

SLAP-BANG

(From the French by J. Christie)

The little boy lay pale and listless in his small white cot, gazing with eyes, enlarged by fever, straight before him, with the strange fixity of illness which seems to see already more than is visible to living eyes.

The day was breaking, a calm, clear, lovely day of June. The light began to steal into the poor apartment where little Francis, the son of Jacques and Madeline Legrand, lay very near death's door.

"Is there anything that you would like?" they asked him. "No," he answered, "nothing."

To amuse him! True, they knew him well, their little Francis. They knew how it delighted him, when he was well, to go into the fields, and to come home loaded with white Hawthorn blossoms, riding on his father's shoulders.

"Look, there is the Broken Bridge. Tra-la-la. And there is a general you saw one once at Boulogne Wood, don't you remember. If you drink your medicine like a good boy, I will buy you a real one, with a cloth tunic and gold epaulettes. Would you like to have a general?"

"No," said the sick child, his voice dry with fever. "Would you like a pistol and bullets, or a crossbow?" "No," replied the little voice, desisively.

And so it was with everything—even with balloons and jumping-jacks. Still, while the parents looked at each other in despair, the little voice responded, "No! No! No!"

"But what is there that you would like, then, darling?" said his mother. "Come, whisper to me—to mamma, and she will tell her cheek beside him on the pillow.

The sick boy raised himself in bed, and, throwing out his eager hands towards some unseen object, cried out as in command and in entreaty, "I want Slap-bang!"

the riding-master by the heels, took a walk upon his hands, or threw up to the gas-light the soft felt hats, which he dexterously caught upon his skull, where, one by one, they formed a pyramid; while at every trick and every jest, his large dull face expanding with a smile in which the same catchword, sometimes to a roll of music from the band, "Slap-bang!"

That night Jacques brought the child a jointed clown, ablaze with spangles, which he had bought at a high price. Four days' wages would not pay for it, but he would willingly have given the price of a year's labor could he have brought a smile to the thin lips of the sick boy.

The child looked for a moment at the toy which sparkled on the bed-curtain. Then he said, sadly, "That is not Slap-bang. I want to see Slap-bang!"

It only Jacques could have wrapped him in the bed-clothes, borne him to the circus, shown him the clown dancing under the blazing gas-lights, and said, "Look there!"

But Jacques did better still. He went to the circus, obtained the clown's address, and then, with legs tottering with nervousness and agitation, climbed slowly up the stairs which led to the great man's apartment. It was a bold task to undertake!

But was this Slap-bang, this charming person called Monsieur Moreno, who received him in his study like a doctor, in the midst of books and pictures, and all the luxury of art? Jacques looked at him and could not recognize the clown. He turned and twisted his felt hat between his fingers, the other waited. At last the poor fellow began to stammer out excuses.

"Where do you live?" demanded Slap-bang. "Oh! close by The Rue des Abesses!" "Come!" said the other, "the little fellow wants to see Slap-bang—well, he shall see him."

When the door opened before the clown, Jacques cried out joyfully, "Cheer up, Francis! Here is Slap-bang!"

The child's face beamed with expectation. He raised himself upon his mother's arm, and turned his head towards the two men as they entered. Who was the gentleman in an overcoat beside his father, who smiled good-naturedly, but whom he did not know? "Slap-bang," they told him. It was all in vain. His head fell slowly back upon the pillow, and his great and sad blue eyes seemed to look out again beyond the narrow chamber walls, in search, unconscious search, of the spangles and the butterfly of the Slap-bang of his dreams.

"No," he said, in a voice which sounded inconsolable; "no; this is not Slap-bang!"

The clown, standing by the little bed, looked gravely down upon the child with a regard of infinite kindness. He shook his head, and looking at the anxious father and mother in her agony, said smiling, "He is right. This is not Slap-bang." And he left the room.

But all at once—half an hour had not elapsed since the clown had disappeared—the door was sharply opened, and behold! in his black, spangled tunic, the yellow tuft upon his head, the golden butterfly upon his breast and back, a large smile opening his mouth like a money box, his face white with flour, Slap-bang, the true Slap-bang, the Slap-bang of the circus, burst into view. And in his little white cot, with the joy of life in his eyes, laughing, crying, happy, saved, the little fellow clasped his feeble hands, and, with the recovered gaiety of seven years old, cried out, "Bravo! Bravo! Slap-bang! It is he, this time! This is Slap-bang! Long live Slap-bang! Bravo!"

When the doctor called that day, he found sitting beside the little patient's pillow, a white-faced clown, who kept him in constant ripple of laughter, and who was observing, as he stirred a lump of sugar at the bottom of a glass of cooling drink.

"You know, Francis, if you do not drink your medicine, you will never see Slap-bang again!"

The poor parents were both crying, but this time it was with joy. From that time till little Francis was on foot again, a carriage pulled up every day before the lodging of the workman in the Rue de Abesses; a man descended, wrapped in a great coat with the collar turned up to his ears, and underneath arrayed as for the circus, with his gay visage white with flour.

"What do I owe you, sir?" said Jacques to the good clown, on the day when Francis left the house for the first time. "For I really owe you everything!"

BE THERE A WILL, WISDOM POINTS THE WAY—The sick man pines for relief, but he dislikes sending for the doctor, which means bottles of drugs never consumed. He has not the resolution to load his stomach with compounds which smell villainously and taste worse. But if he have the will to deal himself with his ailment, wisdom will direct his attention to Parmalee's Vegetable Pills, which, as a specific for indigestion and disorders of the digestive organs, have no equal.

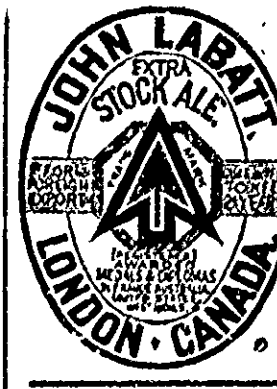
Advertisement for Pain-Killer medicine, featuring an illustration of a hand holding a bottle.

Advertisement for Niagara River Line, offering Chippewa, Chicora, and Corona trips.

Advertisement for Typewriters, listing various models and rental options.

Advertisement for Church Bells, offering chimes and bells for churches.

Pan-American Exposition BUFFALO



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The O'Keefe Brewery Co., Limited TORONTO. THE DOMINION BREWERY CO., Limited MANUFACTURERS OF THE CELEBRATED

Advertisement for White Label Ale, featuring a bottle illustration and text describing the product's quality.

Advertisement for The Brown Bros. Limited, a stationery and office supply store.

Advertisement for Cosgrave Brewery Co., offering ales and brown stouts.

Advertisement for H.C. Tomlin, a Toronto bakery.

Advertisement for F. Rosar, an undertaker.

Advertisement for The McIntosh Granite & Marble Co., offering monuments and stone work.

Advertisement for McCabe & Co. Undertakers.

Advertisement for Toronto Rug Works, offering good serviceable rugs.

Advertisement for Alex. Millard, an undertaker and embalmer.

Advertisement for Memorial Stained Glass Windows and Household Art Glass.

Advertisement for D. Mann & Co. Undertakers and Embalmers.

Advertisement for Church Bells, offering chimes and bells.

Advertisement for D. Mann & Co. regarding freight handlers and rail rates.

Table for the month of July 1902, showing the calendar, feast days, and indulgences. Includes the heading 'SEVENTH MONTH OF DAYS July THE PRECIOUS BLOOD' and '1902'.

Advertisement for 'The HOME CIRCLE' magazine, featuring a decorative border and the text 'OVER THE WAY'.

OVER THE WAY. Across in that mansion yonder Hall hidden by curtains of lace, I see through its polished windows, A child's sweet little face.

And here in my little cottage When my day's toil is done, I sit with my little darling And gaze on the setting sun.

My home is small and lowly, With its curtains of simple chintz, My baby's wardrobe only Some pretty colored prints.

Ask me how we judge each other. I thought her heartless and cold, So proud of her wealth and splendor, Of her satin's shimmering fold.

And now in my little cottage Though I toll hard all the day, I would not exchange with my neighbor.

Alas! how often we murmur And fill with regret the day, Thinking others have all the sunshine While our clouds are always gray.

A LINIMENT FOR THE LOGGER. Loggers lead a life which exposes them to many perils. Wounds, cuts and bruises cannot be altogether avoided in preparing timber for the drive and in river work, where wet and cold combined, are of daily experience, coughs and colds and muscular pains cannot but ensue.

CASTLES IN SPAIN. "If you want to know what a man is, examine his castles in the air," said an old, sick pauper in an English workhouse to a writer for The Spectator.

The obstacle to following the advice, and thus increasing our knowledge of human nature, is that these same castles are off the line of our railways, and that, even if we reach the portcullis, we are all too likely to be without the password.

What we should like to be is a deeper secret than what we are. We know that Raphael aspired to be a poet instead of a painter, and that "Dante once prepared to paint an angel."

The boy has visions of his triumphs at the bar or in the laboratory. The girl dreams of fame as a novelist or a singer, or of social power and charm. These are natural enough.

But the really interesting question is, "What is the air castle of the man or woman who in the eyes of the world has scored a brilliant success?"

SCHOOLBOYS' READING. Does the schoolboy of to-day know anything of Longfellow, Holmes, Whittier, James Russell Lowell and Fitz Greene Hallack, whose poems his father or even his elder brother can still recite? He is such a superior young person that we hesitate to question him as to what he really knows and what he has put behind him as belonging to a past age.

The modern school education is unquestionably a great advancement over that of even twenty years ago, yet it is not possible that in some ways its attitude is a trifle too iconoclastic. Conservatism and clinging traditions are, in their way, excellent habits for a commercial people, and we should be sorry to see the boy of to-day grow up entirely ignorant of all those things which make fragrant the memories of our own