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MY HANDSOME NELL

Tune—"I am a man unmarried."
Nelly Kilpatrick, the heroine of this song, was the poet's companion on the harvest-rig, when he was in his seventeenth year, and first kindled within him the spark of love and poetry. This composition," says Burns, in his *Commonplace Book*, "was the first of my performances, and done at an early period of my life, when my heart glowed with honest, warm simplicity, unacquainted and uncorrupted with the ways of a wicked world."

O, once I loved a bonnie lass,
Ay, and I love her still;
And whilst that virtue warms my breast,
I'll love my handsome Nell.
As bonnie lasses I have seen,
And many full as braw;
But for a modest, graceful mien,
The like I never saw.
A bonnie lass, I will confess,
Is pleasant to the ee,
But without some better qualities
She's no a lass for me.
But Nellie's looks are blithe and sweet;
And what is best of a,
Her reputation is complete,
And fair without a flaw.
She dresses aye sae clean and neat,
Bath decent and genteel;
And then there's something in her gait
Gars you dress look weel.
A gaudy dress and gentle air
May slightly touch the heart;
But it's innocence and modesty
That polishes the dart.
'Tis this in Nelly pleases me,
'Tis this enchants my soul;
For absolutely in my breast
She reigns without control.

ROBERT BURNS
(Born January 25, 1759; died July 21, 1796.)

THE DEVIL IN THE BELFRY

What o'clock is it?—Old Saying
EVERYBODY knows, in a general way, that the finest place in the world is—or, alas, was—the Dutch borough of Vondervotteimittiss. Yet, as it lies some distance from any of the main roads, being in a somewhat out-of-the-way situation, there are perhaps, very few of my readers who have ever paid it a visit. For the benefit of those who have not, therefore, it will be only proper that I should enter into some account of it. And this is, indeed, the more necessary, as with the hope of enlisting public sympathy in behalf of the inhabitants, I design here to give a history of the calamitous events which have so lately occurred within its limits. No one who knows me will doubt that the duty thus self-imposed will be executed to the best of my ability, with all that rigid impartiality, all that cautious examination into facts, and diligent collection of authorities which should ever distinguish him who aspires to the title of historian.
By the united aid of metals, manuscripts, and inscriptions, I am enabled to say positively, that the borough of Vondervotteimittiss has existed, from its origin, in precisely the same condition which it at present preserves. Of the date of this origin, however, I grieve that I can only speak with that species of indefinite definiteness which mathematicians are, at times, forced to put up with in certain algebraic formulae. The date, I may thus say, in regard to the remoteness of its antiquity, cannot be less than any assignable quantity whatsoever.
Touching the derivation of the name Vondervotteimittiss, I confess myself, with sorrow, equally at fault—Among a multitude of opinions upon this delicate point, some acute, some learned, some sufficiently the reverse, I am able to select nothing which ought to be considered satisfactory. Perhaps the idea of Grogswigg, nearly coincident with that of Krotaplettney, is to be cautiously preferred. It runs—"Vondervotteimittiss—Vonder, lege Donder—Votteimittiss, quasi und Bleitiss—Bleitiss, obsol. pro Blitiss." This derivation, to say the truth, is still countenanced by some traces of the electric fluid evident on the summit of the steeple of the House of the Town-Council. I do not choose, however, to commit myself on a theme of such importance, and must refer the reader desirous of information, to the "Orationale de Rebus Proter-Vereris" of Dundergutz. See, also, Blunderbuzard "De Derivationibus," pp. 27 to 5010. Folio Gothic, edit. Red and Black character, Catchword and No Cypher; wherein consult, also, marginal notes in the autograph of Stufundpuff, with the Sub-Commentaries of Gruntundguzzell.
Notwithstanding the obscurity which thus envelops the date of the foundation of Vondervotteimittiss, and the derivation

of its name, there can be no doubt, as I said before, that it has always existed as we find it at this epoch. The oldest man in the borough can remember not the slightest difference in the appearance of any portion of it; and, indeed, the very suggestion of such a possibility is considered an insult. The site of the village is in a perfectly circular valley, about a quarter of a mile in circumference, and entirely surrounded by gentle hills, over whose summit the people have never yet ventured to pass. For this they assign the very good reason that they do not believe there is any thing at all on the other side.

Round the skirts of the valley (which is quite level, and paved throughout with flat tiles), extends a continuous row of sixty little houses. These, having their backs on the hills, must look, of course, to the centre of the plain, which is just sixty yards from the front door of each dwelling. Every house has a small garden before it, with a circular path, a sun-dial, and twenty four cabbages. The buildings themselves are so precisely alike, that one can in no manner be distinguished from the other. Owing to the vast antiquity, the style of architecture is somewhat odd, but it is not for that reason the less strikingly picturesque. They are fashioned of hard-burned little bricks, red, with black ends, so that the walls looked like a chess-board upon a great scale. The gables are turned to the front, and there are cornices, as big as all the rest of the house, over the eaves and over the main doors. The windows are narrow and deep, with very tiny panes and a great deal of sash. On the roof is a vast quantity of tiles with long curly ears. The woodwork, throughout, is of a dark hue, and there is much carving about it, with a trifling variety of pattern; for, time out of mind, the carvers of Vondervotteimittiss have never been able to carve more than two objects—a time-piece and a cabbage. But these they do exceedingly well, and intersperse them, with singular ingenuity, wherever they find room for the chisel.

The dwellings are as much alike inside as out, and the furniture is all upon one plan. The floors are of square tiles, the chairs and tables of black-looking wood with thin crooked legs and puppy feet. The mantel-pieces are wide and high, and have not only time-pieces and cabbages sculptured over the front, but a real time-piece, which makes a prodigious ticking, on the top in the middle, with a flower-pot containing a cabbage standing on each extremity by way of outrider. Between each cabbage and the time-piece again, is a little china man having a large stomach with a great round hole in it, through which is seen the dial-plate of a watch.

The fire-places are large and deep, with fierce crooked-looking fire-dogs. There is constantly a rousing fire, and a huge pot over it full of sauer-kraut and pork, to which the good woman of the house is always busy in attending. She is a little fat old lady, with blue eyes and a red face, and wears a huge cap like a sugar-loaf, ornamented with purple and yellow ribbons. Her dress is of orange-coloured linsey-woolsey made very full behind and very short in the waist—and indeed very short in other respects, not reaching below the middle of her leg. This is, somewhat thick, and so are her ankles, but she has a fine pair of green-stockings to cover them. Her shoes of pink leather, are fastened each with a bunch of yellow ribbons puckered up in the shape of a cabbage. In her left hand she has a little heavy Dutch watch; in her right she works a ladle for the sauer-kraut and pork. By her side there stands a fat tabby cat, with a gilt toy repeater tied to its tail, which "the boys" have there fastened by way of a quiz.

The boys themselves are, all three of them, in the garden attending the pig. They are each two feet in height. They have three-cornered cocked hats, purple waistcoats reaching down to their thighs, buckskin knee-breeches, red woolen stockings, heavy shoes with big silver buckles, and long surtout coats with large buttons of mother-of-pearl. Each, too, has a pipe in his mouth, and a little dumpy watch in his right hand. He takes a puff and a look, and then a look and a puff. The pig, which is corpulent and lazy, is occupied now in picking up the stray leaves that fall from the cabbages, and now in giving a kick behind at the gilt repeater, which the urchins have also tied to its tail, in order to make him look as handsome as the cat.

Right at the front door, in a high-backed leather-bottomed arm chair, with crooked legs and puppy feet like the tables, is seated the old man of the house himself.—He is an exceedingly puffy little old gentleman, with big circular eyes and a huge double chin. His dress resembles that of the boys, and I need say nothing further about it. All the difference is that his pipe is somewhat bigger than theirs, and he can make a greater smoke.—Like them, he has a watch, but he

THE RETURN

INTO the home-side wood, the long straight aisle of pines,
I turned with a slower step than ever my youth-time knew;
Dusk was gold in the valley, grey in the deep-cut chimes,
And below, like a dream afloat, was the quiet sea's fading blue.
Oh, it was joy to see the still night folding down
Over the simple fields I loved, saved sacred dead,
Playmates and friends of mine, brother and town,
The loyal hearts that leapt at the word and land said.
I paused by the cross-roads sign, for a bright clear
The small sharp sound of a bell rang road;
And presently out of the mist, with a blink and gear,
Rumbled the carrier's cart with its tilt and its motley load.—
The old grey horse that moved in the misty headlight's gleam,
The carrier crouched on his seat, with a bell-boy perched astride,
Voices from under the tilt, and laughter—was it a dream,
Or was I awake and alive, standing there by the cross-roads' side?
So I came to the village street where glinting lights shone fair,
The little homely lights that make the glad tears start;
And I knew that one was yearning and waiting to welcome me there,
She that is mother in blood and steadfast comrade in heart.
Oh, but my youth swept back like the tide to a misty shore,
Or the little wind at dawn that heralds the wash of rain;
And I ran, I ran, with a song in my heart to the unattached door,
I returned to the gentle breast that had nursed me—a boy again!

—Punch.

carries his watch in his pocket. To say the truth, he has something of more importance than a watch to attend to, and what that is I shall presently explain. He sits with his right leg upon his left knee, wears a grave countenance, and always keeps one of his eyes, at least, resolutely bent upon a certain remarkable object in the centre of the plain.

This object is situated in the steeple of the House of the Town-Council. The Town-Council are all very little, round, oily, intelligent men, with big saucer eyes and fat double chins, and have their coats much longer and their shoe-buckles much bigger than the ordinary inhabitants of Vondervotteimittiss. Since my sojourn in the borough they have had several special meetings, and have adopted these three important resolutions:

"That it is wrong to alter the good old course of things."
"That there is nothing tolerable out of Vondervotteimittiss."
"That we will stick by our clocks and our cabbage."

Above the session room of the Council is the steeple, and in the steeple is the belfry, where exists, and has existed time out of mind, the pride and wonder of the village—the great clock of the borough of Vondervotteimittiss. And this is the object to which the eyes of the old gentlemen are turned who sit in the leather-bottomed arm-chairs.

The great clock has seven faces—one in each of the seven sides of the steeple—so that it can be readily seen from all quarters. Its faces are large and white, and its hands heavy and black. There is a belfry-man whose sole duty is to attend to it but this duty is the most perfect of sinecures, for the clock of Vondervotteimittiss was never yet known to have any thing the matter with it.—Until lately the bare supposition of such a thing was considered heretical. From the remotest period of antiquity to which the archives have reference, the hours have been regularly struck by the big bell. And, indeed, the case was just the same with all the other clocks and watches in the borough. Never was such a place for keeping the true time. When the large clapper thought it proper to say "twelve o'clock" all its obedient followers opened their throats simultaneously, and responded like a very echo. In short the good burghers were fond of their sauer-kraut, but then they were proud of their clocks.

All people who hold sinecure offices are held in more or less respect, and as the belfry-man of Vondervotteimittiss has the most perfect of sinecures, he is the most perfectly respected of any man in the world. He is the chief dignitary of the borough, and the very pigs look up to him with a sentiment of reverence. His coat-tail is very far longer—his pipe, his shoe-buckles, his eyes, and his stomach, very far bigger than those of any other old gentleman in the village; and as to his chin, it is not only double but triple.

I have thus painted the happy estate of Vondervotteimittiss; alas, that so fair a picture should ever experience a reverse! There has been long a saying among the wisest inhabitants that "no good can come from over the hills," and it really seemed that the words had in them something of the spirit of prophecy. It wanted five minutes of noon, on the day before yesterday, when there appeared a very odd-looking object on the summit of the ridge to the eastward. Such an occurrence, of course, attracted universal attention, and every little old gentleman who sat in a leather-bottomed arm-chair, turned one of his eyes with a stare of dismay upon the phenomenon, still keeping

to the other upon the clock in the steeple. By the time that it wanted only three minutes to noon, the droll object in question was perceived to be a very diminutive foreign-looking young man. He descended the hills at a great rate, so that everybody had soon a good look at him. He was really the most finicky little personage that had ever been seen in Vondervotteimittiss. His countenance was of a dark snuff-colour, and he had a long hooked nose, pea eyes, a wide mouth, and an excellent set of teeth, which latter he seemed anxious of displaying, as he was grinning from ear to ear. What with mustaches and whiskers there was none of the rest of his face to be seen. His head was uncovered, and his hair neatly done up in papillotes. His dress was a tight-fitting swallow-tailed black coat (from one of whose pockets dangled a vast length of white handkerchief), black kerseymere knee-breeches, black stockings, and stumpy-looking pumps, with huge bunches of black satin ribbon for bows. Under one arm he carried a huge *chapeau-de-bras*, and under the other a fiddle nearly five times as big as himself. In his left hand was a gold snuff-box, from which, as he capered down the hill, cutting all manner of fantastical steps, he took snuff incessantly with an air of the greatest possible self-satisfaction. God bless me! here was a sight for the honest burghers of Vondervotteimittiss!

To speak plainly, the fellow had, in spite of his grinning, an audacious and sinister kind of face; and as he curved right into the village, the odd stumpy appearance of his pumps excited no little suspicion, and many a burgher who beheld him that day would have given a trifle for a peep beneath the white cambric handkerchief which hung so obtrusively from the pocket of his swallow-tailed coat. But what mainly occasioned a righteous indignation was, that the scoundrelly popinjay, while he cut a fandango here, and a whirligig there, did not seem to have the remotest idea in the world of such a thing as *keeping time* in his steps.

to count the strokes of the bell as it sounded.
"One!" said the clock.
"Von!" echoed every little old gentleman in every leather-bottomed arm-chair in Vondervotteimittiss—"Von!" said his watch also; "von!" said the watch of his vrow and "von!" said the watches on the boys, and the little gilt repeaters of the tails of the cat and pig.
"Two!" continued the big bell; and "Doo!" repeated all the repeaters.
"Three! Four! Five! Six! Seven! Eight! Nine! Ten!" said the bell.
"Dree! Vour! Fibe! Sax! Seben! Aight! Noin! Den!" answered the others.
"Eleven!" said the big one.
"Eiben!" assented the little fellows.
"Twelve!" said the bell.
"Dveif!" they replied, perfectly satisfied and dropping their voices.
"Und dveif it is!" said all the little old gentlemen putting up their watches. But the big bell had not done with them yet.
"Thirteen!" said he.
"Der Teufel!" gasped the little old gentlemen turning pale, dropping their pipes, and putting down all their right legs from over their left knees.
"Der Teufel!" groaned they, "Dirteen! Dirteen!—Mein Gott, it is—it is Dirteen o'clock!"

Why attempt to describe the terrible scene which ensued? All Vondervotteimittiss flew at once into a lamentable state of uproar.
"Vot is cum'd to mein pelly?" roared all the boys.—"I've been on my for dis hour!"
"Vot is cum'd to mein kraut?" screamed all the vrows. "It has been done to rags for dis hour!"
"Vot is cum'd to mein pipe?" swore all the little old gentlemen. "Donder and Blitzen! it has been smoked out for dis hour!"—and they filled them up again in a great rage, and sinking back in their arm-chairs, puffed away so fast and so fiercely that the whole valley was immediately filled with impenetrable smoke.

Meantime the cabbages all turned very red in the face, and it seemed as if old Nick himself had taken possession of every thing in the shape of a time-piece. The clocks carved upon the furniture took to dancing as if bewitched, while those upon the mantel-pieces could scarcely contain themselves for fury, and kept such a continual striking of thirteen, and such a trisking and wriggling of their pendulums as was really horrible to see.—But, worse than all, neither the cats nor the pigs could put up any longer with the behavior of the little repeaters tied to their tails, and resented it by scampering all over the place, scratching and poking, and squeaking and screeching, and caterwauling and squalling, and flying into the faces, and running under the petticoats of the people, and creating altogether the most abominable din and confusion which it is possible for a reasonable person to conceive. And to make matters still more distressing, the rascally little scapegrace in the steeple was evidently exerting himself to the utmost.—Every now and then one might catch a glimpse of the scoundrel through the smoke. There he sat in the belfry upon the belfry-man, who was lying flat upon his back. In his teeth the villain held the bell-ropes, which he kept jerking about with his head, raising such a clatter that my ears ring again even to think of it. On his lap lay the big fiddle at which he was scraping out of all time and tune, with both hands, making a great show, the nimcompoop of playing "Judy O'Flannagan and Paddy O'Raferty."

Affairs being thus miserably situated, I left the place in disgust, and now appeal for aid to all lovers of correct time and fine kraut. Let us proceed in a body to the borough, and restore the ancient order of things in Vondervotteimittiss by ejecting that little fellow from the steeple.

EDGAR ALLAN POE OFFICERS OF SEASIDE LODGE NO. 9. K. OF P.

Following is the list of Officers for Seaside Lodge No. 9, Knights of Pythias, for the ensuing year. Installed January 9, 1919 by Deputy Grand Chancellor A. A. Shirley.

- Thomas Pendlebury, C. C.
- Ralph Rideout, V. C.
- David Johnson, P.
- Cleveland Mitchell, M. at A.
- Everitt Denley, M. of W.
- Daniel Hanson, K. of R. and S.
- Thomas Loughrey, M. of F.
- Isaac Johnson, M. of E.
- Arthur Hanna, I. G.
- Theodore Holmes, O. G.

What connexion has Grubbs had with the war? He hasn't been at the front or crossed the sea, has he? He hasn't been either wounded or torpedoed—Oh, no. He is merely one of the survivors of a Washington boarding house.—Life

NEWS OF THE SEA

Halifax, Jan. 12.—Word was received today that the American steamship *Tuckahoe*, bound for Boston, was in distress about 160 miles south of Halifax, and required assistance. Her steering gear was out, she was leaking badly, and water was slowly going to the engine room.
The *Englewood*, which sailed from Halifax on Saturday for an American port, was directed by wireless to proceed to the assistance of the *Tuckahoe*, and the U.S. S. *Iroquois*, which had brought in the *A. G. Flagg*, was ordered from Halifax to help the disabled steamer.
To-night came news of another steamer being in distress in the Atlantic, but not off the Nova Scotia coast. C. H. Harvey, marine and fisheries agent, received the following wireless: "S. O. S., F. B. N. *Ansaldo* helm disabled require tow 40.38 north, 58.20 west."
Nothing was received that would reveal the identity of the steamer, and it is not known what the letters "F. B. N." in the message mean. There is no steamer with those letters before her name listed in available shipping records. There are, however, four Italian steamers named *Ansaldo* and each having a number following. According to the message the position given is in the vicinity of Cape Race.

Halifax, Jan. 12.—Darkness has again put an end to the efforts being made by a fleet of steamers to rescue the forty-four members of the crew of the United States shipping board's steamer *Castalia*, which has been drifting at the mercy of mountainous seas, off the coast of Nova Scotia since yesterday morning. Shortly after noon today, the *Bergensford*, which had been standing by the distressed steamer throughout the day wireless that it was impossible to approach her owing to the heavy weather and that she would stand by until the seas moderated sufficiently for an attempt to be made to launch boats. Since that time no further message has been received.

Dawn this morning found the *Bergensford* abreast of the *Castalia*, and in reply to the latter's message at 9.25 that it had been decided to abandon the ship. The former stated that boats were being sent to take off the distressed crew. At 9.40, however, heavy snow was reported, and it is believed that the attempt was abandoned in the face of the storm. The *Castalia* sent out her first S. O. S. message late yesterday forenoon, reporting that she was in a sinking condition and drifting to the southward. She gave her position as being approximately sixty miles south of Canso. Before darkness fell last night she was off Sable Island, approximately forty miles from the first position given, and for a time it was feared she might be dashed on the shoals. She managed to clear the island, however, and at the time the attempt was being made to take off her crew gave her position as 43.47, 60.47. Among the steamers which are either standing by the *Castalia* or proceeding to her assistance are the dominion government steamer *Lady Laurier*, the *War Fiftynine*, *Stadacona*, and *Oscar II*. The *Castalia*, bound from Quebec for New York, left Sydney, where she had put in for coal at 9 p. m. January 9.

Halifax, Jan. 12.—With her fittings smashed to splinters, steering gear gone, and only having made twenty-eight miles since 4 o'clock Saturday and 2 o'clock this afternoon, when she entered Halifax harbor, the American ship *A. G. Flagg*, 1,864 tons, had an experience which her captain, H. R. Lee, hopes he will not for a long time have to repeat.

The *A. G. Flagg* is one of the United States Shipping Board's boats being sent round from the lakes to New York. On Dec. 26 she steamed out of Quebec, reaching Port Hastings on Dec. 29. Escorting by the *Tellapona*, she left that port to continue her voyage, and ran into a heavy gale. On Jan. 2 the escort was lost and other troubles followed, lack of steam one of these. The ship found herself in a condition where she could not heave-to, and she was drawn within half a mile of the coast off Country Harbor, so that it needed keen manœuvring to keep her from going ashore, and they were thrown in the trough of a south-west sea.

The rolling was terrific, the light jaden ship going to an angle of sixty degrees. This lasted a whole day, but at last they were able to run before the wind, and on the morning of Jan. 3 made Louisburg. The ship bunkered and ballasted with coal at Louisburg, but still she was light, and on Jan. 9 they left in tow of the U.S. S. *Iroquois* for New York. Again heavy weather was encountered, almost as bad as before. The steam steering gear broke, and a system of hand gear was improvised, but on Saturday this broke down completely.
The tow line parted twice. The first time the *Iroquois* was able to pass a line over the side, and when it broke a second time, at 4 o'clock Saturday morning, the *Iroquois* shot a line aboard from a gun there for the purpose. This held, but progress was made only at the rate of a mile an hour till Halifax harbor was reached.