

THE HOUSE WITH THE GREEN SHUTTERS

BY GEORGE DOUGLAS.

CHAPTER VII.

John Gourlay, the younger, was late for school, in spite of the nervous titter he fell into when he shrank from the bodies' hard stare at him. There was nothing unusual about that; he was late for school every day. To him his father was still the wilderness where he played a most appropriate role. If his father was not about he would hang round his mother till the last moment, rather than be on to school. "Bleach-the-boy" as the master had been christened by his scholars. "Mother, I have a pain in my head," he would whimper, and she would condole with him and tell him she would keep him at home with her—were it not for the dread of her husband. She was quite sure he was anything but strong, poor boy, and that the schooling was bad for him; for it was really remarkable how quickly the patient of his father was allowed to stay at home, why he got better just directly! It was not often she dared to keep him from school, however, and if she did, she had to hide him from his father.

On school mornings the boy shrank from going out with a shivering that was almost physical. When he walked through the Green Gate with his bawling aldering at his hip (not braced between the shoulders, like a birch scholar's) he used to feel ruefully that he was in for it now—and the Lord alone knew what he would have to put up with ere he came home! And he always had the feeling of a fresh slave when he passed the gate on his return, never failing to note with delight the clean smell of the yard after the stuffiness of school, sucking it in through glad nostrils, and thinking to himself, "Oh, how good it is to be home!" On Friday nights, in particular, he used to feel so happy that, becoming arrogant, he would try his hand at bullying John Gilmour in imitation of himself. "Oh, how good it is to be home!" On Friday nights, in particular, he used to feel so happy that, becoming arrogant, he would try his hand at bullying John Gilmour in imitation of himself.

As he crept along the school road with a rueful face, he was alone, for Janet, who was always earlier at school. The absence of children in the sunny street lent to his depression. He felt forlorn; if there had been a chattering crowd marching alone, he could have been much more at his ease.

Quite recently the school had been fitted up with varnished desks, and John, who inherited his mother's nervous senses with his father's lack of pride, brushing shavings and sawdust from his white apron, was no other sign of life in the sunshine. Only from the smiddy, far away, came at times the tink of an anvil.

John crept on up the street, keeping close to the wall. It seemed to him that there was at that hour; everything had a quiet unfamiliar look. The white walls of the house approached the street with their silent faces.

"Johnny dear, what's wrong w' ye?" cried his mother, when he stole in through the scullery at last. "Are ye ill, lad?"

"I wanted to come home," he said. "I was no defence; it was the sad and simple expression of his wish.

"I had to go to school," he said, bitterly. "I aye want to be at home."

"Johnny," she cried in concern, "what's the matter with your lip, dear? Has anybody been meddling w' ye?"

"It was Swipsey Broom," he said. "Did ever a body hear?" she cried. "Things have come to a fine pass when decent weans can go to the school without a hank of nunchon on their backs."

"Oh, but you let him have it," swaggered John. "I threatened to knock the back of his head. The other boys were on his side, or I would have walloped him."

"Atweel, they would a' be on his side," she cried. "But it's just envy, Johnny. Never mind, dear; you'll soon be a man, and then there's no more of them has the business that you have waiting ready to step in!"

"Mother," he pleaded, "let me bide here for the rest o' the day!"

"If you gie me some o' your novelles to look at, I'll go up to the garret and hide, and ye can ask Jenny no to tell me to read 'em. I'll be a man, and ye can ask Jenny no to tell me to read 'em. I'll be a man, and ye can ask Jenny no to tell me to read 'em."

"Hoh! hoh! hoh!" yelled the others. They halted Swipsey's action with delight because, to their minds, it exactly met the case. It was the one fit return to his bounding.

Beneath the wet plunk of the mud John started back, bumping his head against the wall behind him. The sticky pellet clung to his brow, and he

him and his books that a boy loves; there he is lord of his imagination; in the impertinent world is hidden from his view, he is the great Turpin at night beneath the glimmer of the moon. What boy of sense would read about Turpin in a mere respectable parlor? A hayloft's no better place, where you can hide in a dusty corner, and watch through a chink the baffled minions of Bow street, and hear Black Bess—good lady!—stamping in her secret stall, and be ready to descend when a friendly order comes. "Pericho! But if there is no hayloft at hand a mere garret will do very well. And so John should have been in his glory—was indeed for a while. But he showed his difference from the right kind of a boy by becoming lonely. He had inherited from his mother a silly kind of interest in silly books, but to him reading was a painful process, and he could never read. "And that poker, that there's a history w' it! I made a point of the making o' it. He was an ill-bred little whelp, the bodie in Glasgow, I think. I'll tell you I would give a good deal for the poker-headed fellow, the same size as the rim of the fender! What d'ye want w' a heavy-headed poker? Says he, 'a' ye need's a bit sma' thing to rype the ribs w'." In that say, says I, "How do you know what I want?"

"I went to Glasgow and ordered it special. It came to Skeighan by the steamer, and my own beasts brought it over the road. His head was fixed, added, complacently; 't's unusual w' a range."

The massive fender ran from end to end of the fireplace, projecting a little in front; its rim, a square bar of heavy steel, with bright sharp edges.

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Loranogie thought it a silly thing of Gourlay to be so fond of the poker. But that was just like him, of course. The moment the body in Glasgow opposed his whim, Gourlay, he knew, would make a point o' it.

"Deed you could," said Loranogie; "ye exactly kill him w' the one look."

The elder engaged with the more important matters, paid no attention to the children, who had pushed between them to the front and were looking up at their faces, as they talked, with curious and trusting eyes.

"It's a fine morning, Mr. Gourlay," simpered the stranger. His air was that of a forward tenant who thinks it a great thing to pass remarks on the weather with his laird.

Gourlay cast a look at the drooping heavens.

"It was not in Gourlay to see the beauty of that grey wet dawn. A fine morning to him was one that burnt the back of your neck."

The stranger laughed; a little deprecating giggle. "I mean it was fine weather for the fields," he explained. He had meant nothing of the kind, of course; he had merely been talking at random in his wish to be civil to that important man, John Gourlay.

"Impm; it's fine weather for the fields!" "Are you a farmer then?" Gourlay asked, with his eye on the white waistcoat.

"Oh—oh, Mr. Gourlay! A farmer, no, HI—hi! I'm not a farmer, I daresay, no, ye have no mind of me!"

"No," said Gourlay, regarding him very gravely and steadily with his dark eyes. "I cannot say, sir, that I have the pleasure of remembering you."

"Man, I'm a son of auld John Wilson, of Brigaboe!"

"Oh, auld Wilson, the mole-catcher!" said contemptuous Gourlay. "What's this ye christened him now? 'Toddling Johnnie,' was it noat?"

Wilson colored. But he sniggered to himself at the awkwardness of the remark. A toward always sniggers when insulted, pretending that the insult is only a joke of his opponent, and therefore to be laughed aside. So he escaped the quarrel which he fears a show of anger would only serve to tell and Andrew's his furniture."

"I declare!" said the astonished Brodie. "He's smart-looking boy that, will that be a son of his?"

He pointed to a sharp-faced urchin of twelve who was busy carrying chairs round the corner of the barn, to the tiny house where Wilson meant to live. He was a red-haired boy with an upturned nose, dressed in shirt and knickerbockers only. The cross of his braces came to his eyes, and even he seemed to be the space of a shirt between the top line of his breeches and his shoulders. His knickers were open at the knee, and the black stockings below them were wrinkled slackly down his thin legs, being tied loosely above the calf with dirty white strips of cloth instead of garters. He had no cap, and it was seen that his hair had a "cow-lick" in front; it slanted up from his brow, the way of a sick kind of tuft. There was a violent squint in one of his sharp grey eyes, so that it seemed to flash at the world across the bridge of his nose. He was so eager at his work that his clumsy-looking boots—they only looked clumsy because the legs were stuck to were so thin-skidded on the cobbles as he whipped round the barn with a chair inverted on his poll. When he came back for another chair, he sniggered and heepled a tune of his own making, in shrill disconnected jerks, and sometimes wiped his nose on his sleeve. And the bodies watched him.

"'Aith, he's keen," said the Provost. "And what on earth has Wilson ta'en auld Jamieson's house and barn for? They have stude empty since I knna whan," quoth Alexander Toddie, forgetting his English in surprise.

"They say he means to start a business! He's made some barbees in Aberdeen, they're telling me, and he thinks he'll set Barbie in a love w' it."

"Ou, he means to work a perfect revolution!" "In Barbie!" cried astounded Toddie. "In Barbie e'en't," said the Provost. "It would take a heap to revolutionize hit," said the baker, the ironic man.

"There's a chance in that hoose," Brodie burst in, ignoring the baker's jibe. "Dod, there's a chance, sirs, wonder it never occurred to me before."

"Are ye thinking ye have missed a gude thing?" grinned the Deacon. "But Brodie's idea was to start a business! He's made some barbees in Aberdeen, they're telling me, and he thinks he'll set Barbie in a love w' it."

"Atweel," said he, "there's a chance, Mr. Brodie. That road round to the back's a handy thing. You could take a horse and cart brawly through an opening like that. And there's a gey bit ground at the back, too, when a body comes to the morning, that Wilson 'what line's he meaning to purchase?" queried Brodie, whose mind,

that went down the street two were the usual carrier's carts, the other two were off to Fleckie with meal, and the two that were to be seen since they were to bring back the iron-work which Templandmur needed for his new improvements. Though the Templar had reformed greatly since he married his black wife, he was still far from having his place in proper order, and he had often to depend on Gourlay for the carrying of stuff which a man in his position should have had horses of his own to bring.

Generally stood at his gate he pondered with heavy cunning how much he might charge Templandmur for bringing the ironwork from Fleckie. He decided to charge him for the whole day, though that it would be spent in taking his own meat to Donnerston. In that he was carrying out his usual policy—which was to make each side of his business help the other.

As he stood puzzling his wits over Templandmur's account, his lips were fixed in and out, to assist the slow process of his brain. His eyes narrowed between peering lids, and their light seemed to turn inward as he fixed his eyes on the stone in the middle of the road. His head was tilted that he might keep his eyes upon the stone; and every now and then, as he mused, he rubbed his chin slowly between the thumb and fingers of his hand, as if he were giving up to the thought of Templandmur's account he failed to see the figure advancing up the street.

At last the scurrying of a boot on the wet road struck his ear. He turned with his best glow on the man who was approaching; more of the "Wha-the-bleeze-are-you?" look than ever in his eyes—because he had been caught unawares.

The stranger wore a light-yellow overcoat, and he had been walking a long time in the rain, apparently, for the shoulders of the coat were quite black with the wet, these black patches showing in strong contrast with the white of the overcoat, and the muddied spats he wore looked big and ungainly in consequence. In his appearance there was an air of dirty and pretentious well-to-do-ness. It was not a credit rather. It was not every working man's coat that came back with fur lined in the bank. And here Gourlay had treated him like a dog! Ah, well, he would maybe be upsides with Gourlay yet, so he might!

"Such a rickie of furniture I never saw!" said the Provost, who had been said "Good morning!" It had slipped out of him unawares, and Gourlay had taken it up with an ironic birr that rang in his ears now, poisoning his blood. He felt equal in fancy to a thousand "four-ies now—so strong was he in wrath against him. He had gone forward to pass pleasant remarks about the weather, and why should he not?—he was no disgrace to Barbie, but a credit rather. It was not every working man's coat that came back with fur lined in the bank. And here Gourlay had treated him like a dog! Ah, well, he would maybe be upsides with Gourlay yet, so he might!

"Cunning!" said Brodie, breathing the word low in expressive admiration.

"Demmed cute!" said Sandy Toddie. "Very thart!" said the Deacon. "But the place has been falling down since ever I have mind o't," said Sandy Toddie. "He's a very clever man if he makes anything out of that."

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DISCRIMINATION AGAINST JAPS IN FRISCO

Missionary Committee of Methodist Episcopal Church Approves of Action of Roosevelt.

Buffalo, Nov. 3.—The general missionary committee of the Methodist Episcopal church assembled in Buffalo to make its annual appropriations to home and foreign missions, expressed itself in the strongest terms to-day with regard to the anti-Japanese situation in California.

The resolution adopted was in part as follows:

"With a sense of shame as Americans, and a feeling of sorrow as Christians, we have heard from time to time of the indignities, insults, and even violence inflicted on the natives of Japan, Korea, and China by certain classes of persons who resent the presence of these foreigners on American soil. We deplore the sentiment of humanity, and the spirit of international hospitality, should ever protect such strangers as are found to be lawfully within our gates, even in the absence of the obligations imposed by the solemn compact of international treaties.

"We particularly deplore at this time the reported municipal action of San Francisco, which discriminates against the subjects of a great and friendly nation, an action which, if rightly interpreted by our government, is a violation of our treaty obligations and the more to our discredit, because directed against a people who have shown themselves humane, even to their oppressors, and who have for decades been for the American nation and under the strong protection of whose government Americans have found favor and safety."

"We are confident that we represent the entire communion of our churches, three millions of Methodist Episcopalians—in our hearty approval of the prompt measures taken by President Roosevelt to make good the treaty pledges of our nation and to relieve the nation of any complicity in or sympathy with the conduct complained of."

RUNAWAY FIRE HORSES.

The extensive stables of the V. & E. Railway, within the western limits of its Phoenix, were endangered about midnight Thursday by a fire which broke out in a log cabin occupied by sectionmen and located in the gulch close to the trestle.

Long blasts from a railway locomotive whistle brought out the fire brigade in short time, and with a line of hose from the nearest hydrant the blaze was quickly extinguished. When it started, two Italians were sleeping in the cabin. In hitching up the city fire team the horses started before they had the bits in their mouths, and ran away, going over a mile with the wagon and paraphernalia before a wheel was broken and the horses stopped without further injury.

CHINESE WARSHIP SHORE.

Shanghai, Nov. 1.—The Chinese warship Chin Wan, captured at the entrance of the river. Assistance has been sent to her.

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"We particularly deplore at this time the reported municipal action of San Francisco, which discriminates against the subjects of a great and friendly nation, an action which, if rightly interpreted by our government, is a violation of our treaty obligations and the more to our discredit, because directed against a people who have shown themselves humane, even to their oppressors, and who have for decades been for the American nation and under the strong protection of whose government Americans have found favor and safety."

"We are confident that we represent the entire communion of our churches, three millions of Methodist Episcopalians—in our hearty approval of the prompt measures taken by President Roosevelt to make good the treaty pledges of our nation and to relieve the nation of any complicity in or sympathy with the conduct complained of."

RUNAWAY FIRE HORSES.

The extensive stables of the V. & E. Railway, within the western limits of its Phoenix, were endangered about midnight Thursday by a fire which broke out in a log cabin occupied by sectionmen and located in the gulch close to the trestle.

Long blasts from a railway locomotive whistle brought out the fire brigade in short time, and with a line of hose from the nearest hydrant the blaze was quickly extinguished. When it started, two Italians were sleeping in the cabin. In hitching up the city fire team the horses started before they had the bits in their mouths, and ran away, going over a mile with the wagon and paraphernalia before a wheel was broken and the horses stopped without further injury.

CHINESE WARSHIP SHORE.

Shanghai, Nov. 1.—The Chinese warship Chin Wan, captured at the entrance of the river. Assistance has been sent to her.