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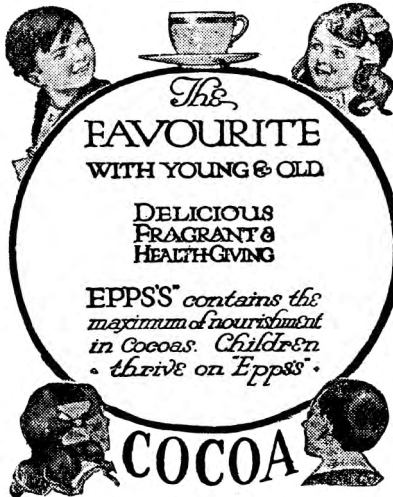
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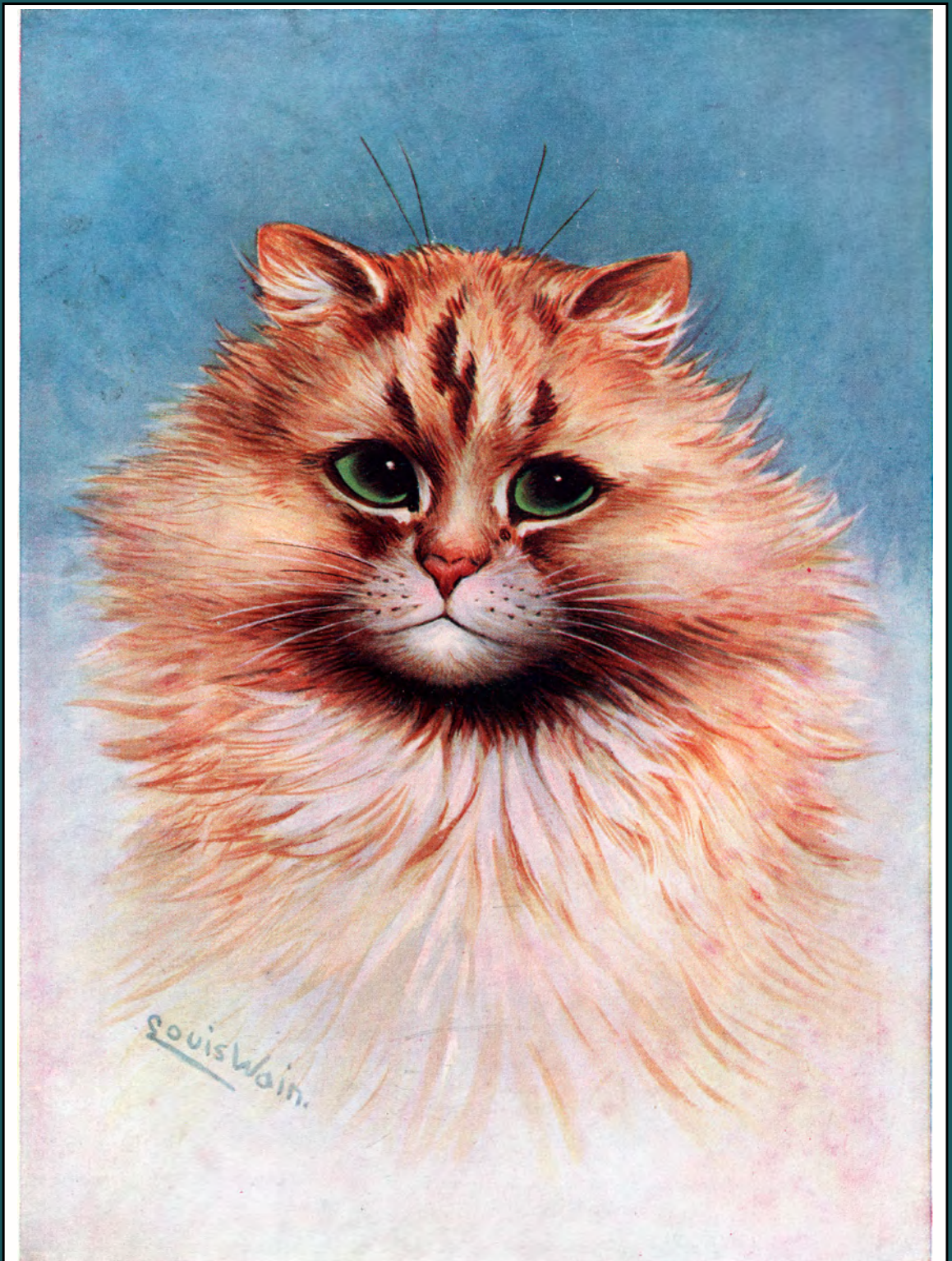
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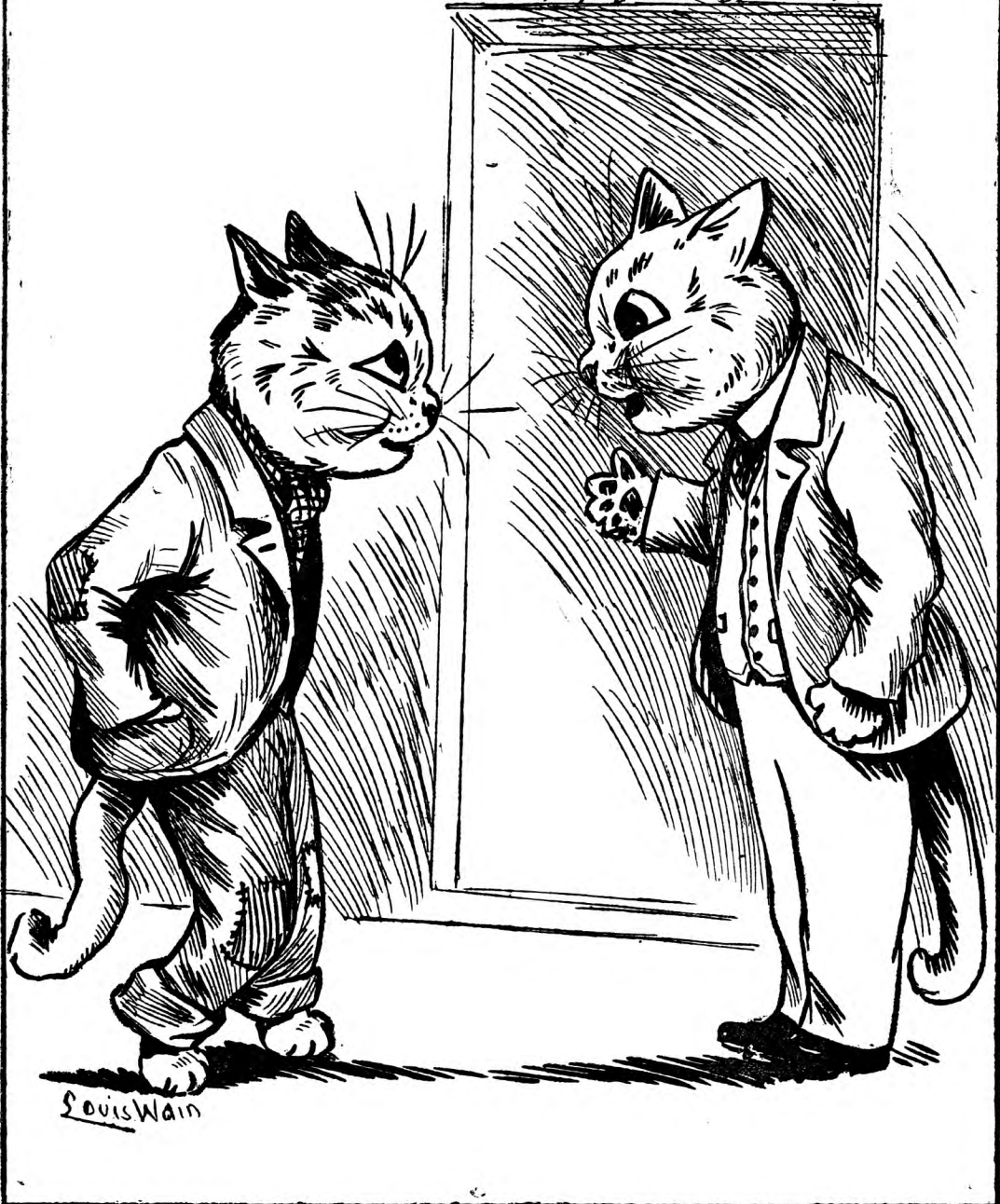
"Nobat," an Orange Persian, belonging to Her Highness Princess Victoria of Schleswig Holstein

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ANNUAL

1912.

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Second Cat : What ! Nine Thousand ! Who provides the milk ?

First Cat : Ah ! that's the difficulty ; especially at Christmas time !

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Teneriffe

By LADY EVELYN C. EWART

WITH luck Santa Cruz de Teneriffe is reached on the fifth day after leaving England. An inhospitable desert landscape, with a fine jagged outline of mountains, rises above the gaily coloured town. The roadstead is open and landing is awkward in rough weather. On reaching the mole, swarming with Spanish life, you feel the influence of the complete change from England. From the launch you ascend some steps and hire a dilapidated carriage drawn by three mules or ponies abreast. The hotel is in a good position for the fine view, up the mountains above the town, and most likely the first object of interest that you visit will be the Iglesias de la Conceptions, which contains two boat flags taken from Nelson in July 1797, when he unsuccessfully tried to storm Santa Cruz. Here, he lost his arm and experienced the only reverse of his glorious career. The church has a beautiful carved chestnut wood chapel, and its general proportions are good, but what is beautiful is submerged in the tawdry display of artificial flowers on the altars, the uncleanness of the floors and surroundings and the utter irreverence of the guides, who smoke and spit whilst they quarrel over the travellers' tips, under the sacred roof. There is also the church of San Francisco with a sparkling tiled copula, and there are lots of beautiful carved balconies which beautify the streets.

The next town to lionise is Laguna, 1,700 feet higher. The inexperienced traveller starts, perhaps, in a light flannel suit or cotton dress with no wrap, and on alighting from the tram-car feels chilled by the cooler air, and is often exposed to heavy rain at Laguna after leaving brilliant sunshine at Santa Cruz. Laguna strikes the visitor as mournful. There are churches all much the same, a seminary and library where the candidates for the priesthood are trained, and the exterior of the Bishop's Palace to view. Then there is the Forest of Mercedes to visit. It is approached on donkey back along a fine eucalyptus avenue, and if the day is clear, a lovely view of the Peak is obtained, but you may be weeks in Teneriffe and never see it free of cloud. There is a wonderful spring in a cleft of rock in the forest, and a pretty waterfall like a white horse's tail.

Güimar is the finest climate on the island and a lovely spot. You wind along the south coast over a rough road, crossing a lava stream and seeing the Gargenta de Güimar through which the lava poured from the Peak in the days of volcanic upheaval. The banana plantations are very numerous,

and, with tomatoes and potatoes, are the great source of the island's wealth. The intricate irrigation needed to produce these crops looks like fortifications on the hillsides. From Güimar the traveller can strike north over the mountains to Orotava on mule-back and experience how much the climate varies at different levels. Orotava is the best known part of Teneriffe. Humboldt said the valley was the most beautiful in the world. The Villa is most fascinating, with grass-grown streets, lovely gardens and a Cathedral, where amidst much that is interesting, may be seen the plate sold by Oliver Cromwell out of our own old St. Paul's. At the Puerto are the hotels most patronized by English and German visitors, and here a very pleasant six weeks can be spent. There are many beautiful expeditions to be made, and the Atlantic rollers break in a glorious surf on the shore. It is from Orotava that people start to ascend the Pico de Teide by way of the Canadas. The latter is the elevation out of which the Peak rises, and is some 8,000 feet above sea level, the Peak is 12,152, a view of all the Canary Islands is obtained from the summit, and the Crater is most interesting. Returning to Santa Cruz the road leads through Tacoronte, which is very picturesque, and it is well worth making a detour to pass by Baja-mar and Tejina.

If the visitor studies the Teneriffians, he will see how widely different their outlook is from that of the Anglo-Saxon nations. The lower orders are illiterate and have few aspirations. Their church feasts and family life seem to content them completely. Teneriffe is densely populated and there is no "race suicide" known there. That infant mortality is high, is due to ignorance, but the Spaniards are good mothers though over indulgent perhaps to their children. Doubtless the peasants lead hard lives, but the sad gray level of our own population in the poor quarters of our great towns, does not exist in this land of sunshine. Their idea of pleasure is quite different to ours. The Carnival seems pointless but pretty to us, but it completely satisfies their instinct for enjoyment. Their great National Sports are bull-fighting and cock-fighting, which not only do not amuse the ordinary Anglo-Saxon but absolutely nauseates him. Just as they are remarkable for their love of children, so are they utterly lacking in all feeling for animals. Casual visitors are not in a position to judge of these matters. English visitors are forever denouncing the cruelty of the Spaniards to animals and comparing English methods with Spanish; but really, when it is taken into account

that England exports her worn-out horses for gain, the question arises, which is preferable, to expose dumb animals to torture to make a holiday, or to gratify cupidity?

The Government is utterly corrupt, and civilization very much behind other countries, but there are compensations for this, and an impression is left on the observant mind that there is nothing so cruel as to plant aspirations in the human breast by education and deny the means of their realization.

It is its limitations that makes life hard to bear.



Darby and Joan.



The Unique Village

By ALIANORA CHEVERS



DOWN to the philanthropic hamlet they innocently strolled. A comely young mother in short-skirt tweed, her head cosily pushed into woollen cycling-cap, with a button on top to denote the centre of gravity. The little daughter wore a short-skirt smock, and bare brown legs terminated in brown sandals; her hair was plaited so firmly that it received power in the stead of pliancy, and wagged stiffly, like a dog's tail, when she walked.

In the child, gravity was determined by the pronounced button-nose bunched up in the centre of a wide, expressionless face. Yet where facial expression was lacking, animation of manner predominated the child danced constantly on her sandals, and vociferated shrilly after the custom of her undisciplined kind.

The farmer's wife was a dear woman, buxom and kind. When asked frankly for a gift of milk, she replied that they were welcome to sup as much as they pleased, as it was not the custom in the village to take money from visitors.

Mother and child lost no time speculating on how the philanthropic rustics prospered—their eyes were greedily searching the cool interior of the model dairy for the delicious sustenance their parched throats craved.

To the elder was handed milk (warm from the separator) in Oliver Cromwell's thirty-first pap-bowl, whilst the younger wayfarer experienced brief delight in quaffing the same reviving fluid from Queen Anne's teapot.

Bewildered, presently, and physically distressed by the problem of how to successfully imbibe liquid refreshment through a spout (whilst adverse gusts of air thrust into her lungs by the treacherous medium of an insecure lid), the little maid was with difficulty coerced past the turning-point in suffocation, and led gasping away to see the pretty chickens.

With her first untortured breath, the spirited child demanded a gift of eggs—charming souvenirs of a merciful recovery from milk-choking. Five dear brown eggs were hospitably vouchsafed her in a darling basket—the philanthropic farm folk preferring to give rather than to receive. But the basket was the ingenious handiwork of a blind, legless lad in Middlesex, and it was good-humouredly represented that sixpence sent him by the kind little button-nosed lady would make his sad heart sing.

Then before they left, there were the old-fashioned customs (casually mentioned to amuse little Missie) of dropping a





HERR BLUTZER HAS A COMPOSING FIT ON.

florin in Queen Anne's teapot to bring luck to the farm, and leaving a couple of silver pieces in old Noll's bowl as a quaint safeguard against the milk turning!

Little Missie, interested and diverted, conservatively made the good old ways her ways, with the aid of her mother's chain purse.

On from the farm to the village! How warm was the sunshine, how shrilly-sweet, the birds, how gay were the peeping hedge-row flowers!

In the High Street—dignified by one shop, one pump, and the village pound—the versatile child pleaded inanity, begging a hot bun from a tempting trayful standing outside the well-stocked emporium. But the mother, clanking her chains, declared her purse to be practically empty.

What a unique village! The befrilled dame behind the crowded counter croaked out that little Miss was kindly welcome to two buns—and would she like to step inside and see the ingle-nook where (a century ago) historic little James learnt his catechism and died?

The dame would take no money for the buns, but little Miss might perhaps be amused by paying twopence for sitting in the ingle-nook, and even contributing her additional mite to little James' money-box, still pathetically standing beside the oak settle?

These mysterious customs and tributes to the departed die hard in our old villages we are proud of our simple traditions, staunch in supporting them!

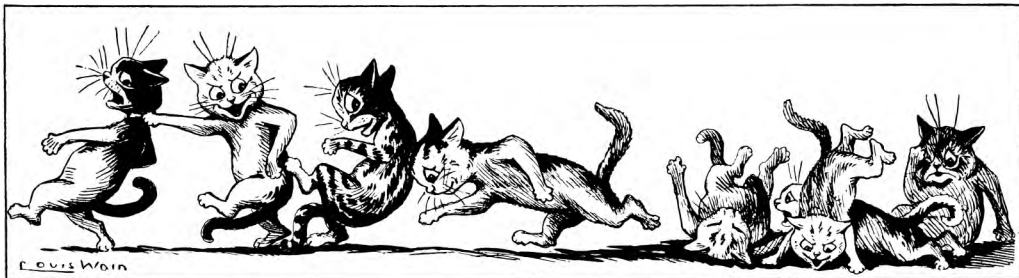
Bun-uplifted, they left the pretty street behind them and struck back and away by a new route from the old-world hamlet, as yet mercifully unstained by the chaffering, money-soiled, bargain-shamed outer world.

Just where it seemed as if the honeysuckle and bramblerose above their heads touched heaven, just where the deep blue of the sky seemed bent to catch the sweetness of scented earth, the radiance of swift-winged painted insects, the stir, the hum, the song of creatures innumerable—just where they glimpsed the tempting paradise of an enchanted woodlet, a dell of rare charm; then, indeed, must the button-nosed child thrust herself upon the half-asleep notice of Owd Grandfer Gibbs, who occupied the obsolete toll-house.

They paid their fruppences down like gentlewomen, and the toll-gate clanging behind them, shut them out from the philanthropic village—the unspoiled Eden of their delight!



How the parrot learned bad language—the dictionary.



How the last man in the foot race won in the last lap. More haste wins the race.—New Adage.



THE BOY SCOUT CAPTURES A GERMAN SPY ,



“The Ancient”

A Catastrophe

By “RITA”

“NOT that I believe in mixed marriages as a rule,” observed the old lady, with an air of dignity, slightly contradicted by a wandering eye.

“Only as an exception,” observed her daughter, ignoring the dignity and fixing the eye with the uncompromising honesty of youth. “Such as Baron Popplesdorf,” she added, apparently as an afterthought.

The wandering eye turned swiftly to the speaker under the shade of golden fringed laburnums. “*Apropos de quoi?*” she enquired.

There was a slight suggestion of cynicism in her daughter’s face. “I wish you would not talk in a *foreign* language,” she said. “It is so obvious.”

“Obvious? But how?”

“Everyone knows you have never been abroad, and that French was not taught in your time. Consequently—well, there it is!”

“There, what is?” demanded the Ancient sternly.

“The deduction. You must have picked it up from some wandering foreigner like Monsieur Jacquet, or old Popplesdorf.”

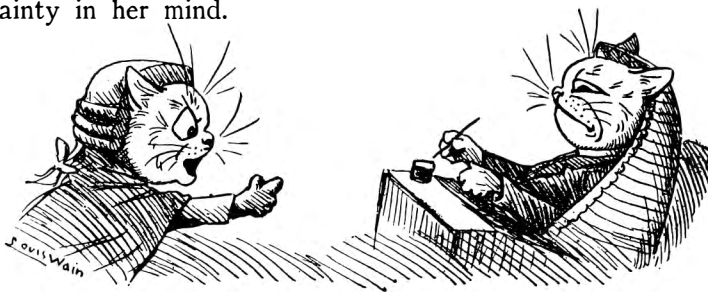
“Return we to our muttuns!” laughed the wicked old lady gaily. “Popplesdorf? And yet again Popplesdorf. He is most anxious for the alliance. And really, child, it is about time you seriously considered the subject of marriage. At your age I was already the mother of—”

“Please spare me! It is too horrifying to listen to the numbers of unorthodox, unregenerate lives for which you are responsible.”

The Ancient one regarded the laburnum tree with sudden attention. She had a dim suspicion that high up in the topmost branches a tawny and full-bushed tail was in evidence. But the green of the leaves and the gold and the blossoms were so mixed with hues of tortoiseshell and amber, that they left a little uncertainty in her mind.

“There is no shame in being the mother of a large family,” she observed.

“So you seem to think,” said her daughter. “But when one can no longer keep count of brothers and sisters, and cousins, and aunts such as I possess—”



Judge : “The dog had his first bite”

Lawyer : “It was not a fair chance, yer Honour. It was a scarecrow.”



1. Out of work. Hard luck! 2. End of the first quart. Hard luck! 3. End of the second quart. Hard luck!

"Hush, imprudent one! Does it not occur to thee that thy mother is of a charm rare and——"

"Superfluous?" questioned the pert Charlotta.

The Ancient boxed her ears. But the pert one only laughed.

"Nothing of the kind. If these cruel humans demand such annual sacrifices——"

"*Annual?*" The eyebrows of Charlotta were elevated to a surprising degree. "Dear Mother, if you only rested content with an *annual* tribute there would be no sacrifices required. As it is, I am going to set you an example. I feel it is necessary. We have a comfortable home. The meals are regular. We are kindly treated. *You*, of course, are thoroughly spoiled," went on the hard going voice. "That daughter of the house is too absurd about you."

"She knows my value," said the Ancient significantly.

"You have long lost that," said the uncompromising Charlotta. "Talk of mixed marriages indeed!"

"It is what I wished to do when we started our conversation. Baron Popplesdorf has honoured me with a proposal——"

"You!" Charlotta sprang to her feet, quivering with indignation.

"For your hand."

"Absurd! Tell him I shall never marry. Besides, I detest foreigners."

"Why *should* you detest what concerns yourself? Your race? *Our* race? I am of foreign lineage as you know."

"I don't know."

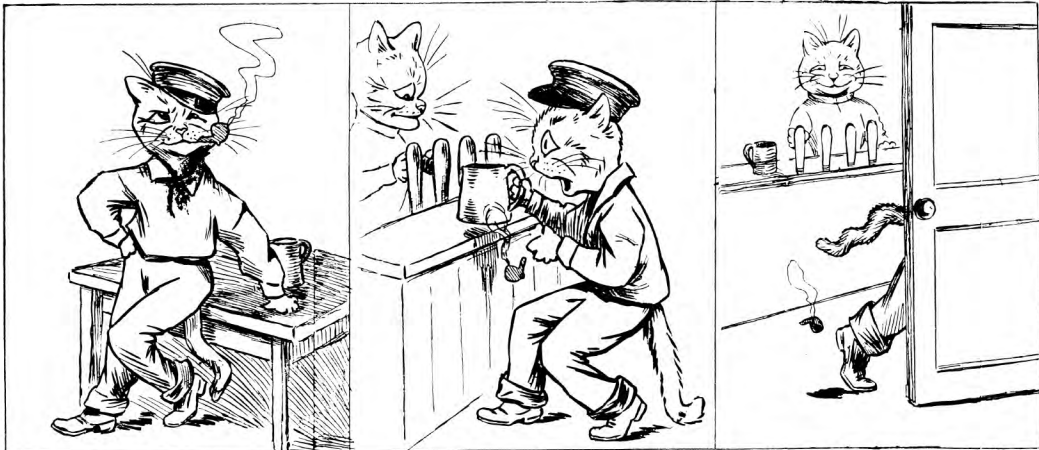
"You are a foolish child! And you will have to marry some day. It is the Fate of Sex."

"It needn't be. At all events I won't marry such a conceited foolish fop as Popplesdorf."

"*What!*" came hissing through the leafage, "I, of a race of kings! I, the courted, the admired; the winner of a score of prizes, the handsomest, courtliest of my kind, to be sneered at by a half-caste, such as thou."

And Popplesdorf, bristling with indignation, tore down from his perch on the topmost bough and confronted mother and daughter.

"Is it thus, then, the affair arranges itself?" he demanded. "Thus, that the honour I would bestow is scouted by pert ignorance!"



4. Waiting for work—empty pot.
Hard luck!

5. "If you want a job, I can give you one, Bill. Clean the empty pots out." Hardest luck!

6. Better luck, next pub.

"Ah, Baron" wailed the Ancient, "it is not my fault. You have then heard this wilful child. I am desolate; I know not what to do!"

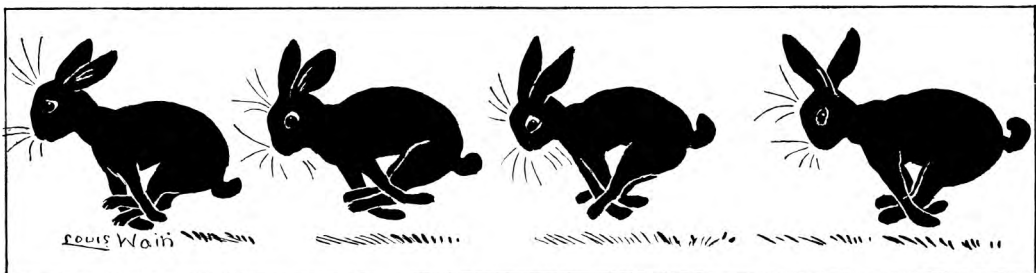
It was a strange group there on the emerald green lawn, under the green and gold of the laburnums. The beautiful mother of some seventy children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren; the rebellious and difficult daughter a late contribution to demi-semi-Persianhood, and the ruffled and rejected suitor, who for the first time in his conquering experience had met with a rebuff. His great bush-like tail waved to and fro, his majestic figure expanded itself into furry exuberance. His tawny eyes flashed and sparkled.

With a bound he reached the side of the Ancient (so named by her young and devoted mistress). Proudly they stood side by side; descendants of a race of kings—and others.

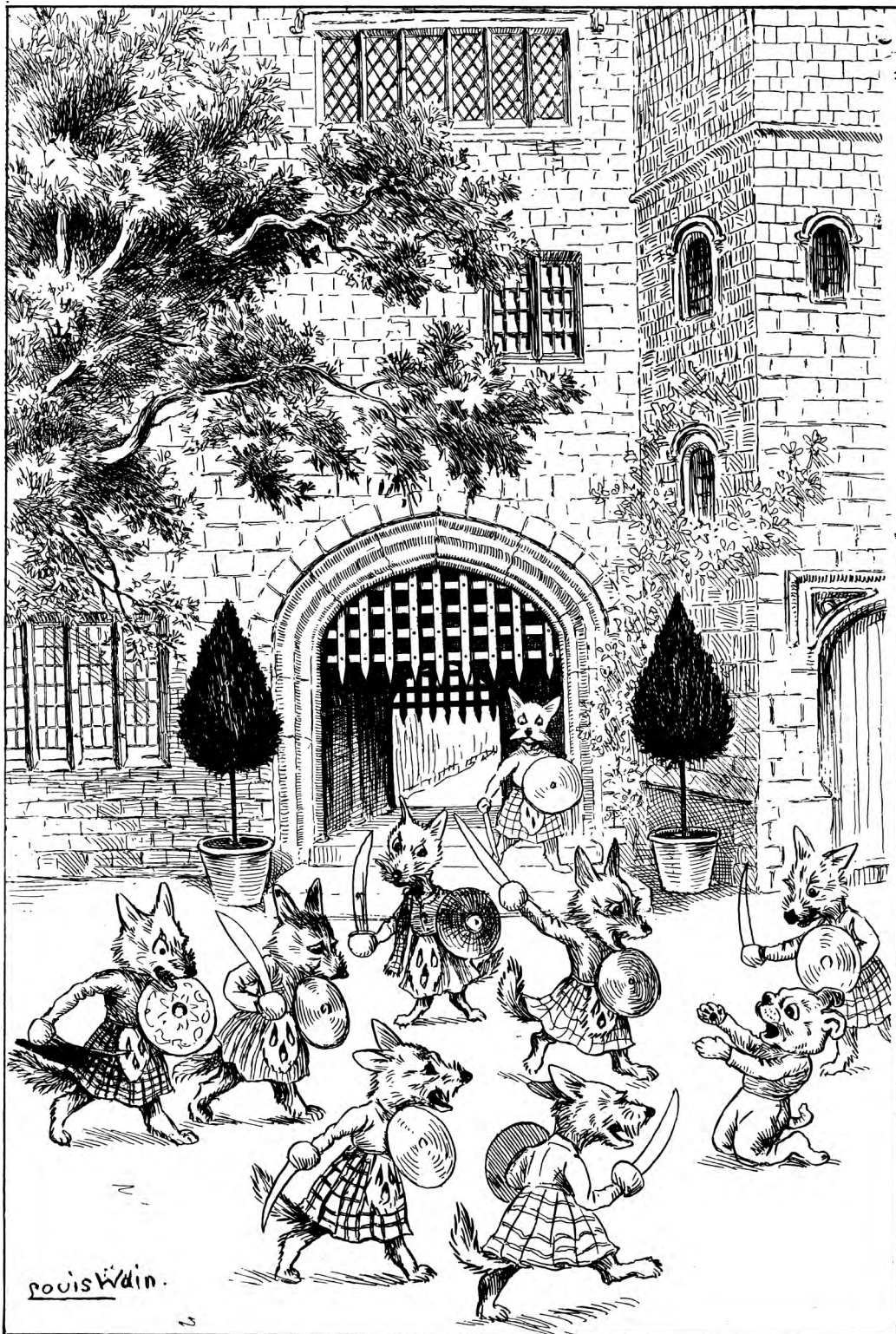
"Listen, then, ungrateful one!" exclaimed the Baron. "Since thou hast scorned my suit and derided my—my—proffered love, I, in my turn, will pour derision on thy head. I have sworn to be one of this family. I always keep my word. Since thou hast refused me for a husband I will be thy father! Madam," he turned with all his courtly grace to where the Ancient Lady was preening herself. "I have the honour to propose myself to *you*?"

"Delighted, I'm sure," said the Ancient.

"Shall we announce another—catastrophe—in the Marriage Market," sneered Charlotta, walking into the house as the gong sounded for luncheon.

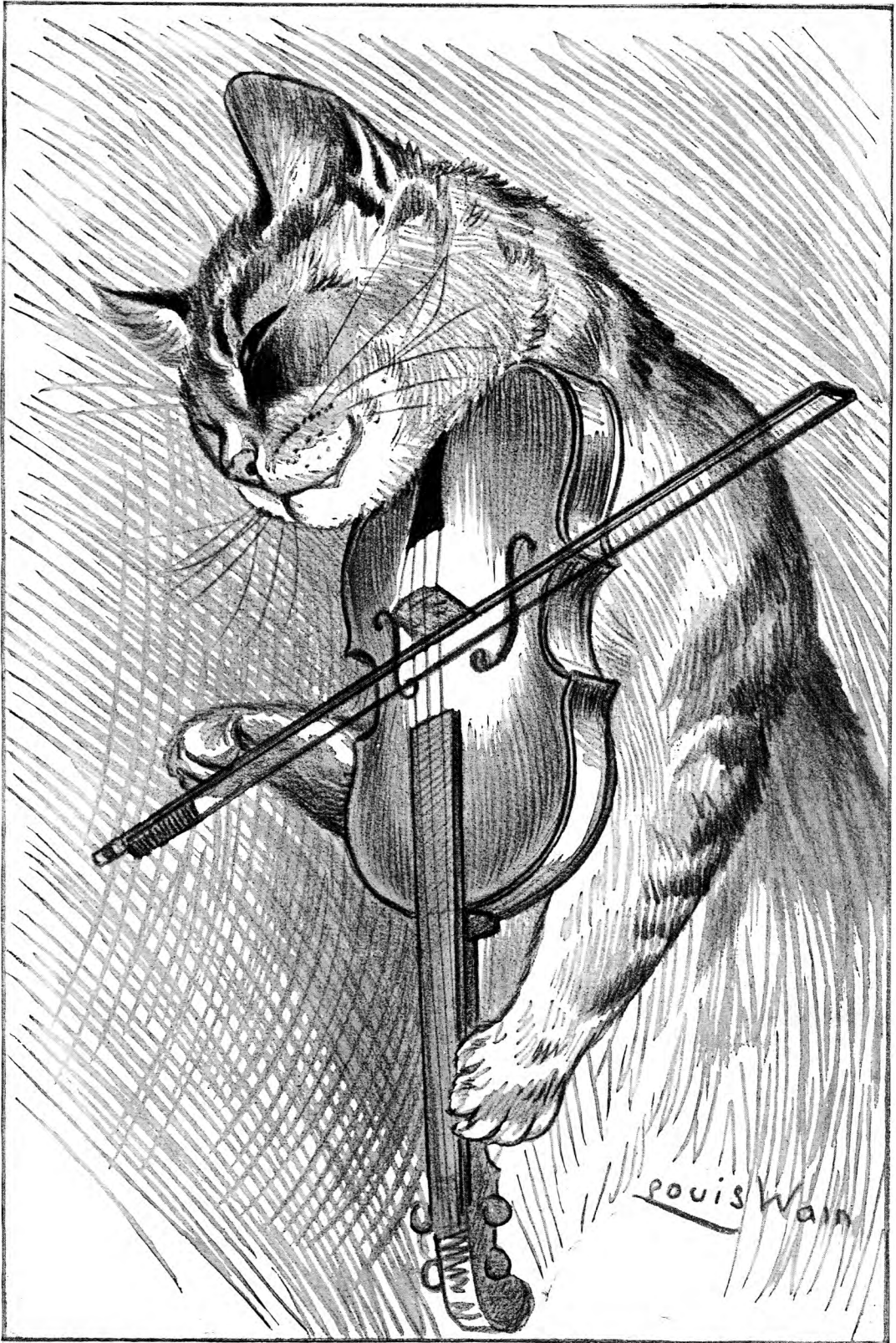


The Klipperty Klips.



HISTORY: The Picts and Scots invaded England a.d. 426, and took many fine castles.

In our days, many fine specimens of these warlike tribesmen are to be found at the Dog shows, at which they take all they can get.



THE INFANT PRODIGY.



Macbeth the Martyr

By ADRIAN ROSS



It was while I was gazing at Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree's great production of *Macbeth*, that a small, and to the casual observer, insignificant touch of stage business revealed to me for the first time the true inner meaning of the great tragedy. Sir Herbert was ending the banquet scene, in which Banquo's ghost is supposed to appear to Macbeth. The guests had reluctantly left their half-consumed feast, and Macbeth, alone with his wife, reeled against a table where he had not previously been sitting, caught up someone else's goblet, and drained what was in it which was evidently little in theory, and was probably nothing at all in practice. The action seemed instinctive; doubtless the actor regarded it as something Macbeth had done so often that the habit had become second nature; and the view was confirmed by the fact that Lady Macbeth took no notice of her husband's doings. Both of them, clearly, were accustomed to this method of avoiding the waste of liquor, customary in all ages of inconsiderate hospitality; and the instinctive exercise of a truly Scottish thrift gave me the key to Macbeth's character. He was no mere murderous usurper, but a misunderstood economist.

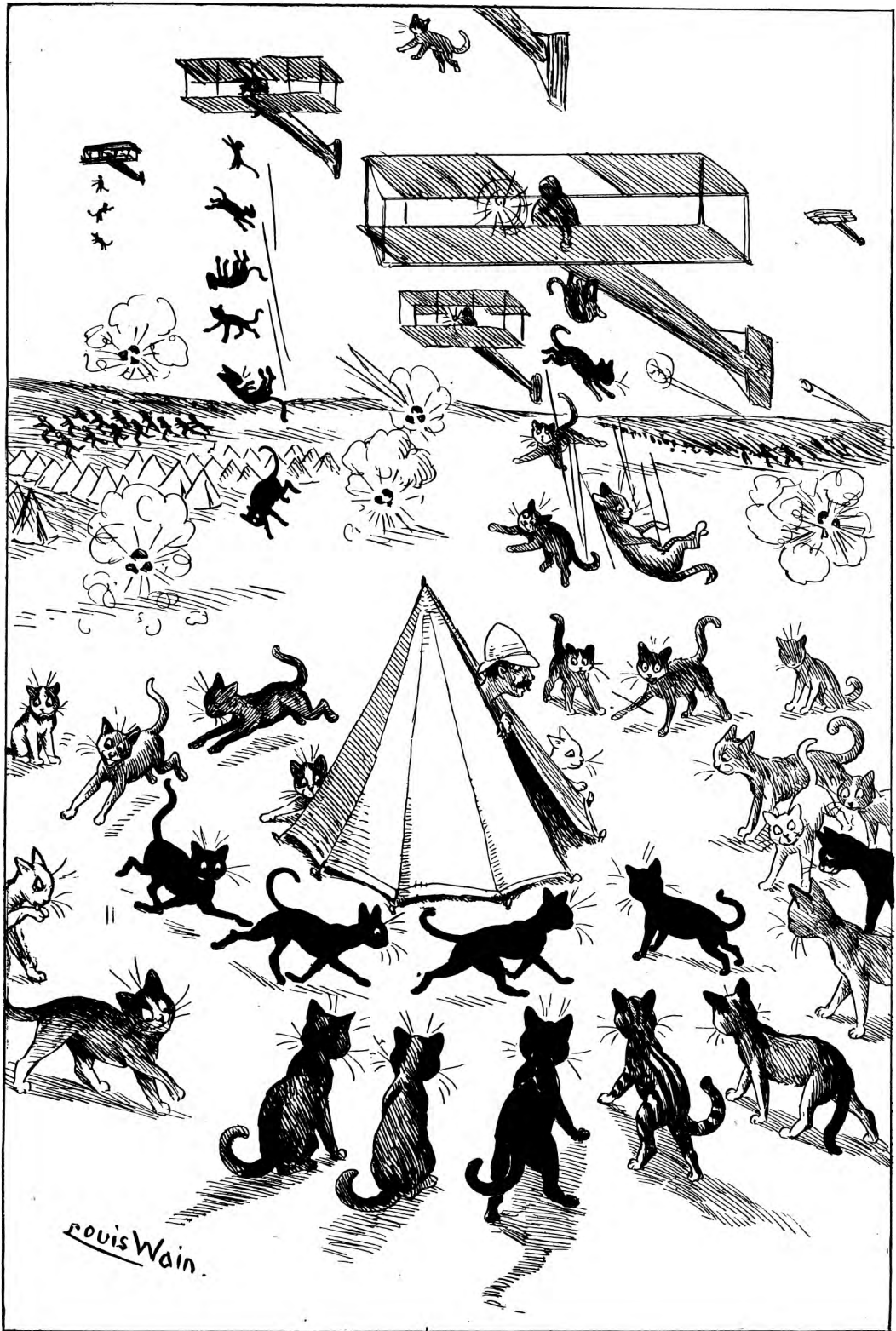
The real Macbeth, so far as we know, was not the criminal that he has appeared on the stage. In what history—or rather the late Professor Freeman—tells us, there is nothing to prevent us from regarding Macbeth and his worthy consort as the champions of Scottish independence and frugality against Saxon influence and extravagance. Macbeth was one of a number of petty princes in Scotland, over whom Duncan exercised some sort of suzerainty. One day the two met, and Duncan, who was by no means the excellent and venerable monarch represented on the stage, was slain by his rival, and, as far as we know, without more than the average percentage of treachery in the eleventh century. After Macbeth had reigned some years, Malcolm, who had secured the favour of that sanctimonious prig,



"Is this a healthy district to live in?"
"Yes, sir; it rains all day!"

Edward the Confessor, returned to Scotland with an English or Anglo-Danish army under Siward, the Earl of Northumbria; Macbeth was killed in battle, and Malcolm became king, with results on his self-importance that his subjects expressed by the nickname of Canmore, or Big-head.

Thus we see that Macbeth was the historical representative of Scottish



A TERRIBLE DANGER

How the Germans took Lord Roberts prisoner and defeated the British army.

independence and other national characteristics, chief among which is thrift; and his rivals were supported by the "pot-bellied" Saxons, as Carlyle calls them, the anarchic and convivial crew whose careless revelry made them an easy prey to the sober and canny Normans, noteworthy, even in France, for caution and business ability.

If we start, then, by taking Macbeth as the embodiment of Scottish thrift, a number of seemingly meaningless passages in the play start out in their true significance. In the early part of the tragedy, we are told that Macbeth, having defeated the Norwegians, would not allow their King to bury his dead,

"Till he disbursed at St. Colme's Inch
Ten thousand dollars to our general use."

Probably Macbeth's private "various reading" of the last words was "to our General's use." It is, at any rate, significant that we hear no more of these dollars. Presumably, like other dollars that we have heard of, they were devoted to the cause of Home Rule. But there is a passage in Act I, Scene VI, that throws some light on the question. Lady Macbeth says to Duncan—

"Your servants ever
Have theirs, themselves and what is theirs, in compt,
To make their audit at your highness' pleasure,
Still to return your own."

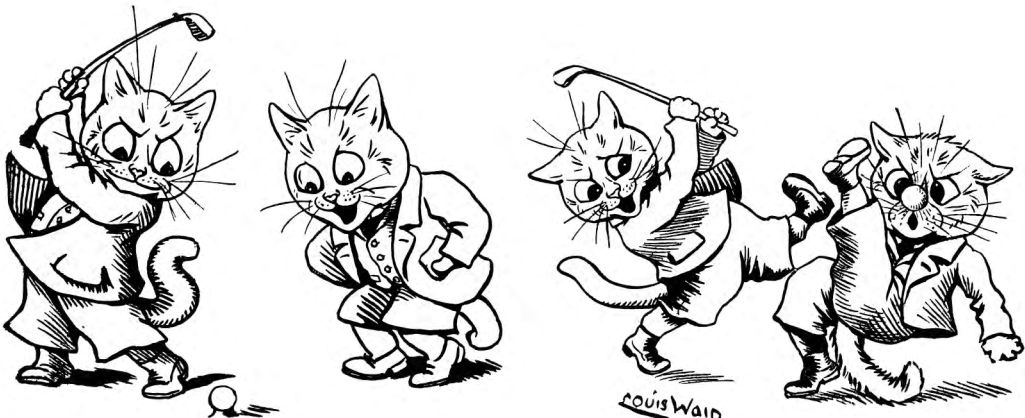
What can this talk of auditing accounts, and returning Duncan what was his own, possibly refer to, if not to the ten thousand dollars? We may be quite sure that the audit of accounts was fixed for the next morning, and Duncan was himself a canny Scot.

"He hath been
So clear in his great office"

says Macbeth, and doubtless the King would have shown especial clearness in his audit office. This gives a strong dramatic reason for Lady Macbeth's anxiety to forestall all financial discussion by the removal of Duncan.

Macbeth himself, we may note, was by no means so intelligent an economist as his wife, the Superman of Scotland. He was prone to petty savings. He weakly objects

"I have bought
Golden opinions from all sorts of people,
Which would be (*Anglice*, 'should be') worn now in their newest gloss,
Not cast aside so soon."



1. "Ha, ha, ha! You'll never touch it.

2. "Oh, Ooh! You did though."



THE LATE COMER.

I think that this obscure passage ought to be understood to refer to the new wardrobe, necessary for the new-made Thane of Cawdor, which Macbeth had, with characteristic thrift, bought "from all sorts of people," possibly at the sales. If he became King his Thane's robes must be disposed of at considerable sacrifice. It may be that Lady Macbeth's indignant retort—

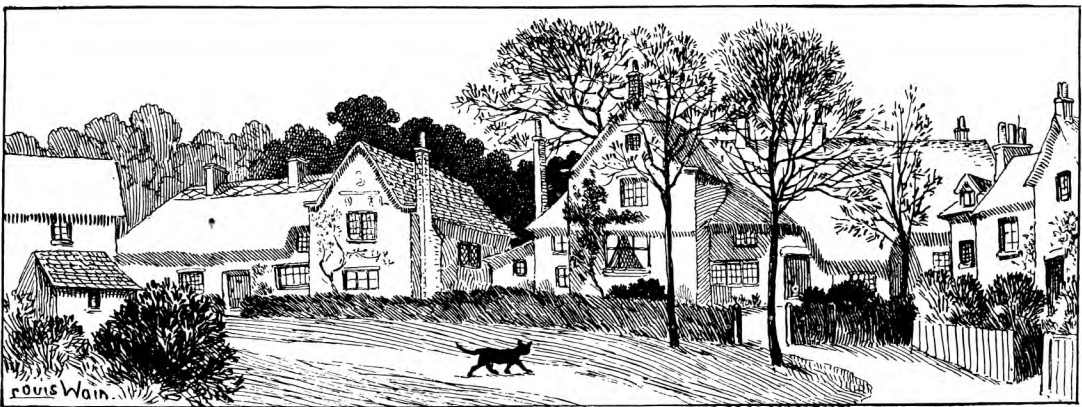
"Was the Hope drunk
Wherein you dress'd yourself?"

refers to the hosiery forming part of her husband's recent purchases.

But Lady Macbeth, as a Scottish housewife, felt the prodigal waste of entertaining Duncan and his retinue. That the King's retainers were roysterers, we know; and on the principle of "like master, like man," it is probable that Duncan himself, at the banquet, had become first Duncan disorderly, and then Duncan incapable. At the very end of the feast, we notice, he committed the extravagance of sending his hostess a diamond; and diamonds (and what they stand for) have ever been the curse of Scotland. The famous character of Macbeth's drunken porter is introduced solely to show how the example of Duncan's retinue had corrupted the Macbeth household. The contagion must be stopped, Lady Macbeth and her husband felt; their aim was lofty, although the means they employed were questionable. Macbeth, then, was King, and he at once inaugurated a system of thrift. He was forced by custom to entertain his nobles, but he restricted his ospitality to the minimum. He says—

"Let every man be master of his time
Till seven at night; to make society
The sweeter welcome, we will keep ourself
Till supper-time alone."

Here was afternoon tea saved at a stroke. But this was not enough. Banquo, whose name suggests banqueting, was, like many old soldiers, a hard drinker; and he, Macbeth believed, was to transmit his objectionable habits to a future dynasty of kings. This must be stopped; and Macbeth resorted again to the method current in his age. Two men, enemies of Banquo, and therefore needing comparatively little pecuniary inducement to murder him, were set on the task. One of the most vexed points in this affair is the identity of the Third Murderer. May we not suggest that a lump sum was to be paid for the job, and that the Third Murderer, whether Macbeth in disguise, or, more probably, a needy dependent of his, was introduced to claim a share in the contract price?



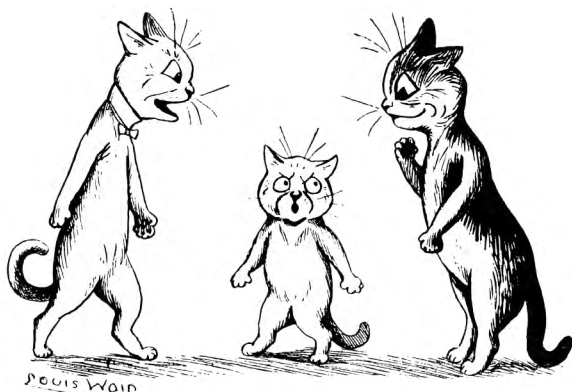
Cat: "I wonder if they'll take me in as a non-paying guest in return for work done in the garden."



TRIALS OF AN AVIATOR.

Seaman: "Are you hurt, sir?"

Aviator: "Gracious, no, man! I only came down for a drink!"



"Has your boy got a voice?"
"Kick him and try!"

"Stand not upon the order of your going,
But go at once!"

They went, leaving Macbeth, as interpreted by Sir Herbert Tree, to drain such goblets as contained but a little, and his wife to empty the others back into the bottles. The remains of the interrupted feast served to stock the household larder for many days.

But this frugality had ill results. The nobles resented it; and a nameless disaffected lord, in Act III, Scene VI, says that if Macbeth is overthrown

"We (the nobles) may again
Give to our tables meat."

Macbeth probably preferred porridge. The leader of the wastrel faction was Macduff, whose wife is depicted as a frivolous and doubtless extravagant woman, with a precocious and utterly spoilt son. Macbeth's action in regard to these was inconsiderate; but should we condemn it altogether? Another bad result was that the remains of the banquet consisted of rich food, unsuitable for ordinary consumption. Macbeth and his wife suffered from dyspepsia, and their nerves broke down. The lady walked in her sleep, and the family doctor was unable to afford any relief. He could not

"Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff."

As for Macbeth himself, his very enemies could see what was troubling him, and could excuse him.

"Who then shall blame
His pestered senses to recoil and start,
When all that is within him does condemn
Itself for being there?"

But the end of this agony was near. The gluttonous Thanes joined the hard-drinking English and Danes and each man of the host cut down and carried a green bough, the traditional sign of a tavern, implying that each warrior was a walking public-house. The Castle of Dunsinane was "gently rendered," doubtless by the drunken porter. Macbeth, weakened by his frugal life, and having possibly exercised too great economy in supplying himself with weapons, succumbed to the burly Macduff; his Queen had previously died of acute gastritis, represented as suicide by the malice of her enemies. Malcolm with the Big Head was King, and made his Thanes Earls (another English extravagance). Macbeth perished, but his spirit lived on; and every Scot who scorns English luxury, and economises a bawbee, may account himself a worthy follower of the Martyr of Thrift.

But the other guests made up for the absence of Banquo. The supplies were giving out. Something had to be done at once, and Macbeth pretended to see a ghost. Instinctively, but with a serious lack of tact, he chose Banquo, the latest person murdered, for the apparition. Lady Macbeth failed to understand her husband's purpose at first, and the thirsty Thanes went on drinking. Macbeth repeated the device, and this time his Queen fell in with his design in the immortal words



Cock: "Call that thing a social introduction!"



After All

BY FRED M. WHITE.

SHE thought she would go into the green heart of the country and hide her grief from the prying eyes of man. Something in the way of the delightful old cottage covered with crimson rambles, a stone-floored cottage with a Welsh dresser, and rows of more or less authentic blue plates on it. If the cottage contained a studio, so much the better. For she was more or less a spoilt little person, who drew a little and wrote a little, and, because she was pretty and engaging, had a great deal more luck with the editorial fraternity than she really deserved. Moreover she possessed an income of a thousand a year of her own, to say nothing of a benevolent grey-haired guardian who pretended in the most sporting way to take her seriously.

Therefore it was that Stella Ferriss was able to follow what she called her "mission," which in still more serious moments she called her "career." All the best books she read told her that genius was all the better for being tried in the fire, and that out of pain and suffering came those pure gems of artistry which could only be the outcome of the purification aforesaid. She resolutely made up her mind to think no further of Harold Dennison. He had behaved very badly to her, of course, but still there was consolation in the fact that he had not been mercenary in his motives and he had not turned his back upon her because he had found consolation (and capital) elsewhere. He had simply dropped out of her life without a word; he had left the Sweitzerhof Hotel without a sign, and from that day to this they never met. Nothing in the way of actual love-making had ever taken place between them, but they had understood.

Hence the necessity of leaving London behind, and seeking the sylvan solitudes of an old-world village in Surrey. A thousand per annum softens a good many sorrows and rounds off many awkward corners. Therefore it



The New Traveller, to Cook: "Madam, can I persuade you to buy a packet of our well-known coffee? Thank you, madam, for your generous patronage."

was not difficult for the stricken maiden to find exactly what she wanted. It was indeed a delightful little cottage, and Stella found herself wondering what the owner was like; who he was, and what he was like, she had not the remotest idea. She had come down there with her one faithful maid; she had made up her mind to keep rigidly to herself and hold her neighbours severely aloof. It is not the least use to be a stricken genius nursing a



JANE ANN CONVERTS THE VILLAGE TO SUFFRAGETTE OPINIONS.



Poet: "Have you a corner for poets?"

Irate Editor (meaningly, with hand on inkstand): "Yes; Westminster Abbey."

secret sorrow if you are to be lured into afternoon teas and tennis at the rectory. Not that there was much chance of this, for the rectory did not approve of girl bachelors who painted pictures on Sundays and who were occasionally seen indulging in a mild cigarette. The village made up its mind that Stella was a "kind of actress person," and after that she had all the solitude she wanted, and, if she would only have admitted it, a great deal more.

It was all very delightful at first, but after a bit the want of society and innocent merriment began to get on her nerves. It was not so easy to forget Harold Dennison as she had hoped. She lay awake at night thinking of him and other things. She was not so bitterly angry against him now as she had been. Perhaps there might have been some good and sufficient reason why he had disappeared so mysteriously. He might have lost all his money. He might have deemed it the better part to vanish leaving her to think the worst of him and so recover the more speedily. Quite the nicest heroes did that sort of thing.

All the same it was fidgety work lying there through the stillness of the summer night listening to all the vague sounds that most houses seemed to be full of during the hours of the very early morning. The somewhat rickety stairs creaked a good deal; it sounded from time to time as if a stealthy footstep was upon them. Down below somebody appeared to be moving about, and Stella sat up half uneasily. She could have sworn she heard the scratching of a match, and something that sounded like an oath. There could be no longer any question about it—a burglar was on the premises. Stella restrained a wild impulse to scream and hide her head under the bedclothes. But that was not according to the best traditions of heroines. It was her plain duty to slip a becoming wrap over the dainty frillings and confront the blood-thirsty marauder, with the long tresses of her shining hair hanging down her back. It wanted a good deal more courage to do this than it would seem when reading the pages of romance, but the artistic temperament was Stella's, and really the wrap was a most becoming one.

She was feeling a great deal less frightened than she had expected as she crept down the stairs into the sitting-room. On the table were a pair of wax candles in antique sconces and these the intruder had lighted. He was there right enough, standing against the wall into which a small safe had been built. Stella had often wondered what that safe meant—it seemed so out of place in this corner of Arcadia. Possibly the owner of the cottage was a City man and possibly he kept valuables there. It looked



"Mother wants a quart of split peas, and please count them"



Mr. Lloyd George: "I have got to the dregs of this bottle. I wonder whether it would mix with a little soda?"

exceedingly like it now. Or else what was this truculent ruffian doing here with a bunch of keys in his hand?

He was exceedingly well dressed for a burglar of typical fiction. Had he been in evening dress it would have been all right. There are many precedents for the black coat and the shining shirt-front in connection with midnight raids on the property of others. But this man was wearing an exceedingly well-cut flannel suit, and his boots left nothing to be desired. He muttered something under his breath to the effect that he must have lost the right key. Possibly he was a valet person or something of that sort. At any rate it was quite time for the heroine to interfere.

"And what may this mean?" she asked coldly.

The man dropped his bunch of keys and turned with a start. No murderous gleam came into his eyes. There was no black scowl upon his brow. There was not even a sneer on his handsome countenance, for handsome it undoubtedly was. On the contrary he looked exceedingly foolish and confused. The light might have been artistic, but it was by no means effective, and Stella was in the shadow. The intruder had a vague vision of dainty loveliness and gleaming hair in a frame of black and white.

"I—I beg your pardon," he stammered. "Upon my word, I hadn't the least intention of disturbing you. I knew a lady was staying in the house, and I had to risk it. You see there's something in my safe here that I am bound to have to-night. If I don't get it I shall lose my good name altogether. You see, it's a wedding present. I borrowed a car to come over here and get it. I haven't been to bed yet."

Stella drew further into the shadows. Her voice sounded a little hoarse and constrained as she spoke.

"You mean to say this is your cottage?" she asked.

"Yes, certainly. Just as much as this is my bunch of keys. You see, I promised a certain ornament to a friend of mine who is going to be married to-morrow. I told her I had got it, and—well, I hadn't. The fact is, I lost it. And I hadn't got the courage to tell her so. Then I recollected that I had another piece of jewellery here which is practically identical with the one I lost, and I came here to get it. Mind you, I didn't know I had lost it till long after dinner, and I was bound to hand over my present before the ceremony



Playful Moments.

to-morrow—which is to-day, by the way. So there was nothing for it but to burgle my own cottage.”

And you expect me to believe all this?” Stella asked. “You must regard me as exceedingly simple.”

“I don’t,” the intruder protested indignantly. “I regard you as a lady. Besides, anybody here would tell you who I am. This is the first summer for years that I have not spent a few weeks here. But really you must not interfere, upon my word you mustn’t. I am bound to have that ornament. If I break faith with that dear little girl she may”

“I quite understand. She may not marry you.”

Some inflection to Stella’s voice caused the intruder to turn and advance in her direction. The man was about to do her violence. Well, if that was his intention she would not shrink. She came forward boldly into the light and the man gasped.

“Stella!” he said. “This is extraordinary. To think that you should be my tenant! And now perhaps you will believe.”

“The worst,” Stella said. “The very worst.”

“But why? What harm have I possibly done you? I am telling you no more than the truth, and you know it. And you know perfectly well that there is no chance of my wedding taking place. I wanted that present for a girl I have known all my life. If I hadn’t prevaricated to her I should not be doing this amazingly stupid thing at this moment. And I am not one to change.”

This was inconsequent, but there was a challenge in it, and Stella took it up eagerly.

“That comes well from you,” she taunted.

“Oh, I like that. You knew I had to go away. You knew that one of my oldest pals had met with an accident. He saved my life once. I just had to go. But before I did—dash it all!—I wrote you a letter. You may only have been playing with me, but I put my heart in that letter, and from any decent girl—”

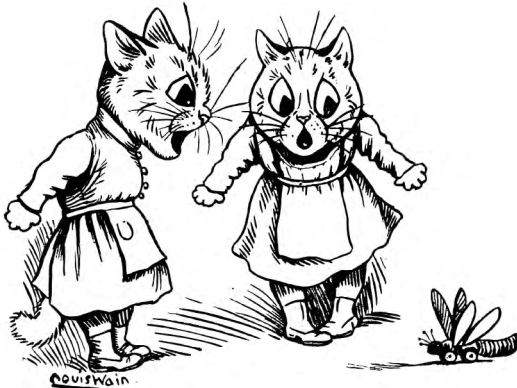
“But I never got it,” Stella cried. “Did you post it?”

“No, I gave it to Bobby Winterscale to deliver.”

“Bobby who never remembered anything! He’s probably got it in the pocket of one of his innumerable coats at the present moment. And you really believe if I had had that letter Oh, Harold, how could you think so badly of me?”

“What would you have said?” Dennison demanded.

“As if you don’t know. As if—”



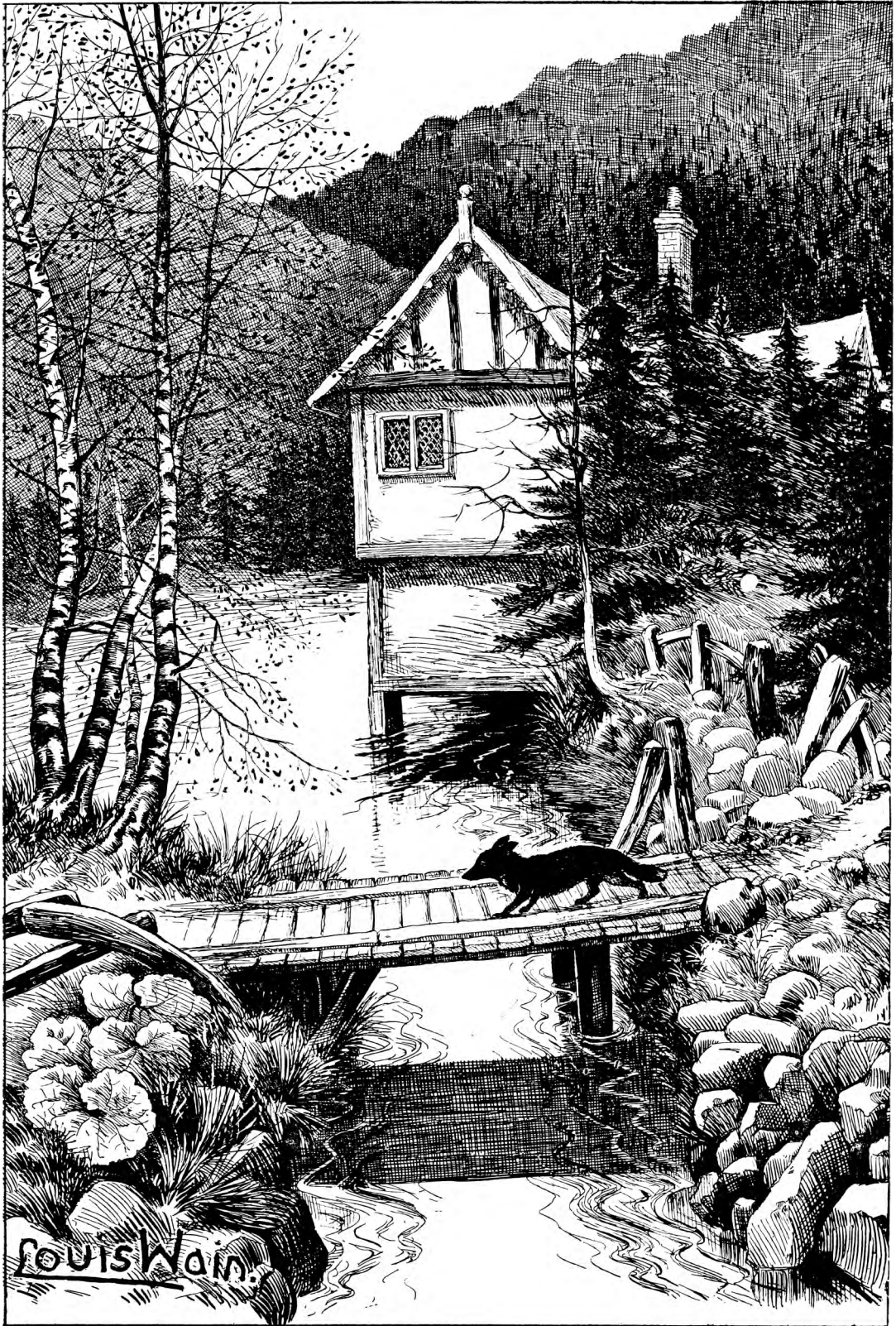
“It’s one of those aeroplane mosquitoes.”

The intruder advanced eagerly. A moment later he held a quivering, palpitating mass of white frills and golden hair in his arms. It was perhaps the most successful effort in the way of burglary in the history of midnight crime.

“Well, that’s all right,” he said a moment or two later. “And you actually took me for a burglar?”

The girl looked up smiling through her tears.

“So you are,” she whispered. “You have burgled me at any rate.”



Louis Wain.

THE POACHER.



The Impossibles

By J. HALL RICHARDSON

“MY dear!”



I sat up at the familiar danger signal and awaited developments. They came.

“We *must* give a little dinner!”

“But, *my dear* (in a masculine, mildly expostulatory tone), we have already given two little dinners. Two are a fearful extravagance for Suburbia: I shall have the Income Tax people inquiring into it!”

My wife ignored me.

“I mean a different sort of party to the others. It must be a party of the Impossibles!”

“The Impossibles!”

“Yes,” she replied briskly, warming with the idea. “The people who won’t fit in, you know! The people we always leave out; the folks that will not pair, the woman who is always one too many; the man who is bound to be the thirteenth—the odds and ends of our social acquaintance.”

“Very complimentary,” I murmured. “Well (in a louder tone), what do you propose to do?”

“Invite the lot; it will save all bother about making an invidious selection, you see; and besides,” she added, “it will be more fun!”

“I see,” said I.

And it was settled.

* * * * *

The night of the dinner to the Impossibles came. Around our dinner-table was gathered a motley crowd of guests. We are rather proud of our little dinners, I may say, and I had complete confidence in the success of the culinary part of the programme. My anxiety turned in another direction: how would that exceedingly hazardous plan adopted by my wife for the placing of the guests succeed?

This had been the plan.

The name of each guest was written upon a card and placed in a hat: ladies had pink cards; gentlemen, green ones. In another hat were place numbers 1A, 1B. My wife drew from one hat a name-card, and my sister-in-law drew from the other hat a number. If Miss Quill was called, and the number from the other hat was 1A, she was paired with the gentleman who drew 1B. He turned out to be Mr. Slippers, the curate.

In this curious way the pairing had been effected, and I looked round my board to find as table companions the following:

Miss Quill, a lady journalist, had on one side the curate, who had a



Mistress: "I hope that you are leaving to better yourself, Harriet."

Servant: "Yes, Mum, I'll never go so low again!"

University contempt for the Press; and, on the other side, a young man from the City, who had never read a paper in his life, except a sporting one. His partner was Miss Spooner, a lady of uncertain age, who, as a last resource, had taken up the course of Household Reform—whatever that might mean.

Then we had Mr. Spectacles, very short-sighted, author of the "Microbe Theory of Life," paired with a damsel of unsatisfied motherly instincts, now "upon the shelf," who had found her place in life as an Inspector of Stamps—a post believed to be not unconnected with recent legislation.

Another couple was Mr. Paints, an artist of private means and unknown talent who had never exhibited; and an authoress who wrote under a masculine pseudonym upon such subjects as "The Anomalies of the Money Market."

I need not trouble you with the others, except to say that at the last moment, two telephones and one telegram of excuse arrived, to the surprise of my wife, who exclaimed melodramatically:

"Thirteen again!"

"But, my dear," I ventured to suggest. "I thought you expressly invited the thirteenth!"

But we were not to be thirteen, because, almost simultaneously with the wire and the "phones," came three strangers unbidden to the door. They did not act as strangers; on the contrary, they behaved as if they knew us very well. They were correctly dressed—two gentlemen and a lady.

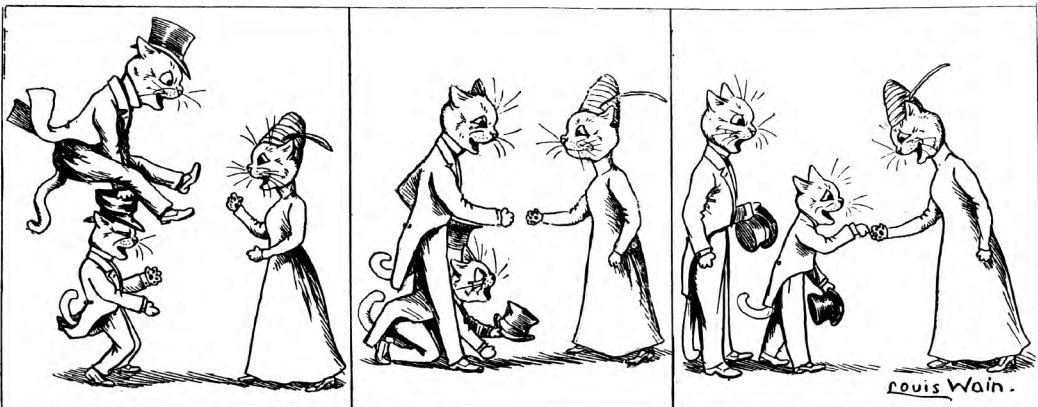
It was puzzling that we did not know their names, and they didn't seem to mind about ours.

"My dear! how pleased we are to come. So kind of you to ring us up. How stupid of me, you don't know my brothers—this is Jack, I should say John; and this is Jim, I should say James." [All this from the lady—nice girl, too!]

Jack and Jim bowed gracefully.

We were still in the dark. I thought of asking them for their telephone number to explain the mystery of their appearance, but reflected that a telephone directory is a hopeless guide to the discovery of the name of a person by his number. So I left it to chance.

"By the way, Stella," said Jim, or James (so the girl's name was Stella—pretty name Stella, pretty girl, too) we are keeping Mrs.—"



1. Both: "How do you do, Miss Pretty?"

2. "So glad do see you, Mr. Tall."

3. "I am so happy to meet you again, Mr. Short."



OUR CONDUCTOR.
"Softly, please."

At that moment, one of our guests came up to my wife and began, "Oh, Mrs. Sunnysmile" and then stopped.

Jim went on imperturbably, as though he had never been interrupted, "We are keeping Mrs. Sunnysmile from her other guests."

My wife gave the strangers a broad comprehensive smile and the trio turned away. Presently, I saw the curate talking to Miss Stella quite comfortably.

"What on earth are you going to do with them?" I whispered to my wife.

"Feed them, of course."

"But you don't know them?"

Perhaps you do," she replied wickedly.

"I never saw her before in my life," I retorted.

"Who?" asked the lady innocently.

"Stella—Miss Stella."

"Oh!" was the rejoinder. I fancied it was pointed.

So I left it at that.

But when it came to placing our unexpected guests, I saw to it that Stella was in the place of honour—as the greatest stranger at my right hand. And well—"Jim" was on my wife's left, and Jack" facing him. It was a successful entertainment; and Miss Stella, with her "brothers'" help, was the life and soul of it.

The Curate was quite enthusiastic when he left—he was one of the last to go.

"I am so very glad to make the acquaintance of Miss Stella" he began, when I checked him.

"Are you aware," said I, severely, "that Stella is the young lady's christian name."

"Her christian name!" he echoed. "Why, I have been calling her Miss Stella all the evening—ever since dinner. What is her surname?" he went on eagerly.

"I don't know."

"You *don't* know?"

"No, I don't. And look, my young friend, I want you to understand that I know nothing about her or her brothers. She came uninvited; she went, as you are aware, in response to an urgent telephone call, and I don't even know her number."

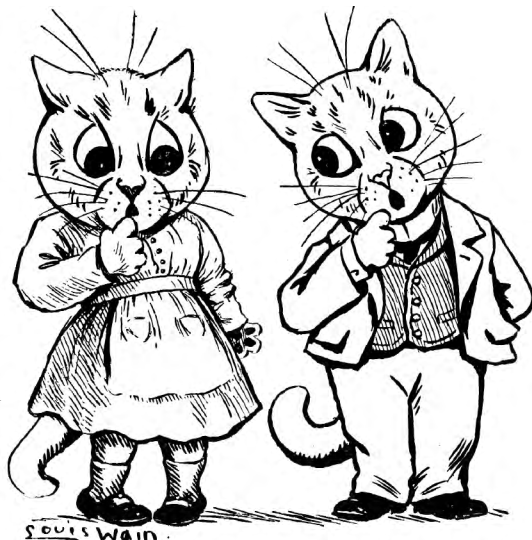
"My dear sir!"

"There you have it in a nutshell. But what is Miss Stella to you?"

"Nothing—nothing of course. She has promised to be one of us, that is all. One of the 'Tyros for the Tyrol.' Excellent idea, don't you think? You see, Switzerland is overrun—"

"With parsons?"

"With trippers, but the Tyrol is not. So we make up a



"Did you eat all that mouse toffee?"

party in the summer and appoint our own conductor and have a jolly holiday—instructional of course, but, yes, I should think jolly.”

And Miss Stella is to be one of the party?”

“She said she would come.”

“You have lost no time,” I said, and he modestly replied that he didn’t think he had.

* * * * *

“Well,” said my wife reflectively, “I do think it was a successful party. But who is Stella?”

The postman brought the answer next day:

“MY DEAR MRS. SUNNYSMILE,

“I owe you and your husband a thousand apologies. I ought never to have done it. Jim says it was a thing no lady would ever do. But you see a bet is a bet, and Jim lost it. Anyway, we had a delightful time; and Jim says (also Jack) will you both come to lunch with us to-morrow at the —— Don’t say ‘No,’ or else I shall believe that you are offended with

“Yours sincerely,

“STELLA TEAZLETON.”

“So,” I cried, “another escapade of that madcap’s—she’s notoriously the greatest prankist in town.”

“But who is she, then?” asked my wife.

“The Hon. Stella Teazleton, third daughter of the Earl of Wroxberry, if I mistake not.”

Mrs. Sunnysmile murmured something about entertaining angels unawares, and subsided.

But it was not to end there.

The “Tyros for the Tyrol” actually got together their party and spent an enjoyable holiday. And I am told that the Hon. Stella Teazleton was one of the tourists.

There were other developments some months later.

Mrs. Sunnysmile, opening her breakfast table correspondence, one morning, turned over an envelope addressed in an unfamiliar hand.

“Whoever can this be from?” she queried, examining the letter, the stamp, the postmark and other external indications.

“Why not open it and see,” I ventured.

“Curiosity is a masculine failing, not a feminine one. Will you take more coffee?”

“Take your own time, my love.”

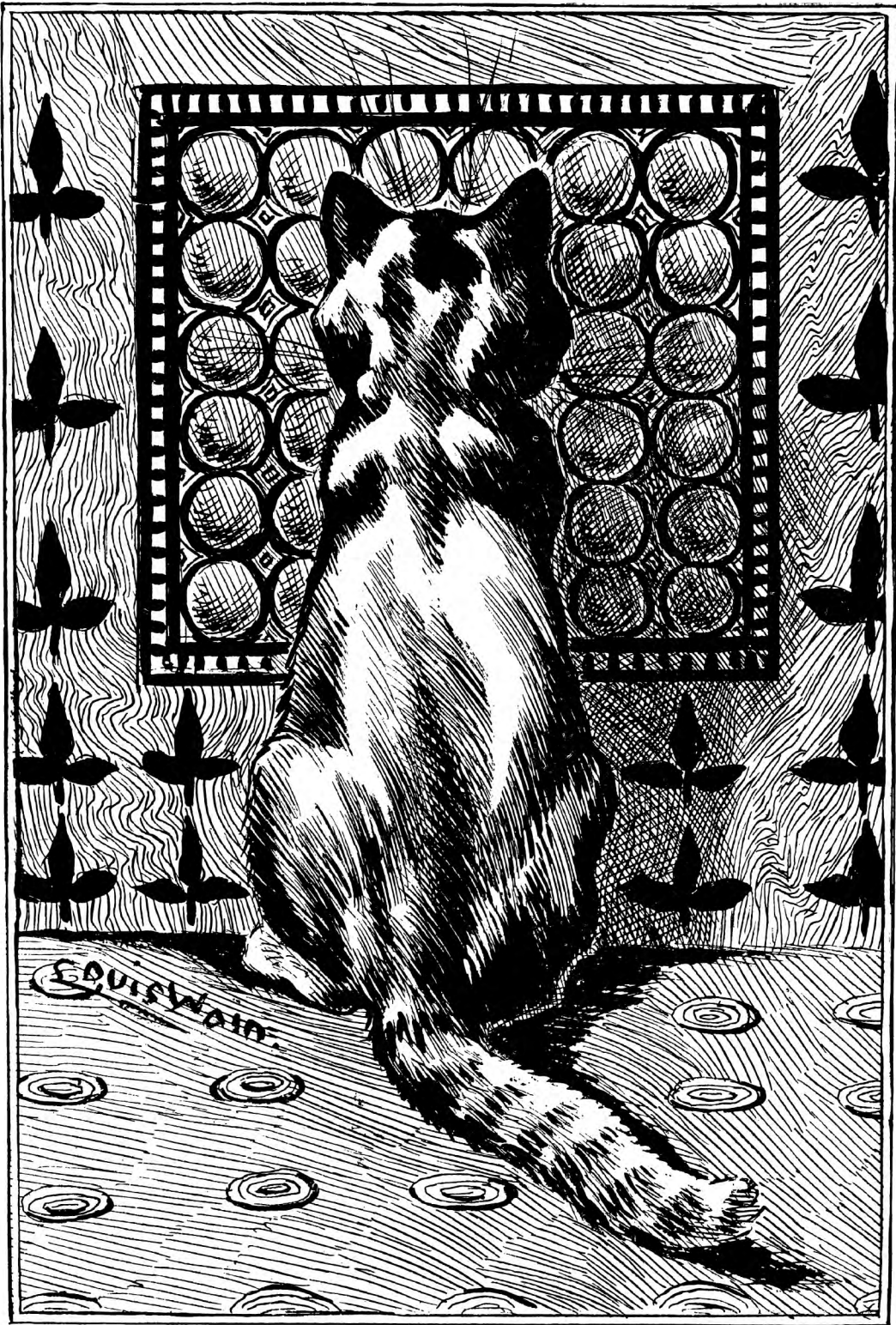
So she opened the letter at once and immediately looked at the signature. “It is from Quill, Sarah Quill, the writing woman, you recollect, one



“It’s like this, sonny: I’m going to fight the winner of the Tug and Jigger match, and I want some practice.”

“Do I pay to be let off?”

“KINGSLUDGE.



THE SUFFRAGETTE QUESTION.
Behind the Grille in the Cats' Parliament House.

of the Impossibles she came to that little dinner you know, when the Honourable Stella Teazleton was such fun."

"I recollect."

"She is going to get married—she is marrying Mr. Spectacles, the short-sighted man, the great Microbe Expert. He was another of our guests."

"That means a wedding present," said I.

A week later came another announcement that a marriage had been arranged. This time the contracting parties were: Miss Spooner, the apostle of Household Reform and the young man from the City, who, I afterwards learned, had been prevailed upon that matrimony was cheap because furniture could be had on the hire-purchase system.

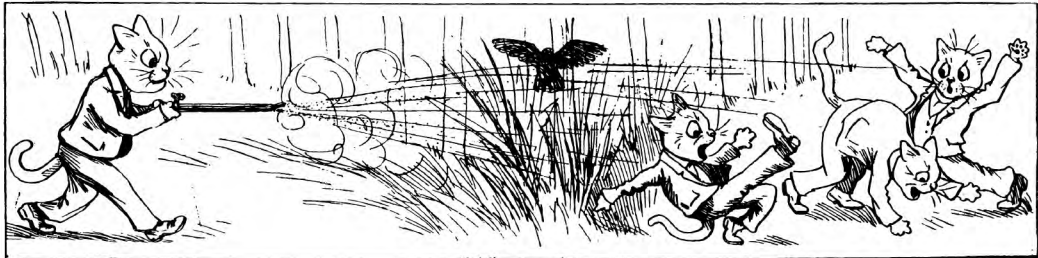
Of course, this would lead to a wedding present also.

After that, I was always in dread that the postman's knock would bring to us demands for more wedding presents, as the Impossibles seemed so ready to mate with each other.

"I shouldn't so much mind the present, if only, this time, the bride in prospective was——"

"Stella," said my wife. "She's a nice girl. I believe she will marry the Curate."

And she did!



1. "I'm sure to bring down that bird."



2. "Wait till we get at you; we'll teach you how to shoot."



2. "Ha! ha! how do you like it?"—"Ooh! Woo! ooh! oo! oh!"



Sentimental Mr. Burnaby

His first Misgivings Concerning a Family of Boys

By HUGH LAURENCE

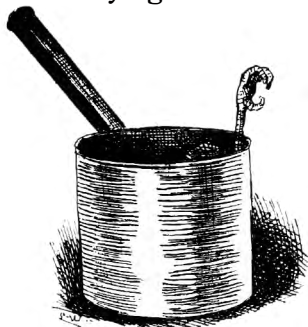
MR. TOM BURNABY looked round his garden disconsolately. For the first time he felt that this trim acre of lawns and terraces and fruit and flowers did not hold all that was satisfying to eye and heart. A man might pay too much for escape from suburban life, he found.

Yet the roses were doing well; the columbines were all that his utmost fancy had pictured them; never had there been such a year for rhododendrons; the fruit was well set and not a slug nor a caterpillar disturbed the orderly vision of beauty which he had dreamed of during the dreary days and nights of his first winter in the country. He felt that his careful husbandry was about to yield abundant reward. Soon he would have a garden that any man might envy.

He strolled over the tennis lawn and pitched over the house and into the meadow beyond, the only stone that marred its symmetry. And then he sighed.

There had been a time when a stone on the lawn was a catastrophe, a bit of waste paper on the well-kept paths an outrage. And on other evenings, coming home after business, there had often been not one stone but perhaps a score; not one scrap of paper but an unedifying medley of torn books, scattered toys, perhaps a broken bottle or so, and the horrifying marks of boys' feet in that forbidden nook where the massed lilies were thrusting their green spears through rich brown soil.

Well, he had wanted order and here it was! He had wanted stones where stones should be, and grass where grass should be, and garden chairs in appointed places; and these things were so. But what an empty unsatisfying business it all seemed after all!



Guess her age?

He strolled across to where a bank of peonies was shouting with colour from a background of roses which tumbled and tossed and foamed their way up from waves of green, covering the deep reds of the high old wall with a cascade of cream.

Here was a riot of rich tinting. The reds of modest antirrhinum, deep blues of delphinium, purple honesty, violet-edged columbines, bronze-browns and yellows of gaillardia and sunflower; mauve salvia cheek by jowl with geum and orange ball of buddleia.

It was his pleasant theory, that to soak oneself in colour was a speedy cure for disturbances of mind, but the theory seemed to fail him now. He was annoyed because he did not see, as he had so often seen at other times, a ragged cap or a ball of paper tossed carelessly among the bushes.

"I've half a mind to stop them going!" he said, and went indoors.

* * * *

All their lives the Burnabys had been in the suburbs, chafing against the little house and smaller garden, and the narrow ways that hemmed them round, but enduring all with as much outward cheerfulness as they could muster until the money could be saved to buy a place of "their very own" in the country.

When the money was ready, the house of their dreams seemed to appear miraculously. Perched on a hill three miles from a station, the centre of a little Kentish village where flowers and fruit supplied the chief topics of conversation, it fell into their overwilling hands: a plum ripe for the picking.

They were settled in the house before they realized that suburbs have some disadvantages for parents of lusty boys. There was education for instance. And now they found that there were no schools. With four boys and a girl ripe for blackboard and slate, this disturbing factor demanded attention.

* * * * *

"Boys in bed I suppose?" said Mr. Burnaby putting his head inside the breakfast-room where wife and maids were at work amid a sea of linen. "Cannot you sit with me and leave all that. It's precious dull."

"Twelve pairs of boots and shoes," said Mrs. Burnaby mechanically, and the housemaid laboriously placed that total on paper.

"Good G—!" ejaculated Burnaby. For the first time he realized why his money vanished so quickly. If three small boys needed twelve sets of boots, what would the tailor's bill be? and the hatter's? and the haberdasher's? School fees were solid outstanding facts, to be reckoned with, impossible to overlook; but these things!—was it possible that it took so much to clothe a boy or so?

Mrs. Burnaby looked at him reproachfully. "You would not have anyone else pack their boxes surely—and the first time they go from home too," she said.

He sat down amid the maids and the heaped-up linen and the gaping boxes. Mrs. Burnaby went on counting ruefully. He remembered he had not seen her smile all this memorable day....

"I have been thinking," he said.... then, "Cannot we stop this infernal business? Shy these things upstairs again. We'll keep them at home."

"Oh, Tom!" said Mrs. Burnaby. She, too, smiled now, and signed to the maids to leave them.



LOUIS WAIN

Tramp: "Can you give me something to do?"

Farmer's Wife: "Yes. See who can run quicker, you or my dog!"

"After all," he pursued, "we could pay the term's fees and say..."

"And say we'd got diphtheria in the house," broke in Mrs. Burnaby, "or we had found a school near by."

"Oh, we'd say any dashed thing they pleased," replied he, "anything to keep the boys near us."

A disturbing vision of this tomb-quiet house as it would be, bereft of noisy voices indoors, immaculate and diabolically tidy outdoors, seemed for the moment to give the suggestion an air of immense practical wisdom. To these grown-up children it did not seem childish or absurd just then—not at all.

"But there are no schools near by," said Mrs. Burnaby presently.

That was true.

"And they *must* be educated!"

Not so true; but horribly and undeniably prosaic.

"And what about your garden?"

"Oh, hang the garden," he said. "A garden always tidy is a nuisance."

Mrs. Burnaby flushed with a new, an ecstatic thought. "Why, we could get a governess," she cried; and her mind fled forward to the changes this would bring. Of course, a governess would be only £50, and just think what they would save on school fees! She would put the two girls in one room and the governess could have Mary's bedroom. And they would build another room on to this breakfast-room for a schoolroom.

"Just what we have been planning to do for so long," she said. "Oh, I'd hate to send them away. Won't it be glorious to peep in on them at their lessons! And we could have little examinations and give them little holidays when they did not expect any, and all that kind of thing!"

Yes, a governess, certainly. How stupid not to have thought of that before!

But came the vision of impish Seymour with leisure moments chiefly occupied in squirting dish-water through the lock of an outraged housemaid's box; of Ronald hammering the cook's best dress to the bedroom wall with nails that defied extraction; of Laurence secreting snails and caterpillars and slimy worms in the best bed when frigid Aunt Elizabeth came to stay! Vanishing misery was drowned in laughter.

No, it would not do, not if they wished Laurence to figure in Aunt Elizabeth's will. "Help me to make out this list," sighed Mrs. Burnaby... "Twelve shirts, six pairs pyjamas, twenty-four collars..."

Blue delphinium and "red-hot poker," scarlet poppy and

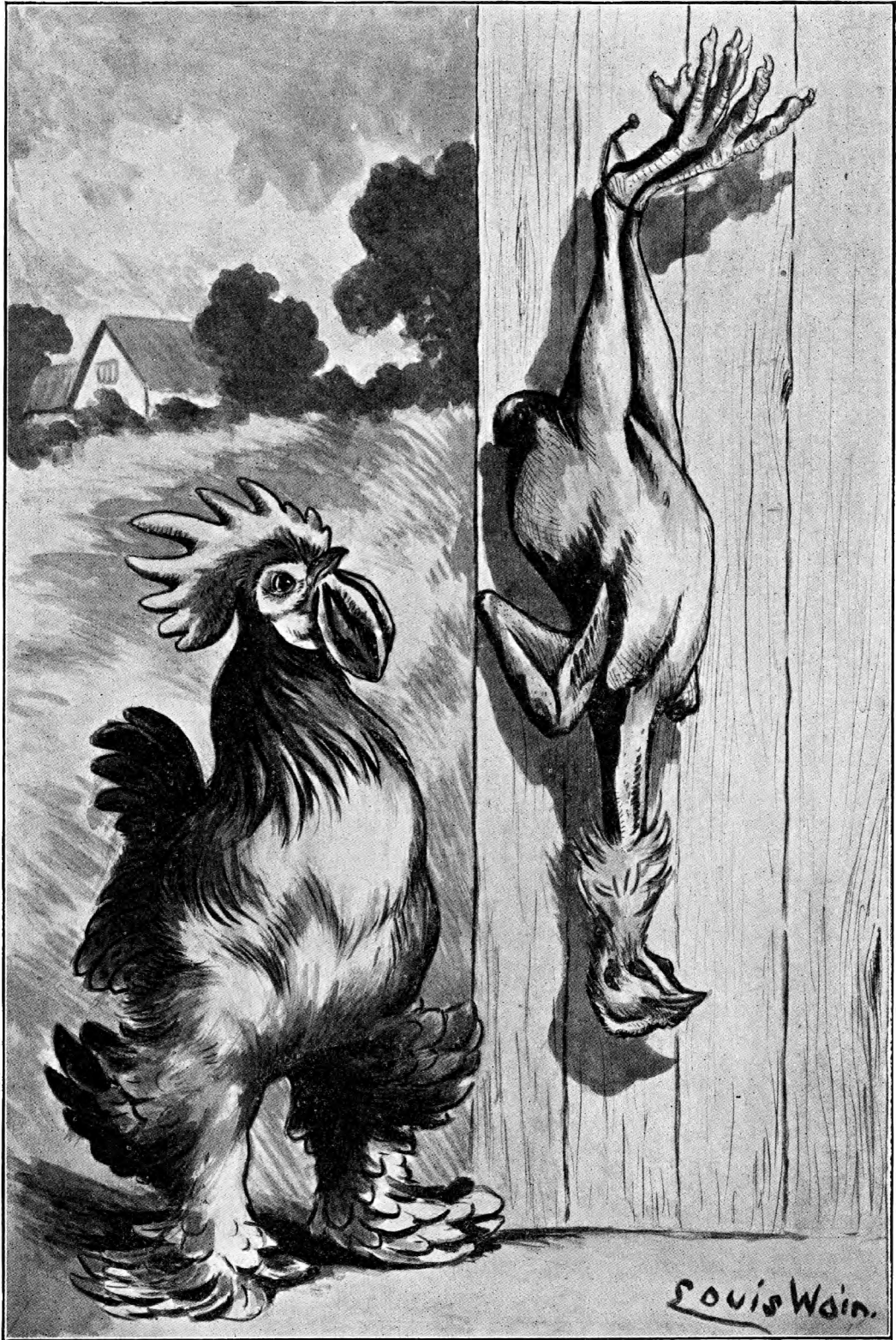


"How do you account for your wicked temper, Girlie!"
"You! Boy mine!"

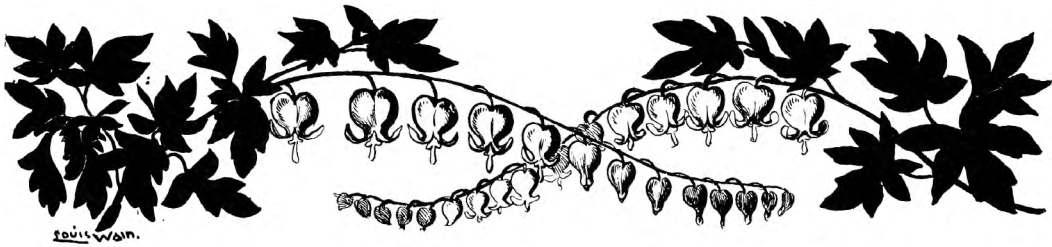
clustered canterbury bell nodded towards the open window, driving toward it the clean, sweet smell of multitudes of growing things.

Burnaby took up the pen. Well, he supposed they must go. After all, he had been at boarding-school and it really wasn't half bad.

But he remembered his mother having a good cry when he had left for his first term. He had wondered why. And now he knew.



"MY WORD! AND SHE JILTED ME!"



In the Left-hand Drawer

BY JOHN STRANGE WINTER

AUTHOR OF

Bootles' Baby. " *The Truth Tellers,*" " *Lady Jennifer,*" " *The Ivory Box,*"
" *Captain Fraser's Profession,*" etc., etc.

" **I**T'S no use, Jack," said a wistful girl's voice, "they're absolutely obdurate. They've hearts like the nether millstone. They don't care whether we love each other, they don't care for anything but money—money—money—just as hard as their hearts—and nothing else. They say you've got nothing and you will never be able to make anything; that they only allowed it to go on because they thought that your Aunt Betty had plenty of money. She was always credited with it. And when she died and just left you the few acres and the old house, and nothing more—of course, it altered the position of everything. If they would be angry, if they would be brutal about you, if they would be anything but what they are—just stony and practical—I think I could bear it better," she wound up, with a great sigh.

"My dearest heart," said another voice in reply, "they can't eat us. They can't take you to church and tie you up to someone else without your leave. We've got to stick to our present position with the obstinacy of mules and the tenacity of leeches. The days are over when parents could force girls to marry somebody else and, begad, there's nobody else to marry! You've three sisters older than yourself, all unmarried. If good matches are going begging in this part of the world, why don't your people arrange some of them?"

"That's what I said!" cried she.

"Well, anyhow, this little wood is very damp and cold, and I'm sure the slugs are coming out now that the light is failing; so do you come up to the house and we'll make Mrs. Cross give us a good tea. We shall be better after we've talked things over as man to man."

"They would say as goose to goose," said the girl, with the faintest suspicion of a sigh and a downright flicker of humour.

So the two emerged from the gloom of the wood, which was little more than a spinney, and bent their steps towards a comfortable glow of light at a little distance away. At the gate the young man stopped. He was tall and spare, although his shoulders were broad. His air was determined, his face dark and pleasant. The girl was a complete contrast—a rounded, sunny little creature with a dimpling face.

"I can't understand your Aunt Betty, Jack," she said,



RABBITING.



HE LIKES A BIT OF SALAD SOMETIMES.

"It would puzzle the Pope to understand. She said to me the last day before she was taken out of it, poor old darling, 'Now, Jack, remember everything in the world I have is yours.' Well, everything in the world that we can find amounts to about £400 a year, and that your people don't think good enough. After all, I'm young. I could settle it on you, as I could settle the Cote House. And if I couldn't make as much more—after all, your people aren't rolling. You haven't been accustomed to such an extravagant up-bringing."

"And I'm no such beauty," said Winnie McKerro, "that I could reasonably expect a lord duke to come riding to offer me his strawberry leaves."

"Well, as to that," said he, "you're good-looking enough for anybody—duke, or prince, or anything else. That's talking folly."

She laughed again.

"I knew it I knew you would say that. That was why I said it. But if we can hang on till I'm one-and-twenty—I wonder—I wonder, Jack, if you'll be true to me?"

"Wonder what?" he asked. "You ought to be ashamed to say such a thing to me, even in joke! I—I've been true to you ever since I was a little chap ten years old, and you—"

"And I not quite six."

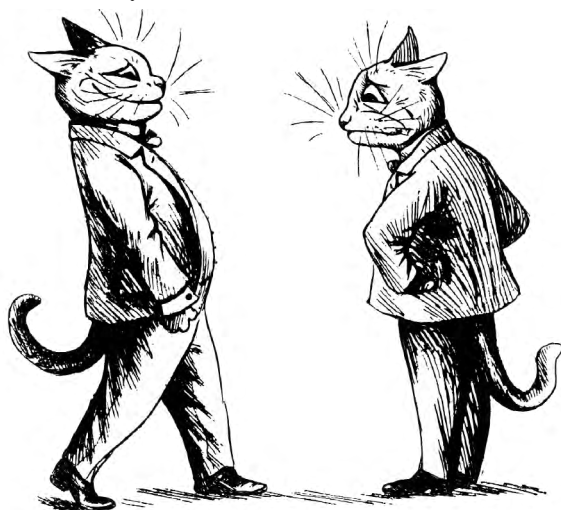
"Of course, we're young," he went on, as he drew her through the gate. "But wouldn't you rather be young and happy than—"

"Young and married to some old Moneybags? I grant you! The very argument I made to Mother yesterday. One wouldn't think that Mother ran away for love and married the man of her choice; would you, now?"

"Looks as if she'd repented it," said Jack Hillcote.

"That I'm sure she hasn't," rejoined Winnie quickly. "Mother's just silly about Father, and as for Father—oh, well! First question and last question—'Where's Mother?' Don't talk to me! And they ran away and they married on nothing. I don't say," she went on, "that they didn't have a hard pinch of it for some years, but still—look at them now! Why, they're radiant young people. You would never think they had a great girl like me of their own."

"No, you wouldn't. Oh, but that's where they're always so unreasonable,



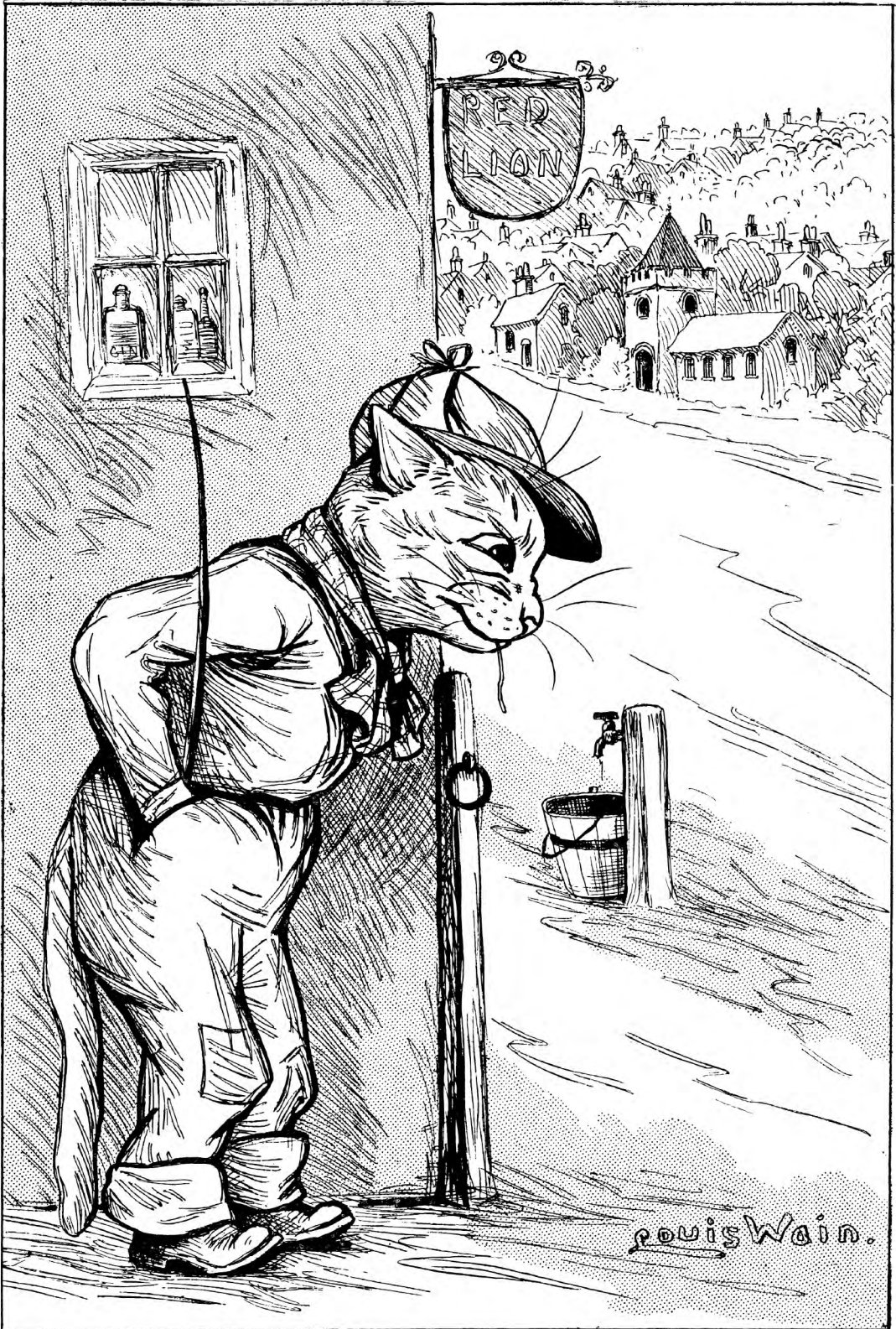
"You are too puffed up with your own importance."

"No. You are mistaken; it's ginger beer!"

fathers and mothers. Now my Aunt Betty, although in a sense she sold me, poor old dear—I'm not blaming her; no, I'm not blaming her. If ever I loved anybody besides you in this world it was my Aunt Betty, just as my father did before me—for goodness knows, she was mother to both of us. And Aunt Betty always said, 'Jack, my boy, marry where you love; don't try to love where you marry. It's never been done yet, and you won't be the one to begin. Marry where you love, my boy; don't love where you marry.'

"Quite right!" said Winnie.

"And you do love me?"



THE DAY OF THE MOTOR-CAR: THE COACHBOY WAITS FOR A JOB.

"I should think I did, and do, and will. And let any other fellow get you from me that can! There's just this, Winnie," he went on, slipping his hand under her arm as they walked side by side up the gaunt old avenue; "there's just this—that your people don't go away much from home, and there aren't many people to marry here. Now, who is there?"

"Well, there's the Rector," said Winnie.

"Oh, rubbish!"

"Well, he has given me the glad eye more than once."

"Don't talk nonsense! Why, the old chap's old enough to be your grandfather."

"Not quite," said she, "not quite—getting that way."

"Well, and who else is there?"

"Well, there's John Hickman."

"Oh, my dear! Your people would never let you marry John Hickman, if you wanted to."

"Well, I don't know that he particularly wants to marry me; but if it was put into his head, he might."

"We'll take care that it isn't put into his head. I know John Hickman—he won't want to cut me out. His ideas of honour are very strict. I'll cook that goose right away, before anything comes of it. Now, my darling, for Mrs. Cross and a good tea."

It was a bit of a stretch, these young people going to Hillcote to have tea. But Winnie McKerro had been accustomed to run in and out of the house when old Miss Betty Hillcote was its mistress, and it seemed less of an adventure to her than it would have done to any other girl in the country. The old housekeeper, a homely, sweet-faced woman, opened the door to them.

"Good afternoon, Miss Winnie."

"Good afternoon, Mrs. Cross," said Winnie McKerro. "How is your rheumatism to-day?"

"It's much better, Miss Winnie, thank you. There's a good fire in the hall, Mr. Hillcote," she said. "I thought you would prefer to have tea there."

"Yes, quite right, Mrs. Cross; quite right."

"How did you know I was coming to tea?" demanded Winnie McKerro.

"Mr. Hillcote said he thought you might be coming in, and so I've made a special baking of little cakes for you, Miss Winnie."

"That's very sweet of you, Mrs. Cross." And she drew off her thick gloves, holding out her little snowflakes of hands to the bright blaze from the logs burning on the open hearth. "I do envy you your hearth, Jack," she said.

"You needn't," said he; "it's as good as your own. It's all going to be settled on you before many months are over, so you needn't worry."

"Oh, Jack," she said, as the housekeeper discreetly withdrew, "do you think that you and I are strong enough to hold out?"

"I know I am," said he.

"I wonder if I—oh, yes, I am! I am! I shall tell Mother when I go in—I shall say, 'I've been to tea with Jack, and I have decided just what alterations I shall make when I am mistress of Hillcote. And I'm going to keep Mrs. Cross. And, do you know, Jack,'" she went on, "I had the most extraordinary dream about your Aunt Betty last night."

"You had? What sort of a dream?"

"Well, I dreamt that she came to see me—she came right into my bed-



GRAND OPERA ON THE TILES

room—but I was in bed in her room, do you see?—the big oak room, the room she always had.”

“Yes?”

“Well, I was in bed, and I woke up suddenly and there was a sort of soft, golden light all over the room that seemed to come from nowhere at all; and then I became aware that your Aunt Betty was standing beside me, and she said to me, ‘Child, you are going to marry my Jack?’ And I said, ‘Yes, Miss Betty, dear, I am, if my people don’t kill me before I can pull it off.’ And she laughed—you know that little way she had when I was slangy, or there was something quite modern that tickled her—and she said, ‘Jack hasn’t quite understood everything. I know just what Jack’s feeling, and you give him my love and tell him to look in the left-hand drawer.’ ‘Which drawer, Miss Betty?’ said I, and—and she was gone.”

“Well, that’s a funny dream, Winnie,” he said. “I’ve never looked at any of the drawers in Aunt Betty’s room. We’ll take Mrs. Cross and do a little tour of investigation. Mrs. Cross,” he said, as the old lady came in, “Miss Winnie had a dream last night about Aunt Betty.”

“Lawk-a-mercy-me, sir!”

“Yes, she did. Now, you tell Mrs. Cross exactly what happened.”

So Winnie McKerro told the old housekeeper exactly what had taken place in her dream the previous night.

“Well, now, that’s queer, Miss Winnie,” said she; “that’s very queer. Miss Betty was always very secret about that left-hand drawer. Have you been in it, Mr. Jack?”

“No, never been into any of her drawers.”

“I think it would be just as well if you were to look over them. I know the mistress was always very secretive about that left-hand drawer—always. I never saw into it; I don’t know what she kept in it.”

“Well, let’s go and look,” said Jack Hillcote.

“I’ll go first,” said Mrs. Cross, “and light the candles.”

Winnie McKerro looked round as she entered the large and handsome apartment.

“Just as I saw it!” she said. “It gave me the shudders, just as it always did in real life. I don’t know how such a dear woman as Miss Betty could live in this awful room.”

“Black oak is rather dull,” said Jack Hillcote; “and this is all so valuable, we should get an awful lot for it.”

“Oh, I wouldn’t sell it,” said Winnie; “oh, no—not sell!”

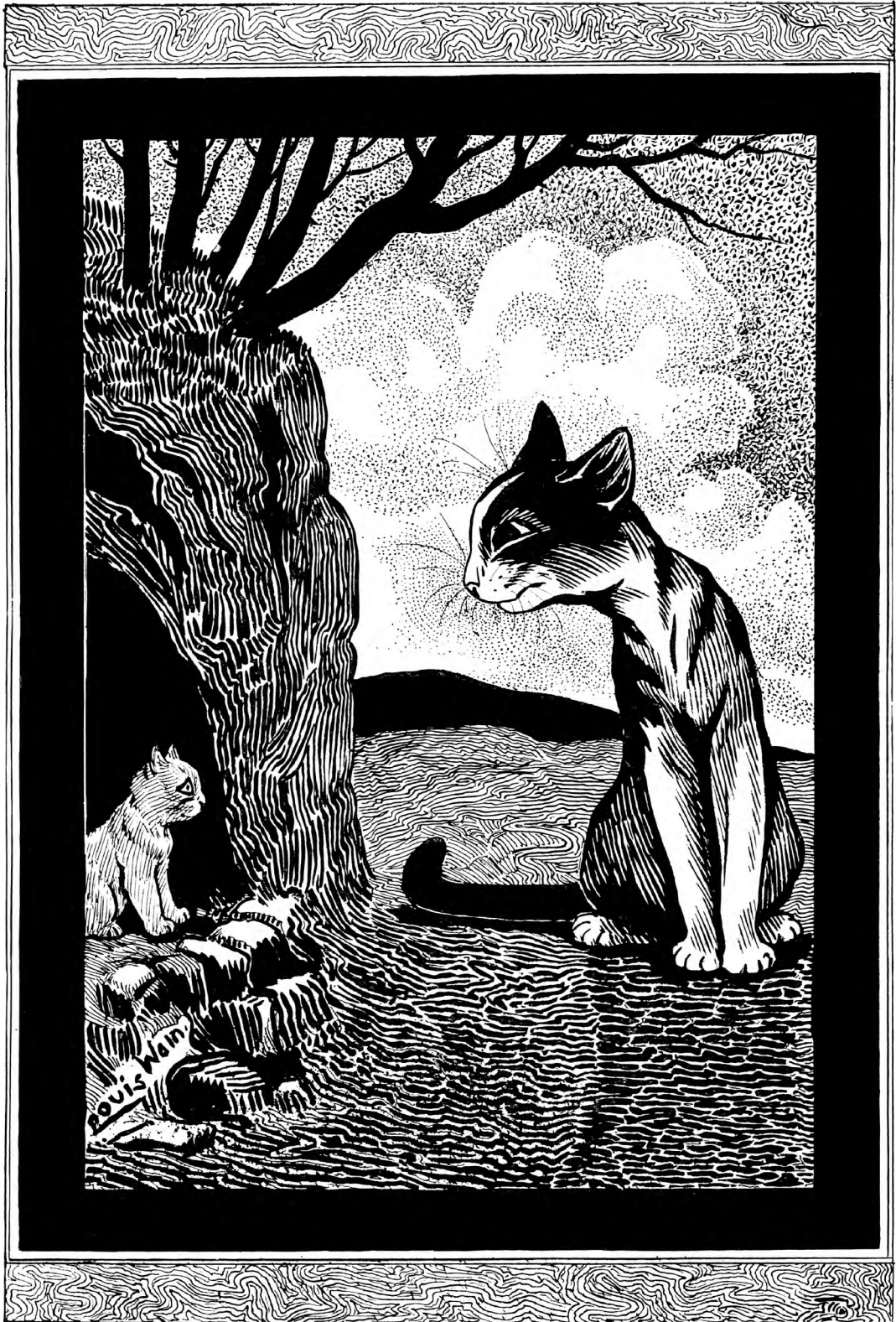
“I don’t see why not. We could buy ourselves lovely new things with the proceeds; do the old place thoroughly up.”

Don’t you think Miss Betty would have a fit? Perhaps she might come and visit me again. I might not like that at all; she might be angry this time.”

“Well, then, we’ll leave things as they are. So long as we get married, that’s all I care about. Now, which drawer did she mean, do you think, Mrs. Cross?”

The housekeeper walked across the room, stopping before a great wardrobe of black oak, heavily carved and shining with age.

“You open this door,” she said, “and here is a set of drawers; you open the other side, and you find the same thing. The top drawer on the left side was the one she was always so particular about. She always kept it locked.”



"Coming out to play, Kitty?"

"No, Tiddles; mamma says you are too rough to play with me."

"Then where is the key?"

"Well, you have the keys, Mr. Hillcote; if you remember—you came and looked in here and said, 'Oh, only a lot of lace and rubbish,' and shut the door and turned the key. That was when they were round for probate."

"Oh, yes—so I did. Now, those keys—oh, I know! I've got them in my room. Wait here a minute."

He raced off to his own room at the other end of the corridor, returning in a minute or two with a bunch of keys in his hand.

"Not that one—that's no good—dear me! Not this one—ah, here it is!"

The key turned easily in the lock, and the next moment the drawer was open before them. There were some lace collars neatly rolled, a few belts with the glass-headed pins put in just as they had been used, a neat pile of handkerchiefs in one corner, a miniature case, and a small bunch of keys.

"Nothing more? Is that all?" said Winnie.

"What do those keys open?" said Jack to the housekeeper.

Mrs. Cross took the little bunch of keys from his hand.

"Now that," she said, "opens the old chest that stands in the closet at the far end of the gallery."

"Bring one of the candles," said Jack Hillcote. "How was it we never looked into that cupboard when they were probating?"

"Well, if you remember, Mr. Jack," she said, "I said to you the day before the probate men came from Blankhampton, I said to you, 'Now look here, Mr. Jack,' I said, 'don't be too free in giving information to these people, because it will all get into the bill if you do.' I opened the door of the cupboard and I said, 'Nothing here just a few old trunks, all empty!' And I opened two, and they said, 'Oh, that's all right—put them down at five shillings.' And they put them down at five shillings. I didn't—er—go out of my way to inform them.

that there was a carved oak chest that I knew was worth at least £20 to anybody that was as you and I had agreed, you know, Mr. Jack."

"Oh, I see. Well, I think we ought to have that chest in the drawing-room; don't you, Winnie?"

"Yes, I do—or in the hall. If it's a good one, if it's worth anything like £20, why should it be in this cupboard?"

"Oh, well, there's a tale hangs by that. And Miss Hillcote had it put away here; she never could bear the sight of it. Only she used it to keep—I don't know something or other. That's the key, I'll swear to it."

"Well, hold the light," said he.



Policeman: "Caught at last!"

Boy: "Can't you read that notice? Keep off!"

And so she held the light and he tried the key in the great, massive lock. There was a groaning and somewhat of a creaking, and then he raised the lid, and they were all looking down into the contents of the wonderful old Italian chest.

"Deeds!" said Mrs. Cross.

"Jewels!" said Winnie.

"Bags of money!" said he. "Good heavens! And you and I lived all our lives in this house with Aunt Betty, and we never suspected one of them. Mrs. Cross, help me to carry everything downstairs. Let us take it all down and look it over and find out what it is."

Winnie held up the hem of her tweed skirt and the housekeeper piled the jewel cases and some rolls of lace into it. The papers she took in her own black silk apron, and Jack carried down the bags of money which, between ourselves, were quite enough for him. And then they went all over Aunt Betty's hoard; deeds of various properties they had never suspected her of possessing, jewels which she had never worn, money which she had never spent. And by her will every farthing, every stick and stone of which she died possessed, went to her beloved great-nephew, John Hillcote. Then Jack looked up at the old woman.

"Mrs. Cross," he said, "I want you to do something for me. Send Nancy down to the Lodge and, with my compliments, ask Mr. and Mrs. McKerro if they will come here at once. Say that something of the greatest importance demands their presence."

The housekeeper went out of the room, and Jack dropped on his knees before Winnie's chair.

"Winnie," he said, slipping his arm round her and drawing her close to him, "do you realise what this means? It makes everything possible; it makes everything comfortable, even luxurious. There won't be any opposition now. We'll keep Aunt Betty's bedroom just as she left it. I wanted to sell it, but you had the right instinct, Winnie, and we'll keep it for ever. We'll never touch it. As long as we live, the drawer on the left-hand side shall remain just as we found it."



"My! What a hat!"



“DON'T DISTURB ME ; I'M HAPPY.”



A Japanese Elopement

Or, the Scheme of a Gentleman Joker

BY CARL R. FALLAS

“O HAYO-ZI-IMAS.”



Which is really Japanese for “Good-day, sir.”

However, the rich young Englishman could not understand the remark, and despite the interest that had been aroused in him by the appearance of two of the most picturesque and popular geisha in Tokyo, he felt that he required the services of Miss Kyoko, the “resident interpreter,” to assist him to a full appreciation of their charms. Miss Kyoko was the daughter of the landlady of the house, which was one of the highest class geisha establishments in the Japanese capital.

The girl appeared at the door in response to a touch upon the electric bell button, and, like the geisha, at once slipped on her knees and bowed low. She looked less artificial than they. Her silk kimono bore only simple ornamentation, and her hair fell gracefully over her shoulders instead of rising architecturally upon her head. Her olive face was less oval than theirs, and her eyelids, through which peeped two bright brown eyes, were less narrow. She greeted him in English, and her grace and self-possession captivated him so much, that he soon forgot entirely the presence of the two girls he had hired to dance before him.

They spoke of the popular customs in England and Japan.

“I think,” said Miss Kyoko slowly, after a pause, “that you are laughing at me. It cannot be true that an English lady always sits at table with her husband?”

“Yes. She would be very angry if she were not allowed to do so.”

“Very angry?” laughed Kyoko. “Are the English ladies permitted to get angry with their husbands?”

“Permitted,” was the laughing rejoinder. “We cannot prevent them, sometimes.”

“And they may really choose whom they shall marry, and speak with them and accompany them freely?” asked the girl.

“Yes. That is called ‘courtship.’ Occasionally they change their minds, and choose someone else, and much trouble ensues.”

“Trouble again? Indeed, white ladies have many privileges.”

“They are often angry because they have so few,” he answered. “Hundreds of them often congregate and make a great noise, and the police are needed to restore quietness.”

Kyoko laughed long and merrily, communicating the information to the grisha, and the three girls laughed in unison.

"O Hanna San thinks," said Kyoko, translating in return the younger girl's comment, "that English ladies, since they speak so very often, are entertainers—perhaps, in fact, like the geisha."

"No, no, indeed!" laughed the young man. "We men are expected to entertain *them*."

"How wonderful!" exclaimed Kyoko. "May I see your lady's photograph?"

"I have not got one."

"But has not your father given you one?"

"No. I should probably have refused the offer, had he made it."

"Refused your father! Have the English children also those—what you call rights?"

"Yes, like the ladies."

"Then Englishmen have a difficult time?"

"Yes, in many cases. But they usually manage to hold their own."

"I am very pleased to hear it," replied Kyoko, solemnly; and she again addressed the geisha, both of whom accompanied their replies with bows.

"O Hanna San and O Donna San are very sorry for you and the other Englishmen," said the resident interpreter, in somewhat official tones.

"Tell them," replied the Englishman, also bowing, "that I am much encouraged by their sympathy."

Further general bowing followed, and the young man then asked to see the picture of Kyoko's lover.

Assuming an expression of unwonted seriousness the girl replied, "I have two. Mother gave me the first when I was a very small girl. He who was to have deigned to marry me was a doctor on a ship. Then the great war broke out, and I gave him my blessing and prayed that he might not die of sickness. He was killed beautifully—shattered into a thousand pieces by a Russian shell."

"Beautifully?"

"Yes, with honour!" was the quiet response.

"And you never saw him?"

"Many, many times have I seen him," replied Kyoko, slowly, "in my dreams."

"Poor girl! poor girl!"

"Oh no," said Kyoko.

"The memory is sweet. He died for our Japan."

"And the second photograph?"

"Oh, indeed, him I love not. The spirit of my brave one often weeps with me in sympathy at night. A cold heart shines through the windows of his face—a face no longer young. I fear the time when I shall meet him."

The diminutive figure of Kyoko's mother hereupon



Snoozems.



REVIVAL OF BOXING IN OUR VILLAGE.

appeared on the threshold of the room. She bowed as the girls had done, and announced the elapse of the time stipulated for the geisha entertainment, and the party broke up.

The rich young Englishman became a frequent caller at the house where Kyoko lived. Indeed, he appeared to develop into a prodigal admirer of geisha. Actually he was infatuated by the resident interpreter," while her mother regarded him as their best customer. Kyoko was always polite to him, and as for the two geisha, rather were they pleased than otherwise with this frequent idleness for which they were paid. Without their presence the handsome visitor would not, of course, have been permitted to sit chatting with his charmer.

"You could speak often if you came to England," he said to her one afternoon, as he was seated, oriental fashion, half kneeling, half sitting, with her and the two professional entertainers, on little floor mats in the private guest room.

Kyoko pondered for a moment. "And I could sit at the table with my— with my husband?" she asked.

"Rather!"

"And I should be mistress of a big European house?"

"Yes, indeed! And if you married me, the house would be in a big park. You would have horses and carriages and a sailing ship and, and— anything else you liked."

Kyoko paused. The picture presented to her mind was an inviting one. She answered softly: "Oh, but I cannot come!"

Tenderly: "Why not, Kyoko?"

"It would be discourteous."

"To whom?" asked the young man.

"To you. I could not take an improper advantage of your kindness."

"My sweet girl—"

"Sweet girl?" interposed Kyoko. "That is a term of endearment, is it not?"

"Yes, rather!"

"Then you are making love to me?"

"Oh, yes, you innocent child!"

"Child?"

"Lady, I mean. Young lady. We often say 'child' in these solemn moments."

"Solemn moments?"

"Yes! yes! I want to tell you that I—I—"

"Love me?"

"Yes, love you."

"I thank you immeasurably," replied the girl, touching the floor with her forehead.

The geisha looked covertly at the pair for a moment, but continued their own conversation. "I love you" was a term not new to their ears.

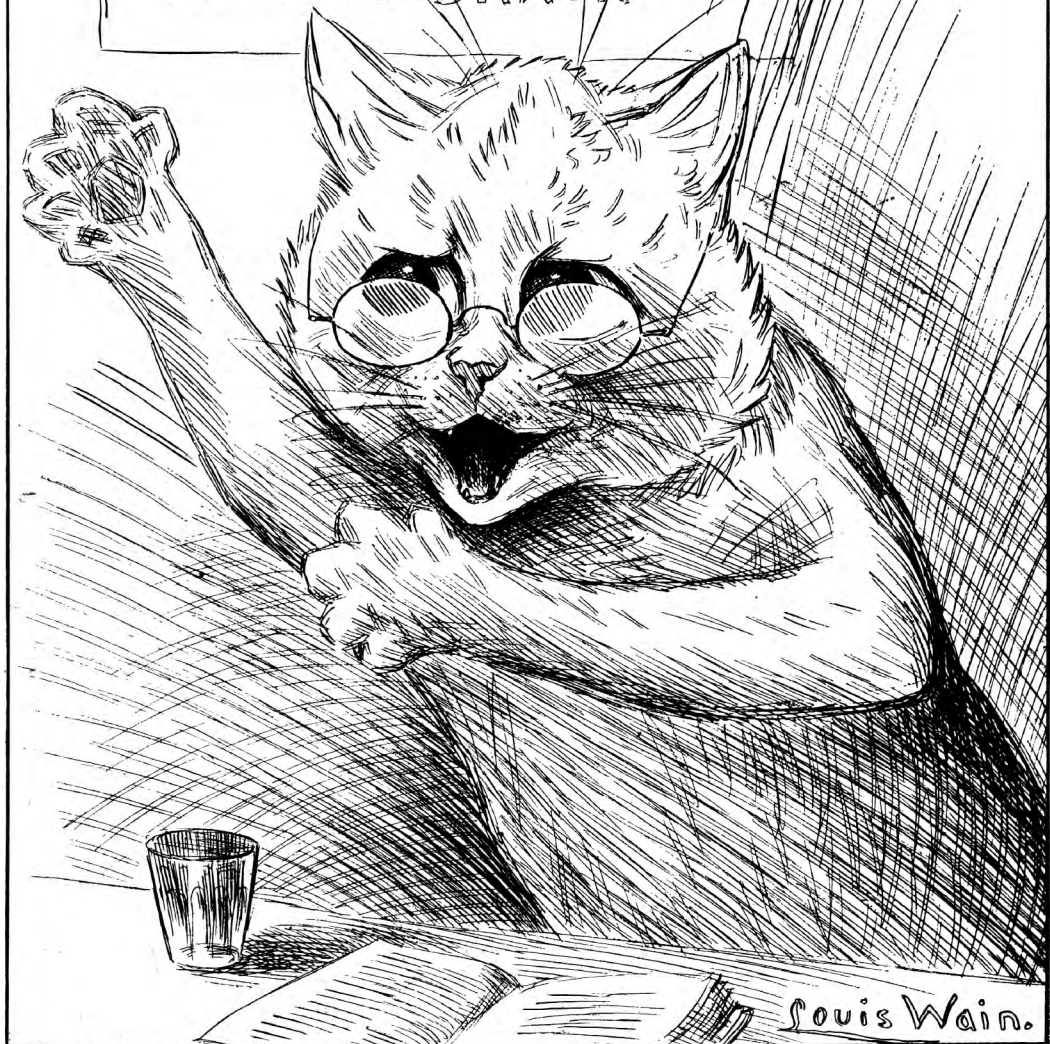
"Come to England," continued the young man ardently, "and you will be the equal of the best-respected, admired, and adored, possessing many servants and enjoying many, many pleasures."

Kyoko seemed to reflect. Then she replied to him in her lowest, most bewitching tones, "You are very, very courteous. I will be content if—if—" and she drooped her narrow eyelids and hung down her head like a white girl, "if I have only you."

SOCIETY
FOR THE
PRESERVATION
OF
EMPTY SPACES.

GROUND PLAN

LECTURES
DR. DUBBLES ADDRESS
ON THE BRAIN



"GENTLEMEN, THERE IS ROOM FOR EVERYONE UP TOP!"

The position was a delicate one. A kiss would have been un-Japanese—vulgar. He acknowledged Kyoko's avowal with a simple bow, and using the girl's former phrase, remarked, "I thank you immeasurably!"

"The honour is mine," replied Kyoko, courteous to the last.

The rich young Englishman retired to his beautiful yacht in the bay, to think, to scheme. What an interesting social event his marriage with this beautiful Japanese girl would be! It would be criticised, yes. But it was not English society that he sought for wife. It was—yes, he could not doubt it, could not pretend longer to hide it from himself—it was Kyoko! He fortified his mind by recalling that there were "precedents" even in English circles of refinement and good taste.

A week slipped by.

A plan grew up.

Kyoko politely approved it.

"You are sure," she asked one evening, "that your heart does not deceive you?"

"Quite sure!" affirmed the Englishman.

"And I shall be a lady in your country?"

"You shall shine among the best."

"And you will teach me to understand English perfectly—so that I shall know when to laugh?"

"Yes."

"And when to weep?"

"You shall never weep."

"Thank you exceedingly."

Then Kyoko added: "You will marry me in English style?"

"Yes, indeed."

"And not put me away when you tire of me?"

"I shall never tire of you."

"I am greatly obliged to you," said Kyoko.

She listened to the details of her wooer's scheme with attention, and concurred with perfect composure. . . .

Midnight.

A girl, all cloaked and hooded, seemed to roll over the verandah of the famous geisha house.

The rich young Englishman drew her into his hired motor car.

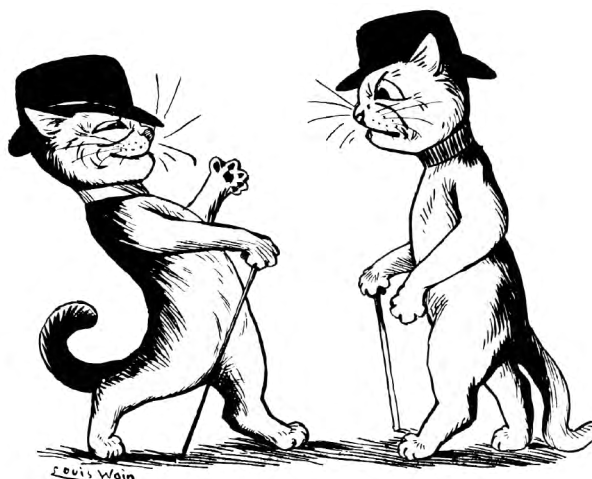
Suddenly a great outcry arose.

"*Nan-deska? nan-deska?* (what is that?)" called a voice.

It was the old landlady, Kyoko's mother, whose head appeared at the window of the house. "Dorobo! dorobo! (Thief! thief!)" she cried.

Other voices joined in the cries.

Two of the straight four miles to the lonely beach had been covered, when a gendarme stepped from his police box and



"What was it that broke the first floor windows in your house last night?"

"The Guv'nor saw a ghost, and missus saw a burglar!"

called after the runaways. But they affected not to hear him, and sped to their journey's end within a few yards of a waiting boat.

A Japanese man strolled towards the car.

"Ah! Japanese girl!" he remarked reflectively, in English.

He remained motionless until the chauffeur had been paid and the motor-launch was moving forward, when he ran into the water and jumped aboard. "I am secret-service man," he said quietly. "Japanese law not liking Japanese girl with European gentleman at night. I must see young lady's face."

He addressed the girl sharply in his own tongue. She slowly uncovered her head.

"Gad!" exclaimed the rich young Englishman. "Why, it's not Kyoko!"

He snatched the note which the girl mutely handed to him, and scanned its contents:—

"DEAR SIR,

"I am very sorry if I disappoint you. I understand that white gentlemen are—what I have heard called 'jokers,' like the English lady entertainers who change their minds. You will, no doubt, praise me for penetrating this joke of yours. You know, of course, that I am not in search of a husband.

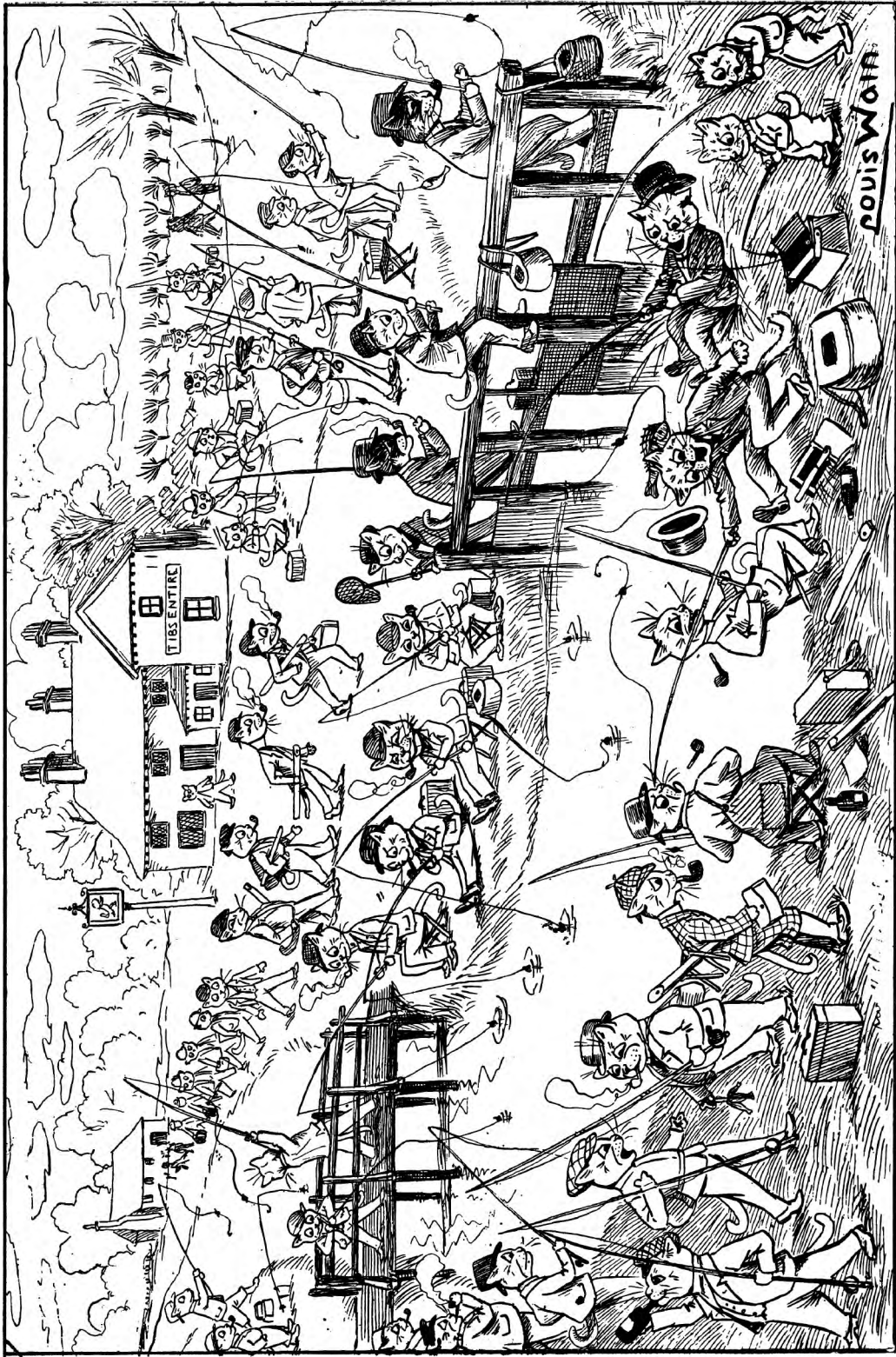
This young lady is. Thank you for your measureless courtesy. You will remember I told you that Japanese girls, when commanded by their father, always obey. I shall marry the Japanese man whose photograph I possess.

"Sayonara (good-bye),
"KYOKO."



The glory of the Aviator.

The launch panted along towards the yacht, much against the will of the little secret-service man. He, however, was quite satisfied when the rich young Englishman met his wishes by circuiting the bay, within the fortifications, and putting him ashore with the girl. Japanese law, he said, did not specially require the punishment of the subjects of Japan's ally, Great Britain. It was always satisfied by the simple prevention of a misunderstanding. . . .



OUR VILLAGE FISHING CLUB.

Scandal!

By JESSIE A. MIDDLETON

"Will you meet me in the fog?"
Said the big St. Bernard dog,

"I have got a word to say,
Which is private, if I may,

"But the terrier has sharp ears,
And repeats the things he hears,

"And the dachshund carries tales,
And the pom's as sharp as nails,

"And the greyhound, to my grief,
Is the newsmonger-in-chief,

"And the poodle's such a knave,
That he'd gossip in his grave,

"And the bulldog, sad to say,
Gave his dearest friend away,

"And the pug, when he's inclined,
Has a *very* wicked mind;

"So to keep the matter dark,
Let us meet in Regent's Park."

"I am willing," said the cat,
"And I'll wear my beehive hat.

Let us say to-night—*incog*."
"I'm your servant," said the dog.

Now the terrier hovered near,
On the chance to overhear,

And he promptly told the pug,
As they gossiped on the rug,

And the pom was next to know,
For he told the bulldog so,

And the bulldog passed the news,
To remove the greyhound's "blues,"

And they all resolved to wait,
In the shadows, near the gate.

* * * * *

Through the gate, amid the fog,
Came the big St. Bernard dog.

And he met the little cat,
In her most coquettish hat.

Then with yells of "Oh, you two!"
Came a crowd of dogs in view.

And they mocked, and made such fun,
That the gossips had to run.

Le Sport

"By ULSTERIA"

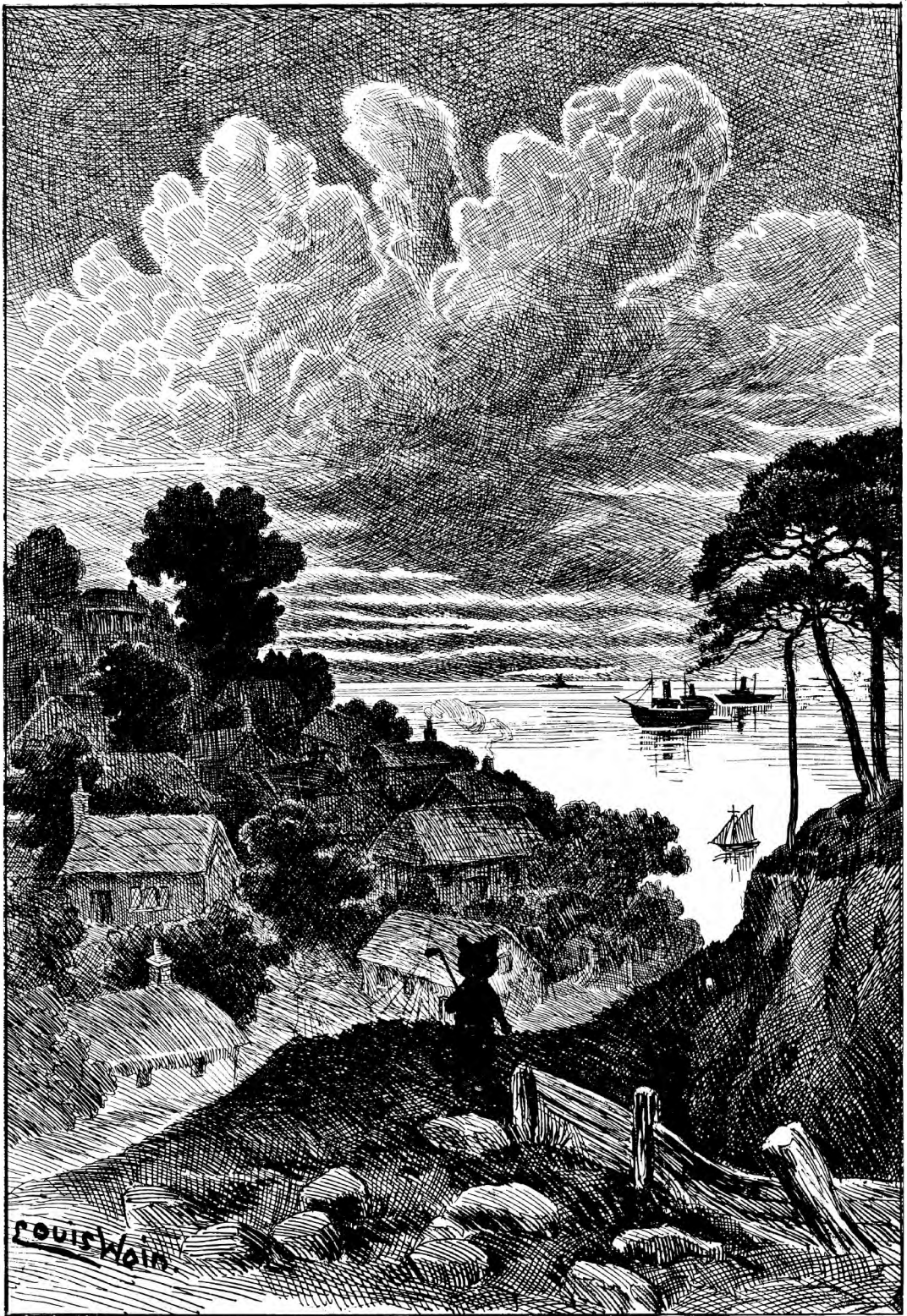
There was once a thoughtless bloater
Bounding blithely in a brook,
But they angled from a motor-
Boat, and stuck it on a hook.

Thus by hooking it they caught it,
Which was really monstrous hard
On the bloat, whose teaching taught it
That the end is boiling lard.

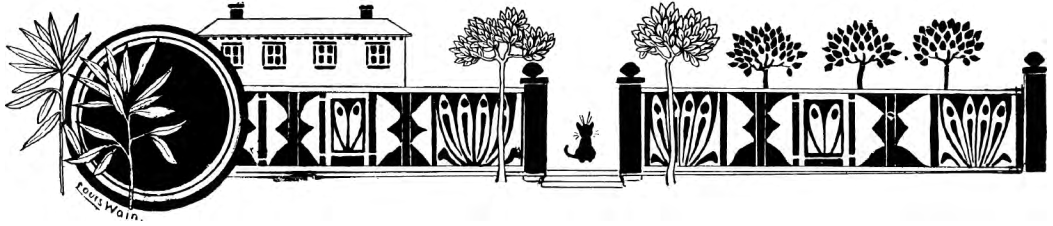
Luscious lard that frizzles, frying.
With a splutter in the pan!
For the bloater, in his dying,
Makes a grand repast for man.

What a bubble at the grilling!
But I'm glad to say, by then,
That the bloat had pass'd all-willing
From the tyrannies of men.

To a brighter, fairer region
(Just as bright as one could wish),
Where the bloaters' name is Legion,
And where all are Flying-fish.



GOLF NEWS,
Keep your eye on the ball!



The Sixth Sense

By MISS CAROLINE WAIN

I HAD been flying since the beginning of aviation. Of a strong physical nature, I had felt something within me that stirred and swayed with the steady beat of the motor. Something that gave me untold delight, and now was carrying me into unknown worlds.

My hand was sure and without tremor, for my brain was skilled in the work of the physical personality; but the other, the psychic—for I have two personalities—was a thousand times more sensitive and impressionable, and where it detached itself from the physical plane, as it were, I saw also with its sense—the sixth sense. Saw vague forms that floated in the air, mere shadows which half halted, then passed, and my eyes and ears were assailed by strange tones, sounds that were not perceptible on the normal plane of life. My physical courage was not strong enough yet to enable the psychic personality to materialize even one of those shadows, though let my eyes rest even a second on one or other of them, and I see they tremble and their vagueness begins to shape. Out of the many forms, one is most persistent in passing and repassing. Greyer than the others, and more defined, this shape, as it passes, haunts me, and murmuring grows distinct. Maybe some day I shall know more about them, perhaps be one of them myself, for are they not God's creatures all of them? Then why should I fear, I reflect? My psychic personality, however, is merging into the physical plane. The petrol is running low, the motor is slackening, and I need all my energies concentrated to bring me safely to earth. A roar of applause greets me. I have won. The coveted prize is mine. My heavenly companions have vanished, but a joyous, excited crowd of earthly ones surrounds me. My one thought is of pride of my areoplane, and my eyes scan the heavens, only for news of my rivals, to know who among them will follow me before I take my rest, preparatory to making a longer flight at night of which no one has any knowledge. It is strenuous work. But I am big, strong, and healthy. Yes, thank God, no ache or pain has been my portion now for many a year. My youth I do not like to think of; a lonely child, I struggled through it as best I could, shutting myself away from all companionship until I met Ryder. Dear old Ryder! What trouble he took over me! He really liked me until, taking me up in his areoplane, I was bitten with the craze, and now he will not speak. I am sorry, but I could not do less than the best, and so soon won over him. I did not want the money, I have plenty of my own, but he did, and there you have it all. Some day, I told myself, I will find a way to make him take it. If not in my lifetime, then at my death I will make amends.

* * * * *



THE UGLY PUP
"Her sweet smile haunts me still."



“ You are one of life’s failures ! ”

“ No, yer ‘onner, I am a successful tramp.”

It is a lovely moonlight night for a flight, with not a breath of wind stirring. A parting word or two to my men, and with a graceful sweep my machine takes the air. Higher and higher I go, setting my teeth against the keenness of the atmosphere; and yet something impels me to go higher and higher and yet higher. What is it? Ah, I know. My second personality again detaches itself; I realise I am to-night seeing further and know more; all earthly things are slipping away, and I want to see the shadows around me take shape, but I must let the physical plane take care of itself, and chance accidents. Dare I go so far? The one grey shadow comes near, and I seem to feel the personality behind its nothingness. It is trembling. Dare I? Troubled, I turn my eyes away, and the shadow sinks back with a slight moan. Nearer and nearer seem to press that crowd of shivering grey beings. Unconsciously my thoughts concentrate on one; I see the grey form slipping away and two transparent arms are flung before a face that has not yet formed out of the shadow. A world of entreaty is in that gesture. I let my sight pass on, its curiosity unsatisfied. But a smaller shape, a darker shadow fixes my attention. I must and will know something about it. Again, and again I gaze to see the greyness fall like a curtain, and the outlines of a figure growing every moment more distinct. Beautiful eyes look into mine; passionate and dark features I see, but as an indistinct outline. The hands are clasped, and rippling murmurs are translated to my consciousness, as a voice murmurs, "Save my little girl, save my little girl, and I will save you." "Yes, but tell me quickly," I cry, for I begin to feel myself dominated by my physical personality. "Ryder will do her harm. Look for my eyes," the shadow answered. My psychic personality goes with a snap, and I look around. I am falling, falling. What is wrong, and what is under me? The sea! Quickly, then slowly, I sink into the mass of water. I clear myself as by a miracle, but for all my strength of arm and muscle I drift slowly away from that mass of wreckage. How did it happen? How long shall I be able to tread the waters? I glance to right and left. In the long distance. I catch a glimpse of a something passing. I am in the way of the ships, thank God; there is yet a chance if I can only hold out until daylight, for the moon is clouding over. How cold the water is, and my clothes are heavy. I cannot keep up much longer. I slip under the waves. Then I hear a voice, "I will help," and my hands meet and draw towards me a piece of wreckage. Gradually, heavily, I draw myself up, and then shout in terror, for out of the darkness something looms weird and terrible. Lights flash out, and presently friendly hands are dragging me on board. The big ship's hulk had caught my plank and flung me and it on one side like a cork.

Half sobbing, half laughing, my magnificent strength pulled itself together, and I turn to see Ryder and the Eyes; and my second self, half awake through my passage of terror, brings back to me the words, "Save my little girl," and I know my duty.

Ryder and I are sitting below; not once has he mentioned the girl with the eyes, but I am told they came aboard together at Dover, and to-night I am going to tell him my story. I fill my glass with a steady hand, and ask him what he means to do with the girl he has with him. He turns round with an ugly word, tells me to mind my own business, and then I relate my story. He listens with a half sneer, but an intense uneasiness, and mixes himself an extra strong brandy.

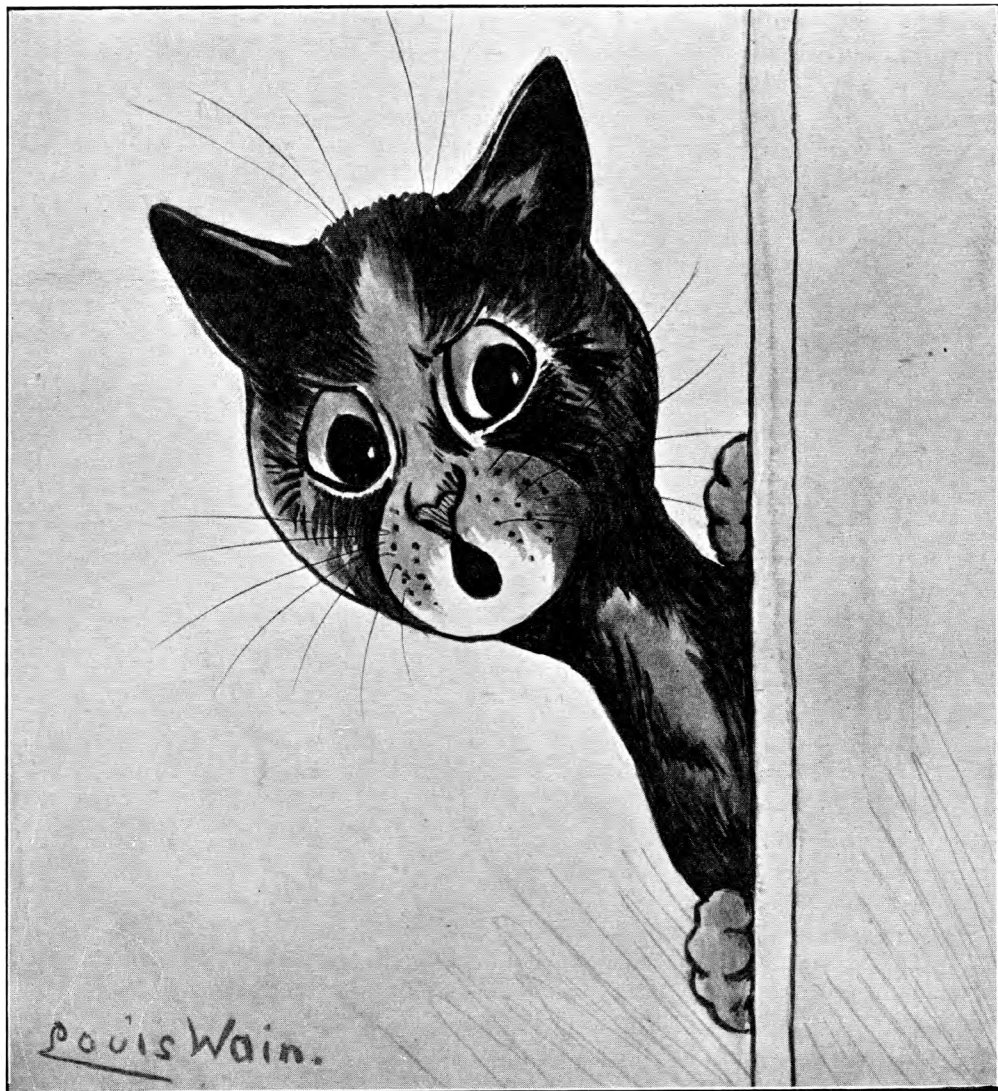
At last he turns and says, "Well, I will marry her on one condition—that you give up your flying." He rises, laughs, and leaves the cabin.



Cat: "Not a ha'porth of milk in the whole place."

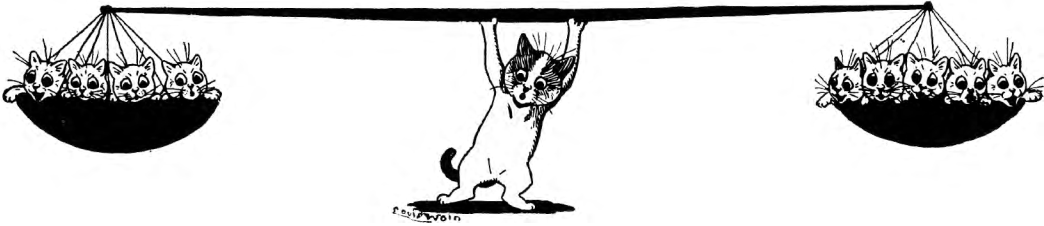
I sit thunderstruck for a moment. How can I? It is too much to ask. And yet, knowing Ryder, I am sure that I have his last words, and know that he will abide by them. But it is too much to ask! too much! I rise listlessly and mount the narrow stairway to the deck. Half way I halt to let another pass, and as I look I see again those passionate brown eyes, half filled with tears, looking out of a face little more than a child's. Shaking as with ague, I pass and stare into the water. "Save her, and I will save you," and I *am* safe.

A wedding at our first stopping place. Was there ever such a wedding? While we all surround and congratulate the bride, I see a pair of grateful eyes full of happiness, and a hand holds mine with a grasp that tells me of a friendship regained, and a voice says, "You are rich, old fellow, and so am I with my bride. With you out of the field I have some chance of gaining a coveted position in the aviating world."



THE CALL BOY:

"Miss Snapps' the stage is waiting.



Oh ! Tommy, Tommy Atkins

BY CAPTAIN JOHN CULLEN

IT'S the dirtiest hole to live in in the country. You can't do nothing because there's nothing to do. It gets all the rain sweepings of the sea, the smoke and smells of the town, the dust of the coal stacks, and the bleak winds with which the Germans blow defiance at us, and there you are, don't you know. If you see a girl she's sniffing at the nose and talking country dialect, thick as crow-cawing. If you see a man he's two suits thick, an inch of dirt next the skin, and not worth kicking to get a suck at his dropped pipe.

When our regiment quartered in the town, we went out every day for a fortnight, then we stopped at home and potted in the canteen till every beer barrel went teetotal, and we got tired of home-made standard concerts. Then an opera company came along, and we filled the theatre and spent our evenings in company with Martha, the Bohemian Girl, Maritana and Wagner. Our camp was full of male-singing canaries for a month afterwards, and we invited ourselves to take the bass parts at every free-and-easy in the town. Now this here Wagner was a rummy chap; the way he wriggled his orchestra, tickled up his fiddles, and kicked at his drums; and the spiteful way he let fly into his trumpets, made the chorus wild every five minutes for spoiling their pitch. I asked the conductor of our regimental band how he thought the theatre conductor came out of it alive and kicking. "Well, it's like this here," says he, "when you've got to tackle a chap like Wagner, you've got to put him in irons and clank them all the time." Then I knew something; and when Bill Jinks dug into "Star of Eve" at our canteen, he did it to an accompaniment of pots marking time on the tables, a tray banging for the big drum, and a Jew's harp for extras. The effect was most unbecoming to the feelings, but our conductor said it gave him an idea, and he went and told Wagner about it in the band. Bill Jinks was a real fly flat about it, for he says, says he, "How can you 'Star of Eve' it when you don't know the time you're singing in," and he set going a bit of Wagner's bespoke trimmings to round up.

Someone told Bill Jinks that we were not an artistic nation, but that if only he could be drafted to one of the foreign stations with the next lot going out, he would make his fortune. So he off's it to the doctor's for examination, and the doctor, he told him that he would have to go to the dentist and have some teeth out before he could pronounce him as sound in wind and limb; so Bill Jinks he goes to the dentist, and the dentist says, says he, "It's a pity, Bill, that this country is going to lose your fine voice, but I suppose it can't be helped," and he takes out sixteen of his teeth. Then Bill Jinks he goes back to the doctor for a free bill, and the doctor stands

agape. "What!" says he; "you've had sixteen teeth out, and you let him do it without protest."

"I let him do it without gas or chloroform, if that's what you mean," says Bill Jinks.

"Then if you've had all them teeth out, you've had too many out according to regulations; I can't pass you, and you can't go abroad."

We couldn't get Bill Jinks to do a smoke for a week, and he lived on slops and tea and porridge.

"Give us a song, old man," says the canteen boys.

"Sorwi can't obige till I get mi nu teef in," says Bill.

"What!" says we; "what does it matter to Wagner whether you've got teeth or not?"

Well, we put Bill Jinks on the shelf for awhile, and we went after Watty. Watty was respectable for Worthy, because it didn't remind you of nothing. We told the Colonel that Watty was shirking the dentist—wouldn't let anyone see any of his jaw, although we knew his bad temper came from his bad teeth; and when he got a punch on the jaw his cheek swelled up that awful you couldn't see his ear from the front. So the Colonel meets him off duty and he rubs it into him thick.

You go to the dentist and have them teeth out, Watty," says he. "It'll take some of the check out of you."

"Barring the cheek, I want the teeth in my head," says Watty.

"Don't cheek me," says the Colonel, boiling. "Go and have your teeth out."

"I won't," says Watty, wrapping his mind up carefully.

"If you don't, you can't go abroad, and you'll have to leave the service," says the Colonel.

It's awful hard luck, sir, but it can't be helped," says Watty, lying like. "You can't compel me to have my teeth out, and I won't."

Then the Colonel sent Watty to the doctor's, and the doctor examined his mouth, and he says, says he, "There are too many nails in your coffin in this mouth, Watty. Can't I persuade you?"

"No, sir," says Watty: "I don't belong to any persuasion, and I prefer to keep all the nails in my coughing."

Then the doctor, he says he'd report him for disobedience and impertinence; and Watty he lands out and let's the doctor see how much damage could be done among his medicine bottles by a bit of Watty, temper, and poor Watty, he gets dismissed the service. What become of him? Well, listen, I'll tell you straight, on the quiet. Someone sees him leaving the



JILTED.



“The ghostes frightened me!”



Cat: "It wasn't me; it was the cook who did it."

camp with a swollen jaw, and takes pity on him and gives him sixpence. So he hung about, and does very well on that swollen jaw and a trembling voice. Then he takes to tramping, and when he'd put on the patent non-discovery outfit of dirt and rags, he comes across an enlisting sergeant, and he enlists as Bobby Burns, descendant of the poet, in our opposition regiment. And he's doing himself well on an island with four others, and no officer to overlook them. Gets up ten in the morning. Ham and eggs for breakfast; steaks and greens and pie for dinner; shrimps, celery and watercress for tea; and everyone coming from the mainland to stand treat. He gets the best of the sky, and he's going to develop chronic rheumatics when he's done the show, and take to the road again.

Come Christmas, we began to lay in stock for a feed. Ikey Woob, whose old mother keeps a chandler's shop Wapping-way, let us have some of her old stock on tick-currants and plums and such like which the mice had sampled freely; and we saved considerable money, through pals treating and making presents of bottles which weren't empty. And one day, certain boys, who shall be nameless, struck a poultry run in the suburbs. It was dark, mind you, and the poultry didn't know nothing; and the boys offed it with a couple of fat pullets, but unfortunately the shape of their boot-marks in the mud put suspicion on our lot, and the boys had to take the poultry to the roof of the fort in the dark, and hang the birds by a piece of string to the ball-cock of the cistern, and drop them in the water. Come the search, everything was all right for the guilty parties.

Two months went by and the water began to take a flavour which was rather original, and none daren't get at the cause.

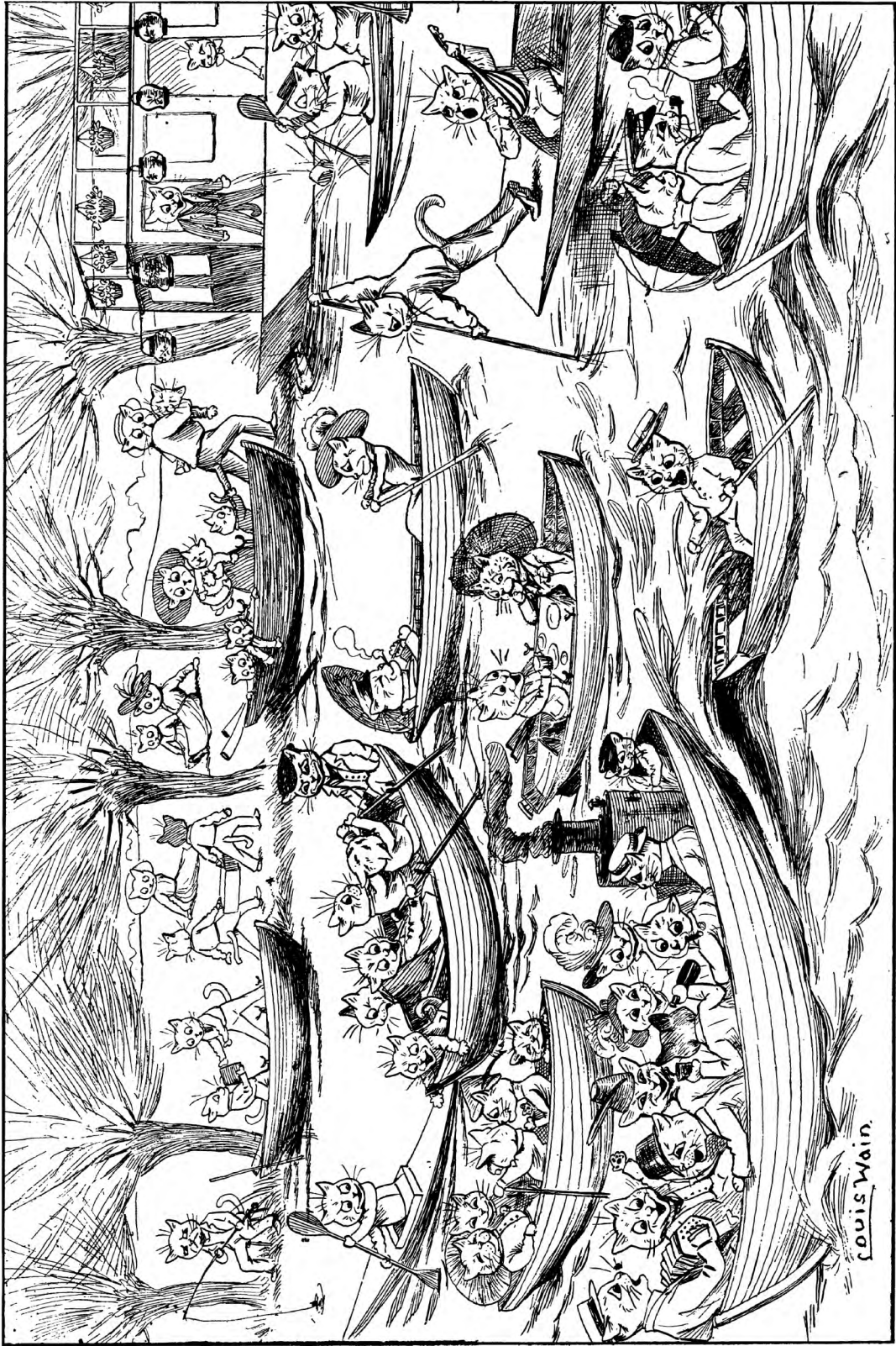
One day, our Colonel, noticing the water was tasting fitful-like, ordered the cistern to be cleaned out, and the poultry was discovered. It was a case of the survival of the fittest, and the fittest wasn't poultry. We baled out the regiment by subscribing to a fund for the payment of the pullets, and it's my opinion we did the right thing in a generous way.

The Juggins of the regiment was a boy who had been out to Aden, the so-called white man's grave, and he came back soft. Got an idea in his mind that because he was born on west side of Whitechapel in a first floor front room, that he had got particular blood in his veins which was a bit classy. And if you didn't believe it, he'd stick a pin in his arm, and show you how thick his blood was.



THE LUCKY BLACK KIT

Everyone in the regiment got at him over this, till both his arms and chest were tattooed with pin-pricks. One day, our doctor took a week off to attend a medical congress, and the boys put their heads together for the purpose of devising a scheme for getting the week's furlough. The Juggins was let into the idea. "Juggins has got to get spotted fever," said Dandy Moke, "that's a dead cert. Then he will live on the fat of the land, and we shall get a week's furlough." Juggins had visions of nasty drugs and disinfectants and refused, but we set upon him and punched his arms and chest black and blue, till he caved in. Dandy



OUR UP-RIVER PARTY.

Louis Wain.

Moke was spokesman, and he got a paragraph put in next day's "Evening Cry" to the effect that spotted fever had broken out in camp.

The doctor's assistant, who was very young and precious, came running in with half his breakfast on his shirt-front and the newspaper in his hand.

"Who's put this paragraph in the paper?" says he. "It's enough to ruin my reputation, let alone the doctor's!"

"'Taint us," says we, "but there's something up with the Juggins; he's refused his food three days running, and this morning he shied his breakfast on the ground and smashed the crockery."

"'Taint true," says the Juggins.

"That's what they all say," says the doctor's assistant.

Then he makes the Juggins strip to the waist, and when he sees the sight he was, he turns queer himself, and it took considerable interest in him on our part to put him right. For we'd rubbed the Juggins all over with onions, and onions is pungent. He ordered special treatment and food for the Juggins, and told him to hold himself ready for a journey to the medical congress.

"Do we get a week's furlough?" said we. "It ain't safe, doctor, for us men to be here. Some of us feels like it coming on us."

"I'll see the Colonel about that," he says, and so he did. And the Colonel orders us to be put in the isolation ward for a week to be fed by nurses, and to have a good physicking to stay the ravages of the disease.

The Juggins showed the assistant doctor his pin-pricks and blue blood and gave the show away, but we didn't know that till afterwards, and we were kept in the isolation ward for a week, and that assistant doctor had a high old time practising on our temperatures, which got up to boiling point with all the nasty spiteful things he did to us, and if it hadn't been for the nurses being females they would have caught it hot too what with their bandages and the hair cropping, and the mustard plasters, and the physic; but you can't tackle a woman unless she's a Suffragette, so by the end of the week we were prepared to come back to discipline and growls.

As for the Juggins, he was sent to the medical congress to be shown as a good specimen of natural tattooing, and he had a high old time showing the doctors his blue blood, and going to theatres in the evening. He didn't come back, because, as the doctor told us, he came into property and there wasn't any reason for him to be in the company of inferiors.

Dandy Moke said the only property the Juggins was worth was six feet of earth and a coffin. But the doctor only smiled.



Woman: "Are you going to chop that wood?"

Tramp: "Ah! you women are no longer sympathetic since you have become Suffragettes."



“COME AND FETCH ME!”



THE BOUNDER.

Servant: "The missis says she's out!"

Man: "Why?"

Servant: "Because she is in!"



The Devil's Dip

BY LOUIS WAIN



A MISTY veil toned the brilliance of the stars or wiped them out altogether. Directly overhead the vault cleared and two of the stars, one small and one greater one, shone brightly.

Our yacht swayed with a rhythmic movement on the drifting current of the calm Atlantic, and the sea lapped its sides in the smallest of wavelets.

Suddenly the big star dropped away from the little star, dropped down many degrees and hung there as though suspended from its smaller companion. A thing of awful grandeur seemed to happen to the big star. Thousands of immense fiery red fireflies sparkled and sputtered around it, and it shot out great tongues of lightning which lit up the firmament. The star seemed to fight its tormentors, bombarding them with fiery flames, and to burn them up one by one with its lightning until the star shone clear and bright again after its conquest of the Satanic horde.

Dazzling white in the heavens, it again sped on its journey to the earth, becoming larger and more wonderful on its way, lighting up the sea as by daylight as it sped through the atmosphere, and fell over the horizon into the distant part of the ocean. High into the heavens flew a luminous column of steam and water. The whole surface of the ocean seemed to be drawn towards it by the suction caused by the falling of the star, carrying the yacht towards the spot swiftly as though impelled by some invisible force. A wind blew up and filled the sails, adding to its speed, and the waters leaped up around about the column till it appeared to be an immense ridge of mountains in the distance. Giant waves, like the water rings in a pond after a stone has been cast in, swept over the ocean, and the yacht climbed up the crest of each, then dived again into the trough of the sea beyond. We were swept onwards towards the vast long hill of water swirling from left to right and upward towards the top. By almost miraculous judgment the helmsman steered a course humouring the trend of the seas, and the yacht answered to his guidance. By degrees we were raced up the hillside of foam, pelted by a stinging smother, ploughing a course diagonally upwards. The mainsail came down with a run at the right moment to save us being battered over on to the turmoil of seas and swamped, for the wind struck the yacht like the lash of a whip and she heeled over, leaving her whole broadside bare, her jibs being soaked under the surface of the water; however, she righted again and sped on her course upward. Her topsail blew into ribbons, and still further freed her. Light as a paper boat she played jokes with the angry waters, and toyed with the churlish puffs of wind, until she had mounted to the top surface of the ridge where she was battered awhile on its outer edge in a maze of tumbling sea, ultimately to find a safe course along the breadth of the ridge, when a strange scene opened out before our eyes.

The big star in its plunge downward had hit the water while it was speeding round on its axis at a fearful rate, and had produced an immense maelstrom cavity like an extinct crater. The sea had piled up into a

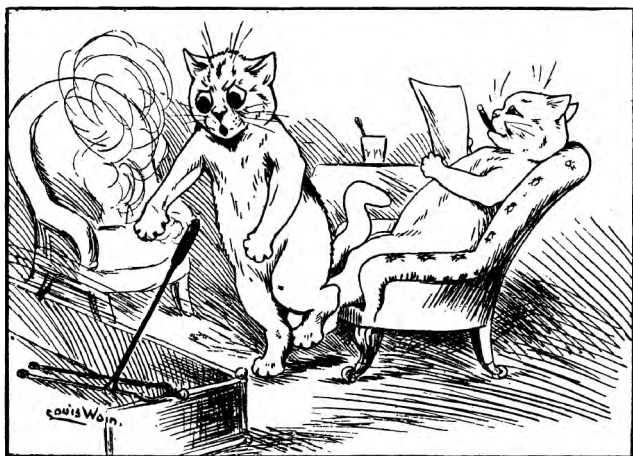
swirling, whirling mountain half a mile high above its normal level, and thirty miles in circumference at the top, and kept in position by the speed of its movement. On its inner side it was like unto some enormous funnel, the water racing round with terrific speed down, down an awful depth of miles, shaped by the whirling of the waters. At the bottom of this hole the big star shone with a dull glow on the bed of the sea, but the speeding round of the funnel caught up fish and monstrous sea serpents and sent them bounding up into the sky with the explosive force of steam, shot up like shells out of a cannon's mouth spinning round and round. Some crashed down on the yacht and disaster was barely averted by the near-by fall of some leviathan, the effect of which was to jump the boat clear of the sea, but our fall fifty feet away, cleared us of the struggles of the beast. Grand and awful as the sight was of this roaring torrent of the maelstrom, giving forth a seething steam and foam, and kept bubbling and boiling by the heat from the big star, with the weird creatures of the sea being tossed everywhere, it was transcended when the bottom of the water funnel narrowed and closed round the great star and set it in motion on its axis again. Then a column of steam of all colours of the rainbow burst out from the watery crater and formed an immense cloud overhead, pouring drenching rain, while the star, sent spinning round at a furious rate, glowed brighter and brighter through the steam and became a brilliant piercing white again.

It lifted, sped up along the miles of funnel in a flash, shot out from the mighty maelstrom with a tremendous roar and screech on its journey into the firmament again, attracted by its companion the little star. The yacht was smothered in a lash of foam through which down in the depths appeared an immense bony hand with fingers like claws, and just the suspicion of the outline of a terribly malignant giant head spitting fire, and battered about almost out of human recognition. Lightning flashes from the wake of the star struck at the head, and a horrible wail and moaning as from millions of throats resounded above the clash of the elements. The pent-up horrors of the scene became intensified by a cloud burst, and thousands of wandering waterspouts, tangled in a network of lightning, were shaken and shivered by the detonation of awful thunder peals.

Many of the yacht's crew had died of terror and their bodies had been swept overboard into the waters, but the owner,

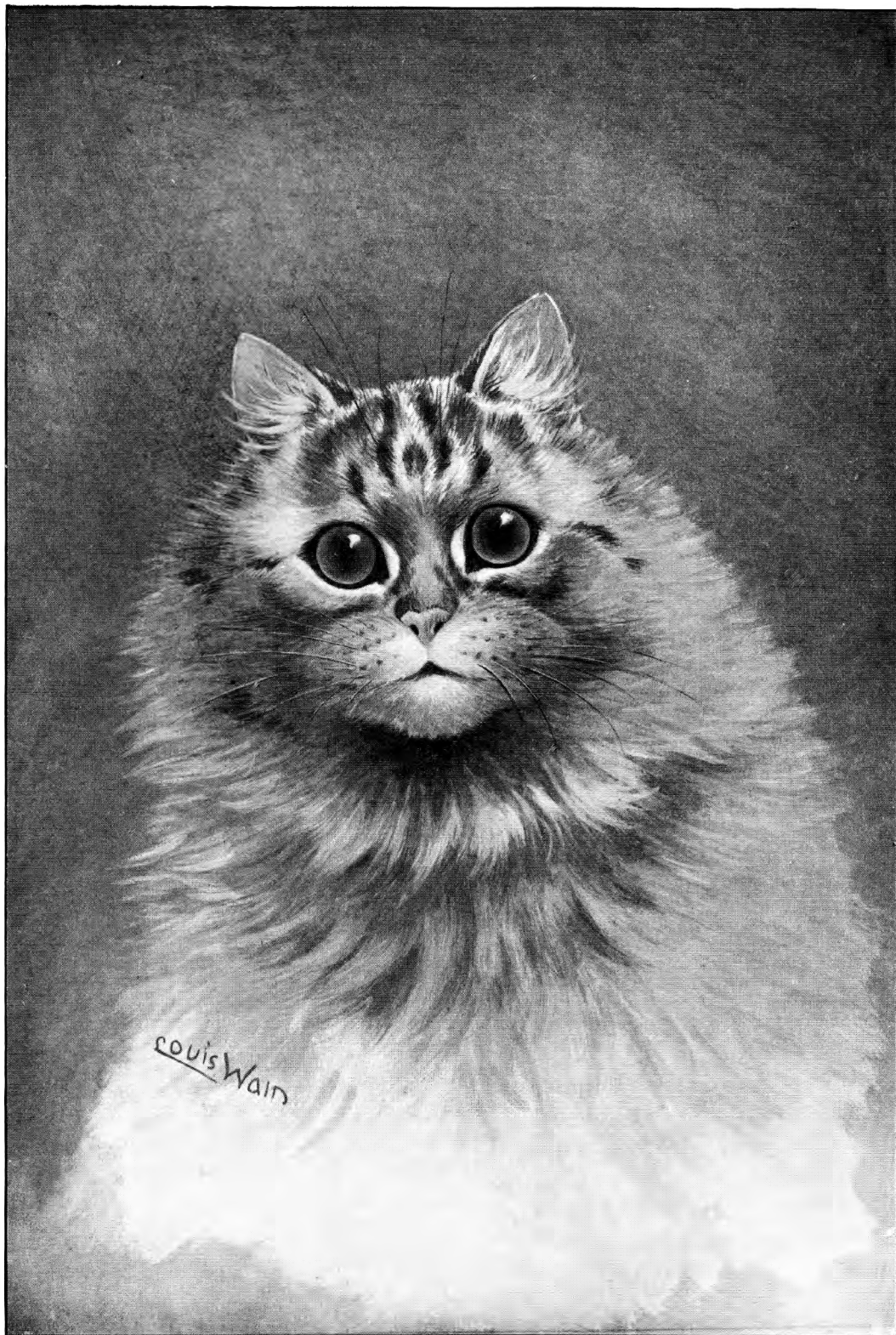
the captain, the helmsman, and a small body of hardy mariners, braced up staunch and true, weathered the worst and looked on appalled at the tragic scene of Nature's mastery of the elements. A grimy, shiny tail of some sea monster crashed over the bows of the yacht, sending the bowsprit and jibs overboard. The captain turned his eyes on to the helmsman and saw him looking down into the awful pit of horrors.

"Avast there, keep your eyes on the ship!"



FORTUNE-TELLING

"You will get a great surprise."



THE DANDY CAT.

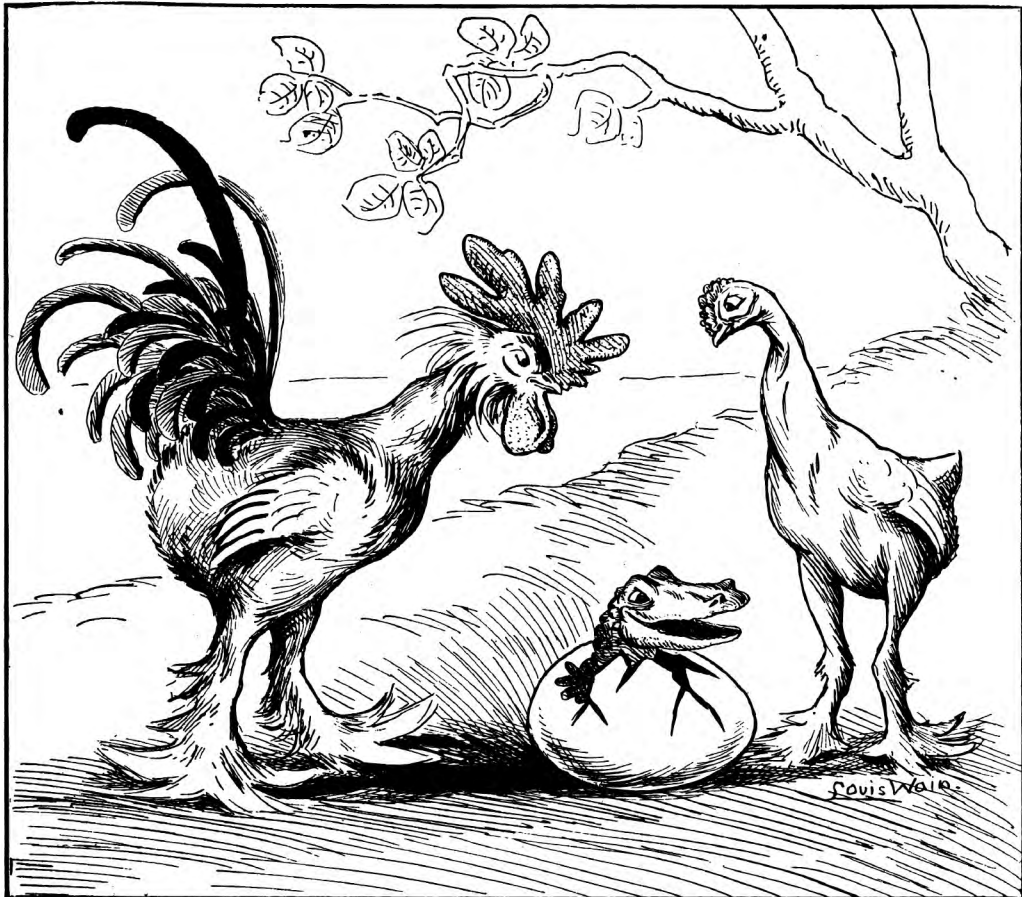
said he, and there was the threat of future trouble for the helmsman in his voice.

"Ay, ay, sir. I can look where I please, for someone has seized hold of me and guides my hands, as long as I keep upright in my strength," and a shift of the wheel sent the serpent's tail back into the sea to be seen no more. A light came into the helmsman's eyes, and turning his face upwards towards the now distant star, he resumed.

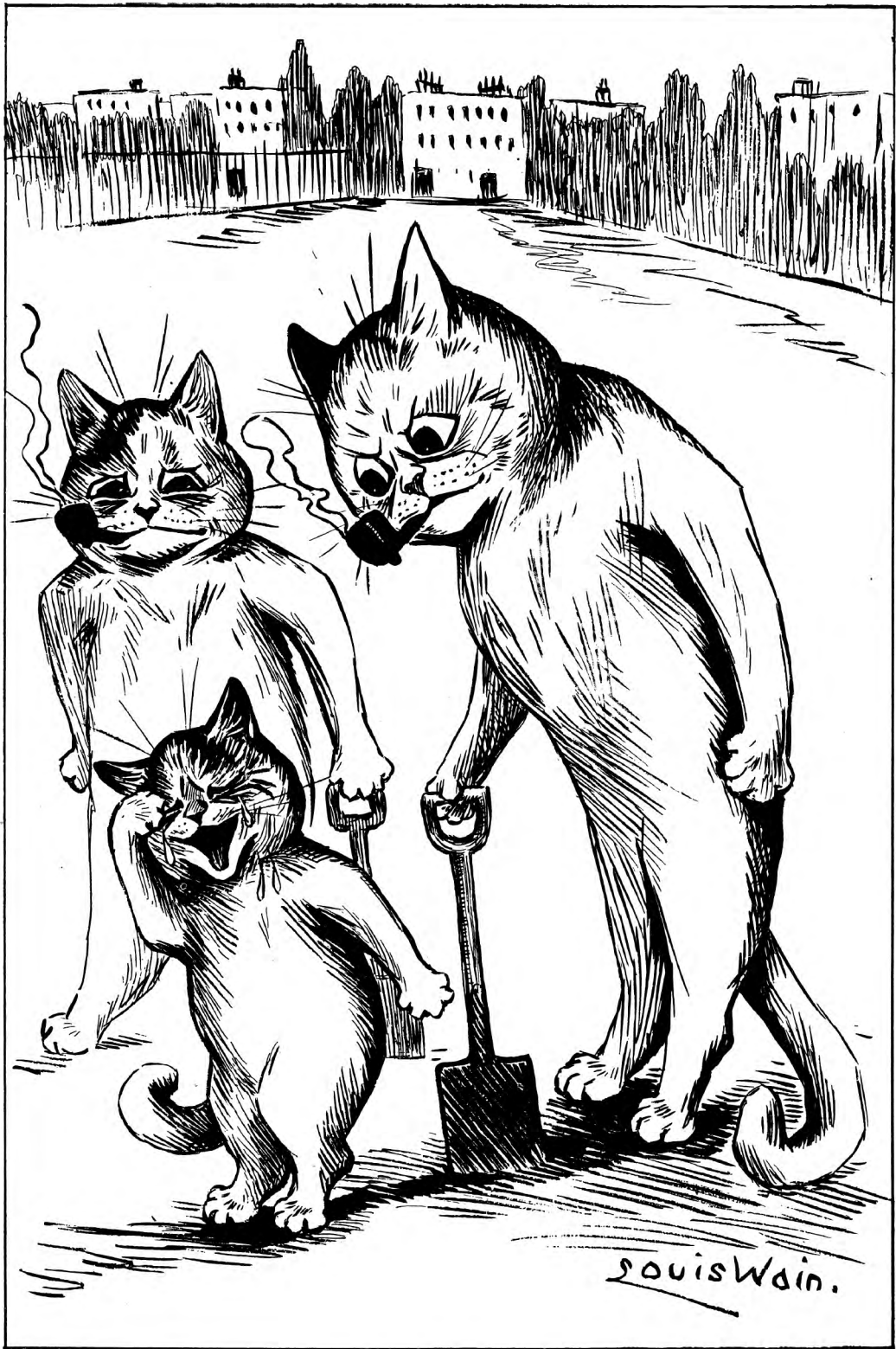
"That is the Star of Bethlehem," and then looking down into the rapidly filling pit said, "And that hole is the Devil's Dip of the Atlantic. It is the gates of Hell, and the devil was struggling to get free again on to the earth to wreak his vengeance upon humanity. The Star of Bethlehem was turned from its course in the heavens to drive him back into his fastness and so allow humanity to regenerate and rise from the ashes of its degradation, and on to the fount of glory."

By a turn of the wheel he sent the yacht careering over the outer edge of the uplifted waters, and the weight of the boat, caught in the downward tread of the currents, sent the yacht racing along towards the normal level of the ocean to safety.

The captain looked at the helmsman and held up his hand as though to speak, but the helmsman's face shone by the light of the great star and compelled silence. Another being seemed to take possession of him. His voice softened and mellowed and he spoke but two words, "I know!"



"That's the brainiest egg you've ever laid, mother."



"Are you lost, little boy?"

"No, but mother is. Boo-o-oh-oo!"

The Love that Lives

BY ALIANORA CHEVERS

MARGARET and Michael were an ideal couple who prided themselves on an ideal marriage, a model house and garden, and on their good luck in possessing a rare strain of valuable show pets—I quite forget whether tiny dogs, or large overdressed cats.

“Pet man in big slippers!” coaxed Margaret, when he remonstrated on scratches inflicted upon the same comfortable footwear. “Will you build wifie a really pretty garden house to keep her pets in?”

No man could avoid being soothed by such ready tact. Margaret innocently appealed to his forbearance, his love, and his ingenuity—for Michael was an excellent amateur carpenter in addition to being a well-known K.C. and noted man of letters.

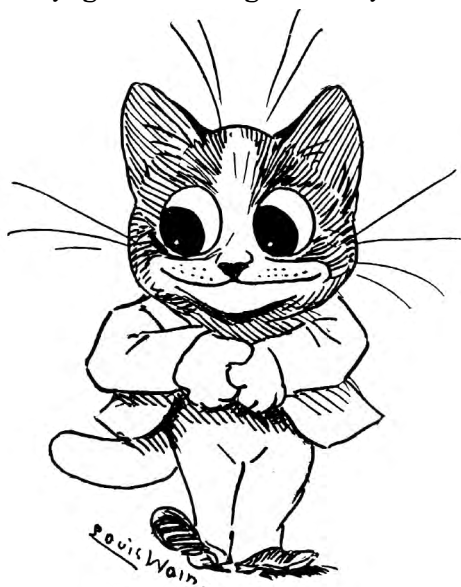
“Big-foot pet, say ‘yes’!” wiled Margaret, and of course did not ask in vain.

To bend to the weak shows strength, just as glad endurance of a fool proves wisdom this has all been written long ago, and needs no endorsement from my pen.

“Show Michael the style of house you want, Tweeticums, and he will do the rest,” her husband invited with that generous affection which keeps him firm on his throne as Margaret’s crowned king.

She chose a design and he did not murmur, although his heart sank to note the peculiar bent of her mind. Her wish must be his wish, for they were absolutely one in heart! The site in the garden was chosen, but then Michael, with teasing tyranny, shut Margaret out of his workshop until the sections were ready to be bolted together.

“Michael, darling!” Margaret would murmur, outside the closed door. Is my grandest of geese busy?..



what can I do for you?

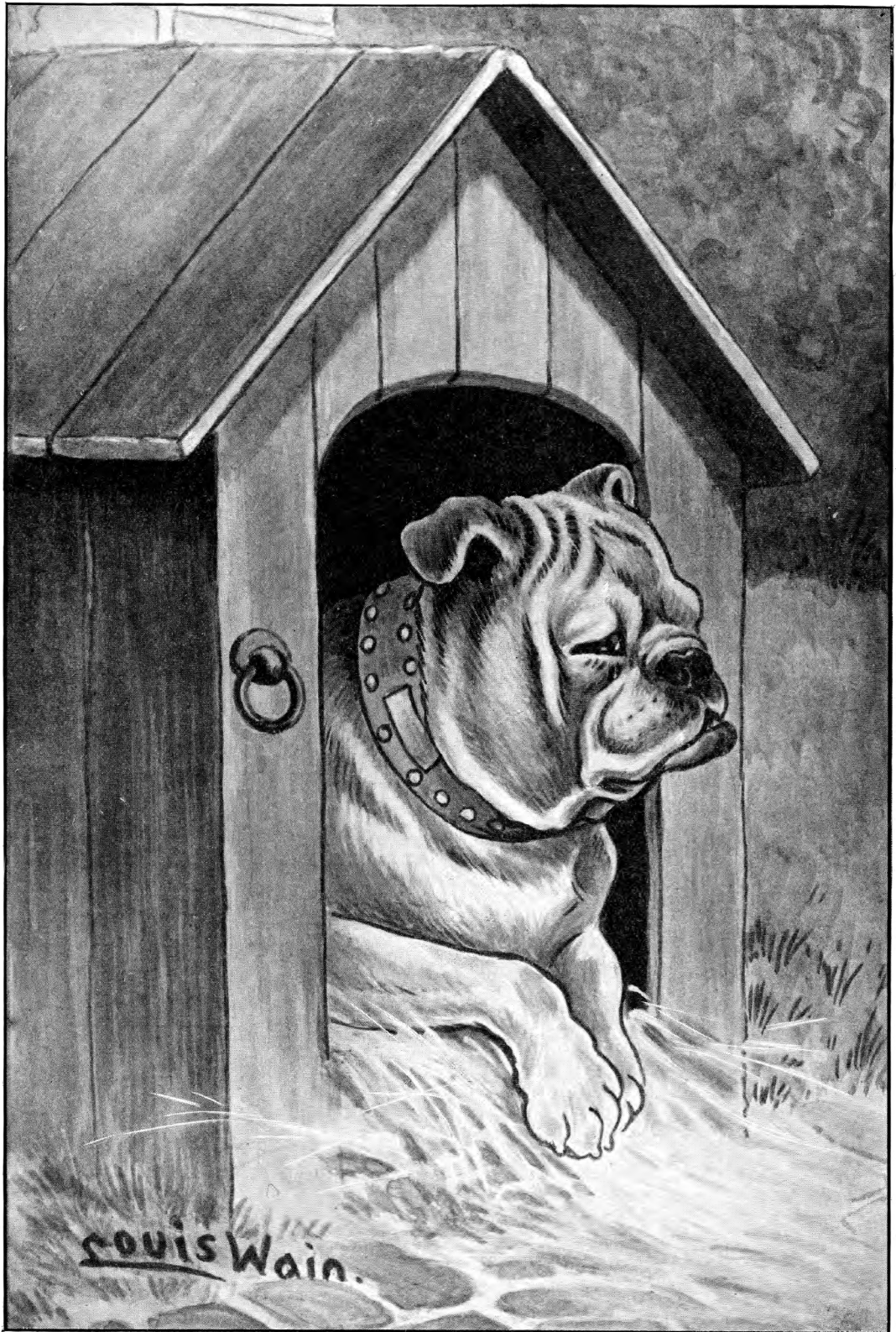
“Es Duckiewings!” would lisp back Michael, and as he was large, fat, and red, the language of love sounded even sweeter when the tender-hearted fellow was out of sight. “His Margaret must run ways on tippitoes if Michael is to be brave best of boys and get on with this infernal, blazing job!”

When Michael injured his deft hands with his tools, the heat of his hurt warmed his speech.

“Shall she tum and tiss it well again?” volunteered his pretty, ridiculous wife. She paused and listened, puzzling dutifully over the terse monosyllable with which he seemed to direct her.

“But I *have* nothing to darn, my prince!” she submitted.

This is where simplicity is preferable to all the wit and wisdom of the



UNCLE TOM'S CABIN

East. Michael realised that he still remained her ideal amongst men, even when the iron of adversity compelled him to convulsive hot-cinder step-dancing against his dignity and will.

Scamper off the damp grass, Michael's pet!" he urged, and his obedient wife reluctantly scampered. He then fluently explained his theories on white-heat metals to the tin-tack hammer, with all of his tongue which could be spared from first-aid services to his thumb.

It was joyously agreed that Michael's little Margaret should lend her wee hands to help with the actual erection of the garden house. Michael carried the sections out to the site, and Margaret carried his tools, whilst after Margaret either purred or barked (I cannot be sure which) the successful show, pedigreed pets.

"Own Michael has built his Margaret a quite tweet, tiny house!" loyally asserted the good little wife, who although not clever—wondered vaguely how all her four-legged friends would fit comfily into their smart new quarters.

But ideal marriages are those where perfect confidence in one another exists between wife and husband. Margaret could be quite sure that her splendid, capable Michael—as practical as he was brilliant!—would make the house luxuriously accommodate her pets!

Michael modestly asserted that he had indeed built her a most tiddly-tweet house, and that if she wanted the blessed moon from the sky to serve as a cake plate, her own old Trot would hook it down for her with a garden fork.

This faith and love, this blind chivalrous craving for knightly enterprise is what makes heroes in silvern armour of quite plain, nice men in everyday tweeds.

"Princeling! it is perfectly wonderful!" Margaret impulsively cried, "but, most Perfect, how can Jock and Janie climb up a smooth pole to their home?"

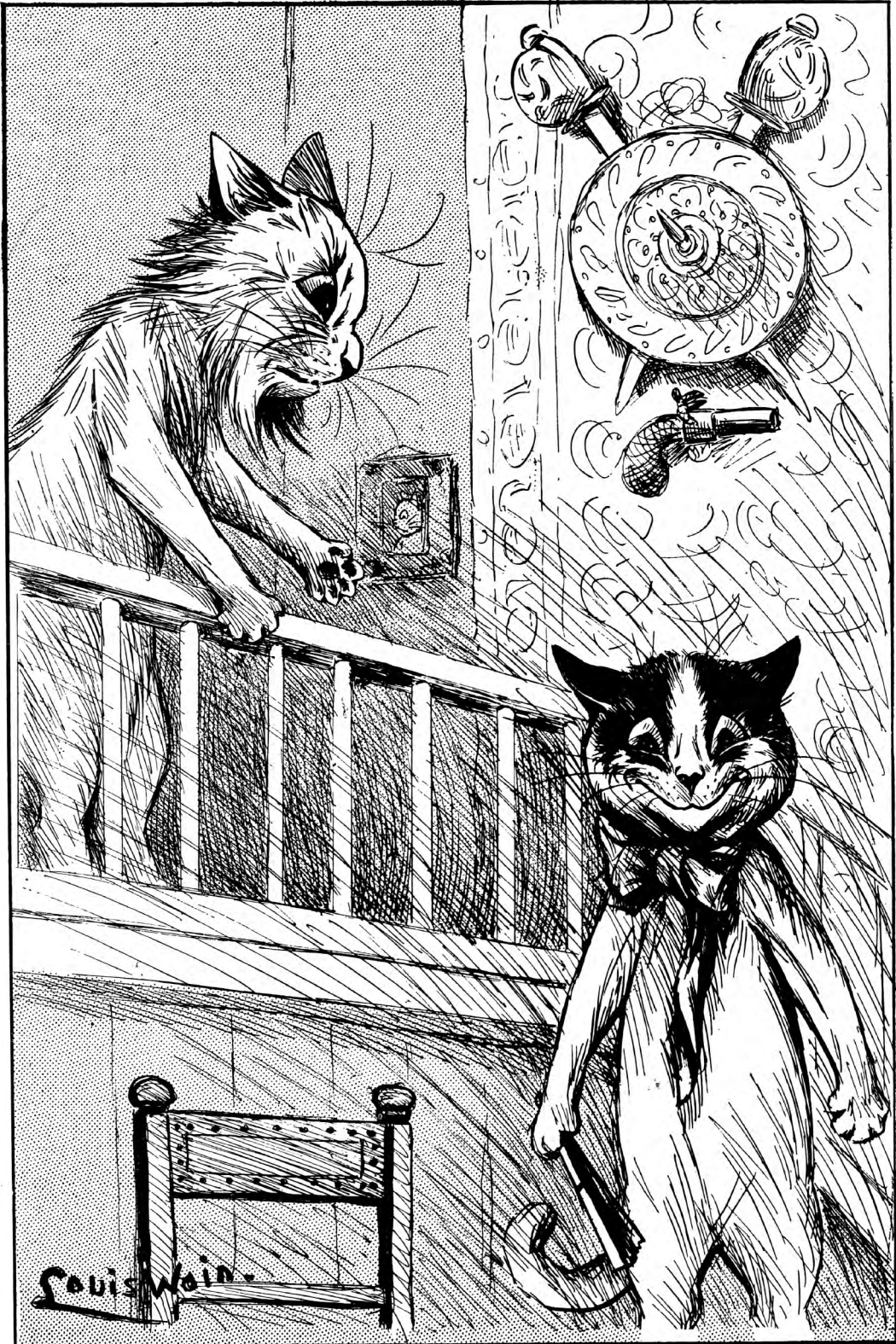
Ideal marriages are rare. Man is but human, even though woman is divine. Michael threw away his tools and kicked surlily at his handiwork. "You chose out a flaming dove-cote design-and there you have the thing!" he snapped.

That is why Margaret and Michael (who detest birds) cherish a fighting family of ring-doves, who ceaselessly groan and gurgle from a beautiful wee house perched on the trim lawn.

Theirs is indeed an ideal marriage, and many misunderstandings cannot quench love.



She: "There's that awful man following me about again; he's always about."
 He: "Of course! He's the oldest inhabitant."



“Where are you going, Alice?”

“I’m going to pay a social visit to the cook; the only way to be sure of a well-cooked dinner!”

A Cuckoo Comedy

Or, a Tragedy in Sparrow-land

BY DON RONALD



WILIGHT.

The cuckoo had been out all day. She had something in her mouth which she occasionally put on the ground and picked up, as she hid in the long grass.

Chirp!

It was from a sparrow a few yards away, near the river. He had found a large worm: he seized it, and shot away to the birch clump on the hill.

Chirp! came irritably from Mrs. Sparrow in her nest: "How late you are!"

Chirp! "Yes, but see here!"

She gulped the morsel ungraciously, nearly choking.

Coo-o said a strange voice.

Chirp! cried Mrs. Sparrow: "Good heavens! what is that?" *Chirp!* "Idiot, I told you not to be late!"

Coo! repeated the strange voice, threateningly, and its giant owner hopped nearer to the little nest. Her egg lay on the ground just beneath her.

Chirp! Chirp! shrieked Mrs. Sparrow, perceiving the monster gazing at them from an adjoining twig.

Chirp! said her husband, placidly: "Never mind."

Chirp! "Don't you see what he's going to do, man?"

As if to prove her words, the cuckoo assumed a fighting attitude and dashed forward, and the two sparrows jumped out of their nest and flew away shrieking. The cuckoo sprang on to the soft, warm nest, crushing down the side with her heavy feet, and inserted her head. One by one she seized three of the five eggs and pitched them into space. Then, dropping lightly to the ground, she carefully took her own treasure in her mouth and re-ascended to the nest, placing the egg by the side of the other two. *Coo-o!* she said with satisfaction, and shot away to the big pine on the far side of the river.

Coo! is the welcoming call from her mate in the newly-built giant nest: "Did you do it?"

Coo! she replies, triumphantly, climbing in: "Rather!"

There are two fat worms. *Coo!* he says, giving her one, and she eats it with relish. *Cu-koo!* he adds, slowly at last his voice has broken. All the weary way from Africa along the Mediterranean shore, where they met, he has been monosyllabic. She harks to the new note delightedly. *Coo-o!* she says.

They nestle close.

Cu-koo-o!

* * * *

The sparrows returned to their nest, forlorn, but glad to find it not entirely destroyed. They stood on the side, opposite to each other, and looked in.

Chirp! said Mrs. Sparrow, joyfully: "She has left me three!"



WAITING FOR THAT MOUSE.

POWIS YOUNG

Chirp! replied her husband: "That big one is not ours."

Chirp! "It is mine."

Chirp! "But not mine."

Chirp! "What a fool you are!"

Chirp! "I'm your husband."

Chirp! Chirp! "Yes, but only for this season, my lad!"

Chirp! said Mr. Sparrow, indifferently, and surveyed the countryside threateningly.

Chirp! said his wife: "Go, if you wish!"

He pretended to hesitate, but she took no notice: he hopped in beside her, and she pushed him into a corner, where he crouched, dejected, his head low down in his neck.

Chirp! he said presently, making up to her: "Did you see her?"

Chirp! Chirp! "Of course I did! How could I help it?"

Chirp! "Wasn't she a perfect hen?"

Chirp! "A turkey, you mean."

Chirp! "Yes, if you wish, my dear."

Chirp! Chirp! Chirp! "Of course you disagree. Fine kind of husband you are! Get away!"

They fall asleep, unfriendly, she on her giant egg, with the others under her wings; he morose and sad...

Next day, at worm-time, they were disturbed by two giant visitors, who perched only several twigs away from their nest and rudely peered at them.

Coo! said the less gigantic of the two: "This is the nest."

Cu-koo! "I see."

Then the intruders flew off.

Mrs. Sparrow was obviously nervous, but remained throughout the trying intrusion firmly seated on her treasures. Her instinct told her that there was no more to fear.

Chirp! said her husband, afterwards: "Did you see those two birds?"

Chirp! she replied, irritably: "Of course I did!"

Chirp! "One of them brought the big egg yesterday."

Chirp! Chirp! "Nonsense! The egg is mine."

Chirp! "Really, my dear! "

Chirp! Chirp! "It is. I laid it."

Chirp! "I am not its father."

Chirp! "You are a fool."

Chirp! said Mr. Sparrow, with humility: "All right, my dear."



Great Thoughts.





"I'M THINKING HARD."

Chirp! Chirp! Chirp! Chirp! cried his wife: "For heaven's sake shut up! Go and bring some more worms. How do you expect me to keep a big egg like this warm on nothing? I had enough trouble laying it."

Old Sparrow hopped on to the edge of the nest and rose into the air without answering. His wife's temper was really becoming unendurable. He consoled himself with the hope that it might improve after hatching time. Down by the river he heard the two strangers calling to each other. Mrs. Cuckoo was perched on a five-barred gate which was always kept shut. They were trying their voices, and it was apparent that Mrs. Cuckoo was finding a difficulty in getting out the second note.

Coo! she called, plaintively: "I'm afraid I can't!"

Cu-koo! answered her husband, in encouraging tones: "Try again, my love."

With a struggle she managed to get out the two notes, and the husband answered delightedly, and they called to each other all the time the sparrow was worming, and, indeed, throughout the morning, and again in the afternoon, and each day onwards, until the farmer who was perspiring from work two fields away used bad language towards them, and came and dislodged them with stones.

Cuckoo they called behind them as they flew away for a little while. But the farmer did not perceive the jibe.

* * * *

Hatching time. Two new featherless darlings nestle beneath Mrs. Sparrow's wings, and old Sparrow is scouring the countryside for flies and small worms.

Chirp! says she to her husband, when he is late: "You are a perfect ninny!" *Chirp!* "We shall starve to death if we depend upon you."

Then, presently there is a crack in the big egg, and finally, after much struggling, a loose-limbed, skinny monster steps out.

Chirp cries Mrs. Sparrow, in amazement: "Good heavens! What is this?"

Her husband has stopped eating a worm he had in his mouth, and looks on scarcely less astounded, part of the worm hanging from his wide-open bill. *Chirp!* he says, presently, with a self-satisfied leer: "I told you so!"

Tweet! Tweet! cry the youngling sparrows: "Oh! Oh!"

Coo! murmurs the newcomer, striding boldly about the nest, and Mrs. Sparrow trembles to her marrow. Mr. Sparrow tries to reach him down the remainder of the worm in conciliation, but being unable to do this, he jumps on to the newcomer's back and gives it to him over his head.

Chirp! Chirp! shrieks Mrs. Sparrow, a moment later: "The monster! Do you see what he is doing?"

Chirp! exclaims her husband: "Oh, dear!"

The giant youngling, dissatisfied with the inadequate room in the nest, has begun the murderous eviction of the baby sparrows. The distracted mother, as she sees her first-born shouldered by the last-born, darts forward furiously, but retreats in terror before the thrusts from the big youngster's bill.

Chirp she shrieks to her husband: "Why don't you stop him?"

Chirp! "I daren't."

Chirp! "Let's both try!"

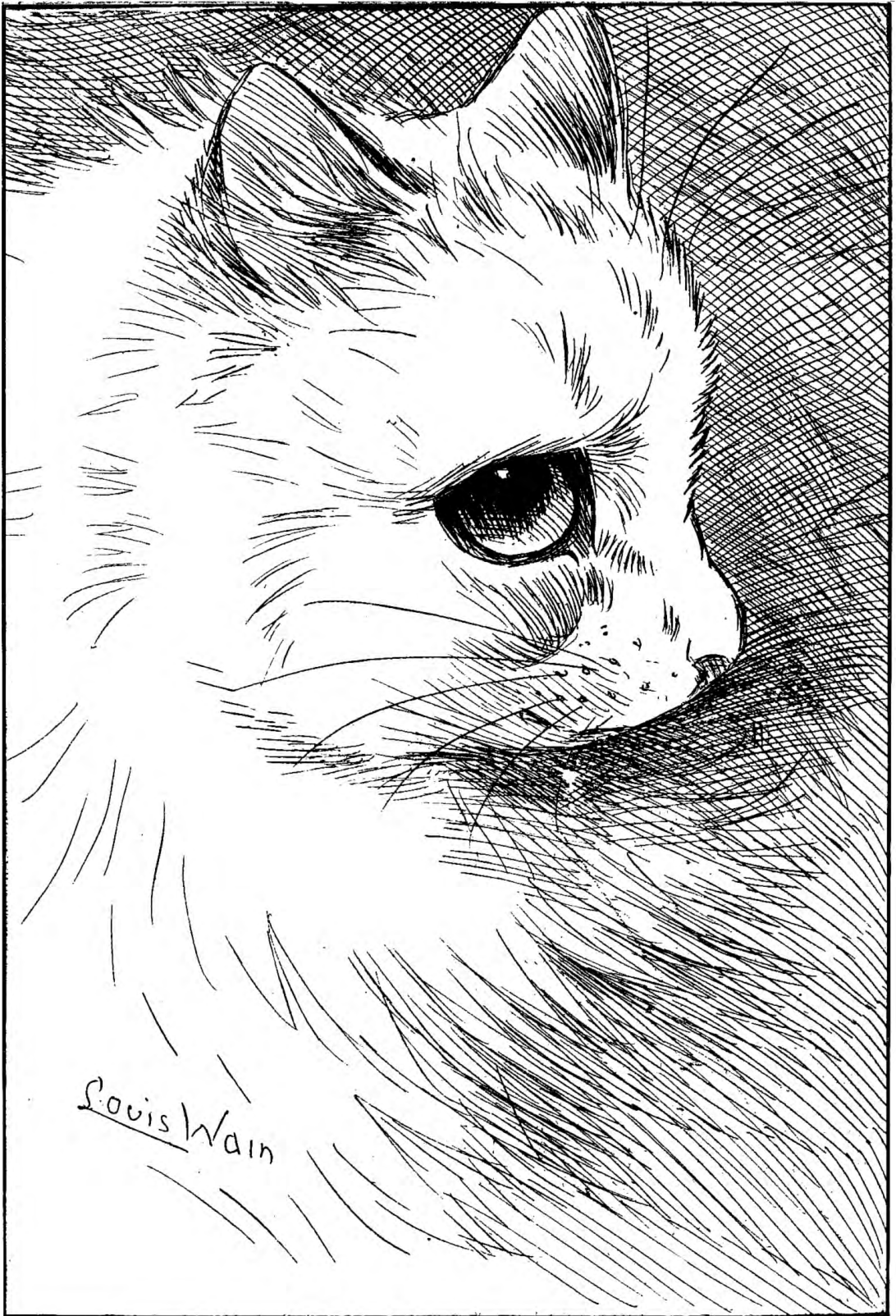
Chirp! Chirp! "No! No!" *Chirp!* "Prudence!" *Chirp!* "He will kill us both."



"Please, mum, I want a shilling for lubricator?"

"Outrageous! I will not help you to drink."

"It's not that, mum. I'm the new chauffeur; the car's gone wrong!"



"I WONDER WHEN HE IS COMING!"

Chirp! Chirp! "Oh you coward! This season will see us parted for ever!"

Tweet! Tweet! cry the helpless babes, as, one after the other, they are heaved over the nest-side, to be dashed to death on the ground beneath.

Chirp! Chirp! cries Mrs. Sparrow, fearfully: "Oh! Oh!" and she shoots off after her husband, who has discreetly gone on an errand of conciliation. A little while later they return with worms, and, hopping on to the young giant's back, give them to him as Mr. Sparrow gave him the remainder of his, earlier on. He swallows them with decision, then nestles himself to rest in the centre of the nest.

Chirp! says Mrs. Sparrow, the maternal pride in her heart reviving, as she caresses him: "Isn't he a beauty?"

Chirp! "But he isn't yours."

Chirp! "Then whose is he?"

Coo! says the youngster, and both remain silent, unnerved.

Days, weeks pass.

* * * *

Down by the river the old cuckoos are calling to each other, one from the five-barred gate and the other from the tuft of grass over the hedge.

Cuckoo! Cuckoo!

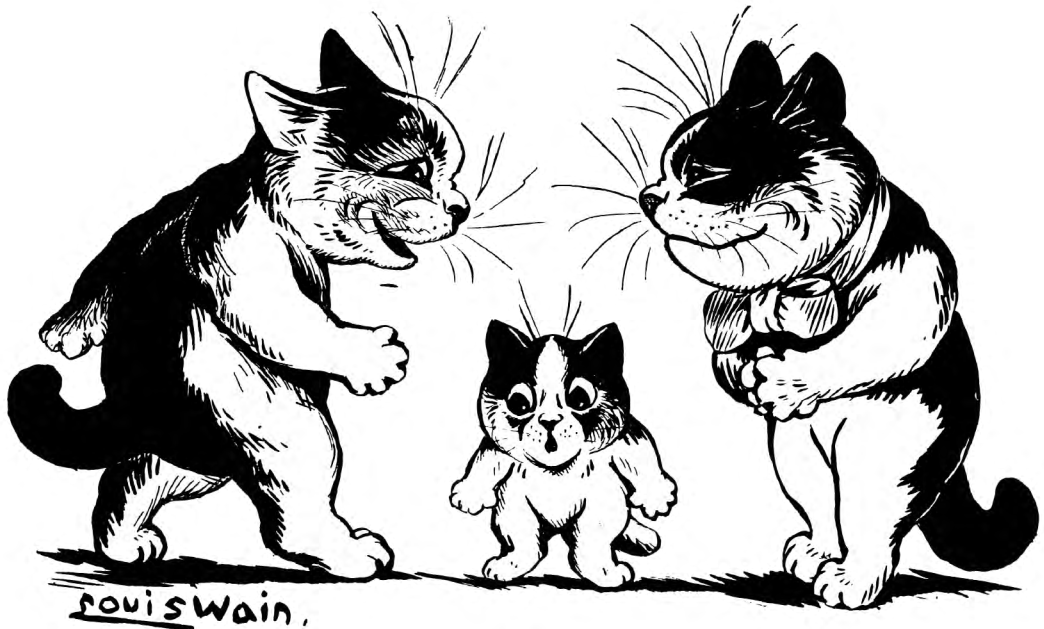
Coo! calls another voice, in a lordly, youthful tone.

The old birds start, and both fly to take stock of the proud stranger, who is casually eating a large worm he has found. Day by day they see and hear him, and they give each other strange looks, as if trying to recall the past.

Suddenly, one cool morning, they rise high into the air, significantly, as if for a long journey, flying due south-east for a warmer climate.

Coo! says the lordly young cuckoo, flying after them: "Old heads!"

Coo! "They know the game!"



"Send Tibby to a boarding-school."



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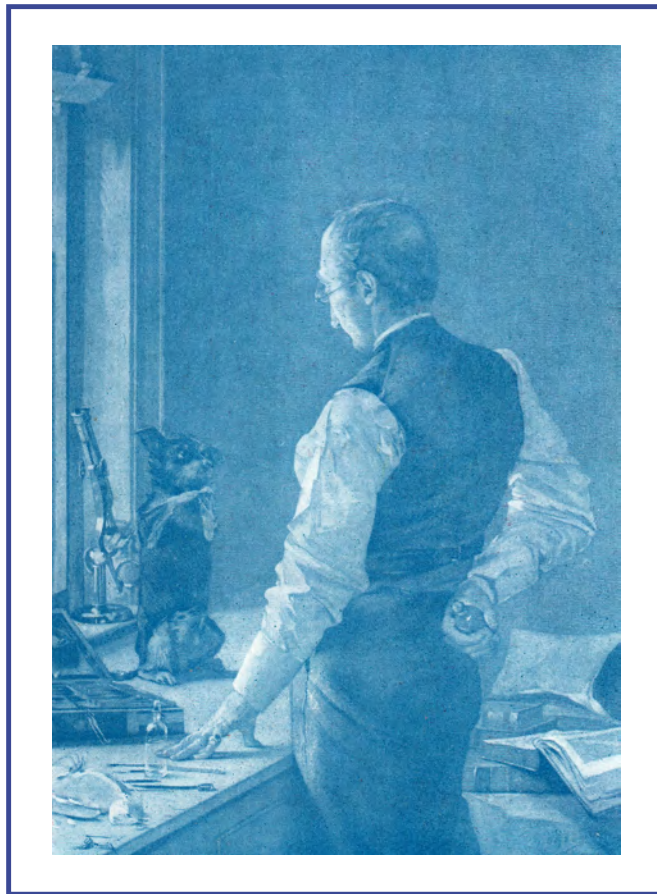
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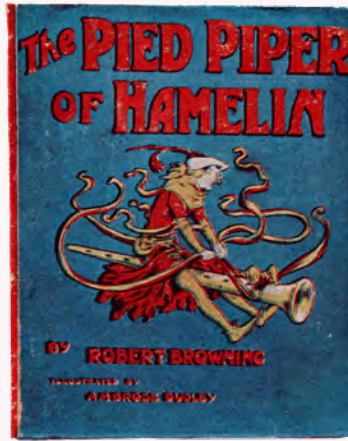
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