



### The Mine-sweepers.

By H. Ingamells.

"Ware mine!"  
"Starboard your helm!" "Full speed ahead!"  
The squat craft duly swings—  
A hand's breadth off, a thing of dread  
The sullen breaker flings.

Carefully, slowly, patiently,  
The men of Grimsby Town  
Grove their way on the rolling sea—  
The storm-swept, treach'rous, gray North Sea—  
Keeping the death-rate down.

Cold is the wind as the Gates of Death,  
Howling a dirge with its biting breath,  
Tearing rude music from rigging taut—  
The tune with deadly omen fraught:  
"Look to yourselves, oh, sailors bold—  
I am the one ye know of old!  
I make my sport with such as ye—  
The game that is played on every sea  
With death as the loser's penalty!"

Valiantly, stoutly, manfully,  
The trawlers fight the gale;  
Buoyant they ride on the rolling sea—  
The storm-swept, treach'rous, gray North Sea—  
Dasht by the North Wind's flail.

Cruel the waves of that ocean drear,  
Whelming the heart with a palsying fear,  
Hurling their might on the staggr'ing craft,  
Crashing aboard of her fore and aft,  
Buffeting, pounding, a dreadful force,  
Sweeping her decks as she hugs her course.

Little they care, come wind or wave,  
The men of Grimsby Town;  
There are mines to destroy and lives to save,  
And they take the risk, these sailormen brave,  
With a laugh and a joke, or a rollicking stave,  
As the gear goes plunging down.

Honor the trawler's crew,  
For Fear they never knew!  
Now on their quest they go  
With measured tack and slow—  
Seeking the hidden fate  
Strewn with a devilish hate.

Death may come in a terrible form,  
Death in a calm or death in a storm,  
Death without warning, stark and grim,  
Death with a tearing of limb from limb,  
Death in a horrible, hideous guise—  
Such is the mine-sweepers' sacrifice!  
Careless of terrors and scornful of ease,  
Stolid and steadfast, they sweep the seas.

Cheerfully, simply, fearlessly,  
The men of Grimsby Town  
Do their bit on the rolling sea—  
The storm-swept, treach'rous, gray North Sea—  
Doing their duty unflinchingly  
Keeping the death-rate down.

—In London Spectator.

### The Man Possessed.

[The following extract has been taken from "The Friendly Road," by David Grayson, published by the Doubleday, Page Pub. Co., Garden City, New York. Mr. Grayson is a farmer writer. "The Friendly Road" is an account of a sixty-mile walking tour that he made in search of adventure, and surely no knight of the olden time riding out with lance a-tilt in quest of "little affairs of honor" ever succeeded in meeting with more interesting experiences than those which came to him. But then, Mr. Grayson possesses the magic power of finding adventure everywhere. We heartily commend to

you his "Friendly Road." To read it may bring to you too, do you not already possess it, a draught of that magic potion.—Ed.]

When I left the Ransomes that fine, spring morning, I had not the slightest presentiment of what the world held in store for me. After being a prisoner of the weather for so long, I took to the Road with fresh joy. All the fields were of a misty greenness, and there were pools still shining in the road, but the air was deliciously clear, clean, and soft. I came through the hill country for three or four miles, even running down some of the steeper places for the very joy the motion gave me, the feel of the air on my face.

Thus I came finally to the Great Road, and stood for a moment looking first this way, then that.

"Where now?" I asked aloud.  
With an amusing sense of the possibilities that lay open before me, I closed my eyes, turned slowly around several times and then stopped. When I opened my eyes I was facing nearly southward: and that way I set out, not knowing in the least what Fortune had presided at that turning. If I had gone the other way—

I walked vigorously for two or three hours, meeting or passing many interesting people upon the busy road. Automobiles there were in plenty, and loaded wagons, and jolly families off for town, and a herdsman driving sheep, and small boys on their way to school with their dinner pails, and a gypsy wagon with lean, led horses following behind, and even a Jewish peddler with a crinkly black beard, whom I was on the very point of stopping.



These asters were grown on an old barnyard at the home of Mr. Wm. Naismith, Falkenburgh, Muskoka. Two plots produced 50,000 flowers, among them prizewinners at Toronto and Ottawa.

"I should like sometime to know a Jew," I said to myself.

As I travelled, feeling like one who possesses hidden riches, I came quite without warning upon the beginning of my great adventure. I had been looking for a certain thing all the morning, first on one side of the road, then the other, and finally I was rewarded. There it was, nailed high upon a tree, the curious, familiar sign:

[ REST ]

I stopped instantly. It seemed like an old friend.

"Well," said I, "I'm not at all tired, but I want to be agreeable."

With that I sat down on a convenient stone, took off my hat, wiped my forehead, and looked about me with satisfaction, for it was a pleasant country.

I had not been sitting there above two minutes when my eyes fell upon one of the oddest specimens of humanity (I thought then) that I ever saw. He had been standing near the roadside, just under the tree upon which I had seen the sign, "Rest." My heart dotted and carried one.

"The sign man himself!" I exclaimed. I arose instantly and walked down the road toward him.

"A man has only to stop anywhere here," I said exultantly, "and things happen."

The stranger's appearance was indeed extraordinary. He seemed at first glimpse to be about twice as large around the hips as he was at the shoulders, but this I soon discovered to be due to no natural avoirdupois, but to the prodigious number of soiled newspapers and magazines with which the low-hanging pockets of his overcoat were stuffed. For he was still wearing the old, shabby overcoat—though the weather was warm and bright—and on his head was an odd and outlandish hat. It was of fur, flat at the top, flat as a pie-tin, with the moth-eaten earlaps turned up at the sides and looking exactly like small, furry ears. These, with the round, steel spectacles which he wore—the only distinctive feature of his countenance—gave him an indescribably droll appearance.

"A fox!" I thought.  
Then I looked at him more closely.

one finger was missing, and that the hand itself was cruelly twisted and scarred.

The stranger instantly set off up the Road without giving me much more attention than he would have given any other sign-post. I stood a moment looking after him—the wings of his overcoat beating about his legs, and the small, furry ears on his cap wagging gently.

"There," said I aloud, "is a man who is actually going somewhere."

So many men in this world are going nowhere in particular when one comes along—even though he be amusing and insignificant—who is really (and passionately) going somewhere, what a stir he communicates to a dull world! We catch sparks of electricity from the very friction of his passage.

It was so with this odd stranger. Though at one moment I could not help smiling at him, at the next I was following him.

"It may be," said I to myself, "that this is really the sign man!"

I felt like Captain Kid under full sail to capture a treasure-ship; and as I approached, I was much agitated as to the best method of grappling and boarding. I finally decided, being a lover of bold methods, to let go my largest gun first—for moral effect.

"So," said I, as I ran alongside, "you are the man who puts up the signs."

He stopped and looked at me.

"What signs?"

"Why, the sign 'Rest' along the road."

He paused for some seconds with a perplexed expression on his face.

"Then you are not the sign man," I said.

"No," he replied, "I ain't any sign man."

I was not a little disappointed, but having made my attack, I determined to see if there was any treasure aboard—which, I suppose, should be the procedure of any well-regulated pirate.

"I'm going this way myself," I said, "and if you have no objections—"

He stood looking at me seriously, indeed suspiciously, through his round spectacles.

"Have you got the passport?" he asked finally.

"The passport?" I exclaimed, mystified in my turn.

"Yes," said he, "the passport. Let me see your hand."

When I held out my hand he looked at it closely for a moment, and then took it with a quick, warm pressure in one of his, and gave it a little shake, in a way not quite American.

"You are one of us," said he, "you work."

I thought at first that it was a bit of pleasantry, and I was about to return it in kind when I saw plainly in his face a look of solemn intent.

"So," he said, "we shall travel like comrades."

He thrust his scarred hand through my arm, and we walked up the road side by side, his bulging pockets beating first against his legs and then against mine, quite impartially.

"I think," said the stranger, "that we shall be arrested at Kilburn."

"We shall!" I exclaimed, with something, I admit, of a shock.

"Yes," he said, "but it is all in the day's work."

"How is that?"

He stopped in the road and faced me. Throwing back his overcoat, he pointed to a small, red button, on his coat lapel.

"They don't want me in Kilburn," said he, "the mill men are strikin' there, and the bosses have got armed men on every corner. Oh, the capitalists are watchin' for me, all right."