

They passed through the shallow water without mishap, save when the wheel struck a hidden stone or fell suddenly into a rut; but when they neared the body of the river MacLure halted, to give Jess a minute's breathing.

'It'll tak ye a' yir time, lass, an' a' wud rather be on yir back; but ye never failed me yet, and a wumman's life is hangin' on the crossin'.'

With the first plunge into the bed of the stream the water rose to the axles, and then it crept up to the shafts, so that the surgeon could feel it lapping in about his feet, while the dogcart began to quiver, and it seemed as if it were to be carried away. Sir George was as brave as most men, but he had never forded a Highland river in flood, and the mass of black water racing past beneath, before, behind him, affected his imagination and shook his nerves. He rose from his seat and ordered MacLure to turn back, declaring that he would be condemned utterly and eternally if he allowed himself to be drowned for any person.

'Sit doon,' thundered MacLure; 'condemned ye will be suner or later gin ye shirk yir duty, but through the water ye gang the day.'

Both men spoke much more strongly and shortly, but this is what they intended to say, and it was MacLure that prevailed.

Jess trailed her feet along the ground with cunning art, and her shoulder against the stream; MacLure leant forward in his seat, a rein in each hand, and his eyes fixed on Hillocks, who was now standing up to the waist in the water, shouting directions and cheering on horse and driver.

'Haud tae the richt, doctor; there's a hole yonder. Keep oot o't for ony sake. That's it; yir daein' fine. Steady, man, steady. Yir at the deepest; sit heavy in yir seats. Up the channel noo, an' ye'll be oot o' the swirl. Well dune, Jess, weel dune, auld mare! Mak' straight for me, doctor, an' a'll gie ye the road oot. Ma word, ye've dune yir best, baith o' ye this mornin',' cried Hillocks, splashing up to the dogcart, now in the shallows.

'Sall, it was titch an go for a meenut in the middle; a Hielan' ford is a kittle (hazardous) road in the snaw time, but ye're safe noo.

'Gude luck tae ye at Westerton, sir; aane but a richt-hearted man wud hae riskit the Tocht in flood. Ye're bound tae succeed aifter sic a ground beginning,' for it had spread already that a famous surgeon had come to do his best for Annie, Tammas Mitchell's wife.

Two hours later MacLure came out from Annie's room and laid hold of Tammas, a heap of speechless misery by the kitchen fire, and carried him off to the bar, and spread some corn on the threshing floor and thrust a flail into his hands.

'Noo we've tae begin, an' we 'ill no be dune for an oor, and ye've tae lay on withoot stoppin' till a' come for ye, an' a'll shut the door tae haud in the noise, an' keep yir dog beside ye, for there maunna be a cheep aboot the hoose for Annie's sake.'

'A'll dae onything ye want me, but if—'

'A'll come for ye, Tammas, gin there be danger; but what are ye feared for wi' the Queen's ain surgeon here?'

Fifty minutes did the flail rise and fall, save twice, when Tammas crept to the door and listened, the dog lifting his head and whining.

It seemed twelve hours instead of one, when the door swung back, and MacLure filled the doorway, preceded by a great burst of light, for the sun had arisen on the snaw.

His face was as tidings of great joy, and Elspeth told me that there was nothing like it to be seen that afternoon for glory, save the sun itself in the heavens.

'A' never saw the marrow o't, Tammas, an' a'll never see the like again; it's a' ower, man, withoot a hitch frae beginnin' tae end, and she's fa'in' asleep as fine as ye like.

'Dis he think Annie . . . 'ill live?'

'Of coorse he dis, and be aboot the hoose inside a month; that's the gude o' bein' a clean-bluided, weel-illvin'—'

'Preserve ye, man, what's wrang wi ye? it's a mercy a' keppit ye, or we wud hev hed anither job for Sir George.

'Ye're a' richt noo; its doon on the strae. A'll come back in a whilie, an' ye 'ill see Annie juist for a meenut, but ye maunna say a word.'

Marget took him in and let him kneel by Annie's bedside.

He said nothing then or afterwards, for speech came only once in his lifetime to Tammas, but Annie whispered, 'Ma ain dear man.'

When the Doctor placed the precious bag beside Sir George in our solitary first next morning, he laid a cheque beside it and was aboot to leave.

'No, no,' said the great man. 'Mrs. Macfadyen and I were on the gossip last night, and I know the whole story aboot you and your friend.'

'You have some right to call me a coward, but I'll never let you count me a mean, miserly rascal,' and the cheque with Drumsheugh's painful writing fell in fifty pieces on the floor.

As the train began to move, a voice from the first called so that all in the station heard:

'Give's another shake of your hand, MacLure; I'm proud to have met you; you are an honour to our profession. Mind the antiseptic dressings.'

It was market day, but only Jamie Soutar and Hillocks had ventured down.

'Did ye hear yon, Hillocks? Hoo dae ye feel? A'll no deny a'm lifted.'

Halfway to the Junction Hillocks had recovered, and began to grasp the situation.

'Tell's what he said. A' wud like to hae it exact for Drumsheugh.'

'Thae's the cedential words, an' they're true; there's no a man in Drumtochty disna ken that, except ane.'

'An' wha's that, Jamie?'

'It's Weelum MacLure himsel. Man, a've often gined that he sud fetch awa for us a', and maybe dee before he kent that he had githered mair love than ony man in the Glen.

'A'm proud tae hae met ye,' says Sir George, an' him the greatest doctor in the land. 'Yir an honour tae oor profession.'

'Hillocks, a' wudna hae missed it for twenty notes,' said James Soutar, cynic-in-ordinary to the parish of Drumtochty.

Cunningham Gekie, D.D.: There are, however, multitudes who must either drink nothing intoxicating, or will take too much of it; and it is certain, moreover, that he who does not begin to drink, will never be a drunkard. Is it, then, too much for love to say, with Paul, "I will not eat even flesh" (which seems a necessary) "while the world stands, lest I make my brother to offend" (1 Cor. viii. 13). Who that reflects on the results of our drinking customs will not feel, as a Christian, that this trifling self-denial is not worthy his most serious consideration, remembering the grand effects it has already secured in saving such multitudes from sin and crime.

Hon. J. M. Gibson: With Children's Aid Societies in the centres of population, well organized and managed by earnest-minded people devoted to the work, searching out the children who are without parental care, neglected or abandoned, rescuing them from pernicious influences and surroundings, and voluntary committees throughout the Province seeking for desirable homes for these children, advising and assisting in the work of placing out and maintaining a watchful and kindly interest in the treatment they receive, a network agency can be established in our community capable of accomplishing wonderful results in reducing the numbers of those from whom the criminal classes are constantly being recruited.

Our Young Folks.

WHEN BEDTIME COMES TOO SOON.

The clocks don't know their A B C's,
And so they cannot spell;
But yet they count much more than I,
And seem to count quite well.

But what good so much counting does
I'd really like to know?—
Just sending people off to bed
Before they want to go!

—St. Nicholas.

A PEEP AT SOME CHINESE PROVINCES.

The Chinese emperor, "the son of Heaven," as he is called, used to rule in awful state at Peking. From North, West, and South there came every year stately processions humbly bringing tribute and splendid presents to his celestial majesty. Embassies from the hot, sunny coasts and tropical forests of Annam and Cochin-China were always on the march with gifts. Annam sent elephant tusks, rhinoceros horns, nuts, spices, sandal wood, and one hundred pieces of satin and one hundred rolls of white silk. A letter written in gold from the King of the South said: "As is my duty as your vassal, gazing from afar at the 'heavenly abode,' I have sent my envoy bearing these presents; I humbly wait your acceptance of them." Tonquin and Cambodia did the same.

But all that is changed now, for France has annexed the whole great S-shaped coast, reaching back to the great river Mekong. Driving back the yellow troops of Cochin-China, she has made herself a splendid empire in Southern Asia; so no more tribute will reach Peking from the South.

Tonquin means the "Eastern land." It is the most northerly of the three provinces we are considering, and the nearest to China. Inland it is very mountainous, but with fertile coasts and valleys. The coast South of the gulf of Tonquin is Annam proper, and the great flat region trending to the South-west is called Cambodia; all three provinces are now really France in Asia.

The country is extremely lovely. Palms, bamboos, and giant flowering-trees grow faster than man can destroy them. Teak and gum trees yield splendid timber. Gutta-percha trees, dye-woods, vanilla plants, and spices grow wild. The great staple crop is rice, vast quantities being raised. The indigo plant, the sugar-cane, coffee, tea, pepper, cloves, and excellent cotton are grown.

From Cambodia comes the yellow pigment thence named gamboge. Oils and resins are made into brilliant lacquer, and the glossy coral-red and gilded wares seen in our museums are the work of these artistic peoples of "further India."

In the forests roam the elephant, rhinoceros, tiger, leopard, and apes of many species. Among the birds are peafowl, gold and silver pheasants (see our illustration), and bright-plumaged macaws. In the marshy deltas of the great rivers Mekong and Saigon are crocodiles and serpents, boas and venomous reptiles.

Cambodia is a network of river channels opening out into the great inland lake of Tonli-sap. Here are the haunts of fever, ague, and cholera. It is death for a European to sleep in these beautiful but deadly glades. Still, people do live there, for where is the spot which is not "home" to some human beings? The French port of Saigon is fast becoming a rich and busy trade centre.

Hidden among the forest jungles are the famous ruins of Angkor. No man or woman treads the richly carved palace halls of that deserted city. They are a lair for tigers, a haunt for venomous reptiles. Trees and climbers for a thousand years have choked the galleries and courts. When the city was built, and by whom, there is no record! The people must have been far ad-

vanced in the arts, and rich. Now the silence is broken only by the peacock's cry, or the growl of some beast of prey.

The religion of the richer inhabitants of Cochin-China is Buddhism, founded by Buddha, who is represented in the temples by an image sitting cross-legged in deep contemplation; but the poor worship good and evil spirits, which they call Nats. There are many Jesuit missionaries following the French conquerors, but few converts are made. By race the people are a mixture of Malays and Chinese, and are brave, lively, and peaceable. They live very hardily and extremely coarsely, eating rice, snakes, locusts, and rats, and drinking only tea, but chewing betel-nut till their teeth are worn down to their gums. As workers, they make and embroider some excellent silk and cotton fabrics; while their houses are mainly of wood and bamboos gaily coloured.

HINTS FOR YOUNG READERS.

Have you a commonplace-book—just a little blank-book with a pencil attached? If not, supply yourself with one to-day. In reading for serious work it is an excellent plan to make notes of what most interests you, always adding the chapter and page for reference hereafter. You will find in Macaulay's *Life and Letters*, as you would in those of any great man or woman, constant allusions to noted people—those people will be perpetually bobbing up in your path whenever you are reading of their period. Record their names, and any special bits about them in your book—Hannah More, Carlyle, Sydney Smith, Trevelyan, whoever they may be. A pencil and blank-book are indispensable to a careful reader.

Now you will be ready to take up Macaulay's *History of England*. Do not shake your head at the thought of several volumes of history. History is only the story of the past. You and I are making it for those who will live after we are gone. A great many interesting things will strike you while reading Macaulay's *History*, and you will never forget, if you read it thoughtfully, the brilliant third chapter of his first volume.

Poetry? Well, of course you have read already Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome*, but you will read again every one of his heroic ballads, and, if you are like me, your cheeks will flush and your voice tremble as you read. Perhaps you will feel as dear little Dedicie does, who says, "Oh! let me hear something with shouts in it!" And if you would rather take Longfellow or Whittier or Bryant or Holmes or Jane Austen or any other author, pray choose for yourself, dear reader.—*Harper's Young People*.

VALUABLE BIBLES.

The three most valuable Bibles in the world are said to be in the British Museum, the National Library in Paris, and the cloister of Belem, Lisbon. The first is in manuscript, written by Alcuin and his pupils, and in the year 800 was presented to Charlemagne on the day of his coronation. In the thirties of the present century it was in the possession of a private gentleman in Basel, who offered it to the French Government for 42,000 francs. Afterwards it was sold to the British Museum for the comparatively small sum of £750. The book is written in fine, small characters, and is decorated throughout with exquisite vignettes and arabesques. The chapter headings, as also the name of Jesus, are everywhere written in gold. The Paris Bible was published in 1527, printed by order of Cardinal Ximenes, and dedicated to Leo X. One of the three copies, printed on vellum paper, was, in 1789, sold to England for 12,000 francs. This copy was afterwards presented to Louis Philippe, and in this way was placed in the National Library. The third, or Belem Bible, consists of nine folio volumes, and is written on parchment. It was stolen by Junot in 1807, and taken to Paris. Madame Junot, when Portugal wanted to buy the Bible back, asked 150,000 francs for it. Louis XVIII., however, made the Portuguese Government a present of the precious volume.