

daring and fearless trapezist and tight-rope dancer, Mlle. Mimi, direct from Paris, of the little Fairy Queen, Snowball, who is to be borne aloft in one hand by the Bounding Brothers of Bohemia, in the thrilling one-act drama of the 'Peruvian Princess.'

The portraits of the rival stars attract much admiration and comment—in rather a coarse and highly-coloured state of art, it must be admitted, but sweetly pretty and simpering all the same, displaying a great redundancy of salmon-coloured bust and arms, and pronounced by those who have seen the fair originals, speaking likenesses.

And now all the town is to see them, the chariot races, the Bounding Brothers, the Fairy Queen, the Daughter of the Desert, the clown, and the rest of the menagerie.

It is a crisp, cool, fresh, yellow twilight; the world looks clean and well washed, after last night's rain. The sky is turquoise blue. there is a comfortable little new moon smiling down, as if it, too, had come out expressly to go to the circus.

Everybody is in fine spirits, there is much laughter and good-humoured chaffing, there are troops and troops of children—children of a larger growth, too, who affect to treat the whole affair with off-hand, good-natured contempt—only came to look after the young ones, you know—old boys and girls, who in their secret souls are as keen for the sport as any nine-year old of them all.

An immense throng is gathered on the common, watching with beating hearts and bated breath, for their first taste of rapture, the free sight of Mlle. Mimi walking up the rope. And amid this throng, in her Sunday 'things' quite 'of a tremble' with joyous expectancy stands Jemima Ann, waiting with the deepest interest of all for the first glimpse in her public capacity of the fair performer she has the honour of knowing in private life.

The band stands at ease giving the public tantalizing little tastes of its quality, working up the suspense of small boys to an agonizing pitch, laughing and talking to one another, as if this magical sort of thing were quite every-day life to them, when suddenly everybody is galvanized, every neck is strained, an indescribable murmur and rush goes through the crowd: 'Oh, hush! Here she is! Oh, my! Isn't she lovely! Oh-h-h!' it is a long-drawn, rapturous breath.

A vision has appeared—a vision all gold and glitter, all gauze and spangles, all rosy, floating skirts, a little flag in each hand, bare white arms, streaming yellow curls, twinkling pink feet, rosy smiling face! The band strikes up a spirited strain, and up, and

up, and up floats the fairy in rose and spangles.

Every throat stretches, every eye follows, every breath seems suspended, every mouth is agape. Profound stillness reigns. And up, and up, and up still floats the rose-pink vision; and now she stands on the dizzy top, a pink star against the blue sky, waving her flags, and kissing hands to the breathless crowd below. Now she is descending slowly, slowly, and slowly plays the band, and the tension is painful to all these good, simple souls.

A sort of involuntary gasp goes through them as with a light buoyant bound she is on terra firma, bowing right and left, and vanishing into the tent like the fairy she is.

'Oh-h-h! wasn't it lovely! Oh, ma, she is just too sweet for anything. Oh, pa, do let us hurry in and get a good seat. Was it Olympe? No, it wasn't, it was the other one, Mamzel Mimi.' Oh, I'm being scrooged to death. Pa, do let us hurry in—don't you see everybody is going!

Jemima Ann goes with the rest. It is the rarest of rare things for her to be off duty, but Aunt Samantha has relented for once, and her niece is here, fairly palpitating with expectant rapture.

All the boarders, washed and shining with good humour, much friction, and yellow soap, in brave array muster strong, and kindly little Mr. Doolittle has meekly presented 'Miss Jim' with a ticket. So she is swept onward and inward, with the crowd into the great canvas arena, and presently finds herself perched on an exquisitely uncomfortable shelf, her knees on a level with her chin, gazing with awe at the vast sawdust ring and the red curtain beyond, whence it is whispered the performers will presently emerge.

Then she glances about her—yes, there are the boarders, there is Mr. Rogers, there is the butcher and his family, there is the undertaker and his wife, there is the family grocer and his seven sons and daughters, there are quite numbers of ladies and gentlemen she knows. And all over the place there are swarms of children, children beyond any possibility of computation. A smell of sawdust and orange-peel, a pervading sense of hilarity and peanuts is in the atmosphere, the band plays as if it would burst itself with enthusiasm, and the evening performance triumphantly begins.

Long after this festive night, Jemima Ann tries to recall, dispassionately, all she has seen in this her first glimpse of wonderland, but it is all so splendid, so rapid, so bewildering to a mind used only to underground kitchens, and the society of black