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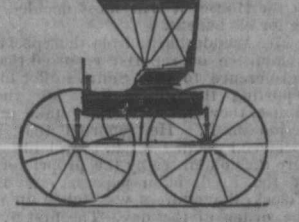
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Selected Literature.

From Harper's Bazar.

Harry Heathcote of Gangoll.

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

The heat of the day was intense—There was a wind blowing, but it was that which is called there the hot wind, which comes dry, scorching, sometimes almost intolerable, over the burning central plain of the country.

No one can understand without feeling it how much a wind can add to the sufferings inflicted by heat. The old man had on a dirty, wretched remnant of a dressing-gown, but Jerry was clothed simply in trousers and an old shirt. Only that the mosquitoes would have stung him, he would have dispensed probably with these. He had been quarrelling with his father respecting a certain horse which he had sold, of the price of which the father demanded a share. Jerry had unblushingly declared that he himself had "shaken" the horse—*Amplius*, had stolen him—

twelve months since on Darnley Downs, and was therefore clearly entitled to the entire plunder. The father had rejoined with animation that unless "half a quid" or ten shillings—were given to him as his contribution to the keep of the animal, he would inform against his son to the squatter on the Darnley Downs, and had shown him that he knew the very run from which the horse had been taken. Then the sons within had interfered from their beds, swearing that their father was the noisiest old "cuss" unhang, they having had their necessary slumbers disturbed.

At this moment the debate was interrupted by the appearance of a man outside the veranda. "Well, Mr. Jerry, how goes it?" asked the stranger.

"What, Bos, is that you? What brings you up to Boobalong? I thought, you was ringing trees for that young set at Gangoll? I'll be even with him some of these days! He had the impudence to send a man of his up here last week looking for sheep-skins."

"He wasn't that soft, Mr. Jerry, was he? Well I've dropped working for him. How are you, Mr. Brownie? I hope I see you finely, Sir—It's a stiff sort of weather, Mr. Brownie, ain't it, Sir?"

The old man granted out some reply, and then asked Boscobel what he wanted.

"I'll just hang about for the day, Mr. Brownie, and get a little grub. You never begrudged a working-man that yet."

Old Brownie again granted, but said no word of welcome. That, however, was to be taken for granted, without much expression of opinion.

"No, Mr. Jerry," continued Boscobel, "I've done with that fellow."

"And so has Nokes done with him? Nokes is at work on Medlicott's Mill. That sugar business wouldn't suit me."

"An axen your hand is what you're fit for, Bos."

"There's a many things I can turn my hand to, Mr. Jerry. You couldn't give a fellow such a thing as a noddler Mr. Jerry, could you? I'd offer you money for it, only I know it would be taken amiss. It's that hot that a fellow's very in'ards get narched up."

Upon this Jerry slowly rose, and going to a cupboard, brought forth a medium of spirits, which he called Battle-Axe, but which was supposed to be brandy. This Boscobel swallowed at a gulp, and then washed it down with a little water.

"Come, Jerry," said the old man, somewhat relenting his wrath, "you might as well give a drop, as it is going about."

The two brothers, who had now been thoroughly aroused from their sleep, and who had heard the enticing sound of the spirit bottle, joined the party, and so they drank all round.

"Heathcote's in an awful state about them fires, ain't he?" asked Jerry.

Boscobel, who had squatted down on the veranda, and was now lighting his pipe, bobbed his head.

"I wish he was cuss, burned out over head and ears," said Jerry.

Boscobel bobbed his head again, nodding with great studied pipe.

"If the treated me fellows," continued Jerry, "n't have a yard of grass left—nor a hogget. I'd come here and w—any one about specially."

sheep-skins, cuss his impudence! I sent that German fellow away with a flea in his ear."

"Carl Bender?"

"It's some such name as that."

"He's all in all with the young squires," said Boscobel. "And there's a chap there called Jacko—he's another."

He gets 'em down there to Gangoll, and the ladies talk to 'em, and then they'd go through fire and water for him. There's Mickey—he's another, j'et the same way. I don't like them ways, myself."

"Too much of master and man about it, ain't there, Bos?"

Just that, Mr. Jerry. That ain't my idea of a free country. I can work as well as another, but I ain't going to be told that I'm a swindler because I'm making the most of my time."

"He turned Nokes out by the scruff of his neck?" said Jerry. Boscobel again bobbed his head. "I didn't think Nokes was the sort of fellow to stand that."

"No more he ain't," said Boscobel. "Heathcote's a good plucked un all the same," said Joe.

"I say he's a good plucked un. I'm not standing up for him. Nokes is half a stone heavier than him, and ought to have knocked him over."

That's what you'd've done, wouldn't you, Bos? I know I would."

"He'd've had my axe at his head," said Boscobel.

"We all know Joe's game to the backbone," said Jerry.

"I'm game enough for you anyway," said the brother. "And you can try it out any time you like."

"That's right; fight like dogs; do," said the old man.

The quarrel at this point was interrupted by the arrival of another man, who crept up around the veranda exactly as Boscobel had done. This was Nokes, of whom they had that moment been speaking. There was silence for a few moments among them, as though they feared that he might have heard them, and Nokes stood hanging his head as though half ashamed of himself. Then they gave him the same kind of greeting as the other men had received. Nobody told him he was welcome, but the spirit jar was again brought into use, Jerry measuring out the liquor, and it was understood that Nokes was to stay there and get his food. He too gave some account of himself, which was supposed to suffice, but which they all knew to be false. It was Sunday and they were off work at the sugar-mill. He had come across Gangoll run, intending to take back with him things of his own which he had left at Bender's hut, and having come so far, I thought that he would come on get his dinner at Boobalong. As was being told, a good deal was of Harry Heathcote. Nokes declared that he had come right across Gangoll, and explained that he would not have been at all sorry to meet master Heathcote in the bush. Master Heathcote had his own way up at the station when he was backed by a lot of his own hands; but a good time was coming, perhaps. Then Nokes gave it to be understood very plainly that it was the settled practice of his life to give Harry Heathcote a thrashing. During all this there was an immense amount of bad language, and a large proportion of the art which in the colony is called "blowing." Jerry, Boscobel, and Nokes all boasted, each that on the first occasion he would give Harry Heathcote such a beating that a whole bone should hardly be left in the man's skin.

"There isn't one of you that would touch him," said Joe, who was known as the freest fighter in the Brownie family.

"And you'd eat him?" said Jerry.

"That's what I'd do," said Jerry.

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they retired into the outer kitchen, prepared it for themselves, and there ate their dinner, and each of the brothers did the same for himself in the big room—Joe, the fighting brother, provided for his father's wants as well as his own. One of them had half a leg of cold mutton, so that he was saved the trouble of cooking, but he did not offer to share this comfort with the others. An enormous kettle of tea was made, and that was common among them. While this was being consumed, Boscobel put his head into the room, and suggested that he and his mate wanted a drink. Whereupon Jerry, without a word pointed to the kettle, and Boscobel was allowed to fill two pans.

Such was the welcome which was always accorded to strangers at Boobalong.

"After their meal the men came back into the veranda, and there were more smoking and sleeping, more boasting and snoring. Different allusions were made to the spirit jar, especially by the old man, but the veranda was in vain. The bottle was Jerry's own property, and that he had already been almost completely liberal. But he had a view. He was quite sure that Boscobel and Nokes had not come from the same source. The chance coincidence of something to propose, and their own way they would take, position before they left, to make it possible to the intended result."

Nokes had explained his purpose to return that night to the Mill. The proposition would be made some seven, when the day was over, give way suddenly to the first walked off, stopping in a veranda in a half-drunken manner, looking now and then at him Boscobel jumped up, hitched up his trousers, and the first man. At a short interval Jerry passed on to the big room to the end of the veranda.

The other two men, however, were not so easily satisfied. There's a sort of old man, as Jerry said, "Of course," said Jerry.

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look himself into his hat, and was safe from further questioning that night.

CHAPTER VII.

All the Saturday night Boscobel had been on the run, and he returned home till nearly dawn Sunday morning.

prayers were the congreg.

Heathcote and Jerry, and Jacko, rather avowed themselves to be in the same way.

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