Yet it appeared again in a brave new dress with illuminated borders to its pages and richly colored illustrations, properly grateful, I hope, but never scornful of the paper covers in which it was born.

I wrote a preface to that new edition, a preface in which I have addressed, not the public, but the book itself, which has grown through the passage of time, to possess a kind of entity of its own.

To my Dear First Book (so I began):

> Here you are on my desk again after twenty-eight years, in which you have worn out your plates several times and richly earned your fine new attire…
>
> You have been a good friend to me, my book—none better...At the very first, you earned the wherewithal to take a group of children out of the confusion and dangers of squalid streets and transport them into a place of sunshine, safety and gladness. Then you took my hand and led me into the bigger, crowded world where the public lives. You brought me all the new, strange experiences that are so thrilling to the neophyte. The very sight of your familiar title brings them back afresh! Proof-sheets in galleys, of which one prated learnedly to one's awe-stricken family; then the Thing itself, in covers; and as one opened them tremblingly in secret there pounced from the text some clumsy phrase one never noted before in all one's weary quest for errors. Then reviews, mingling praise and blame; then letters from strangers; then, years after, the story smiling at one cheerily,

pathetically, gratefully, from patient rows of raised letters printed for blind eyes; then, finally, the sight of it translated into many foreign tongues.

Would that I had had more art—even at the expense of having had less heart—with which to endow you, but I gave you all of both I had to give, and one can do no more. In return you have repaid me in ways tangible and intangible, ways most rare and beautiful, even to bringing me friendships in strange lands, where people have welcomed me for your sake. Then go, little book on your last journey into the world. Here are my thanks, good comrade, and here my blessing! Hail and farewell!

Does all this have too sentimental a ring? I hope not, but at any rate, one always has a bit of license where a first love or a first book are concerned, particularly if the first love or first book have lasted over the silver wedding day.

Kate Douglas Wiggin
A Child's Journey with Dickens

When I was a little girl (I always think that these words, in precisely this juxtaposition, are six of the most charming in the language)—when I was a little girl, I lived, between the ages of six and sixteen, in a small village in Maine. My sister and I had few playmates, but I cannot remember that we were ever dull, for dullness in a child, as in a grown person, means lack of dreams and visions, and those we had a-plenty. We were fortunate, too, in that our house was on the brink of one of the loveliest rivers in the world. When we clambered down the steep bank to the little cove that was just beneath our bedroom windows, we found ourselves facing a sheet of crystal water as quiet as a lake, a lake from the shores of which we could set any sort of adventure afloat; yet scarcely three hundred feet away was a roaring waterfall,—a baby Niagara,—which, after dashing over the dam in a magnificent tawny torrent, spent itself in a wild stream that made a path between rocky cliffs until it reached the sea, eight miles away. No child could be lonely who lived on the brink of such a river; and then we had, beside our studies and our country sports, our books, which were the dearest of all our friends. It is a long time ago, but I can see very clearly a certain set of black walnut book-shelves, hanging on the wall of the family sitting-room. There were other cases here and there through the house, but I read and re-read the particular volumes in this one from year to year, and a strange, motley collection they were, to be sure! On the top shelf were George Sand's "Teverino," "Typee," "Undine," Longfellow's and Byron's "Poems," "The Arabian

Nights," Bailey's "Festus," "The Lamplighter," "Scottish Chiefs," Thackeray's "Book of Snobs," "Ivanhoe," and the "Life of P.T. Barnum." This last volume, I may say, did not represent the literary inclinations of my parents, but had been given me on my birthday by a grateful neighbor for saving the life of a valuable Jersey calf tethered on the too steep slopes of our river bank. The "Life of Barnum" was the last book on the heterogeneous top shelf, and on the one next below were most of the novels of Charles Dickens, more eagerly devoured than all the rest, although no book in the case had escaped a second reading save Bailey's "Festus," a little of which went a very long way with us.

It seems to me that no child nowadays has time to love an author as the children and young people of that generation loved Dickens; nor do I think that any living author of to-day provokes love in exactly the same fashion. From our yellow dog, Pip, to the cat, the canary, the lamb, the cow, down to all the hens and cocks, almost every living thing was named, sooner or later, after one of Dickens's characters; while my favorite sled, painted in brown, with the title in brilliant red letters, was "The Artful Dodger." Why did we do it? We little creatures couldn't have suspected that "the democratic movement in literature had come to town," as Richard Whiteing says, nevertheless we responded to it vigorously, ardently, and swelled the hero's public.

For periodical literature we had in our household "Harper's Magazine" and "Littell's Living Age," but we never read newspapers, so that there was a moment of thrilling excitement when my mother, looking up from the "Portland Press," told us that Mr. Dickens was coming to America, and that he was even then sailing from England.

I remember distinctly that I prayed for him fervently several times during the next week, that the voyage might be a safe one, and that even the pangs of seasickness might be spared so precious a personage. In due time we heard that he had arrived in New York, and had begun the series of readings from his books; then he came to Boston, which was still nearer, and then—day of unspeakable excitement!—we learned that he had been prevailed upon to give one reading in Portland, which was only sixteen miles away from our village.

It chanced that my mother was taking me to Charlestown, Massachusetts, to pay a visit to an uncle on the very day after the one appointed for the great event in Portland. She, therefore, planned to take me into town the night before, and to invite the cousin, at whose house we were to sleep, to attend the reading with her. I cannot throw a more brilliant light on the discipline of that period than to say that the subject of my attending the reading was never once mentioned. The price of tickets was supposed to be almost prohibitory. I cannot remember the exact sum; I only know that it was mentioned with bated breath in the village of Hollis, and that there was a general feeling in the community that any one who paid it would have to live down a reputation for riotous extravagance forever afterward. I neither wailed nor wept, nor made any attempt to set aside the parental decrees (which were anything but severe in our family), but if any martyr in Fox's "Book" ever suffered more poignant anguish than I, I am heartily sorry for him; yet my common sense assured me that a child could hardly hope to be taken on a week's junketing to Charlestown, and expect any other entertainment to be added to it for years to come. The definition of a "pleasure" in the State of Maine, county of York, village

of Hollis, year of our Lord 1868, was something that could not reasonably occur too often without being cheapened.

The days, charged with suppressed excitement, flew by. I bade good-bye to my little sister, who was not to share my metropolitan experiences, and my mother and I embarked for Portland on the daily train that dashed hither and thither at the rate of about twelve miles an hour. When the august night and moment arrived, my mother and her cousin set out for the Place, and the moment they were out of sight I slipped out of the door and followed them, traversing quickly the three or four blocks that separated me from the old City Hall and the Preble House, where Dickens was stopping. I gazed at all the windows and all the entrances of both buildings without beholding any trace of my hero. I watched the throng of happy, excited, lucky people crowding their way into the hall, and went home in a chastened mood to bed,—a bed which, as soon as I got into it, was crowded with Little Nell and the Marchioness, Florence Dombey, Bella Wilfer, Susan Nipper, and Little Em'ly. There were other dreams, too. Not only had my idol provided me with human friends, to love and laugh and weep over, but he had wrought his genius into things; so that, waking or sleeping, every bunch of holly or mistletoe, every plum pudding was alive; every crutch breathed of Tiny Tim; every cricket and every singing, steaming kettle had a soul.

The next morning we started on our railroad journey, which I remember as one being full of excitement from the beginning, for both men and women were discussing the newspapers with extraordinary interest, the day before having been the one on which the President of the United States had been formally impeached. When the train stopped for two or three minutes at North Berwick, the

people on the side of the car next the station suddenly arose and looked eagerly out at some object of apparent interest. I was not, at any age, a person to sit still in her seat when others were looking out of windows, and my small nose was quickly flattened against one of the panes. There on the platform stood the Adored One! His hands were plunged deep in his pockets (a favorite gesture), but presently one was removed to wave away laughingly a piece of the famous Berwick sponge cake, offered him by Mr. Osgood, of Boston, his travelling companion and friend.

I knew him at once!—the smiling, genial, mobile face, rather highly colored, the brilliant eyes, the watch chain, the red carnation in the button-hole, and the expressive hands, much given to gesture. It was only a momentary view, for the train started, and Dickens vanished, to resume his place in the car next to ours, where he had been, had I known it, ever since we left Portland.

When my mother was again occupied with her book, I slipped away and entered the next car. I took a humble, unoccupied seat near the end, close by the much patronized tank of (unsterilized) drinking-water, and the train-boy's basket of popcorn balls and molasses candy, and gazed steadily at the famous man, who was chatting busily with Mr. Osgood. I remembered gratefully that my mother had taken the old ribbons off my gray velvet hat and tied me down with blue under the chin, and I thought, if Dickens should happen to rest his eye upon me, that he could hardly fail to be pleased with the effect of the blue ribbon that went under my collar and held a very small squirrel muff in place. Unfortunately, however, his eye never did meet mine, but some family friends espied me, and sent me to ask my mother to come in and sit with them.

I brought her back, and fortunately there was not room enough for me with the party, so I gladly resumed my modest seat by the popcorn boy, where I could watch Dickens, quite unnoticed. There is an Indian myth which relates that when the gaze of the Siva rested for the first time on Tellatonea, the most beautiful of women, his desire to see her was so great that his body became all eyes. Such a transformation, I fear, was perilously near to being my fate! Half an hour passed, perhaps, and one gentleman after another came from here or there to exchange a word of greeting with the famous novelist, so that he was never for a moment alone, thereby inciting in my breast my first, and about my last, experience of the passion of jealousy. Suddenly, however, Mr. Osgood arose, and with an apology went into the smoking-car. I never knew how it happened; I had no plan, no preparation, no intention, no provocation; but invisible ropes pulled me out of my seat, and, speeding up the aisle, I planted myself timorously down, an unbidden guest, in the seat of honor. I had a moment to recover my equanimity, for Dickens was looking out of the window, but he turned in a moment, and said with justifiable surprise:—

"God bless my soul, where did you come from?"

"I came from Hollis, Maine," I stammered, "and I'm going to Charlestown to visit my uncle. My mother and her cousin went to your reading last night, but, of course, three couldn't go from the same family, so I stayed at home. Nora, that's my little sister, stayed at home too. She's too small to go on a journey, but she wanted to go to the reading dreadfully. There was a lady there who had never heard of Betsey Trotwood, and had only read two of your books!"

"Well, upon my word!" he said; "you do not mean to say that *you* have read them!"

"Of course I have," I replied; "every one of them but the two that we are going to buy in Boston, and some of them six times."

"Bless my soul!" he ejaculated again. "Those long thick books, and you such a slip of a thing."

"Of course," I explained conscientiously, "I do skip some of the very dull parts once in a while; not the short dull parts, but the long ones."

He laughed heartily. "Now, that is something that I hear very little about," he said. "I distinctly want to learn more about those very dull parts." And whether to amuse himself, or to amuse me, I do not know, he took out a notebook and pencil from his pocket and proceeded to give me an exhausting and exhaustive examination on this subject; the books in which the dull parts predominated; and the characters and subjects which principally produced them. He chuckled so constantly during this operation that I could hardly help believing myself extraordinarily agreeable, so I continued dealing these infant blows, under the delusion that I was flinging him bouquets.

It was not long before one of my hands was in his, and his arm around my waist, while we talked of many things. They say, I believe, that his hands were "undistinguished" in shape, and that he wore too many rings. Well, those criticisms must come from persons who never felt the warmth of his hand-clasp! For my part, I am glad that Pullman chair cars had not come into fashion, else I should never have experienced the delicious joy of snuggling up to Genius, and of being distinctly encouraged in the attitude.

I wish I could recall still more of his conversation, but I was too happy, too exhilarated, and too inexperienced to take conscious notes of the interview. I remember feeling that I had never known anybody so well and so intimately, and that I talked with him as one talks under cover of darkness or before the flickering light of a fire. It seems to me, as I look back now, and remember how the little soul of me came out and sat in the sunshine of his presence, that I must have had some premonition that the child, who would come to be one of the least of writers, was then talking with one of the greatest;—talking, too, of the author's profession and high calling. All the little details of the meeting stand out as clearly as though it had happened yesterday. I can see every article of his clothing and of my own; the other passengers in the car; the landscape through the window, and above all the face of Dickens, deeply lined, with sparkling eyes and an amused, waggish smile that curled the corners of his mouth under his grizzled moustache. A part of our conversation was given to a Boston newspaper next day, by the author himself, or by Mr. Osgood, and a little more was added a few years after by an old lady who sat in the next seat to us. (The pronoun "us" seems ridiculously intimate, but I have no doubt I used it, quite unabashed, at that date.)

"What book of mine do you like best?" Dickens asked, I remember; and I answered, "Oh, I like David Copperfield much the best. That is the one I have read six times."

"Six times,—good, good!" he replied; "I am glad that you like Davy, so do I;—I like it best, too!" clapping his hands; and that was the only remark he made which attracted the attention of the other passengers, who looked in our direction now and then, I have been told, smiling at

the interview, but preserving its privacy with the utmost friendliness.

"Of course," I added, "I almost said 'Great Expectations,' because that comes next. We named our little yellow dog Mr. Pip. They told father he was part rat terrier, and we were all so pleased. Then one day father showed him a trap with a mouse in it. The mouse wiggled its tail just a little, and Pip was so frightened that he ran under the barn and stayed the rest of the day. Then all the neighbors made fun of him, and you can think how Nora and I love him when he's had such a hard time, just like Pip in 'Great Expectations'!"

Here again my new friend's mirth was delightful to behold, so much so that my embarrassed mother, who had been watching me for half an hour, almost made up her mind to drag me away before the very eyes of our fellow passengers. I had never been thought an amusing child in the family circle; what then, could I be saying to the most distinguished and popular author in the universe?

"We have another dog," I went on, "and his name is Mr. Pocket. We were playing with Pip, who is a smooth dog, one day, when a shaggy dog came along that didn't belong to anybody, and hadn't any home. He liked Pip and Pip liked him, so we kept him, and named him Pocket after Pip's friend. The real Mr. Pip and Mr. Pocket met first in Miss Havisham's garden, and they had such a funny fight it always makes father laugh till he can't read! Then they became great friends. Perhaps you remember Mr. Pip and Mr. Pocket?" And Dickens thought he did, which, perhaps, is not strange, considering that he was the author of their respective beings. Mr. Harry Furniss declares that "Great Expectations" was Dickens's favorite novel, but I can only

say that to me he avowed his special fondness for "David Copperfield."

"Did you want to go to my reading very much?" was another question. Here was a subject that had never once been touched upon in all the past days,—a topic that stirred the very depths of my disappointment and sorrow, fairly choking me, and making my lip tremble by its unexpectedness, as I faltered, *"Yes; more than tongue can tell."*

I looked up a second later, when I was sure that the tears in my eyes were not going to fall, and to my astonishment saw that Dickens's eyes were in precisely the same state of moisture. That was a never-to-be-forgotten moment, although I was too young to appreciate the full significance of it.

"Do you cry when you read out loud?" I asked curiously. "We all do in our family. And we never read about Tiny Tim, or about Steerforth when his body is washed up on the beach, on Saturday nights, or our eyes are too swollen to go to Sunday School."

"Yes, I cry when I read about Steerforth," he answered quietly, and I felt no astonishment.

"We cry the worst when it says, 'All the men who carried him had known him and gone sailing with him, and seen him merry and bold,'" I said, growing very tearful in reminiscence.

We were now fast approaching our destination,—the station in Boston,—and the passengers began to collect their wraps and bundles. Mr. Osgood had two or three times made his appearance, but had been waved away with a smile by Dickens,—a smile that seemed to say,—"You will excuse me, I know, but this child has the right of way."

"You are not travelling alone?" he asked, as he arose to put on his overcoat.

"Oh, no," I answered, coming down to earth for the first time since I had taken my seat beside him,—"oh, no, I had a mother, but I forgot all about her." Whereupon he said,—"You are a passed-mistress of the art of flattery!" But this remark was told me years afterwards by the old lady who was sitting in the next seat, and who overheard as much of the conversation as she possibly could, so she informed me.

Dickens took me back to the forgotten mother, and introduced himself, and I, still clinging to his hand, left the car and walked with him down the platform until he disappeared in the carriage with Mr. Osgood, leaving me with the feeling that I must continue my existence somehow in a dull and dreary world.

That was my last glimpse of him, but pictures made in childhood are painted in bright hues, and this one has never faded. The child of to-day would hardly be able to establish so instantaneous a friendship. She would have heard of celebrity hunters and autograph collectors and be self-conscious, while I followed the dictates of my countrified little heart, and scraped acquaintance confidently with the magician who had glorified my childhood by his art.

He had his literary weaknesses, Charles Dickens, but they were all dear, big, attractive ones, virtues grown a bit wild and rank. Somehow when you put him—with his elemental humor, his inexhaustible vitality, his humanity, sympathy, and pity—beside the Impeccables, he always looms large! Just for a moment, when the heart overpowers the reason, he even makes the flawless ones look a little faded and colorless!

Kate Douglas Wiggin
'Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm'

This sketch of my sister's literary career and its attendant happenings has brought before me, as in a magic mirror, all her characters and one by one they have glided across the stage and disappeared. Rebecca only remains, Rebecca in whom I see much of Kate's own eager, dreaming childhood, happy Rebecca, whom Thomas Bailey Aldrich called 'the nicest child in American literature.'

During the progress of a painful illness, she came driving into K.D.W.'s vision one winter in New York, sitting erect on the slippery leather seat of the old stage-coach, her yellow calico frock standing stiffly out around her, her precious pink parasol held carefully by her side. The wheels rattled, the horses' hoofs whirled up the summer dust, and Rebecca Rowena Randall alighted at the gate of the Brick House at Riverboro, holding her bunch of faded lilacs. She *would* come in, she would not be denied, and pencil and paper must be found at once. The nurse was horrified, the doctor shook his head, but finally gave in when assured that the patient had a germ in her system that would raise her temperature to a dangerous height if not speedily removed. A handful of writing materials was all the remedy required and Rebecca's picture, stage-coach and all, was sketched before the vision faded.

When the patient had so far recovered that change of air was advised, my mother and I went with her to Pinehurst, North Carolina. To the eyes of the other

travellers we were a party of three, but in reality Rebecca was with us, 'carrying her nightgown,' for it was 'a real journey,' and assuring herself of the safety of her old hair trunk at every change of cars. Back to New York she came with us again, and later in the season journeyed to a sanitarium in the northern part of the State for a time. There my sister went on with the book from a couch on the roof and posted the concluding chapters to Maine as they were completed, that I might have them typed and sent to the publishers.

It is an interesting fact in a literary way, I think, that the germ of this book must have lain in K.D.W.'s brain since the date of her first published story, 'Half-a-Dozen Housekeepers,' written in California when she was a slip of a girl. I doubt if she remembered herself, after all the years and all the happenings that had come between, that she called the two old spinster sisters in 'Half-a-Dozen Housekeepers' Jane and Miranda Sawyer, that they lived in a brick house, that they had a widowed sister, Aurelia Randall, who was struggling with a large family of children on a farm, 'up-country,' and that on the last page of the book, when the old ladies are speaking of taking one of their nieces to bring up, Miranda says, decidedly, 'Well, Jane, you can write we'll take Rebecca, though I always thought she was a self-willed child, too full of her own fancies to be easily managed.'

The story of this early book has nothing at all to do with Rebecca, whose name is given on the last page only, and but little to do with the Aunts, who are K.D.W.'s initial attempts at painting New England types, but the idea of some day developing this only once-mentioned Rebecca into a character, and showing how 'a child brings hope into a household and forward-looking thoughts,'

must have lain somewhere in my sister's mind for many years and suddenly begun to germinate in 1903.

'Aunt Miranda' had prophesied of Rebecca, a quarter of a century or so before her birth as a real book character, that she would be a self-willed child, too full of her own fancies to be easily managed, while her creator used for her Wordsworth's lovely lines:

> '*Her eyes as stars of Twilight fair;*
> *Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair;*
> *But all things else about her drawn*
> *From May-time and the cheerful Dawn;*
> *A dancing Shape, an Image gay,*
> *To haunt, to startle, and way-lay.'*

Probably my sister and Aunt Miranda were both right, for May-time must be far too full of her own delicious fancies to adopt those of anybody else, and Rebecca's eyes 'always had the effect of looking directly through the obvious (in this case, Aunt Miranda!) to something beyond in the landscape.'

The little rustic maiden, like her own sunny brook, 'always full of sparkles the livelong day,' did not have a moment to wait for her welcome when she finally appeared in print, for she had no sooner been helped from the stage by dear old Jeremiah Cobb than notes and letters and telegrams began to pour in upon her author, and not a critic in this country, or across the water, had a word to say in her dispraise, but only called her 'a lovely dear,' 'a precious creature,' or a prototype of 'youth immortal.'

An unknown critic in the 'Louisville Evening Post' of June 14, 1907 (to whom be a long and happy life in gratitude for the joy he gave my sister!) sang the following pæan to Rebecca, and because it is so beautifully worded I must needs preserve it here:

It is the fashion of the day [he says and I say *he* advisedly] to write letters to the heroines of novels—a pretty pastime, and one which is never lacking in opportunities for the critic. Since this is so, it is not out of place to review 'Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm,' with a letter to Rebecca herself; and, with the example of Abijah the Brave, who writes his love-letter in Latin, the epistolary critics may proceed as follows:

'MY DEAR REBECCA, of Sunnybrook Farm and the Brick House:

'Oh, *"carissima puella,"* as Abijah Flagg would say to Emma Jane, 'I love you as you are and for yourself':

'For you are gay and you are good; you are obedient and original; you are vivid and you are tender; in a phrase, you are fire and air and earth and dew—and all in a little New England bundle done up in homely little dresses and tied flat with homely little bows. The dresses make no difference, nor the bows, nor the flatness. I know you well; not as Adam Ladd knows you—a harp, a bubble, the shadow of a dancing leaf—but as something quite as delicate and far more enduring. It is you, dear child, who will wear when Emma Jane is faded and the unimaginative have gone to their graves. *For the Kingdom of Heaven is within you, and it will keep you alive and beautiful.* To borrow again from the Latin of Abijah: *"Ave atque vale; Vale, carissima, carissima, carissima puella!" De tuo fideli servo.*

'A Critic.'

Kate quoted her own Rebecca when this letter reached her and said it was 'so beautiful beyond compare that you had to swallow lumps in your throat while you read it, and little cold feelings crept up and down your back all the time.' Louisville, a city I have never seen, must be a

heavenly place to live in, if all its critics can write like Rebecca's *fideli servo*, and as for Kentucky, known by me heretofore merely for its blue grass, its swift steeds, and its Mammoth Caves, I feel now that it is obviously the very home and haunt of old-time chivalry.

As for my sister's hosts of lovers, in the family and out of it, here and over the water, we all thought when we read the eulogy, of that nameless archer in the Scriptures who drew his bow at a venture and did such wondrous execution, for, as poets will, sometimes, he saw more than he knew he saw and characterized the creator as well as her creation.

May I venture to transcribe here also Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett's beautiful tribute to Rebecca, especially noteworthy as coming from one whose child-portraits are known the world over?

105 MADISON AVENUE, Jan. 18, 1904

DEAR MRS. RIGGS:

I wanted to write to you, and should have done so long ago, but work has made it literally impossible. You see I have read too much fiction not to have become *difficile* and when any one gives me a joy I touch my forehead to the earth before them in salaams of gratitude. You gave me a joy with Rebecca. It is a lovely dear, that book! I wonder how many people recognize that it is a study of the most beautiful thing in the world—the thing which sets life astir and lights all the stars as it passes—the creature who is born with the genius of *temperament.* That is a different thing from the temperament of genius, which is occasionally by way of being rather trying. Rebecca, however, I do suspect of being also a genius, though she is as unconscious as the wind of spring. But about fifteen years after your story ended the world would, I believe,

hear of her. It is so sweet, so fine, that you do not once say she is a creature of gifts, of charms, of fascinating qualities. You make only an exquisitely touched, perfectly unaffected picture of an artless, delightful, *delighted* young human thing, living, breathing and moving with absolute joyfulness in the sunshine which—she is not the least aware—radiates from her own being. I call her delighted because she is so delighted with everything, with every little joy she picks up by the wayside and touches and glows upon until it unfolds into full flower. The normal spirit and good cheer of her are adorable. Her unconscious leadership is the most lovable and natural thing. It is all so true and inevitable, and you have done it so well—so well. The very point at which you leave it all is of a perfection of harmony and restraint. My love to you; my congratulations.

Yours very truly indeed

FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT

Although my sister's life was by no means an unclouded one, and although she was hampered from her earliest years by a general fragility of health and by frequent illnesses, yet she was, in this, most fortunate, that no manuscript of hers from the day she first began to write ever 'came home to roost,' and not only that, but never even to perch for a moment, preen its feathers, and stretch its wings for a longer flight.

All her books, of course, were not equally successful; she sometimes received unfavorable criticisms, which she invariably read with attention and carefully preserved that, as she expressed it, 'she might learn something from them.' A bulky scrapbook for each one of her stories is to be found in her study at Quillcote, each containing the opinions of the press and the public on its merits and

defects, but the Rebecca volumes, for the two books and for the play, need a whole shelf for their accommodation.

One parchment portfolio, made and decorated for her by an artist-friend, holds nothing but letters from eminent men and women about Rebecca, that 'beautiful book,' as Mark Twain called it—'beautiful and moving and satisfying. How Mrs. Riggs pervades it—her brightest and best and loveliest self!'

One would like to quote verbatim all the personal letters in this exquisite illuminated volume, but a few must really be given, if only to show the appreciative spirit, the loving-kindness of authors to one another.

For instance, Miss May Sinclair writes:

Grown-up geniuses are hard to 'do,' but the child genius is only 'done' by the grace of God, and that has certainly been with you, dear Mrs. Wiggin, in the writing of these stories.

Hamilton W. Mabie writes:

I fell in love with Rebecca in the stage-coach and never expect to fall out again. The story is charming throughout; admirable at every point.

And Mary Mapes Dodge, who knew children, if ever woman did, follows with:

Rebecca is delightful in every sense, a masterpiece of simple but vivid characterization.

Sarah Orne Jewett, exquisite painter of 'The Country of the Pointed Firs,' calls Rebecca 'a live, dear, genuine creature in this pretentious world,' and so the warm-hearted, generous praise goes on, quite enough to turn any but the most firmly set of heads.

The letters from unknown admirers are legion, one of them, which especially amused my sister, running:

In a recent number of 'Harper's Magazine' Mr. W.D. Howells conveys the impression that authors are not worshipped as they once were, nor looked upon as made of different clay from the rest of us. If this is true (and who should know better than Mr. Howells?), perhaps you are not so burdened with letters of appreciation that this one will be the last straw. I remember how poor Louisa Alcott suffered with admirers, beginning with the young woman who fell fainting into the author's arms, with the hysterical request, 'Darling, love me!' and ending with the harmless old lady who begged permission to add an Alcott grasshopper to her collection of those sprightly insects gathered from other famous Concord lawns.

No such fantastic tributes were offered to K.D.W., but physicians, hospital attendants, and trained nurses were eloquent in Rebecca's praise and—rather dubious but heartfelt tribute—the Superintendent of a State Lunatic Asylum wrote, on duly labelled paper, from the Office of the Superintendent: 'I have given "Rebecca" to a number of my patients to read and they have derived great pleasure and benefit from it.'

Certain things occurred while the book was being prepared for publication that may have happened to other authors—as to that, I do not know; but that happened to this one only among my sister's books. For instance, the printers and proof-readers sent her messages of congratulation while they were working on the manuscript, the whole 'Family' of The Riverside Press wired Christmas greetings on the first holiday after the book appeared, and one of the members of the firm, in his happy and appreciative letter on K.D.W.'s success, sounded the first note, in what afterwards proved to be a chorus, when he wrote, 'Did it ever strike you that

Rebecca, of all your books, appealed more to men than women?'

The idea had not occurred to Rebecca's author up to that time, but Laurence Hutton followed immediately with his tribute, saying, 'Since Timothy quested himself into my heart I have met nobody in a book who has appealed to me more than Rebecca. I have laughed over her and I have cried over her'; and Jack London, from his headquarters with the Japanese Army in Manchuria, cries out that she is real, that he loves her, and would travel the whole world to make her his.

Here is a well-known artist in the illuminated volume, who rhapsodizes, 'No man, from Maine to Mexico, be he raw in youth or decrepit in age, but wants Rebecca—wants her *now*, before that gold-plated and presumptuous Aladdin can get to the Brick House!'

Another romantic painter, well-known in the great world, pours out his soul, dear fellow, as follows:

MY DEAR MRS. WIGGIN:

I have just come down from the West where it is wild—where I knew mountains better than men—flowers better than children, and was nearer to the stars than to women.

Then suddenly 'Rebecca Rowena' smiled at her reflection in my heart—and took her place there—as child and girl—ready to make room for the woman.

Is there such a woman—save in your own beautiful dream of the eternal Feminine made manifest? But 'Rebecca' must be real—not a mere composite reality—else how could she make me love her so—so long to see her with these physical eyes?

Of course she may be a memory from some happier life—which your lovely picture of her has recalled. But then you must have been there and have known and loved

her, too. Will you pardon an unremembered friend for asking if you would tell me the day and month of Rebecca's birth on this plane,—unless she was merely born of dreams and memories?

I am deeply grateful to you for your love-compelling picture of that child I have dreamed of—that girl I have sought—as the budding promise of the woman who has always lived in my soul since we were parted,—æons of ages ago. I am

Sincerely yours

A Western author-friend telegraphed that if Rebecca hadn't married yet he was coming East 'to take a chance'; a famous actor wired, 'Would I could be Aladdin to so charming, so darling a Rebecca!' and what we know as a 'solid, business-man' became sufficiently liquid to moan, 'Why was Rebecca given to another? As a mother parts with her only daughter at her wedding, so I feel at parting from that child.'

All these tributes from grown men, men of the world, men of experience, are amusing and touching in the same breath; one cannot but smile at their fervor and at the same time be a bit 'teary round the lashes' to think how they long for 'youth immortal, for Spring, for Girlhood, for new-found Poetry.'

Ernest Thompson Seton

(England: 1860-1946)
Founding pioneer of Boy Scouts of America, Two Little Savages

I note that I am to tell about my maiden effort. This is not easy, for the fact is, I made a number of maiden efforts, and the puzzle is, which one is wanted?

The wild animal story I wrote in 1880, and couldn't get any one to publish, so that it is still in my desk (for which I am now thankful as I look over it)?

Or the 1882 attempt, which lies with No. 1?

Or the No. 3, which having elements of history in it, got into a very local newspaper, which generously made no charge for insertion?

Or the 1884 attempt, which is reposing mustily with its maiden yea, virgin sisters, Nos. 1 and 2?

Or the No. 5 attempt, on "Housebuilding," which, through influence, I got into a local Canadian magazine, and having a very heavy pull through a political friend, I extorted $5.00 for the article of 2,000 words?

Or perhaps you really mean my early 1886 effort which was a chapter of my wild life, and appeared in *Forest and Stream* for June 6th of that year. Or possibly my later attempt that same year (called "The Song of the Prairie Lark") which appeared in the old *American Magazine*, and killed it dead,—at least there was no later issue of said magazine.

Now, personally, if I must make a choice of this bunch of maiden efforts, I should select "The Drummer on Snowshoes," which appear in *St. Nicholas* in 1887. For this, with five illustrations, they paid me the incredible sum of fifty dollars—cash (not promises)—enough to keep me on the prairies for a year.

I showed this story to Joe Collins, the Canadian writer. He had editorial instinct, and said, briefly: "You can sell as many of this kind as you choose to write and as fast as you choose to write them"; and he proved right, for this was later re-written and re-published as "Redruff" in my most successful book of animal stories.

As I look back over these many attempts I realize that the misguided editors rejected all my efforts to be "so very literary" and accepted those in which I tried to tell in simple language a story that came from my heart.

Alice Hegan Rice

(America: 1870-1942)
Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch

In my maiden effort in literature I claim the distinction of having broken the record in the use of prose if not poetic license. In the first paragraph I managed to achieve six statements that were not true. It ran as follows:

"To begin with I am a typical old maid, living alone in a large city, possessing two cozy rooms, a cat and some books, and living a happy, contented life; but occasionally I indulge in dreams and wonderings as to what would have been my fate had I chosen the more hazardous path of matrimony."

Now, at the time I wrote those lines I was a school girl, one of a large family, living in a small city, possessing no cat, and giving no thought whatever to "the hazardous path of matrimony." Having just read Ik Marvel's "Reveries of a Bachelor"—I can still recall the thrill of those lines "Love is a flame; how a flame brightens a man's habitation!"—I decided to write as a school theme a companion piece to it and call it "Reveries of a Spinster."

The little commendation of my English teacher on the margin of my composition was the match that set fire to the heap of literary aspirations that had been accumulating since I was old enough to hold a pencil.

Without taking any one into my confidence I sent my composition, unsigned, to the Louisville *Courier-Journal*. Even at this late date it is a matter of gratification to me that I launched my own small craft without asking for a friendly push from Marse Henry, in whose home I was a frequent visitor.

For several days I waited anxiously to see what would happen. As usual, it was the unexpected. "The Reveries of a Spinster" was not only printed as a serious contribution but was immediately followed by an indignant protest from "A Married Woman." That was the start of a spirited controversy that raged for some weeks between the married and the unmarried who voiced their opinions from various parts of the state. All of which provided daily amusement for a group of school girls who read the articles at recess, and shrieked with glee over the caustic references to the "cynical old maid" who had begun the discussion.

Having found it thus easy "to start something" with my pen, I continued my efforts from time to time with varying success, but never ventured further than the comic papers until ten years later when I plucked up courage to send my first long story to a publisher. The result was the publication of "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch," and the same year that found me definitely started on my career as an author found me also a happy adventurer on what I had once regarded as "the hazardous path of matrimony."

Lucy Maud Montgomery

(Canada: 1874-1942)
Anne of Green Gables Series
(

Many years ago, when I was still a child, I clipped from a current magazine a bit of verse, entitled "To the Fringed Gentian," and pasted it on the corner of the little portfolio on which I wrote my letters and school essays. Every time I opened the portfolio I read one of those verses over; it was the key-note of my every aim and ambition:

"Then whisper, blossom, in thy sleep
How I may upward climb
The Alpine path, so hard, so steep,
That leads to heights sublime;
How I may reach that far-off goal
Of true and honoured fame,
And write upon its shining scroll
A woman's humble name."

In June, 1902, I returned to Cavendish, where I remained unbrokenly for the next nine years. For the first two years after my return I wrote only short stories and serials as before. But I was beginning to think of writing a book. It had always been my hope and ambition to write one. But I never seemed able to make a beginning.

I have always hated beginning a story. When I get the first paragraph written I feet as though it were half done. The rest comes easily. To begin a book, therefore, seemed quite a stupendous task. Besides, I did not see just how I could get time for it. I could not afford to take the time from my regular writing hours. And, in the end, I never deliberately sat down and said "Go to! Here are pens,

paper, ink and plot. Let me write a book. It really all just "happened."

I had always kept a notebook in which I jotted down, as they occurred to me, ideas for plots, incidents, characters, and descriptions. In the spring of 1904 I was looking over this notebook in search of some idea for a short serial I wanted to write for a certain Sunday School paper. I found a faded entry, written many years before: "Elderly couple apply to orphan asylum for a boy. By mistake a girl is sent them." I thought this would do. I began to block out the chapters, devise, and select incidents and "brood up" my heroine. Anne—she was not so named of malice afore-thought, but flashed into my fancy already christened, even to the all important "e"—began to expand in such a fashion that she soon seemed very real to me and took possession of me to an unusual extent. She appealed to me, and I thought it rather a shame to waste her on an ephemeral little serial. Then the thought came, "Write a book. You have the central idea. All you need do is to spread it out over enough chapters to amount to a book."

The result was *Anne of Green Gables*. I wrote it in the evenings after my regular day's work was done, wrote most of it at the window of the little gable room which had been mine for many years. I began it, as I have said, in the spring of 1904. I finished it in the October of 1905.

Ever since my first book was published I have been persecuted by the question "Was so-and-so the original of such-and-such in your book.'" And behind my back they don't put it in the interrogative form, but in the affirmative. I know many people who have asserted that they are well acquainted with the "originals" of my characters. Now, for my own part, I have never, during all the years I have

studied human nature, met one human being who could, as a whole, be put into a book without injuring it. Any artist knows that to paint *exactly* from life is to give a false impression of the subject. *Study* from life he must, copying suitable heads or arms, appropriating bits of character, personal or mental idiosyncrasies, "making use of the real to perfect the ideal."

But the ideal, his ideal, must be behind and beyond it all. The writer must *create* his characters, or they will not be life-like.

With but one exception I have never drawn any of my book people from life. That exception was "Peg Bowen" in *The Story Girl*. And even then I painted the lily very freely. I have used real places in my books and many real incidents. But hitherto I have depended wholly on the creative power of my own imagination for my characters.

Cavendish was "Avonlea" to a certain extent. "Lover's Lane" was a very beautiful lane through the woods on a neighbour's farm. It was a beloved haunt of mine from my earliest days. The "Shore Road" has a real existence, between Cavendish and Rustico. But the "White Way of Delight," "Wiltonmere," and "Violet Vale" were transplanted from the estates of my castles in Spain. "The Lake of Shining Waters" is generally supposed to be Cavendish Pond. This is not so. The pond I had in mind is the one at Park Corner, below Uncle John Campbell's house. But I suppose that a good many of the effects of light and shadow I had seen on the Cavendish pond figured unconsciously in my descriptions. Anne's habit of naming places was an old one of my own. I named all the pretty nooks and corners about the old farm. I had, I remember, a "Fairyland," a "Dreamland," a "Pussy-Willow Palace," a "No-Man's-Land," a "Queen's Bower," and many

others. The "Dryads Bubble" was purely imaginary, but the "Old Log Bridge" was a real thing. It was formed by a single large tree that had blown down and lay across the brook. It had served as a bridge to the generation before my time, and was hollowed out like a shell by the tread of hundreds of passing feet. Earth had blown into the crevices, and ferns and grasses had found root and fringed it luxuriantly. Velvet moss covered its sides and below was a deep, clear, sun-flecked stream.

Anne's Katie Maurice was mine. In our sitting-room there had always stood a big book-case used as a china cabinet. In each door was a large oval glass, dimly reflecting the room. When I was very small each of my reflections in these glass doors were "real folk" to my imagination. The one in the left-hand door was Katie Maurice, the one in the right, Lucy Gray. Why I named them thus I cannot say. Wordsworth's ballad had no connection with the latter, for I had never read it at that time. Indeed, I have no recollection of deliberately naming them at all. As far back as consciousness runs, Katie Maurice and Lucy Gray lived in the fairy room behind the bookcase. Katie Maurice was a little girl like myself, and I loved her dearly. I would stand before that door and prattle to Katie for hours, giving and receiving confidences. In especial, I liked to do this at twilight, when the fire had been lit and the room and its reflections were a glamour of light and shadow.

Lucy Gray was grown-up and a widow! I did not like her as well as Katie. She was always sad, and always had dismal stories of her troubles to relate to me; nevertheless, I visited her scrupulously in turn, lest her feelings should be hurt, because she was jealous of Katie, who also disliked her. All this sounds like the veriest nonsense, but

I cannot describe how real it was to me. I never passed through the room without a wave of my hand to Katie in the glass door at the other end.

The notable incident of the liniment cake happened when I was teaching school in Bideford and boarding at the Methodist parsonage there. Its charming mistress flavoured a layer cake with anodyne liniment one day. Never shall I forget the taste of that cake and the fun we had over it, for the mistake was not discovered until tea-time. A strange minister was there to tea that night. He ate every crumb of his piece of cake. What he thought of it we never discovered. Possibly he imagined it was simply some new-fangled flavouring.

Many people have told me that they regretted Matthew's death in Green Gables. I regret it myself. If I had the book to write over again I would spare Matthew for several years. But when I wrote it I thought he must die, that there might be a necessity for self-sacrifice on Anne's part, so poor Matthew joined the long procession of ghosts that haunt my literary past.

Well, my book was finally written. The next thing was to find a publisher. I typewrote it myself, on my old second-hand typewriter that never made the capitals plain and wouldn't print "w" at all, and I sent it to a new American firm that had recently come to the front with several "best sellers." I thought I might stand a better chance with a new firm than with an old established one that had already a preferred list of writers. But the new firm very promptly sent it back. Next I sent it to one of the "old, established firms," and the old established firm sent it back. Then I sent it, in turn, to three "Betwixt-and-between firms", and they all sent it back. Four of them returned it with a cold, printed note of rejection; one of

them "damned with faint praise." They wrote that "Our readers report that they find some merit in your story, but not enough to warrant its acceptance."

That finished me. I put *Anne* away in an old hat-box in the clothes room, resolving that some day when I had time I would take her and reduce her to the original seven chapters of her first incarnation. In that case I was tolerably sure of getting thirty-five dollars for her at least, and perhaps even forty.

The manuscript lay in the hatbox until I came across it one winter day while rummaging. I began turning over the leaves, reading a bit here and there. It didn't seem so very bad. "I'll try once more," I thought. The result was that a couple of months later an entry appeared in my journal to the effect that my book had been accepted. After some natural jubilation I wrote: "The book may or may not succeed. I wrote it for love, not money, but very often such books are the most successful, just as everything in the world that is born of true love has life in it, as nothing constructed for mercenary ends can ever have.

"Well, I've written my book! The dream dreamed years ago at that old brown desk in school has come true at last after years of toil and struggle. And the realization is sweet, almost as sweet as the dream."

When I wrote of the book succeeding or not succeeding, I had in mind only a very moderate success indeed, compared to that which it did attain. I never dreamed that it would appeal to young and old. I thought girls in their teens might like to read it, that was the only audience I hoped to reach. But men and women who are grandparents have written to tell me how they loved *Anne*, and boys at college have done the same. The very day on which these words are written has come a letter to me from

an English lad of nineteen, totally unknown to me, who writes that he is leaving for "the front" and wants to tell me "before he goes" how much my books and especially *Anne* have meant to him. It is in such letters that a writer finds meet reward for all sacrifice and labor.

Well, *Anne* was accepted; but I had to wait yet another year before the book was published. Then on June 20th, 1908, I wrote in my journal:

"To-day has been, as Anne herself would say, 'an epoch in my life.' My book came to-day, 'spleet-new' from the publishers. I candidly confess that it was to me a proud and wonderful and thrilling moment. There, in my hand, lay the material realization of all the dreams and hopes and ambitions and struggles of my whole conscious existence—my first book. Not a great book, but mine, mine, mine, something which I had created."

I have received hundreds of letters from all over the world about *Anne*. Some odd dozen of them were addressed, not to me, but to "Miss Anne Shirley, Green Gables, Avonlea, Prince Edward Island." They were written by little girls who had such a touching faith in the real flesh and blood existence of Anne that I always hated to destroy it. Some of my letters were decidedly amusing. One began impressingly, "My dear long-lost uncle," and the writer went on to claim me as Uncle Lionel, who seemed to have disappeared years ago. She wound up by entreating me to write to my "affectionate niece" and explain the reason of my long silence. Several people wrote me that their lives would make very interesting stories, and if I would write them and give them half the proceeds they would give me "the facts!" I answered only one of these letters, that of a young man who had enclosed stamps for a reply. In order to let him down as gently as

possible, I told him that I was not in any need of material, as I had books already planned out which would require at least ten years to write. He wrote back that he had a great deal of patience and would cheerfully wait until ten years had expired; then he would write again. So, if my own invention gives out, I can always fall back on what that young man assured me was "a thrilling life-history!"

Green Gables has been translated into Swedish and Dutch. My copy of the Swedish edition always gives me the inestimable boon of a laugh. The cover design is a full length figure of Anne, wearing a sunbonnet, carrying the famous carpet-bag, and with hair that is literally of an intense scarlet!

With the publication of *Green Gables* my struggle was over. I have published six novels since then. *Anne of Avonlea* came out in 1909, followed in 1910 by *Kilmeny of the Orchard*. This latter story was really written several years before *Green Gables*, and ran as a serial in an American magazine, under another title. Therefore some sage reviewers amused me not a little by saying that the book showed "the insidious influence of popularity and success" in its style and plot!

The Story Girl was written in 1910 and published in 1911. It was the last book I wrote in my old home by the gable window where I had spent so many happy hours of creation. It is my own favourite among my books, the one that gave me the greatest pleasure to write, the one whose characters and landscape seem to me most real. All the children in the book are purely imaginary. The old "King Orchard" was a compound of our old orchard in Cavendish and the orchard at Park Corner. "Peg Bowen" was suggested by a half-witted, gypsy-like personage who roamed at large for many years over the Island and was the

terror of my childhood. We children were always being threatened that if we were not good Peg would catch us. The threat did not make us good, it only made us miserable.

Poor Peg was really very harmless, when she was not teased or annoyed. If she were, she could be vicious and revengeful enough. In winter she lived in a little hut in the woods, but as soon as the spring came the lure of the open road proved too much for her, and she started on a tramp which lasted until the return of winter snows. She was known over most of the Island. She went bareheaded and barefooted, smoked a pipe, and told extraordinary tales of her adventures in various places. Occasionally she would come to church, stalking unconcernedly up the aisle to a prominent seat. She never put on hat or shoes on such occasions, but when she wanted to be especially grand she powdered face, arms and legs with *flour!*

As I have already said, the story of Nancy and Betty Sherman was founded on fact. The story of the captain of the *Fanny* is also literally true. The heroine is still living, or was a few years ago, and still retains much of the beauty which won the Captain's heart. "The Blue Chest of Rachel Ward" was another "ower-true tale." Rachel Ward was Eliza Montgomery, a cousin of my father's, who died in Toronto a few years ago. The blue chest was in the kitchen of Uncle John Campbell's house at Park Corner from 1849 until her death. We children heard its story many a time and speculated and dreamed over its contents, as we sat on it to study our lessons or eat our bed-time snacks.

The "Alpine Path" has been climbed, after many years of toil and endeavor. It was not an easy ascent, but even in

the struggle at its hardest there was a delight and a zest known only to those who aspire to the heights.

"He ne'er is crowned
With immortality, who fears to follow
Where airy voices lead."

True, most true! We must follow our "airy voices," follow them through bitter suffering and discouragement.

Eleanor Gates

(America: 1875-1951)
The Biography of a Prairie Girl

My inspiration was, I remember, *The Youth's Companion*. It reached the ranch every few weeks, tied in a big bundle made up of many issues, and was to me in the nature of a literary spree, for my father, with old-fashioned ideas, kept me pretty strictly to the more classic type of reading-matter. So loving *The Companion* as I did, naturally enough I came to aspire to its pages; and when I had dashed off my initial effort, what was there better to do than try it on the teacher? (I looked for no sympathy at home.)

The teacher and I were not on the best of terms. He was a Swede, tow-headed and milky-eyed. And he loathed me because when he mispronounced words, which he often did, I promptly corrected him—a bit of daring that more than once came near to costing me a public spanking. (It was the year I was eight.) So I was not submitting my story to him with the thought that he could help me any. No, indeed. I was simply hoping to fill him with envy.

The story started off in a most unaffected fashion:

"For a long time Mr. Hank Hayes has been promising me that he would let me ride his big gray stallion. So yesterday I went over to his house, and he led the horse out. 'I'm afraid you're going to break your neck,' he said. But I was not afraid. The gray stallion has dapples on his hair, and he jumped around awful when I got on. Then away he galloped."

The tale wound on in my best blood-curdling style, culled from Cooper, with simplifications. I told how I swam sloughs and leaped coulées, raised the scalps on

people's heads, and—subdued the mammoth gray, bringing him back on the Hayes ranch dripping but still dancing, whereupon Mr. and Mrs. Hayes rendered to me both praise and cookies in which were caraway seeds.

The teacher was boarding with us that week, and under the pretense of examining my masterpiece more at his leisure, he brought the thing home in his pocket; then with characteristic (almost brotherly) treachery, he showed it to that paragon of all the virtues, that censor of everything sisterly, my brother Will.

With unconcealed horror and rage Will read my tale. Then he launched into such a storm of blame—against me, against Mr. Hayes, and against Mrs. Hayes—and into such wild threats as to what he intended to say to my mother, that without further delay the author crawled under the sitting-room bed.

From there, lying on my back, with my freckled nose full of goose down, I marked the too-soon entrance of my mother; heard Will break out into his excited tattling; caught the rustle of paper as my story changed hands— all the while scarcely daring to breathe.

"If it's all so," vowed the eldest-born, "then she ought to be licked! And if it ain't so, then it's a lie! And she's under the bed, Ma." Then to me, "Oh, you'd better hide! You're goin' to catch it!"

I crawled out. I was trembling with fear. The red of shame suffused my small countenance. Never since have I regretted a literary effort more. As I advanced I expected to be shaken and switched.

What happened however was very different from my expectations—also it was far-reaching in its effect, and regrettable. For my mother smiled upon me, held out a welcoming hand, and drew me to her knee. "So!" she

said—and I could see that she was proud about something. "So! We've got a writer in the family!"

And the harm was done.

By the time I was eleven I was writing freely, but, thanks to that stern and scoffing critic, my eldest brother, I was submitting no material. One of these early opera begins thus: "There were two women in the room, and both were dead"—which shows that I was then passing through that period of too-young literary effort always recognizable by the exalting of the ultra-morbid. Fortunately I came through it safely.

Fortunately, also, a man whom I met— I was still at an age when my hair was forever getting snagged on the buttons on the back of my pinafore—gave me some precious advice which (astonishing as it may seem) I took. It was this: "Write, write, write. Get the habit of writing. But! Put it all away. And read, read, read. Don't try to sell anything till you're grown up."

At twenty-four I found myself a junior "special" at the University, where I was merrily flunking in all my courses, due to the fact that I was reading everything except what I should have read; due, also to the other fact that I was writing My Maiden Dramatic Effort, a play called "Gentle Miss Gillette," which was produced at the Macdonough Theatre, Oakland, California. When my "The Poor Little Rich Girl" opened at the Hudson Theatre, New York, it was presumed to be my first dramatic attempt. But between these two plays, during the eleven years intervening, I had collaborated on several.

After that first, and dramatic, work, I allowed myself to be deflected to literary stuff of another kind. Finding all my early stories unutterably awful, I burned them and wrote a new one, called "Badgy." I offered it to *The*

Century Magazine. They bought it. That was my first sale. And "Badgy" became a chapter of my Maiden Book, "The Biography of a Prairie Girl."