

[Written for the Canadian Illustrated News.]

"SWEET HOME."

I.

There is a song whose simple name
Is with so many memories teeming,
That far more wisdom it can claim
Than other songs of wiser seeming.
This little song, how oft it cheers,
As through the world we friendless roam.
How many a long-lost friend appears
Whene'er we sing "Sweet Home!"

II.

It solaces the lonely hour.—
It soothes the weary troubled brain,
And paints with Fancy's magic power
Scenes which we ne'er may see again.
And to the sorrow-laden heart
Kind messengers of mercy come,
And evil, painful thoughts depart.
Whene'er we sing "Sweet Home!"

III.

Those words we've liped in childhood's glee,
Long ere we felt their mystic power,
And sung, while roving wild and free
In boyhood's careless, happy hour,
And still each joy of early days,
Gone like the ocean's lightest foam,
Returns before our mortal gaze.
Whene'er we sing "Sweet Home!"

IV.

"Sweet Home!" Ah! who can tell thy worth
To those that love thee, little song?
Yet all thy memories are of Earth,
And brighter hopes to Heaven belong.
Our earthly homes must pass away,
And while on earth we're doomed to roam,
But Heaven's joys will ne'er decay.—
Thene'er we sing "Sweet Home!"

JOHN KEADE.

A SUSPICIOUS OVERCOAT.

An Englishman's boast is his freedom; with a few trifling exceptions, such as sticking his heels up and expectorating wherever he pleases, an Englishman is as free as an American. He may be of any politics he chooses; he may profess any or no religion; he may abuse all countries, especially his own, to his heart's content; he may intone the church-service, and wear stoles and chasubles, and crosses and what not, if he can bear being hissed a little; he may wear any covering for the head which he fancies, if only he can make up his mind to bear with equanimity the street-boys' inquiries after his hatter; and of course he may walk in the streets of London on a bright summer-day with a light overcoat thrown over his arm—only then he must take the consequences.

The consequences to my friend Brown were of a very serious description: Brown was taken into custody on a charge of felony for this very offence. It was a particularly hard case, for Brown rather prided himself upon his probity, and had never stolen anything, except a few glances at a pretty woman, since he was at school, and then his thefts had only assumed the modified form of "cribbing" his lessons. Moreover, Brown came of a family of acknowledged rectitude: his father had been curate of a large parish with a small income; he had discharged his duties to his church and to society in a particularly zealous manner; to the former, by working himself into a consumption, of which he died at the age of thirty-four; and to the latter, by increasing its number with a family of seven. Yet the son of such a man, to question whose honour, let alone honesty, were to run a hundred-bladed penknife into the tenderest part of his body, found himself one summer-day in the grasp of a policeman.

Now, it happened on this wise. My friend, John Brown, in July, 1857, found himself the fortunate possessor of six weeks' holidays. These he was invited to spend with some kind friends at their house a few miles from London; and this simple incident was the origin of poor Brown's misfortune: for if he had not had to take a short drive into town on the day he left them, he would not have had an overcoat, and if he had not had an overcoat, he would have had no policeman's knuckles in his collar, and no charge of felony to answer. We little know what a day may bring forth: if ever any man took due precaution that he might pass without mishap through any particular four-and-twenty hours, that man was Brown, on the 1st July, 1857. He had been more than usually attentive to his private devotions that morning; all his best feelings had been awakened by the recent farewell he had taken of his kindest and dearest friends, and he descended from the vehicle, which stopped at the Royal Exchange, with a conscience void of offence towards everybody; and yet, before six hours had elapsed, he was destined to be dragged by the police along one of the principal streets of London, to the unbounded delight of a mob of vagabonds. From the Royal Exchange, the unconscious felon walked quietly along with his carpet-bag in his hand, and his overcoat upon his arm, to the Grand Cigar Divan in the Strand. Here he took the light refection of a cigar and a cup of coffee without any felonious intention, and also read the *Times* all through—firstly, for the patriotic purpose of seeing how his country was going on, and what was the opinion of the oracle in Printing-house Square upon things in general; secondly, that he might inform himself whether there was anybody dead he knew, which, if it be an offence at all, certainly amounts to no more than a misdemeanour. Having satisfied himself upon these points, the doomed man requested permission to leave his carpet-bag until his return, as he intended to dine at 'Simpson's' in the evening. Leave was given, and an obliging offer was made to take charge of the unhappy overcoat; this Brown declined, 'not knowing;' he was afraid it might get soiled: so the evil spirit prompted him to sally forth, still holding that which was so soon to work him woe.

The demon who had chosen Brown for his shuttlecock that day, now drove him in the direction of St. James' Street, to call upon a friend at the J. U. S. Club, which had then temporary accommodation next door to the 'Wellington.' Cheerfully he went to meet his fate, admiring as only a new arrival from the country properly can, the *fennum et opes strepitumque Romæ*, along the Strand, past the National Gallery, down Pall Mall, and up St. James Street. Had he found his friend at the club, he would have been saved; but Fortune had enticed the gallant gentleman away on purpose, and now she perfidiously whispered to Brown that he should pay a visit in the Regent's Park. As a horse, to whom a feed of corn is extended at a distance in the field, stands still, pricks up his ears, advances a few steps, kicks up his heels, and turns away, then trots up nearer, and gradually yields to capture for the sake of a sensual gratification; so Brown stood still and pondered, walked a few

strides forward, turned sharply round, and took a few steps back, then turned again and quickened his pace, and ultimately crossed Piccadilly, for he snuffed the luncheon from afar, and for that consideration he determined to submit to confinement in a dismal house for the space of a couple of hours; alas! poor man, he never arrived there! Piously pondering upon the Thirty-nine Articles, for he had some idea of taking holy orders, he wended his way through the Burlington Arcade, and turning to the right, reached Regent Street by Vigo Street. Regent Street is (or rather was) poor Brown's delight; he used to declare he preferred it to the Boulevards; he maintained with warmth that the houses might not be so lofty, perhaps, as those in the Boulevards, and not so regular, but the very irregularity was itself a charm. Was not variety proverbially charming? and suppose it wasn't so long, was there any particular virtue in length? There were many things besides sermons which were better for not being too long, and streets, in his opinion, belonged to them. Upon this particular occasion, however, Brown was too full of luncheon—mentally, I mean, for otherwise he was quite the contrary—to pay much attention to his favourite street; he crossed hastily to the 'sunny' side, and had arrived nearly at the 'circus,' when a young lady fashionably attired, and very good-looking, but with rather more assurance than is considered becoming in any but ladies of very high rank or very low morals, tripped gaily up to him, and said: 'Why Charles, what are you doing in town? Now, Brown—whose name, you know, isn't Charles, but John—is a very polite man, if you give him time to collect himself, and would rather have his hair clipped quite close to his head à la convict, than be guilty of abruptness or rudeness to anything—however well-dressed—in the shape of a woman; he was proceeding, therefore, to extricate himself by a civil speech from his extraordinary situation, and had just stammered out a few words, when he felt a tap upon his shoulder, administered from behind. He looked over his shoulder, and saw a man, rather under the middle height, with a face bathed in perspiration, the evident consequence of accelerated motion upon a hot summer-day, who remarked curtly: 'You were in my shop just now, sir.' Brown—who could have made an affidavit before the most searching of juries that he had never seen the man before in his life, and who naturally supposed that a recent visitor at the shop had left something there by mistake, which 'the unknown,' like an honourable British tradesman, was anxious to restore—simply told him civilly, that he was mistaken; and then turned away to finish his explanatory speech to the lady who had done him the honour of claiming his acquaintance; but, lo! the damsel had vanished, and 'the unknown,' darting in front of Brown to impede his progress, continued: 'O yes, you were, and you've something belonging to me either in your pocket or under your coat—I know why you carry an overcoat in July.'

Poor Brown's knees were loosened; it flashed across his mind that he had read in the papers how members of the swell-mob hid booty under overcoats, and transferred it to a 'gaily dressed female,' who made off with it securely, and he felt as if the fates had conspired to ruin him for life; his imagination conjured up the vision of a whole column of police reports, in which his own name stood prominently out in connection with the terms, 'Master of Arts,' 'impudent robbery,' 'gay female,' 'holy orders,' and everything incongruous. His first idea, as he afterwards confessed, was to hit 'the unknown' as hard as he could between the eyes, and then fly; but half a moment's reflection convinced him that this would be the worst thing he could do; a cry of 'Stop, thief!' would be raised, and the suspicious circumstances against him would thus be materially increased. 'I therefore,' to use Brown's very words, 'am afraid I forgot all about the Thirty-nine Articles, and swore considerably; then took off my hat, and told 'the unknown,' in terms too strong for repetition, to take a good look at me, and make sure of his man, for as certainly as he was grossly mistaken, so certainly would I make him answer for his conduct. My vehemence appeared to stagger him a little, but he soon recovered himself, and with the air of determination suitable to a man who has lost his property, and at any rate caught somebody, he expressed his intention of 'going on with it.' 'Very well,' said I, trying to look cool, 'there's a police-station close by, and I'll walk there with you.' On we went in silence for a yard or two, when he, seeing me so quiet, after a few furtive glances, such as a man casts at a dog of whose temper he isn't quite certain, when he wants to put his collar on, caught hold of my cuff. 'Come, come,' I said, 'I am quite willing to go with you, but you really mustn't touch me. Will you leave go?' 'No,' I had a tight-fitting glove on, but I doubled my fist as well as I could, and with as much strength as my condition—for I confess I was 'all of a tremble'—would allow, I made my right hand intimately acquainted with his nose. The force of the blow was sufficient, I am happy to say, to release me, though at the expense of a rent in my cuff, caused by his weight as he staggered back. Then a scene of confusion arose such as I never wish to be an actor in again at two o'clock p. m. of a July day in Regent Street. 'The unknown,' after anything but a scientific display of pugnacity, rushed at my throat with cries of 'He's stolen my scarf!' and made an ineffectual attempt to grasp me by the hair, but as that, like *scotch*, is a game for two, I took the liberty of taking a good clutch of his locks with one hand, and putting my other arm round his waist, was seized with an irresistible desire to break his back against the kerb-stone; but though I did my best, my nerves had been so shaken that he did not quite go down; and just as I was proceeding to a second trial, the horny hand of a policeman was inserted in my cravat, and I was gruffly requested to 'come along with him.' I demanded the free use of my windpipe; this I obtained, and then begged for a cab, as there was a mob collected, yelling and howling in the most disagreeable manner. This Dogberry steadily refused, merely remarking that 'he hadn't got no orders about a keb,' and my reply that 'it wasn't likely he could have, as there was nobody to give him any,' was perfectly unavailing; so I was obliged to walk arm-in-arm—for he would persist in believing I wanted to escape—to the nearest police station.

Here I was put behind an iron machine of some kind, and carefully guarded, whilst 'the unknown' enumerated my fabulous crimes. I had been, I found to my astonishment, into his shop, and purchased a scarf, and whilst he turned away to attend to something behind him, I had bolted with the article, retaking the money I had laid down for payment; and I had, moreover, purloined two other scarfs. All this story I of course indignantly declared to be an utter falsehood, but a police-sergeant is impossible. The sergeant in my case evinced no disposition to believe or disbelieve either one side or the

other; he simply demanded my name and address, and my accuser's witness. The shopboy, who was supposed to have beheld my villainous conduct, was summoned, and as soon as he made his appearance, he gave one look at me, and exclaimed to his master: 'You've made a mistake, sir; I never saw this gentleman before in my life.'

'Here's a pretty business,' said the sergeant, tearing up the charge-sheet: 'the charge is dismissed, of course.'

'Not at all,' said I. 'I told this man he should answer for it, and I insist upon being taken to the nearest magistrate.'

A cab was sent for, and away we went to Marlborough Street. My reception there was anything but flattering; I was told to sit down upon a bench, and as I sat and ruminated, an official inquired: 'Whose man is this, and what's the charge?' My captor answered: 'Mine—felony!'

'It's an infamous lie!' I shouted. 'A man has made a false charge against me, and I want the magistrate's advice.'

'That's a very different story,' said the official. 'Come along with me, please.'

So we were ushered into the magistrate's presence, where I made a vehement harangue about my grievances, to which I must say the magistrate listened very patiently and courteously, and when I had done, said sternly: 'Policeman, what is the charge?'

Again my captor, who, in common with most constables, I believe, seemed, contrary to the principles of British law, to consider every prisoner guilty until he is proved not guilty, and even when he is, gave his former laconic reply: 'Felony, your worship.'

I burst out afresh, but was checked by the magistrate, who asked 'the unknown' if he meant to proceed with the charge.

He shook his head, and muttered that he had made a mistake; and he looked so utterly miserable that I felt inclined to forgive him. Had his nose been visibly swollen—for though I am not a vindictive man, I must say I examined that feature attentively—I would; but it did not appear so to me, so I begged the magistrate to tell me how I could obtain redress.

'Oh, you can have your civil action, sir, if you like; you had better consult a solicitor. And as for you, sir,' he said, turning to 'the unknown,' 'you must take care what you do in this country. If you bring charges of felony against people with no better reason for suspecting them than because they are like other people in build, are accosted by improper characters in the street, and carry overcoats upon their arms, you will some day find yourself in a very unpleasant predicament.'

I thanked the magistrate, demanded my persecutor's name and address, and commenced my triumphant exit from the court. How differently was I treated now! A particularly stolid policeman, laying his forefinger on his nose, and motioning me with a wink and a smile into a corner, whispered: 'You go to Lewis—he'll get a 'united pound.'

Another official, who had contemptuously measured me from head to foot as I entered, now came up to congratulate me, and to enforce the policeman's advice, saying, as he did so, to a friend: 'Here's a blessed tradesman been falsely charging a gentleman; he should go to Lewis, shouldn't he?'

Coldly declining their officious advice, I dashed into the street. 'Hurray!' cried the little boys who had followed me to the court—'Hurray!' give us a copper, your honour.' 'I said it wa'n't you. I offered to bet a farden it wa'n't—didn't I, Bill?' 'And I picked up yer 'at,' said another. 'That gent-man steal anything!' roared a full-grown man; 'why, he looks as if he'd be more likely to stand a quart.'

However, I was deaf to flattery; and calling a cab, drove away to the city, to a friend I had there who was an eminent solicitor. By his advice, I did not bring a civil action against 'the unknown;' for with legal nonchalance, he pointed out how it was simply a case of mistaken identity, and that a civil action would look vindictive; so 'the unknown' was allowed to compromise the matter by giving me a written apology, and paying a sum of money to the poor-box.

Thus was poor Brown the victim of his overcoat; and I really believe he cannot look upon a policeman or walk down Regent Street without a shudder, even unto this day.

THE BURNING ISLANDS.

Destruction of Santorin—A Two Years' Conflagration of an Island—Geological Wonders—The Whole Mediterranean Basin in Revolution.

The cable announced that on Friday, 1st. inst., a terrible earthquake was experienced throughout the Kingdom of Greece, by which great damage was done in many places. The only details of this catastrophe yet given us are that the town of Santorin was "reduced to a heap of ruins," and that a neighbouring island disappeared at the time of the shock. The town here spoken of is evidently the capital town of the Island of Santorin, no town of Santorin existing in Greece; and the neighbouring island is probably either Therasia or Aspro-Nisi, both of which were separated from it, as Pliny relates, by a tremendous earthquake which occurred in the year 236 before Christ.

Santorin and the islands in its vicinity have long been known as the theatre of some of the most curious and interesting geological phenomena of the globe. For now nearly two years a large portion of the Island of Santorin itself, on which the town of that name stands, or rather stood, has been literally burning up with subterranean fires. The flames burst out along the sea-line of the island in 1868, and they have never since ceased to rage, extending their area steadily, and presenting one of the most striking and terrible spectacles in the world. Scientific expeditions have been sent from the mainland of Greece, and from Austria, to observe this awful phenomenon, but the dwellers in Santorin themselves, like the residents of Torre del Greco, near Vesuvius, had not suffered its fearful proximity to disturb their devotion to the culture of their vineyards, esteemed the best in the Grecian Archipelago, even as those of the Vesuvius slope are reputed the best of Southern Italy. Santorin, the southernmost of the famous group of islands known as the Cyclades, lies about half-way between the Morea and the town of Candia, in Crete. It was known to the Phœnicians, by whom it was originally settled, as the "Beautiful," *Calliste*, the Round, *Srongule*, the latter name indicating its form previous to the catastrophe by which, as we have said, the islets of Therasia and of Aspro-Nisi were detached from it more than 2,000 years ago. Six centuries before Christ it had become powerful and populous enough to found the Libyan city of Cerene. In the third century of our era it was baptised by the Christian name of St. Irene, of which its modern name of Santorin is a corruption. Its area is comparatively small, as it is only forty-eight