

LITTLE BLUE BOOK NO. 1115
Edited by E. Haldeman-Julius

**A Book of Ridiculous
Stories**

Stephen Leacock

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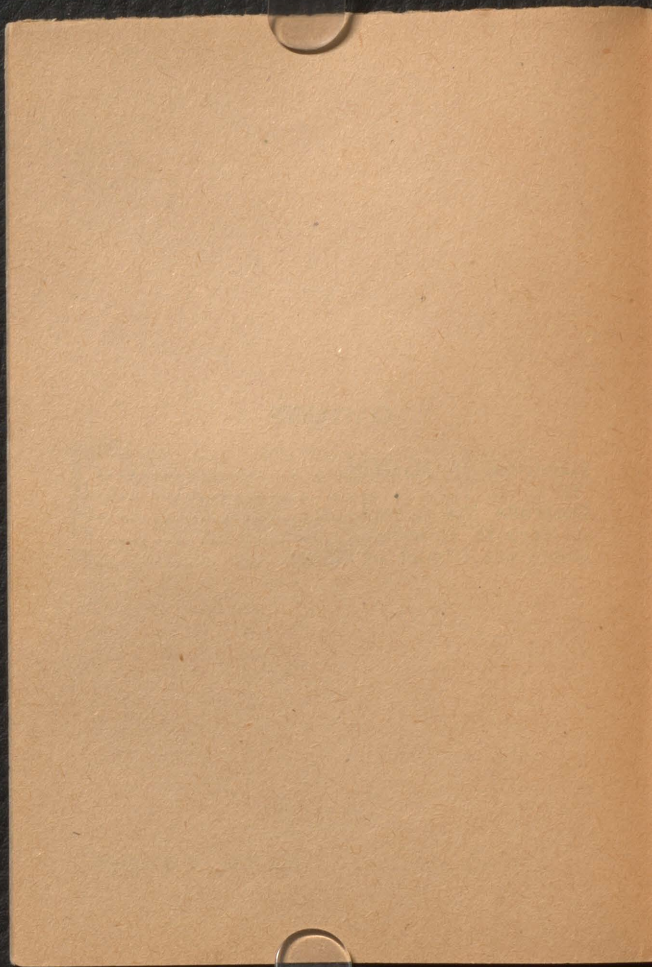
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A BOOK OF RIDICULOUS STORIES

MADDENED BY MYSTERY: OR, THE DEFECTIVE DETECTIVE

The Great Detective sat in his office. He wore a long green gown and half a dozen secret badges pinned to the outside of it.

Three or four pairs of false whiskers hung on a whisker-stand beside him.

Goggles, blue spectacles and motor glasses lay within easy reach.

He could completely disguise himself at a second's notice.

Half a bucket of cocaine and a dipper stood on a chair at his elbow.

His face was absolutely impenetrable.

A pile of cryptograms lay on the desk. The Great Detective hastily tore them open one after the other, solved them, and threw them down the cryptogram-shute at his side.

There was a rap at the door.

The Great Detective hurriedly wrapped himself in a pink domino, adjusted a pair of false black whiskers and cried,

"Come in."

His secretary entered. "Ha," said the detective, "it is you!"

He laid aside his disguise.

"Sir," said the young man in intense excitement, "a mystery has been committed!"

"Ha!" said the Great Detective, his eye kindling, "is it such as to completely baffle the police of the entire continent?"

"They are so completely baffled with it," said the secretary, "that they are lying collapsed in heaps; many of them have committed suicide."

"So," said the detective, "and is the mystery one that is absolutely unparalleled in the whole recorded annals of the London police?"

"It is."

"And I suppose," said the detective, "that it involves names which you would scarcely dare to breathe, at least without first using some kind of atomiser or throat-gargle."

"Exactly."

"And it is connected, I presume, with the highest diplomatic consequences, so that if we fail to solve it England will be at war with the whole world in sixteen minutes?"

His secretary, still quivering with excitement, again answered yes.

"And finally," said the Great Detective, "I presume that it was committed in broad daylight, in some such place as the entrance of the Bank of England, or in the cloak-room of the House of Commons, and under the very eyes of the police?"

"Those," said the secretary, "are the very conditions of the mystery."

"Good," said the Great Detective, "now wrap yourself in this disguise, put on these brown whiskers and tell me what it is."

The secretary wrapped himself in a blue domino with lace insertions, then, bending over, he whispered in the ear of the Great Detective:

"The Prince of Wurttemberg has been kidnapped."

The Great Detective bounded from his chair as if he had been kicked from below.

A prince stolen! Evidently a Bourbon! The scion of one of the oldest families in Europe kidnapped. Here was a mystery indeed worthy of his analytical brain.

His mind began to move like lightning.

"Stop!" he said, "how do you know this?"

The secretary handed him a telegram. It was from the Prefect of Police of Paris. It read: "The Prince of Wurttemberg stolen. Probably forwarded to London. Must have him here for the opening day of Exhibition. £1,000 reward."

So! The Prince had been kidnapped out of Paris at the very time when his appearance at the International Exposition would have been a political event of the first magnitude.

With the Great Detective to think was to act, and to act was to think. Frequently he could do both together.

"Wire to Paris for a description of the Prince."

The secretary bowed and left.

At the same moment there was slight scratching at the door.

A visitor entered. He crawled stealthily on his hands and knees. A hearthrug thrown over his head and shoulders disguised his identity.

He crawled to the middle of the room.

Then he rose.

Great Heaven!

It was the Prime Minister of England.

"You!" said the detective.

"Me," said the Prime Minister.

"You have come in regard to the kidnapping of the Prince of Wurttemberg?"

The Prime Minister started.

"How do you know?" he said.

The Great Detective smiled his inscrutable smile.

"Yes," said the Prime Minister. "I will use no concealment. I am interested, deeply interested. Find the Prince of Wurttemberg, get him safe back to Paris and I will add £500 to the reward already offered. But listen," he said impressively as he left the room, "see to it that no attempt is made to alter the marking of the prince, or to clip his tail."

So! To clip the Prince's tail! The brain of the Great Detective reeled. So! a gang of miscreants had conspired to—but no! the thing was not possible.

There was another rap at the door.

A second visitor was seen. He wormed his way in, lying almost prone upon his stomach, and wriggling across the floor. He was enveloped in a long purple cloak. He stood up and peeped over the top of it.

Great Heaven!

It was the Archbishop of Canterbury!

"Your Grace!" exclaimed the detective in amazement—"pray do not stand, I beg you. Sit down, lie down, anything rather than stand."

The Archbishop took off his mitre and laid it wearily on the whisker-stand.

"You are here in regard to the Prince of Wurttemberg."

The Archbishop started and crossed himself. Was the man a magician?

"Yes," he said, "much depends on getting him back. But I have only come to say this: my sister is desirous of seeing you. She is coming here. She has been extremely indiscreet and her fortune hangs upon the Prince. Get him back to Paris or I fear she will be ruined."

The Archbishop regained his mitre, uncrossed himself, wrapped his cloak about him, and crawled stealthily out on his hands and knees, purring like a cat.

The face of the Great Detective showed the most profound sympathy. It ran up and down in furrows. "So," he muttered, "the sister of the Archbishop, the Countess of Dashleigh!" Accustomed as he was to the life of the aristocracy, even the Great Detective felt that there was here intrigue of more than customary complexity.

There was a loud rapping at the door.

There entered the Countess of Dashleigh. She was all in furs.

She was the most beautiful woman in England. She strode imperiously into the room. She seized a chair imperiously and seated herself on it, imperial side up.

She took off her tiara of diamonds and put it on the tiara-holder beside her and uncoiled her boa of pearls and put it on the pearl-stand.

"You have come," said the Great Detective, "about the Prince of Wurttemberg."

"Wretched little pup!" said the Countess of Dashleigh in disgust.

So! A further complication! Far from being in love with the Prince, the Countess denounced the young Bourbon as a pup!

"You are interested in him, I believe."

"Interested!" said the Countess. "I should rather say so. Why, I bred him!"

"You which?" gasped the Great Detective, his usually impassive features suffused with a carmine blush.

"I bred him," said the Countess, "and I've got £10,000 up on his chances, so no wonder I want him back in Paris. Only listen," she said, "if they've got hold of the Prince and cut his tail or spoiled the markings of his stomach it would be far better to have him quietly put out of the way here."

The Great Detective reeled and leaned up against the side of the room. So! The cold-blooded admission of the beautiful woman for the moment took away his breath! Herself the mother of the young Bourbon, misallied with one of the greatest families of Europe, staking her fortune on a Royalist plot, and yet with so instinctive a knowledge of European politics as to know that any removal of the hereditary birth-marks of the Prince would forfeit for him the sympathy of the French populace.

The Countess resumed her tiara.

She left.

The secretary re-entered.

"I have three telegrams from Paris," he said, "they are completely baffling."

It read:

"The Prince of Wurttemberg has a long, wet

snout, broad ears, very long body, and short hind legs."

The Great Detective looked puzzled.

He read the second telegram.

"The Prince of Wurttemberg is easily recognized by his deep bark."

And then the third.

"The Prince of Wurttemberg can be recognized by the patch of white hair across the center of his back."

The two men looked at one another. The mystery was maddening, impenetrable.

The Great Detective spoke.

"Give me my domino," he said. "These clues must be followed up," then pausing, while his quick brain analyzed and summed up the evidence before him—"a young man," he muttered, "evidently young since described as a 'pup,' with a long, wet snout (ha! addicted obviously to drinking), a streak of white hair across his back (a first sign of the results of his abandoned life)—yes, yes," he continued, "with this clue I shall find him easily."

The Great Detective rose.

He wrapped himself in a long black cloak with white whiskers and blue spectacles attached.

Completely disguised, he issued forth.

He began the search.

For four days he visited every corner of London.

He entered every saloon in the city. In each of them he drank a glass of rum. In some of them he assumed the disguise of a sailor. In others he entered as a soldier. Into others he

penetrated as a clergyman. His disguise was perfect. Nobody paid any attention to him as long as he had the price of a drink.

The search proved fruitless.

Two young men were arrested under suspicion of being the Prince, only to be released.

The identification was incomplete in each case.

One had a long wet snout but no hair on his back.

The other had hair on his back but couldn't bark.

Neither of them was the young Bourbon.

The Great Detective continued his search.

He stopped at nothing.

Secretly, after nightfall, he visited the home of the Prime Minister. He examined it from top to bottom. He measured all the doors and windows. He took up the flooring. He inspected the plumbing. He examined the furniture. He found nothing.

With equal secrecy he penetrated into the palace of the Archbishop. He examined it from top to bottom. Disguised as a choir-boy he took part in the offices of the church. He found nothing.

Still undismayed, the Great Detective made his way into the home of the Countess of Dashleigh. Disguised as a housemaid, he entered the service of the Countess.

Then at last the clue came which gave him a solution of the mystery.

On the wall of the Countess' boudoir was a large framed engraving.

It was a portrait.

Under it was a printed legend:

THE PRINCE OF WURTEMBERG

The portrait was that of a Dachshund.

The long body, the broad ears, the unclipped tail, the short hind legs—all was there.

In the fraction of a second the lightning mind of the Great Detective had penetrated the whole mystery.

THE PRINCE WAS A DOG! ! !

Hastily throwing a domino over his housemaid's dress, he rushed to the street. He summoned a passing hansom, and in a few moments was at his house.

"I have it," he gasped to his secretary, "the mystery is solved. I have pieced it together. By sheer analysis I have reasoned it out. Listen—hind legs, hair on back, wet snout, pup—eh, what? Does that suggest nothing to you?"

"Nothing," said the secretary; "it seems perfectly hopeless."

The Great Detective, now recovered from his excitement, smiled faintly.

"It means simply this, my dear fellow. The Prince of Wurttemberg is a dog, a prize Dachshund. The Countess of Dashleigh bred him, and he is worth some £25,000 in addition to the prize of £10,000 offered at the Paris Dog show. Can you wonder that——"

At that moment the Great Detective was interrupted by the scream of a woman.

"Great Heaven!"

The Countess of Dashleigh dashed into the room.

Her face was wild.

Her tiara was in disorder.

Her pearls were dripping all over the place. She wrung her hands and moaned.

"They have cut his tail," she gasped, "and taken all the hair off his back. What can I do? I am undone! !"

"Madame," said the Great Detective, calm as bronze, "do yourself up. I can save you yet."

"You!"

"Me!"

"How?"

"Listen. This is how. The Prince was to have been shown at Paris."

The Countess nodded.

"Your fortune was staked on him?"

The Countess nodded again.

"The dog was stolen, carried to London, his tail cut and his marks disfigured."

Amazed at the quiet penetration of the Great Detective, the Countess kept on nodding and nodding.

"And you are ruined?"

"I am," she gasped, and sank down on the floor in a heap of pearls.

"Madame," said the Great Detective, "all is not lost."

He straightened himself up to his full height. A look of inflexible inflexibility flickered over his features.

The honor of England, the fortune of the most beautiful woman in England was at stake.

"I will do it," he murmured.

"Rise, dear lady," he continued. "Fear nothing. I WILL IMPERSONATE THE DOG! ! !"

That night the Great Detective might have been seen on the deck of the Calais packet boat

with his secretary. He was on his hands and knees in a long black cloak, and his secretary had him on a short chain.

He barked at the waves exultingly and licked the secretary's hand.

"What a beautiful dog," said the passengers.

The disguise was absolutely complete.

The Great Detective had been coated over with mucilage to which dog hairs had been applied. The markings on his back were perfect. His tail, adjusted with an automatic coupler, moved up and down responsive to every thought. His deep eyes were full of intelligence.

Next day he was exhibited in the Dachshund class at the International show.

He won all hearts.

"*Quel beau chien!*" cried the French people.

"*Ach! was ein Dog!*" cried the Spanish.

The Great Detective took the first prize!

The fortune of the Countess was saved.

Unfortunately as the Great Detective had neglected to pay the dog tax, he was caught and destroyed by the dog-catchers. But that is, of course, quite outside of the present narrative, and is only mentioned as an odd fact in conclusion.

“Q.” A PSYCHIC PASTORY OF THE
PSUPERNATURAL

I cannot expect that any of my readers will believe the story which I am about to narrate. Looking back upon it, I scarcely believe it myself. Yet my narrative is so extraordinary and throws such light upon the nature of our communications with beings of another world, that I feel I am not entitled to withhold it from the public.

I had gone over to visit Annerly at his rooms. It was Saturday, October 31. I remember the date so precisely because it was my pay day, and I had received six sovereigns and ten shillings. I remembered the sum so exactly because I had put the money into my pocket, and I remember into which pocket I had put it because I had no money in any other pocket. My mind is perfectly clear on all these points.

Annerly and I sat smoking for some time. Then quite suddenly—

“Do you believe in the supernatural?” he asked.

I started as if I had been struck.

At the moment when Annerly spoke of the supernatural I had been thinking of something entirely different. The fact that he should speak of it at the very instant when I was thinking of something else, struck me as at least a very singular coincidence.

For a moment I could only stare.

"What I mean is," said Annerly, "do you believe in phantasms of the dead?"

"Phantasms?" I repeated.

"Yes, phantasms, or if you prefer the word, phanograms, or say if you will phanogram-matical manifestations, or more simply psychophantasmal phenomena?"

I looked at Annerly with a keener sense of interest than I had ever felt in him before. I felt that he was about to deal with events and experiences of which in the two or three months that I had known him he had never seen fit to speak.

I wondered now that it had never occurred to me that a man whose hair at fifty-five was already streaked with gray, must have passed through some terrible ordeal.

Presently Annerly spoke again.

"Last night I saw Q," he said.

"Good heavens!" I ejaculated. I did not in the least know who Q was, but it struck me with a thrill of indescribable terror that Annerly had seen Q. In my own quiet and measured existence such a thing had never happened.

"Yes," said Annerly, "I saw Q as plainly as if he were standing here. But perhaps I had better tell you something of my past relationship with Q, and you will understand exactly what the present situation is."

Annerly seated himself in a chair on the other side of the fire from me, lighted a pipe and continued.

"When first I knew Q he lived not very far from a small town in the south of England,

which I will call X, and was betrothed to a beautiful and accomplished girl whom I will name M."

Annerly had hardly begun to speak before I found myself listening with riveted attention. I realized that it was no ordinary experience that he was about to narrate. I more than suspected that Q and M were not the real names of his unfortunate acquaintances, but were in reality two letters of the alphabet selected almost at random to disguise the names of his friends. I was still pondering over the ingenuity of the thing when Annerly went on:

"When Q and I first became friends, he had a favorite dog, which, if necessary, I might name Z, and which followed him in and out of X on his daily walk."

"In and out of X," I repeated in astonishment.

"Yes," said Annerly, "in and out."

My senses were now fully alert. That Z should have followed Q out of X, I could readily understand, but that he should first have followed him in seemed to pass the bounds of comprehension.

"Well," said Annerly, "Q and Miss M were to be married. Everything was arranged. The wedding was to take place on the last day of the year. Exactly six months and four days before the appointed day (I remember the date because the coincidence struck me as peculiar at the time) Q came to me late in the evening in great distress. He had just had, he said, a premonition of his own death. That evening,

while sitting with Miss M on the veranda of her house, he had distinctly seen a projection of the dog R pass along the road."

"Stop a moment," I said. "Did you not say that the dog's name was Z?"

Annerly frowned slightly.

"Quite so," he replied. "Z, or more correctly Z R, since Q was in the habit, perhaps from motives of affection, of calling him R as well as Z. Well, then, the projection, or phanogram, of the dog passed in front of them so plainly that Miss M swore that she could have believed that it was the dog himself. Opposite the house the phantasm stopped for a moment and wagged its tail. Then it passed on, and quite suddenly disappeared around the corner of a stone wall, as if hidden by the bricks. What made the thing still more mysterious was that Miss M's mother, who is partially blind, had only partially seen the dog."

Annerly paused a moment. Then he went on:

"This singular occurrence was interpreted by Q, no doubt correctly, to indicate his own approaching death. I did what I could to remove this feeling, but it was impossible to do so, and he presently wrung my hand and left me, firmly convinced that he would not live till morning."

"Good heavens!" I exclaimed, "and he died that night?"

"No, he did not," said Annerly quietly, "that is the inexplicable part of it."

"Tell me about it," I said.

"He rose that morning as usual, dressed

himself with his customary care, omitting none of his clothes, and walked down to his office at the usual hour. He told me afterwards that he remembered the circumstances so clearly from the fact that he had gone to the office by the usual route instead of taking any other direction."

"Stop a moment," I said. "Did anything unusual happen to mark that particular day?"

"I anticipated that you would ask that question," said Annerly, "but as far as I can gather, absolutely nothing happened. Q returned from his work, and ate his dinner apparently much as usual, and presently went to bed complaining of a slight feeling of drowsiness, but nothing more. His stepmother, with whom he lived, said afterwards that she could hear the sound of his breathing quite distinctly during the night."

"And did he die that night?" I asked, breathless with excitement.

"No," said Annerly, "he did not. He rose next morning feeling about as before except that the sense of drowsiness had apparently passed, and that the sound of his breathing was no longer audible."

Annerly again fell into silence. Anxious as I was to hear the rest of his astounding narrative, I did not like to press him with questions. The fact that our relations had hitherto been only of a formal character, and that this was the first occasion on which he had invited me to visit him at his rooms, prevented me from assuming too great an intimacy.

"Well," he continued, "Q went to his office

each day after that with absolute regularity. As far as I can gather there was nothing either in his surroundings or his conduct to indicate that any peculiar fate was impending over him. He saw Miss M regularly, and the time fixed for their marriage drew nearer each day."

"Each day?" I repeated in astonishment.

"Yes," said Annerly, "every day. For some time before his marriage I saw but little of him. But two weeks before that event was due to happen, I passed Q one day in the street. He seemed for a moment about to stop, then he raised his hat, smiled and passed on."

"One moment," I said, "if you will allow me a question that seems of importance—did he pass on and then smile and raise his hat, or did he smile into his hat, raise it, and then pass on afterwards?"

"Your question is quite justified," said Annerly, "though I think I can answer with perfect accuracy that he first smiled, then stopped smiling and raised his hat, and then stopped raising his hat and passed on."

"However," he continued, "the essential fact is this: on the day appointed for the wedding, Q and Miss M were duly married."

"Impossible!" I gasped; "duly married, both of them?"

"Yes," said Annerly, "both at the same time. After the wedding Mr. and Mrs. Q——"

"Mr. and Mrs. Q," I repeated in perplexity.

"Yes," he answered, "Mr. and Mrs. Q—— for after the wedding Miss M took the name

of Q—left England and went out to Australia, where they were to reside.”

“Stop one moment,” I said, “and let me be quite clear—in going out to settle in Australia it was their intention to reside there?”

“Yes,” said Annerly, “that at any rate was generally understood. I myself saw them off on the steamer, and shook hands with Q, standing at the same time quite close to him.”

“Well,” I said, “and since the two Q’s, as I suppose one might almost call them, went to Australia, have you heard anything from them?”

“That,” replied Annerly, “is a matter that has shown the same singularity as the rest of my experience. It is now four years since Q and his wife went to Australia. At first I heard from him quite regularly, and received two letters each month. Presently I only received one letter every two months, and later two letters every six months, and then only one letter every twelve months. Then until last night I heard nothing whatever of Q for a year and a half.”

I was now on the tiptoe of expectancy.

“Last night,” said Annerly very quietly, “Q appeared in this room, or rather, a phantasm or psychic manifestation of him. He seemed in great distress, made gestures which I could not understand, and kept turning his trouser pockets inside out. I was too spell-bound to question him, and tried in vain to divine his meaning. Presently the phantasm seized a pencil from the table, and wrote the words, ‘Two sovereigns, tomorrow night, urgent.’”

Annerly was again silent. I sat in deep thought. "How do you interpret the meaning which Q's phanogram meant to convey?"

"I think," he announced, "it means this. Q, who is evidently dead, meant to visualize that fact, meant, so to speak, to deatomize the idea that he was demonetized, and that he wanted two sovereigns tonight."

"And how," I asked, amazed at Annerly's instinctive penetration into the mysteries of the psychic world, "how do you intend to get it to him?"

"I intend," he announced, "to try a bold, a daring experiment, which, if it succeeds, will bring us into immediate connection with the world of spirits. My plan is to leave two sovereigns here upon the edge of the table during the night. If they are gone in the morning, I shall know that Q has contrived to de-astralize himself, and has taken the sovereigns. The only question is, do you happen to have two sovereigns? I myself, unfortunately, have nothing but small change about me."

Here was a piece of rare good fortune, the coincidence of which seemed to add another link to the chain of circumstance. As it happened I had with me the six sovereigns which I had just drawn as my week's pay.

"Luckily," I said, "I am able to arrange that. I happen to have money with me." And I took two sovereigns from my pocket.

Annerly was delighted at our good luck. Our preparations for the experiment were soon made.

We placed the table in the middle of the

room in such a way that there could be no fear of contact or collision with any of the furniture. The chairs were carefully set against the wall, and so placed that no two of them occupied the same place as any other two, while the pictures and ornaments about the room were left entirely undisturbed. We were careful not to remove any of the wall-paper from the wall, nor to detach any of the window-panes from the window. When all was ready the two sovereigns were laid side by side upon the table, with their heads up in such a way that the lower sides or tails were supported by only the table itself. We then extinguished the light. I said "Good night" to Annerly, and groped my way out into the dark, feverish with excitement.

My readers may well imagine my state of eagerness to know the result of the experiment. I could scarcely sleep for anxiety to know the issue. I had, of course, every faith in the completeness of our preparations, but was not without misgivings that the experiment might fail, as my own mental temperament and disposition might not be of the precise kind needed for the success of these experiments.

On this score, however, I need have had no alarm. The event showed that my mind was a media, or if the word is better, a transparency, of the very first order for psychic work of this character.

In the morning Annerly came rushing over to my lodgings, his face beaming with excitement.

"Glorious, glorious," he almost shouted, "we

have succeeded! The sovereigns are gone. We are in direct monetary communication with Q."

I need not dwell on the exquisite thrill of happiness which went through me. All that day and all the following day, the sense that I was in communication with Q was ever present with me.

My only hope was that an opportunity might offer for the renewal of our inter-communication with the spirit world.

The following night my wishes were gratified. Late in the evening Annerly called me up on the telephone.

"Come over at once to my lodgings," he said. "Q's phanogram is communicating with us."

I hastened over, and arrived almost breathless. "Q has been here again," said Annerly, "and appeared in the same distress as before. A projection of him stood in the room, and kept writing with its finger on the table. I could distinguish the word "sovereigns," but nothing more."

"Do you not suppose," I said, "that Q, for some reason which we cannot fathom, wishes us to again leave two sovereigns for him?"

"By Jove!" said Annerly enthusiastically, "I believe you've hit it. At any rate, let us try; we can but fail."

That night we placed again two of my sovereigns on the table, and arranged the furniture with the same scrupulous care as before.

Still somewhat doubtful of my own psychic fitness for the work in which I was engaged,

I endeavored to keep my mind so poised as to readily offer a mark for any astral disturbance that might be about. The result showed that it had offered just such a mark. Our experiment succeeded completely. The two coins had vanished in the morning.

For nearly two months we continued our experiments on these lines. At times Annerly himself, so he told me, would leave money, often considerable sums, within reach of the phantasm, which never failed to remove them during the night. But Annerly, being a man of strict honor, never carried on these experiments alone except when it proved impossible to communicate with me in time for me to come.

At other times he would call me up with the simple message, "Q is here," or would send me a telegram, or a written note saying, "Q needs money; bring any that you have, but no more."

On my own part, I was extremely anxious to bring our experiments prominently before the public, or to interest the Society for Psychic Research, and similar bodies, in the daring transit which we had effected between the world of sentience and the psycho-astric, or pseudo-ethereal existence. It seemed to me that we alone had succeeded in thus conveying money directly and without mediation, from one world to another. Others, indeed, had done so by the interposition of a medium, or by subscription to an occult magazine, but we had performed the feat with such simplicity that I was anxious to make our experience public, for the benefit of others like myself.

Annerly, however, was averse from this course, being fearful that it might break off our relations with Q.

It was some three months after our first inter-astral psycho-monetary experiment, that there came the culmination of my experiences—so mysterious as to leave me still lost in perplexity.

Annerly had come in to see me one afternoon. He looked nervous and depressed.

"I have just had a psychic communication from Q," he said in answer to my inquiries, "which I can hardly fathom. As far as I can judge, Q has formed some plan for interesting other phantasms in the kind of work that we are doing. He proposes to form, on his side of the gulf, an association that is to work in harmony with us, for monetary dealings on a large scale, between the two worlds."

My reader may well imagine that my eyes almost blazed with excitement at the magnitude of the prospect opened up.

"Q wishes us to gather together all the capital that we can, and to send it across to him, in order that he may be able to organize with him a corporate association of phanograms, or perhaps in this case, one would more correctly call them phantoids."

I had no sooner grasped Annerly's meaning than I became enthusiastic over it.

We decided to try the great experiment that night.

My own worldly capital was, unfortunately, no great amount. I had, however, some £500 in bank stock left to me at my father's decease,

which I could, of course, realize within a few hours. I was fearful, however, lest it might prove too small to enable Q to organize his fellow phantoids with it.

I carried the money in notes and sovereigns to Annerly's room, where it was laid on the table. Annerly was fortunately able to contribute a larger sum, which, however, he was not to place beside mine until after I had withdrawn, in order that conjunction of our monetary personalities might not dematerialize the astral phenomenon.

We made our preparations this time with exceptional care, Annerly quietly confident, I, it must be confessed, extremely nervous and fearful of failure. We removed our boots, and walked about on our stockinged feet, and at Annerly's suggestion, not only placed the furniture as before, but turned the coal-scuttle upside down, and laid a wet towel over the top of the wastepaper basket.

All complete, I wrung Annerly's hand, and went out into the darkness.

I waited next morning in vain. Nine o'clock came, ten o'clock, and finally eleven, and still no word of him. Then feverish with anxiety, I sought his lodgings.

Judge of my utter consternation to find that Annerly had disappeared. He had vanished as if off the face of the earth. By what awful error in our preparations, by what neglect of some necessary psychic precautions, he had met his fate, I cannot tell. But the evidence was only too clear, that Annerly had been

engulfed into the astral world, carrying with him the money for the transfer of which he had risked his mundane existence.

The proof of his disappearance was easy to find. As soon as I dared do so with discretion I ventured upon a few inquiries. The fact that he had been engulfed while still owing four months' rent for his rooms, and that he had vanished without even having time to pay such bills as he had outstanding with local tradesmen, showed that he must have been devisualized at a moment's notice.

The awful fear that I might be held accountable for his death, prevented me from making the affair public.

Till that moment I had not realized the risks that he had incurred in our reckless dealing with the world of spirits. Annerly fell a victim to the great cause of psychic science, and the record of our experiments remains in the face of prejudice as a witness to its truth.

GERTRUDE THE GOVERNESS: OR, SIMPLE SEVENTEEN

*Synopsis of Previous Chapters:
There are no Previous Chapters.*

It was a wild and stormy night on the West Coast of Scotland. This, however, is immaterial to the present story, as the scene is not laid in the West of Scotland. For the matter of that the weather was just as bad on the East Coast of Ireland.

But the scene of this narrative is laid in the South of England and takes place in and around Knotacentinum Towers (pronounced as if written Nosham Taws), the seat of Lord Knotacent (pronounced as if written Nosh).

But it is not necessary to pronounce either of these names in reading them.

Nosham Taws was a typical English home. The main part of the house was an Elizabethan structure of warm red brick, while the elder portion, of which the Earl was inordinately proud, still showed the outlines of a Norman Keep, to which had been added a Lancastrian Jail and a Plantagenet Orphan Asylum. From the house in all directions stretched magnificent woodland and park with oaks and elms of immemorial antiquity, while nearer the house stood raspberry bushes and geranium plants which had been set out by the Crusaders.

About the grand old mansion the air was loud with the chirping of thrushes, the cawing of partridges and the clear sweet note of the rook, while deer, antelope and other quadrupeds strutted about the lawn so tame as to eat off the sun-dial. In fact, the place was a regular menagerie.

From the house downwards through the park stretched a beautiful broad avenue laid out by Henry VII.

Lord Nosh stood upon the hearthrug of the library. Trained diplomat and statesman as he was, his stern aristocratic face was upside down with fury.

"Boy," he said, "you shall marry this girl or I disinherit you. You are no son of mine."

Young Lord Ronald, erect before him, flung back a glance as defiant as his own.

"I defy you," he said. "Henceforth you are no father of mine. I will get another. I will marry none but a woman I can love. This girl that we have never seen——"

"Fool," said the Earl, "would you throw aside our estate and name of a thousand years? The girl, I am told, is beautiful; her aunt is willing; they are French; pah! they understand such things in France."

"But your reason——"

"I give no reason," said the Earl. "Listen, Ronald, I give one month. For that time you remain here. If at the end of it you refuse me, I cut you off with a shilling."

Lord Ronald said nothing; he flung himself from the room, flung himself upon his horse and rode madly off in all directions.

As the door of the library closed upon Ronald the Earl sank into a chair. His face changed. It was no longer that of the haughty nobleman, but of the hunted criminal. "He must marry the girl," he muttered. "Soon she will know all. Tutchemoff has escaped from Siberia. He knows and will tell. The whole of the mines pass to her, this property with it, and I—but enough." He rose, walked to the sideboard, drained a dipper full of gin and bitters, and became again a high-bred English gentleman.

It was at this moment that a high dogcart, driven by a groom in the livery of Earl Nosh, might have been seen entering the avenue of Nosham Taws. Beside him sat a young girl, scarce more than a child, in fact not nearly so big as the groom.

The apple-pie hat which she wore, surmounted with black willow plumes, concealed from view a face so face-like in its appearance as to be positively facial.

It was—need we say it—Gertrude the Governess, who was this day to enter upon her duties at Nosham Taws.

At the same time that the dogcart entered the avenue at one end there might have been seen riding down it from the other a tall young man, whose long, aristocratic face proclaimed his birth and who was mounted upon a horse with a face even longer than his own.

And who is this tall young man who draws nearer to Gertrude with every revolution of the horse? Ah, who, indeed? Ah, who, who? I wonder if any of my readers could guess that this was none other than Lord Ronald.

The two were destined to meet. Nearer and nearer they came. And then still nearer. Then for one brief moment they met. As they passed Gertrude raised her head and directed toward the young nobleman two eyes so eye-like in their expression as to be absolutely circular, while Lord Ronald directed toward the occupant of the dogcart a gaze so gaze-like that nothing but a gazelle, or a gas-pipe, could have emulated its intensity.

Was this the dawn of love? Wait and see. Do not spoil the story.

Let us speak of Gertrude. Gertrude De-Mongmorenci McFiggin had known neither father nor mother. They had both died years before she was born. Of her mother she knew nothing, save that she was French, was extremely beautiful, and that all her ancestors and even her business acquaintances had perished in the Revolution.

Yet Gertrude cherished the memory of her parents. On her breast the girl wore a locket in which was enshrined a miniature of her mother, while down her neck inside at the back hung a daguerreotype of her father. She carried a portrait of her grandmother up her sleeve and had pictures of her cousins tucked inside her boot, while beneath her—but enough, quite enough.

Of her father Gertrude knew even less. That he was a high-born English gentleman who had lived as a wanderer in many lands, this was all she knew. His only legacy to Gertrude had been a Russian grammar, a Rou-

manian phrase-book, a theodolite, and a work on mining engineering.

From her earliest infancy Gertrude had been brought up by her aunt. Her aunt had carefully instructed her in Christian principles. She had also taught her Mohammedanism to make sure.

When Gertrude was seventeen her aunt had died of hydrophobia.

The circumstances were mysterious: There had called upon her that day a strange bearded man in the costume of the Russians. After he had left, Gertrude had found her aunt in a syncope from which she passed into an apoplexy and never recovered.

To avoid scandal it was called hydrophobia. Gertrude was thus thrown upon the world. What to do? That was the problem that confronted her.

It was while musing one day upon her fate that Gertrude's eye was struck with an advertisement.

"Wanted a governess; must possess a knowledge of French, Italian, Russian, and Roumanian, Music, and Mining Engineering. Salary £1, 4 shillings and 4 pence halfpenny per annum. Apply between half-past eleven and twenty-five minutes to twelve at No. 41A Decimal Six, Belgravia Terrace. The Countess of Nosh."

Gertrude was a girl of great natural quickness of apprehension, and she had not pondered over this announcement more than half an hour before she was struck with the extra-

ordinary coincidence between the list of items desired and the things that she herself knew.

She duly presented herself at Belgravia Terrace before the Countess, who advanced to meet her with a charm which at once placed the girl at her ease.

"You are proficient in French," she asked.

"*Oh, oui,*" said Gertrude modestly.

"And Italian," continued the Countess.

"*Oh, si,*" said Gertrude.

"And German," said the Countess in delight.

"*Ah, ja,*" said Gertrude.

"And Russian?"

"*Yaw.*"

"And Roumanian?"

"*Jep.*"

Amazed at the girl's extraordinary proficiency in modern languages, the Countess looked at her narrowly. Where had she seen those lineaments before? She passed her hand over her brow in thought, and spit upon the floor, but no, the face baffled her.

"Enough," she said, "I engage you on the spot; tomorrow you go down to Nosham Taws and begin teaching the children. I must add that in addition you will be expected to aid the Earl with his Russian correspondence. He has large mining interests in Tschminsk."

Tschminsk! why did the simple word reverberate upon Gertrude's ears? Why? Because it was the name written in her father's hand on the title page of his book on mining. What mystery was here?

It was on the following day that Gertrude had driven up the avenue.

She descended from the dogcart, passed through a phalanx of liveried servants drawn up seven-deep, to each of whom she gave a sovereign as she passed and entered Nosham Taws.

"Welcome," said the Countess, as she aided Gertrude to carry her trunk upstairs.

The girl presently descended and was ushered into the library, where she was presented to the Earl. As soon as the Earl's eye fell upon the face of the new governess he started visibly. Where had he seen those lineaments? Where was it? At the races, or the theater—on a bus—no. Some subtler thread of memory was stirring in his mind. He strode hastily to the sideboard, drained a dipper and a half of brandy, and became again the perfect English gentleman.

While Gertrude has gone to the nursery to make the acquaintance of the two tiny golden-haired children who are to be her charges, let us say something here of the Earl and his son.

Lord Nosh was the perfect type of the English nobleman and statesman. The years that he had spent in the diplomatic service at Constantinople, St. Petersburg, and Salt Lake City had given to him a peculiar finesse and noblesse, while his long residence at St. Helena, Pitcairn Island, and Hamilton, Ontario, had rendered him impervious to external impressions. As deputy-paymaster of the militia of the county he had seen something of the sterner side of military life, while his hereditary office of Groom of the Sunday Breeches had

brought him into direct contact with Royalty itself.

His passion for outdoor sports endeared him to his tenants. A keen sportsman, he excelled in fox-hunting, dog-hunting, pig-killing, bat-catching and the pastimes of his class.

In this latter respect Lord Ronald took after his father. From the start the lad had shown the greatest promise. At Eton he had made a splendid showing at battledore and shuttlecock, and at Cambridge had been first in his class at needlework. Already his name was whispered in connection with the All England ping-pong championship, a triumph which would undoubtedly carry with it a seat in Parliament.

Thus was Gertrude the Governess installed at Nosham Taws.

The days and the weeks sped past.

The simple charm of the beautiful orphan girl attracted all hearts. Her two little pupils became her slaves. "Me loves oo," the little Rasehellfrida would say, leaning her golden head in Gertrude's lap. Even the servants loved her. The head gardener would bring a bouquet of beautiful roses to her room before she was up, the second gardener a bunch of early cauliflowers, the third a spray of late asparagus, and even the tenth and eleventh a sprig of mangel-wurzel or an armful of hay. Her room was full of gardeners all the time, while at evening the aged butler, touched at the friendless girl's loneliness, would tap softly at her door to bring her a rye whisky and seltzer or a box of Pittsburgh Stogies. Even the dumb creatures seemed to admire her in their

own dumb way. The dumb rooks settled on her shoulder and every dumb dog around the place followed her.

And Ronald! ah, Ronald! Yes, indeed! They had met. They had spoken.

"What a dull morning," Gertrude had said. "*Quel triste matin! Was für ein allerverdamnter Tag!*"

"Beastly," Ronald had answered.

"Beastly!!" The word rang in Gertrude's ears all day.

After that they were constantly together. They played tennis and ping-pong in the day, and in the evening, in accordance with the stiff routine of the place, they sat down with the Earl and Countess to twenty-five-cent poker, and later still they sat together on the veranda and watched the moon sweeping in great circles around the horizon.

It was not long before Gertrude realized that Lord Ronald felt toward her a warmer feeling than that of mere ping-pong. At times in her presence he would fall, especially after dinner, into a fit of profound subtraction.

Once at night, when Gertrude withdrew to her chamber and before seeking her pillow, prepared to retire as a preliminary to disrobing—in other words, before going to bed, she flung wide the casement (opened the window) and perceived (saw) the face of Lord Ronald. He was sitting on a thorn bush beneath her, and his upturned face wore an expression of agonized pallor.

Meantime the days passed. Life at the Taws moved in the ordinary routine of a great

English household. At 7 a gong sounded for rising, at 8 a horn blew for breakfast, at 8:30 a whistle sounded for prayers, at 1 a flag was run up at half-mast for lunch, at 4 a gun was fired for afternoon tea, at 9 a first bell sounded for dressing, at 9:15 a second bell for going on dressing, while at 9:30 a rocket was sent up to indicate that dinner was ready. At midnight dinner was over, and at 1 a. m. the tolling of a bell summoned the domestics to evening prayers.

Meanwhile the month allotted by the Earl to Lord Ronald was passing away. It was already July 15, then within a day or two it was July 17, and, almost immediately afterwards, July 18.

At times the Earl, in passing Ronald in the hall, would say sternly, "Remember, boy, your consent, or I disinherit you."

And what were the Earl's thoughts of Gertrude? Here was the one drop of bitterness in the girl's cup of happiness. For some reason that she could not divine the Earl showed signs of marked antipathy.

Once as she passed the door of the library he threw a bootjack at her. On another occasion at lunch alone with her he struck her savagely across the face with a sausage.

It was her duty to translate to the Earl his Russian correspondence. She sought in it in vain for the mystery. One day a Russian telegram was handed to the Earl. Gertrude translated it to him aloud.

"Tutchemoff went to the woman. She is dead."

On hearing this the Earl became livid with fury, in fact this was the day that he struck her with the sausage.

Then one day while the Earl was absent on a bat hunt, Gertrude, who was turning over his correspondence, with that sweet feminine instinct of interest that rose superior to ill-treatment, suddenly found the key to the mystery.

Lord Nosh was not the rightful owner of the Taws. His distant cousin of the older line, the true heir, had died in a Russian prison to which the machinations of the Earl, while Ambassador at Tschminsk, had consigned him. The daughter of this cousin was the true owner of Nosham Taws.

The family story, save only that the documents before her withheld the name of the rightful heir, lay bare to Gertrude's eye.

Strange is the heart of woman. Did Gertrude turn from the Earl with spurning? No. Her own sad fate had taught her sympathy.

Yet still the mystery remained! Why did the Earl start perceptibly each time that he looked into her face? Sometimes he started as much as four centimeters, so that one could distinctly see him do it. On such occasions he would hastily drain a dipper of rum and vichy water and become again the correct English gentleman.

The denouement came swiftly. Gertrude never forgot it.

It was the night of the great ball at Nosham Taws. The whole neighborhood was invited. How Gertrude's heart had beat with anticipation, and with what trepidation she had over-

hauled her scant wardrobe in order to appear not unworthy in Lord Ronald's eyes. Her resources were poor indeed, yet the inborn genius for dress that she inherited from her French mother stood her in good stead. She twined a single rose in her hair and contrived herself a dress out of a few old newspapers and the inside of an umbrella that would have graced a court. Round her waist she bound a single braid of bagstring, while a piece of old lace that had been her mother's was suspended to her ear by a thread.

Gertrude was the cynosure of all eyes. Floating to the strains of the music she presented a picture of bright girlish innocence that no one could see undisentraptured.

The ball was at its height. It was away up!

Ronald stood with Gertrude in the shrubbery. They looked into one another's eyes.

"Gertrude," he said, "I love you."

Simple words, and yet they thrilled every fiber in the girl's costume.

"Ronald!" she said, and cast herself about his neck.

At this moment the Earl appeared standing beside them in the moonlight. His stern face was distorted with indignation.

"So!" he said, turning to Ronald, "it appears that you have chosen!"

"I have," said Ronald with hauteur.

"You prefer to marry this penniless girl rather than the heiress I have selected for you."

Gertrude looked from father to son in amazement.

"Yes," said Ronald.

"Be it so," said the Earl, draining a dipper of gin which he carried, and resuming his calm. "Then I disinherit you. Leave this place, and never return to it."

"Come, Gertrude," said Ronald tenderly, "let us flee together."

Gertrude stood before them. The rose had fallen from her head. The lace had fallen from her ear and the bagstring had come undone from her waist. Her newspapers were crumpled beyond recognition. But dishevelled and illegible as she was, she was still mistress of herself.

"Never," she said firmly. "Ronald, you shall never make this sacrifice for me." Then to the Earl, in tones of ice, "There is a pride, sir, as great even as yours. The daughter of Metsschnikoff McFiggin need crave a boon from no one."

With that she hauled from her bosom the daguerreotype of her father and pressed it to her lips.

The Earl started as if shot. "That name!" he cried, "that face! that photograph! stop!"

There! There is no need to finish; my readers have long since divined it. Gertrude was the heiress.

The lovers fell into one another's arms. The Earl's proud face relaxed. "God bless you," he said. The Countess and the guests came pouring out upon the lawn. The breaking day illuminated a scene of gay congratulations.

Gertrude and Ronald were wed. Their happiness was complete. Need we say more? Yes, only this. The Earl was killed in the hunting-field a few days later. The Countess was struck by lightning. The two children fell down a well. Thus the happiness of Gertrude and Ronald was complete.

A HERO IN HOMESPUN: OR, THE LIFE
STRUGGLE OF HEZEKIAH HAYLOFT

"Can you give me a job?"

The foreman of the bricklayers looked down from the scaffold to the speaker below. Something in the lad's upturned face appealed to the man. He threw a brick at him.

It was Hezekiah Hayloft. He was all in homespun. He carried a carpet-bag in each hand. He had come to New York, the cruel city, looking for work.

Hezekiah moved on. Presently he stopped in front of a policeman.

"Sir," he said, "can you tell me the way to——"

The policeman struck him savagely across the side of the head.

"I'll learn you," he said, "to ask damn fool questions——"

Again Hezekiah moved on. In a few moments he met a man whose tall black hat, black waistcoat and white tie proclaimed him a clergyman.

"Good sir," said Hezekiah, "can you tell me——"

The clergyman pounced upon him with a growl of a hyena, and bit a piece out of his ear. Yes, he did, reader. Just imagine a clergyman biting a boy in open daylight! Yet that happens in New York every minute.

Such is the great cruel city, and imagine look-

ing for work in it. You and I who spend our time in trying to avoid work can hardly realize what it must mean. Think how it must feel to be alone in New York, without a friend or a relation at hand, with no one to know or care what you do. It must be great!

For a few moments Hezekiah stood irresolute. He looked about him. He looked up at the top of the Metropolitan Tower. He saw no work there. He looked across at the skyscrapers on Madison Square, but his eye detected no work in any of them. He stood on his head and looked up at the Flat-iron Building. Still no work in sight.

All that day and the next Hezekiah looked for work.

A Wall Street firm had advertised for a stenographer.

"Can you write shorthand?" they said.

"No," said the boy in homespun, "but I can try."

They threw him down the elevator.

Hezekiah was not discouraged. That day he applied for fourteen jobs.

The Waldorf Astoria was in need of a chef. Hezekiah applied for the place.

"Can you cook?" they said.

"No," said Hezekiah, "but oh, sir, give me a trial, give me an egg and let me try—I will try so hard." Great tears rolled down the boy's face.

They rolled him out into the corridor.

Next he applied for a job as a telegrapher. His mere ignorance of telegraphy was made the ground of refusal.

At nightfall Hezekiah Hayloft grew hungry. He entered again the portico of the Waldorf Astoria. Within it stood a tall man in uniform.

"Boss," said the boy hero, "will you trust me for the price of a square meal?"

They set the dog on him.

Such, reader, is the hardness and bitterness of the Great City.

For fourteen weeks Hezekiah Hayloft looked for work. Once or twice he obtained temporary employment only to lose it again.

For a few days he was made accountant in a trust company. He was discharged because he would not tell a lie. For about a week he held a position as cashier in a bank. They discharged the lad because he refused to forge a check. For three days he held a conductorship on a Broadway surface car. He was dismissed from this business for refusing to steal a nickel.

Such, reader, is the horrid degradation of business life in New York.

Meantime the days passed and still Hayloft found no work. His stock of money was exhausted. He had not had any money anyway. For food he ate grass in Central Park and drank the water from the Cruelty to Animals horse-trough.

Gradually a change came over the lad; his face grew hard and stern, the great city was setting its mark upon him.

One night Hezekiah stood upon the sidewalk. It was late, long after ten o'clock. Only a few chance pedestrians passed.

"By Heaven!" said Hezekiah, shaking his

fist at the lights of the cruel city, "I have exhausted fair means, I will try foul. I will beg. No Hayloft has been a beggar yet," he added with a bitter laugh, "but I will begin."

A well-dressed man passed along.

Hezekiah seized him by the throat.

"What do you want?" cried the man in sudden terror. "Don't ask me for work. I tell you I have no work to give."

"I don't want work," said Hezekiah grimly. "I am a beggar."

"Oh! is that all," said the man, relieved. "Here, take this ten dollars and go and buy a drink with it."

Money! money! and with it a new sense of power that rushed like an intoxicant to Hezekiah's brain.

"Drink," he muttered hoarsely, "yes, drink."

The lights of a soda-water fountain struck his eye.

"Give me an egg phosphate," he said as he dashed his money on the counter. He drank phosphate after phosphate till his brain reeled. Mad with the liquor, he staggered to and fro in the shop, weighed himself recklessly on the slot machine three or four times, tore out chewing gum and matches from the automatic nickel boxes, and finally staggered on to the street, reeling from the effects of thirteen phosphates and a sarsaparilla soda.

"Crime," he hissed. "Crime, crime, that's what I want."

He noticed that the passers-by made way for him now with respect. On the corner of the street a policeman was standing.

Hezekiah picked up a cobblestone, threw it, and struck the man full on the ear.

The policeman smiled at him roguishly, and then gently wagged his finger in reproof. It was the same policeman who had struck him fourteen weeks before for asking the way.

Hezekiah moved on, still full of his new idea of crime. Down the street was a novelty shop, the window decked with New Year's gifts.

"Sell me a revolver," he said.

"Yes, sir," said the salesman. "Would you like something for evening wear, or a plain kind for home use. Here is a very good family revolver, or would you like a roof garden size?"

Hezekiah selected a revolver and went out.

"Now, then," he muttered, "I will burglarize a house and get money."

Walking across to Fifth Avenue he selected one of the finest residences and rang the bell.

A man in livery appeared in the brightly lighted hall.

"Where is your master?" Hezekiah asked, showing his revolver.

"He is upstairs, sir, counting his money," the man answered, "but he dislikes being disturbed."

"Show me to him," said Hezekiah, "I wish to shoot him and take his money."

"Very good, sir," said the man deferentially. "You will find him on the first floor."

Hezekiah turned and shot the footman twice through the livery and went upstairs.

In an upper room was a man sitting at a desk under a reading-lamp. In front of him was a pile of gold.

He was an old man, with a foolish, benevolent face.

"What are you doing?" said Hezekiah.

"I am counting my money," said the man.

"What are you?" asked Hezekiah sternly.

"I am a philanthropist," said the man. "I give my money to deserving objects. I establish medals for heroes. I give prizes for ship captains who jump into the sea, and for firemen who throw people from the windows of upper stories at the risk of their own; I send American missionaries to China, Chinese missionaries to India, and Indian missionaries to Chicago. I set aside money to keep college professors from starving to death when they deserve it."

"Stop!" said Hezekiah, "you deserve to die. Stand up. Open your mouth and shut your eyes."

The old man stood up.

There was a loud report. The philanthropist fell. He was shot through the waistcoat and his suspenders were cut to ribbons.

Hezekiah, his eyes glittering with the mania of crime, crammed his pockets with gold pieces.

There was a roar and hubbub in the street below.

"The police!" Hezekiah muttered. "I must set fire to the house and escape in the confusion.

He struck a safety match and held it to the leg of the table.

It was a fireproof table and refused to burn. He held it to the door. The door was fireproof. He applied it to the bookcase. He ran

the match along the books. They were all fire-proof. Everything was fireproof.

Frenzied with rage, he tore off his celluloid collar and set fire to it. He waved it above his head. Great tongues of flame swept from the windows.

"Fire! Fire!" was the cry.

Hezekiah rushed to the door and threw the blazing collar down the elevator shaft. In a moment the iron elevator, with its steel ropes, burst into a mass of flame; then the brass fittings of the doors took fire, and in a moment the cement floor of the elevator was one roaring mass of flame. Great columns of smoke burst from the building.

"Fire! Fire!" shouted the crowd.

Reader, have you ever seen a fire in a great city? The sight is a wondrous one. One realizes that, vast and horrible as the city is, it nevertheless shows its human organization in its most perfect form.

Scarcely had the fire broken out before resolute efforts were made to stay its progress. Long lines of men passed buckets of water from hand to hand.

The water was dashed on the fronts of the neighboring houses, thrown all over the street, splashed against the telegraph poles, and poured in torrents over the excited crowd. Every place in the neighborhood of the fire was literally soaked. The men worked with a will. A derrick rapidly erected in the street reared itself to the height of sixteen or seventeen feet. A daring man mounted on the top of it, hauled bucket after bucket of water on the pulley. Bal-

ancing himself with the cool daring of the trained fireman, he threw the water in all directions over the crowd.

The fire raged for an hour. Hezekiah, standing at an empty window amid the flames, rapidly filled his revolver and emptied it into the crowd.

From one hundred revolvers in the street a fusillade was kept up in return.

This lasted for an hour. Several persons were almost hit by the rain of bullets, which would have proved fatal had they struck anyone.

Meantime, as the flames died down, a squad of policemen rushed into the doomed building.

Hezekiah threw aside his revolver and received them with folded arms.

"Hayloft," said the chief of police, "I arrest you for murder, burglary, arson, and conspiracy. You put up a splendid fight, old man, and I am only sorry that it is our painful duty to arrest you."

As Hayloft appeared below a great cheer went up from the crowd. True courage always appeals to the heart of the people.

Hayloft was put in a motor and whirled rapidly to the police station.

On the way the chief handed him a flask and a cigar.

They chatted over the events of the evening.

Hayloft realized that a new life had opened for him. He was no longer a despised outcast. He had entered the American criminal class.

At the police station the chief showed Hezekiah to his room.

"I hope you will like this room," he said a little anxiously. "It is the best that I can give you tonight. Tomorrow I can give you a room with a bath, but at such short notice I am sure you will not mind putting up with this."

He said good night and shut the door. In a moment he reappeared.

"About breakfast?" he said. "Would you rather have it in your room, or will you join us at our table-d'hôte? The force are most anxious to meet you."

Next morning, before Hezekiah was up, the chief brought to his room a new outfit of clothes—a silk hat, frock-coat, shepherd's-plaid trousers and varnished boots with spats.

"You won't mind accepting these things, Mr. Hayloft. Our force would like very much to enable you to make a suitable appearance in the court."

Carefully dressed and shaved, Hezekiah descended. He was introduced to the leading officials of the force, and spent a pleasant hour of chat over a cigar, discussing the incidents of the night before.

In the course of the morning a number of persons called to meet and congratulate Hezekiah.

"I want to tell you, sir," said the editor of a great American daily, "that your work of last night will be known and commented on all over the States. Your shooting of the footman was a splendid piece of nerve, sir, and will do much in defense of the unwritten law."

"Mr. Hayloft," said another caller, "I am sorry not to have met you sooner. Our friends

here tell me that you have been in New York for some months. I regret, sir, that we did not know you. This is the name of my firm, Mr. Hayloft. We are leading lawyers here, and we want the honor of defending you. We may! Thank you sir. And now, as we have still an hour or two before the court, I want to run you up to my house in my motor. My wife is very anxious to have a little luncheon for you."

The court met that afternoon. There was a cheer as Hezekiah entered.

"Mr. Hayloft," said the judge, "I am adjourning this court for a few days. From what I hear the nerve strain that you have undergone must have been most severe. Your friends tell me that you can hardly be in a state to take a proper interest in the case till you have had a thorough rest."

As Hayloft left the court a cheer went up from the crowd, in which the judge joined.

The next few days were busy days for Hezekiah. Filled with receptions, civic committees, and the preparation of the brief, in which Hezekiah's native intelligence excited the admiration of the lawyers.

Newspaper men sought for interviews. Business promoters called upon Hezekiah. His name was put down as a director of several leading companies, and it was rumored that in the event of his acquittal he would undertake a merger of all the great burglar protection corporations of the United States.

The trial opened a week later, and lasted two months. Hezekiah was indicted on five charges—arson, for having burned the steel cage of

the elevator; misdemeanor, for shooting the footman; the theft of the money, petty larceny; the killing of the philanthropist, infanticide; and the shooting at the police without hitting them, aggravated felony.

The proceedings were very complicated—expert evidence was taken from all over the United States. An analytical examination was made of the brain of the philanthropist. Nothing was found.

The entire jury were dismissed three times on the grounds of prejudice, twice on the ground of ignorance, and finally disbanded on the ground of insanity.

The proceedings dragged on.

Meantime Hezekiah's business interests accumulated.

At length, at Hezekiah's suggestion, it was necessary to abandon the case.

"Gentlemen," he said, in his final speech to the court, "I feel that I owe an apology for not being able to attend these proceedings any further. At any time, when I can snatch an hour or two from my business, you may always count on my attendance. In the meantime, rest assured that I shall follow your proceedings with the greatest interest."

He left the room amid three cheers and the singing of "Auld Lang Syne."

After that the case dragged hopelessly on from stage to stage.

The charge of arson was met by a *nolle prosequi*. The accusation of theft was stopped by a *ne plus ultra*. The killing of the footman was pronounced justifiable insanity.

The accusation of murder for the death of the philanthropist was withdrawn by common consent. Damages in error were awarded to Hayloft for the loss of his revolver and cartridges. The main body of the case was carried on a writ of *certiorari* to the Federal Courts and appealed to the Supreme Court of the United States.

It is there still.

Meantime, Hezekiah, as managing director of the Burglars' Security Corporation, remains one of the rising generation of financiers in New York, with every prospect of election to the State Senate.

GUIDO THE GIMLET OF GHENT: A ROMANCE
OF CHIVALRY

It was in the flood-tide of chivalry. Knight-hood was in the pod.

The sun was slowly setting in the east, rising and falling occasionally as it subsided, and illuminating with its dying beams the towers of the grim castle of Buggensberg.

Isolde the Slender stood upon an embattled turret of the castle. Her arms were outstretched to the empty air, and her face, upturned as in colloquy with heaven, was distraught with yearning.

Anon she murmured, "Guido"—and bewhiles a deep sigh rent her breast.

Sylph-like and ethereal in her beauty, she scarcely seemed to breathe.

In fact, she hardly did.

Willowy and slender in form, she was as graceful as a meridian of longitude. Her body seemed almost too frail for motion, while her features were of a mould so delicate as to preclude all thought of intellectual operation.

She was begirt with a flowing kirtle of deep blue, bebound with a belt be buckled with a silver clasp, while about her waist a stomacher of point lace ended in the ruffled farthingale at her throat. On her head she bore a sugar-loaf hat shaped like an extinguisher and pointing backward at an angle of 45 degrees.

"Guido," she murmured, "Guido."

And erstwhile she would wring her hands as one distraught and mutter, "He cometh not."

The sun sank and night fell, enwrapping in shadow the frowning castle of Buggensberg, and the ancient city of Ghent at its foot. And as the darkness gathered, the windows of the castle shone out with fiery red, for it was Yuletide, and it was wassail all in the Great Hall of the castle, and this night the Margrave of Buggensberg made him a feast, and celebrated the betrothal of Isolde, his daughter, with Tancred the Tenspot.

And to the feast he had bidden all his liege lords and vassals—Hubert the Husky, Edward the Earwig, Rollo the Rumbottle, and many others.

In the meantime the Lady Isolde stood upon the battlements and mourned for the absent Guido.

The love of Guido and Isolde was of that pure and almost divine type, found only in the middle ages.

They had never seen one another. Guido had never seen Isolde, Isolde had never seen Guido. They had never heard one another speak. They had never been together. They did not know one another.

Yet they loved.

Their love had sprung into being suddenly and romantically, with all the mystic charm which is love's greatest happiness.

Years before, Guido had seen the name of Isolde the Slender painted on a fence.

He had turned pale, fallen into a swoon and started at once for Jerusalem.

On the very same day Isolde in passing through the streets of Ghent had seen the coat of arms of Guido hanging on a clothes line.

She had fallen back into the arms of her tirewomen more dead than alive.

Since that day they had loved.

Isolde would wander forth from the castle at earliest morn, with the name of Guido on her lips. She told his name to the trees. She whispered it to the flowers. She breathed it to the birds. Quite a lot of them knew it. At times she would ride her palfrey along the sands of the sea and call "Guido" to the waves! At other times she would tell it to the grass or even to a stick of cordwood or a ton of coal.

Guido and Isolde, though they had never met, cherished each the features of the other. Beneath his coat of mail Guido carried a miniature of Isolde, carven on ivory. He had found it at the bottom of the castle crag, between the castle and the old town of Ghent at its foot.

How did he know that it was Isolde?

There was no need for him to ask.

His *heart* had spoken.

The eye of love cannot be deceived.

And Isolde? She, too, cherished beneath her stomacher a miniature of Guido the Gimlet. She had it of a traveling chapman in whose pack she had discovered it, and had paid its price in pearls. How had she known that he it was, that is, that it was he? Because of the Coat of Arms emblazoned beneath the miniature. The same heraldic design that had first shaken her to the heart. Sleeping or waking it

was ever before her eyes. A lion, tered in a field of gules, and a dog, improper, three-quarters in a field of buckwheat.

And if the love of Isolde burned thus purely for Guido, the love of Guido burned for Isolde with a flame no less pure.

No sooner had love entered Guido's heart than he had determined to do some great feat of emprise or adventure, some high achievement of deringdo which should make him worthy to woo her.

He placed himself under a vow that he would eat nothing, save only food, and drink nothing, save only liquor, till such season as he should have performed his feat.

For this cause he had at once set out for Jerusalem to kill a Saracen for her. He killed one, quite a large one. Still under his vow, he set out again at once to the very confines of Pannonia determined to kill a Turk for her. From Pannonia he passed into the Highlands of Britain, where he killed her a Caledonian.

Every year and every month Guido performed for Isolde some new achievement of emprise.

And in the meantime Isolde waited.

It was not that suitors were lacking. Isolde the Slender had suitors in plenty ready to do her lightest hest.

Feats of arms were done daily for her sake. To win her love suitors were willing to vow themselves to perdition. For Isolde's sake, Otto the Otter had cast himself into the sea. Conrad the Cocconut had hurled himself from the highest battlement of the castle head first into the mud. Hugo the Hopeless had hanged

himself by the waistband to a hickory tree and had refused all efforts to dislodge him. For her sake Sickfried the Susceptible had swallowed sulphuric acid.

But Isolde the Slender was heedless of the court thus paid to her.

In vain her stepmother, Agatha the Angular, urged her to marry. In vain her father, the Margrave of Buggensberg, commanded her to choose the one or the other of the suitors.

Her heart remained unswervingly true to the Gimlet.

From time to time love tokens passed between the lovers. From Jerusalem Guido had sent to her a stick with a notch in it to signify his undying constancy. From Pannonia he set a piece of board, and from Venetia about two feet of scantling. All these Isolde treasured. At night they lay beneath her pillow.

Then, after years of wandering, Guido had determined to crown his love with a final achievement for Isolde's sake.

It was his design to return to Ghent, to scale by night the castle cliff and to prove his love for Isolde by killing her father for her, casting her stepmother from the battlements, burning the castle, and carrying her away.

This design he was now hastening to put into execution. Attended by fifty trusty followers under the lead of Carlo the Corkscrew and Beowulf the Bradawl, he had made his way to Ghent. Under the cover of night they had reached the foot of the castle cliff; and now, on their hands and knees in single file, they were crawling round and round the spiral path

that led up to the gate of the fortress. At six of the clock they had reappeared at the second round, and as the feast in the hall reached its height, they reappeared on the fourth lap.

Guido the Gimlet was in the lead. His coat of mail was hidden beneath a parti-colored cloak and he bore in his hand a horn.

By arrangement he was to penetrate into the castle by the postern gate in disguise, steal from the Margrave by artifice the key of the great door, and then by a blast of his horn summon his followers to the assault. Alas! there was need for haste, for at this very Yuletide, on this very night, the Margrave, wearied of Isolde's resistance, had determined to bestow her hand upon Tancred the Tenspot.

It was wassail all in the great hall. The huge Margrave, seated at the head of the board, drained flagon after flagon of wine, and pledged deep the health of Tancred the Tenspot, who sat plumed and armored beside him.

Great was the merriment of the Margrave, for beside him, crouched upon the floor, was a new jester, whom the seneschal had just admitted by the postern gate, and the novelty of whose jests made the huge side of the Margrave shake and shake again.

"Odds Bodikins!" he roared, "but the tale is as rare as it is new! and so the wagoner said to the Pilgrim that sith he had asked him to put him off the wagon at that town, put him off he must, albeit it was but the small of the night—by St. Pancras! whence hath the fellow so novel a tale?—nay, tell it me but once more, haply I may remember it"—and

the Baron fell back in a perfect paroxysm of merriment.

As he fell back, Guido—for the disguised jester was none other than he, that is, than him—sprang forward and seized from the girdle of the Margrave the key of the great door that dangled at his waist.

Then, casting aside the jester's cloak and cap, he rose to his full height, standing in his coat of mail.

In one hand he brandished the double-headed mace of the Crusader, and in the other a horn.

The guests sprang to their feet, their hands upon their daggers.

"Guido the Gimlet!" they cried.

"Hold," said Guido, "I have you in my power!!"

Then placing the horn to his lips and drawing a deep breath, he blew with his utmost force.

And then again he blew—blew like anything. Not a sound came.

The horn wouldn't blow!

"Seize him!" cried the Baron.

"Stop," said Guido, "I claim the laws of chivalry. I am here to seek the Lady Isolde, betrothed by you to Tancred. Let me fight Tancred in single combat, man to man."

A shout of approbation gave consent.

The combat that followed was terrific.

First Guido, raising his mace high in the air with both hands, brought it down with terrible force on Tancred's mailed head. Then Guido stood still, and Tancred raising his mace in the air brought it down upon Guido's head. Then

Tancred stood still and turned his back, and Guido, swinging his mace sideways, gave him a terrific blow from behind, midway, right center. Tancred returned the blow. Then Tancred knelt down on his hands and knees and Guido brought the mace down on his back. It was a sheer contest of skill and agility. For a time the issue was doubtful. Then Tancred's armor began to bend, his blows weakened, he fell prone. Guido pressed his advantage and hammered him out as flat as a sardine can. Then placing his foot on Tancred's chest, he lowered his vizor and looked around about him.

At this second there was a resounding shriek.

Isolde the Slender, alarmed by the sound of the blows, precipitated herself into the room.

For a moment the lovers looked into each other's faces.

Then with their countenances distraught with agony they fell swooning in different directions.

There had been a mistake!

Guido was not Guido, and Isolde was not Isolde. They were wrong about the miniatures. Each of them was a picture of somebody else.

Torrents of remorse flooded over the lovers' hearts.

Isolde thought of the unhappy Tancred, hammered out as flat as a picture-card and hopelessly spoilt; of Conrad the Cocconut head first in the mud, and Sickfried the Susceptible coiled up with agonies of sulphuric acid.

Guido thought of the dead Saracens and the slaughtered Turks.

And all for nothing!

The guerdon of their love had proved vain.

Each of them was not what the other had thought. So it is ever with the loves of this world, and herein is the medieval allegory of this tale.

The hearts of the two lovers broke together.
They expired

Meantime Carlo the Corkscrew and Beowulf the Bradawl, and their forty followers, were hustling down the spirals as fast as they could crawl, hind end uppermost.

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