

Choice Literature.

Harry's Rash Wish

BY THE HON. MRS. GREENE.

CHAPTER I.

I hate babies! I wish there were no such things in the world!" cried little Harry Thompson, as, having finished his first inspection of the nursery cot, he tripped across the floor with his little bare feet and climbed into bed. "I wish, nurse, you'd take that nasty cradle out of the room and bring back my rocking-horse instead."

"Indeed, Master Harry! I ain't goin' to do nothing of the kind, and I am ashamed of you, that I am, speakin' in such a heartless way of your little sister," replied nurse, reproachfully; "it is not so many years ago since you were rocking in the same cradle yourself, and a very peevish, cross little baby you were—always a screamin' or a whimin' at summit or other."

"I am sure I was never half so red or so ugly, or so small," cried Harry, taking his fairy tale book from the head of his little wooden crib, and thrusting it under the pillow. "What good are babies? they can't fight, or kill lions or tigers or buffaloes, or read fairy tale books or do anything useful."

"I can't say as how I see much use in readin' the silly stuff as is printed nowadays in fairy tale books," replied nurse, rather contemptuously; "and if I was you, Master Harry, I'd be thinkin' of sayin' my prayers when I put my head down on my pillow, instead of gabbling about hobgoblins and such like."

"Hobgoblins and fairies are not one scrap like each other, so there you are wrong, nurse," cried Harry, triumphantly; "Hobgoblins are like ghosts,—indeed, they are generally ghosts, with long white sheets and green eyes, and very hideous; but fairies are most beautiful things, with wings and yellow hair, and shining dresses, and wands, and they can come in and go out of the room, and make people invisible, or do anything like that."

"I wish, then, they'd make you invisible, Master Harry, or do something with you to keep you quiet, for there's not much chance of baby sleepin' while you keep such a chatter and nonsense; put your head down on the pillow now, and don't let me hear another word till the mornin'."

After this admonition from nurse there was silence in the nursery for a few minutes; but until Harry was actually asleep he could seldom cease talking, and presently he began again in a kind of a loud whisper, "I wish—I wish—oh! how I do wish something."

"What do you wish, Master Harry? is it a slice of the cake that I have in the press?" asked nurse, who after all was not an unkindly soul; and she rose and walked towards the cupboard.

"No, no, I did not mean the cake—though I should like a bit of that very much; but I wish so much I could be a fairy for one night—only for a single night, and then I know what I should do."

"What would you do?" and nurse having cut a slice from the cake placed it in Harry's outstretched hand.

"I would turn all the babies in the world into mice or rats or butter, as the enchanter did to the queen and her children in the golden bower, and then cats would eat them, and people would catch them, and soon there would be no more of them, and I should have my rocking-horse back in the nursery instead of that nasty cradle."

"Well—well, if ever I heard such an ideal!" murmured nurse to herself with a smile; "a turnin' of babies into mice and such like. I doubt but you'd be repentin' of your wish after a bit, if the fairies were just to take you at your word."

This speech of nurse's hardly reached Harry's ears, for having finished the cake, he was already half way into the land of dreams; he tried to answer her, but could not, and though his eyes were still blinking a little, and he could hear the singing of the kettle on the hob, yet he had an uncomfortable vision of seeing the baby crawl slowly out of the cradle on to the floor, and having looked all around it furtively, suddenly creep up the side of the nursery press and disappear, squeezing itself through the well-known mouse-hole out of which Harry had that very day picked the piece of cork placed there by the nursemaid Lizzie.

Harry did not look like looking any longer lest he should see it come out again, so he turned on his pillow and covered his face with his hands. But this was only a dream, such a thing could not really happen, and soon—very soon—Harry's eyelids closed altogether; he heard no longer the singing of the tea-kettle or the creak of the cradle rockers, and when the nurse came to replace the quilt which had fallen from his bed, he was fast asleep with his arm under his head, and his red-brown curls hanging in wonderful confusion over his pillow.

It was not very long after this that nurse herself began to yawn and grow sleepy. Having glanced at the clock, she put her knitting aside in the work-basket, and took the spectacles from her nose; she then lit the night-lamp and replaced the piece of cork in the cupboard, and all her preparations for the night having been completed, she raised the infant in her arms from the cradle, and as she looked into its little quiet face, she could not but smile over Harry's strange wish, that there might be no more babies in the world.

Soon the nursery was as still as might be; there were no angry gusts of wind that night rushing against the panes of glass or moaning in the chimney. The kettle sang itself quietly to sleep in the fender, the cinders creaked and tinkled and fell into the grate below, till at length the red glow died out, and the grate became black and sombre as everything else around it. The night-light flickered a little at first, and cast strange shadows on the wall, but soon its light also sank beneath its yellow rim, and only a faint glowing circle on the ceiling above showed that it still burned; it was a night for people to sleep, and to sleep deeply.

And very deeply little Harry slept, with his head pressed into his pillow and his

arm thrust under it, holding in loving embrace his much prized fairy tale book. Had he not slept so very soundly, he might perhaps have seen—or perhaps, indeed even in his sleep he did see—the fairies one by one, as the clock struck twelve, creeping out between the leaves of his book and climbing over the side of his bed, letting themselves stealthily down upon the floor.

I think Harry either must have felt them squeezing themselves out of the book, or he must have seen them, as they clamored down, for he raised himself on his elbow, and though his eyes appeared to be shut, still he seemed to follow all their movements.

And such a strange-looking lot as they were to be sure—enchanters and witches, gnomes, and lots of old well-known friends, such as Ali Baba and his forty thieves, and the yellow Dwarf, and Beauty and the Beast walking arm in arm, and Cinderella, whose train was carried by her two sisters; and at the head of the procession Little Snow-white, whose mother had so long wished that she might be born, and when she was born she was so lovely—oh! so lovely.

Harry could scarcely take his eyes off her; yes, it was quite plain to see that Harry was awake now, for he was so busy counting them, as they walked slowly past his bed, each with a wand in his or her hand, and so loudly did he number them, two and two and two, that nurse from her bed cried, "Hush—hush! be quiet there, Master Harry, with your two and two; this is the time for sleep, and not to be adding up your figures;" but then the curtains of nurse's bed were drawn, and she could not see the fairies all flitting along so grandly and in such order, creeping up the legs of the nursery table, till at last they were all gathered in a crowd upon the top.

Harry counted them twice over; there were just a hundred of them; and now, as they all joined hand in hand and made a circle round the night-lamp he could see them much plainer, soon gorgeous robes and dazzling dresses, and more resplendent than all the rest, Little Snowwhite in a dress of pure silver; she did not join hands with the others, but stood just inside the circle waiting as it were till they had taken their places.

Then some strange ceremony began, which interested Harry so much that he got up upon his knees, and stretched his head as far as he could to watch them. Little Snowwhite seemed to be making a speech, for she waved her hand to and fro, and clasped her hands, and appeared as if she were in some great trouble; and sometimes she pointed her wand, which was shaped like a spear, at the night-light, and sometimes Harry thought she pointed it at him, till all at once she seemed to waver and flicker as it were from side to side, and to totter, and though two knights rushed out from the circle and tried to catch her, they were too late, for she slipped through their arms like water, and sank into a little white heap on the table, just for all the world like a flake of snow.

This seemed to cause a great hubbub and commotion, the circle was quite broken up, and a crowd of angry faces gathered round the glass which held the night-light, and Harry could see that they were all plunging their spears or wands into the boiling grease; and as each successive gnome or fairy drew it out it seemed to him they looked furiously across the room at him, and such a buzz and hum began, and surging of heads round the light, that Harry grew quite terrified and crept back under the clothes, where he would have hidden his face also, only the night-light seemed to grow frightened as well as all the row and fuss they were making around it, for it gave two or three great leaps of red flame in its socket, and then went suddenly out with a splutter and crackle, leaving the room in total darkness, and all the fairies in dismay and confusion.

Nor could Harry feel quite comfortable himself, for he disliked very much being in the dark, especially with such a lot of angry fairies creeping about the room like wasps, and as the thought of wasps came into his head he heard suddenly a great humming and humming and buzzing, and he knew that all the gnomes and creatures were creeping up the side of his bed again as fast as ever they could, in great hurry and confusion, and as each of them passed by his face to creep back under the pillow, they hissed out some words to his ear that sounded to him like "Sleep, sleep, sleep," and at the same moment plunged the sharp point of their wands into his eyelids, till at last, when the hundredth gnome had buzzed the word "sleep" into his ear, he did, strange to say, fall sound asleep, and into such a very long deep sleep as I hope you and I may never experience for ourselves.

(To be continued.)

The children of a clergyman's family were making themselves happy at tea propounding conundrums. Directly one of them said, "Who was the meekest woman?" The Dominie seemed struck with a fresh thought, and replied very quickly, "We don't read of any." But the Madame made herself even with him when she rejoined with quite as much quickness, "Well, we read of only one such man, and from the fuss that's made about him it's plain they're scarce."

"Who has not longed for an ideal, and yet a real, friend, one who should exactly understand us, to whom we could tell everything, and in whom we could altogether confide—one who should be very wise and very true, one of whose love and unfeigned interest we could be certain? There are other points for which we could not hope: that this friend should be very far above us, and yet the very nearest and dearest, and ways with us, thinking of us, always doing kind and wonderful things for us, undertaking and managing everything, forgetting nothing, failing in nothing, quite certain never to change and never to die, so that this one grand friendship should fill our lives, and that we really never need trouble about anything for ourselves any more at all. Such is our Royal Friend and more; for no human possibilities of friendship can illustrate what He is to those to whom He says, 'Ye are my friends.' And we, even we, may look up to our glorious King, our Lord and our God and say, 'This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend!'—F. R. Haergeral (in The Day of Days).

"No Society."

The faction fight over the Saratoga hotel naturally leads to the consideration of the same spirit as manifested in an indefinite variety of other ways. It has crept even into the church, and shows itself often in the faintest manner, in circumstances which, apart from experience, might have been thought too solemn to tolerate its presence, or its influence. Cases have occurred in which members of congregations sat down at the Lord's table according to their worldly rank, and in such a way as that their super sensitiveness might not be troubled by the presence of "vulgar persons."

First, the lord of the manor would "sit down," so served in solitary grandeur with the sacramental bread and wine, got an appropriate address delivered by the snob of a clergyman for his special advantage, and then give place to those next in rank—the smaller gentry—who again would be followed by a batch of the wealthier farmers, and then the great mass of the common people in their native offensive rudeness would be allowed to approach and

"Draft The chalice of the grapes of God."

This was a little more grotesque and offensive than usual, but not very much so. What are a great many congregations after all, but something like society clubs? and what is often the great constraining reason for going to this church and that, but simply the society to be met and cultivated there? The ambitious wife of a prosperous tradesman by and by discovers that their "clergyman" is not so "acceptable" as he used to be. Poor man what is the matter? have his wits gone a wool gathering? or has his religious fervour become cooled down? Is that poor woman become so brilliantly intellectual that he can't preach "up" to her? Oh dear no. She is dying for "better society" than that congregation affords. Her son is studying Latin and has got the length—baker's son as he possibly is—of understanding that the *crum* in "crumpet" is long and the *pet* short, and that consequently it is awful that he should be connected with an unfashionable church, or that he should have no chance except among tradesmen's daughters. Mark such families. As sure as anything they will be off one of these days to a more fashionable church, and will lay all the blame on the poor minister foreman as if he did not preach so well, when all their thoughts were about "society," and who should by and by be entered on their calling list. Were it worth while we could give illustrations of this by actual cases in Toronto, Hamilton, London, etc., nay, in almost every town or village in the province or on the continent. All the flitter, and movement, and change, professedly for the glory of God and the good of their souls, when notoriously it was all from a spirit of flunkeyism, and from an abject desire to get into what they fancied "good society,"—

"for the children's sake, you know!" "And things are all so much nicer and more refined." That the church of God was even intended for purposes higher than merely social ones never seems to occur to such persons, and so as their notions of gentility expand, they pass from one communion to another, always from "strong conviction, you know," but always with a sharp look-out for the social or business advantages to be secured by the change. What notion such people may have of God we shall not say, but evidently the chief excellence of a church is, in their view, to afford them a pleasantly soft cushion to conscience, and secure for them the *entree* to what they have always regarded as better society than they have been accustomed to. We once saw a pet village made up by very devout religious people, near a large city in one of the States, where working people and small shop-keepers were kept to one side of the railway line, with their separate schools and separate churches, while the real, blue-blooded folks—as settled by the balance at their bankers—were left all alone, to dine, dance, pray and die exclusively in each other's society, and in a manner most edifying and delightful. They had a clergyman engaged by the year, and though his salary was handsome, he was expected to be in as great bondage as ever was Macaulay's "Levite," when he said grace at the Squire's table, and humbly left before the dessert was brought forward. All right. It was, after all, only what is going on in hundreds of cases, only a little more prominent than usual, and a little more ridiculous. The father makes money by note shaving, sometimes, as people in Toronto know very well, by absolute stealing, and the wife and daughters are soon in full chase after "society," and overflowing with horror at the mere mention of tradesman or the slightest reference to "Dissenter." The founder of the family, some thirty or forty years ago, was a decent sausage maker, a dealer in taffy, or a retailer of whiskey by the "horn," but the sons have become lawyers, and the daughters have become slightly veneered at a "finishing institution," and, lo and behold, "old things have passed away, and all things have become new." Is it wrong? Not a bit of it, so long as it has all been done in the way of honor, awe, even honor on a very humble scale. But dear young ladies, don't look as if you thought yourselves the "daughters of a hundred Earls;" and oh, most motherly matrons, be moderate in your superciliousness, and don't so very openly turn the church of God, and the mysteries of religion, into mere stepping stones by which you may, not morally or religiously, but simply socially, rise to "higher things." You hunger for "good society." No wonder, you need it badly. But what do you call "good?"

In 1870 there were not ten Protestant Christians in Japan; in May, 1876, there were ten churches, with a membership of 800. Dr. McCosh (now President of Princeton College), tells the story of a negro who prayed earnestly that he and his colored brethren might be preserved from what he called their "upsettin' sins." "Brudder," said one of his friends at the close of the meeting, "you ain't got de hang of dat ar word. It's besettin', not upsettin'." "Brudder," replied the other, "if dat's so, it's so. But I was prayin' de Lord to save us from de sin of intoxication, and if dat ain't a upsettin' sin, I dunno what am."

Austria and the War.

The Empire over which Francis Joseph reigns is made of parts so diverse, and even so incongruous, that every European convulsion assails the stability of his throne. Four distinct and antagonistic races are included within his dominions. In a population of about thirty-five millions, there are twenty millions of Slavics, nine millions of Germans, six millions of Hungarian Magyars, and four or five millions of Roumans. The Slavics are, moreover, to be divided into the Czechs, who occupy Bohemia and Moravia, and the Croats and Dalmatians, who live on the confines of Slavio Turkey. The mutual jealousies of these races, their struggles for predominance at Vienna, their widely separated sympathies, have made the problem of government a peculiarly difficult one to Austrian rulers and statesmen. Up to 1860, they were managed by the severe and simple processes of despotism. The defeat at Sadowa chastened Austria into constitutionalism; and under the protection of the new system, each race has raised its cry, has claimed for precedence and privilege, and has rendered the possibility of an harmonious and united Empire more difficult than ever.

In presence of any European war, Austria's position must be a painful one; in presence of a war between Russia and Turkey, the obtrusive and ostensible cause of which is the maltreatment of Slavio provinces, and the anticipated result of which is the emancipation and independence of Slavio peoples, her perplexity reaches an alarming extent. Hungary, that large kingdom lying on the frontiers of Roumania, is especially jealous of the Slavics, and of the prospective increase of Slavio power and influence, both inside and without the limits of the Austrian Empire; and Hungary, since 1866, has grown to be the most exacting as well as potent of the Austrian states. Andrassy, who was a Hungarian rebel in 1848, upon whose head a price was set, is Chancellor of the Austrian Empire; and the Empire can least of all afford to ignore Hungarian sentiment. One of its chief dangers is, then, lest the victorious Russians, having freed Bosnia, the Herzegovina, and Bulgaria from Turkish misrule should erect these provinces into self-governing states on its very borders. This step would prove a double calamity to Austria. It would stir the fierce Hungarian hostility to the Slavics to its depths; and it would make the Croats and Dalmatians restless and impatient to separate from the Empire and join their brother Slavics in a federal government. Or, if Austria, at last deciding upon war, should incorporate Servia and Bosnia in her own dominions, it would give the Slavics such predominance as to arouse a general revolt in Hungary.

There is another threat directed against Austria, another interest of hers imperilled by the present conflict. The Danube is the vital artery of her commerce; with its waters flow the life blood of her business prosperity. Russia is her hereditary enemy; and Russia's most solemn promises cannot be trusted. Two centuries of diplomatic falsehood have robbed Russia of credibility. If Russia triumphs, she will command the mouths of the Danube, as the rebels did the mouth of the Mississippi before Farragut took New Orleans and Grant Vicksburg. If that happens, and she chooses, she may well ruin Austrian trade. She may promise the free navigation of the Danube; but once in possession she may hold it with as grim a grip as she has always held anything of which she has once got a hold. It may be that the great powers, who are all more or less interested in the freedom of the Danube, will compel her to loose her grip; but of this Austria cannot be sure, no more than she can be sure that Russia's pledges will be redeemed. In her present condition, with her divided and restless races, her financial difficulties, her slow success with the experiment of constitutional government; with her distrust and fear of Germany, her want of trustworthy allies, her army being diseased to conflict, and her resources checked by the war as it is, it is a very serious problem with her whether or not to go to war; each alternative having its great and grave perils, and threatening the very existence of the Empire.—George M. Towle, in N.Y. Library Table.

Saturday Night.

Among the multitude of suggestions for spending Sunday in a profitable way, we say that Saturday has a close connexion with it. Saturday night is one of the resting-places in the journey of life, when it becomes every man to settle his accounts.

1. *Settle with the world.*—The business of a single week is easily reviewed—its mistakes may be easily rectified, its experience turned to good account. The man of business should some time on Saturday look over his books, examine his outstanding debts, and see that all is straight and safe. This is all the more important if his accounts are numerous. Great watchfulness is required, if he would escape embarrassment and trouble. He who knows exactly how he stands every Saturday night will not be likely to live a poor man; or if he does, he will hardly ever be found in debt or in want.

2. *Settle with conscience.*—Let him review his words and his actions, his motives and feelings during the past week. If anything is seen to be wrong or defective, (and who is he that is without faults?) let the remembrance of it be carried into the next week, that a repetition of it may be avoided. Let him in prayer seek not only forgiveness for what has been amiss in the past, but grace to do better the coming week.

3. *Settle with the Lord's Treasury.*—Every man owes constant returns of gratitude to the Giver of all good. Is it not meet to finish the settlement of Saturday night by reviewing all the mercies of the week, and setting apart a portion of its profits to serve some good cause that will promote the glory of Him "who gave himself for us?" How much better and happier might life be with a downright honest settlement every Saturday night! How much brighter would Sunday morning be; how much more profitable the whole day!

Those whose business it is to deal with men in the aggregate are apt to lack individual sympathy.

Scientific and Useful.

COFFEE IN CALIFORNIA.

Among the late plantations naturalized in California is coffee. Since its introduction, four years ago, it has become very productive, yielding a bean of strong aromatic flavor, and growing as vigorously as in the coffee countries of South America. There are extensive plantations in Central and Southern California which pay a handsome profit.

COMMON SALT.

M. Chatot, a Frenchman, recommends common table salt for oidium or grape-vine disease. He says that his vines and grapes were covered for some years with a fungus-like substance, and that last spring he sprinkled a handful of salt about the roots of each vine. The vines grew luxuriantly and bore an abundance of grapes, entirely free from the fungus of oidium.

INDIAN PUDDING.

You will find the following recipe a very light and excellent pudding: One pint of cornmeal and a tea-cup of wheat flour; rub a piece of butter the size of an egg through it; add a tea-cup of molasses, a pint and a half of butter-milk, a teaspoonful of soda, dissolve in as little warm water as possible; stir all together until perfectly smooth; beat four eggs very light and add them. Bake in a buttered Turk's head, turn out, and send it to the table with wine sauce.

THE JAPAN QUINCE

is known as a shrub plant of floral beauty, and elegant hedges are grown from it. In rich soils, however, by itself and left untrimmed, it will in a very few years become a broad spreading feature of beauty, twelve feet high and twenty or more feet broad, with thousands of flowers. The old scarlet variety may be planted, and two years thereafter grafted on its various branches with other varieties or colors, from pure white to deep blood-red, and form in a few years a gem of transcendent beauty.

The London Garden says that a fine effect is produced by this method of training potunias: He procures a number of hazel rods, each about two feet long, bends them like hoops and drives both ends of them into the bed, placing them at suitable intervals all over it. On these he ties and trims his potunias, which blossom more abundantly under this treatment. Potunias have been successfully treated as if sweet-pea vines and trained on a slanting trellis. The trailing habit of this plant, especially late in the season, is not always sufficiently considered.

HOW TO IMPROVE AN OLD BUREAU.

If any of our readers have an old-fashioned bureau, very old and plain, without veneering, such a one as our great-grandmothers used, we can tell them what to do with it. First get it painted black, have it well done by a competent workman, and let the first coat be rubbed in with sand paper. Then the second coat of black will look smooth and glossy. When it is thoroughly dry you can proceed to ornament it with pictures of birds, flowers, butterflies, etc., carefully gummed on and arranged as your taste may direct. You will find the pictures generally sold in stationer's stores under the name of "Scrap Book pictures" are the best for your purpose, and they cost very little. If you take pains with your work you will find it quite Oriental in its effect, and you will wish for more bureaus to ornament. Try one, at any rate. Any plain, old-fashioned, light stand or table may be adorned in the same way. But remember one thing, never use pictures with any background, as landscapes, groups, etc. The effect will be destroyed if you attempt this. Your pictures need no background but the black paint.

PARIS GREEN FOR THE POTATO BUG.

The Country Gentleman has the following on this subject:—"We observe a number of remedies for the Colorado potato beetle, advertised in the newspapers, most of which are particularly recommended because they are 'soluble in water,' Paris green being well known to be insoluble. All these remedies, as a matter of course, owe their efficiency to their poisonous character, otherwise they would not kill the insects; and if soluble they would be absorbed by the pores of the potato plant and the tubers. Their solubility would therefore make them dangerous by poisoning the potatoes. Nothing has yet been found that will compare with Paris green for the certain destruction of this insect, and its entire safety is partially owing to its insolubility and its not being absorbed by the plant. Another point of safety is the iron contained in all soils, mostly about one hundred times as much as is required to neutralize the poison as soon as it is washed down. Still another is the very minute portion required, when compared with the entire bulk of the soil in which the plants grow. The fact that it has been used on tens of thousands of farms at the West for several years past, without the slightest trace of any injurious effect on the wholesome character of its entire safety." The approved method of applying Paris green is to mix it thoroughly with flour, at the rate of seventeen pounds of flour to one pound of the green. This must be lightly sprinkled on the vines when they are wet, either by dew or rain, or by artificial sprinkling. A tin box with the cover full of small holes is the best thing to apply it with. Remember that Paris green is made of arsenic, and is very poisonous. It should not be handled by persons who have cracks or cuts in their hands, and if it gets in the eyes it will inflame them. Be cautious in the use of it.—Exchange.

About last June a party of Indians from Fort Simpson, British Columbia, arrived at Wrangell, and instituted a series of meetings for divine worship. The Sticks and other tribes here really knew nothing about Christianity. They soon became interested in the proceedings of their Christian visitors, and a few, after many inquiries, concluded to try the "new life" of which they had heard. Since then the few have become a hundred, and the tribe are asking for a Christian teacher for some one to explain to them more fully the way.