

The doctor smiles as he rises from his chair and glances at the little brass clock. Leaning for a moment against the mantel shelf, he speaks, more to himself than to his companion, it would seem:

"Some day, perhaps. No one knows what may happen. But not—not until two pictures which Time has painted for me have grown dim!"

THE END.

"CHILDIE."

The chancel of an old cathedral was filled with day's fast fleeting light—a rare sweet light, toned down to ecclesiastical dimness by many stained and pictured windows.

The grand tones of an organ, played by no unskilful hand, pealed throughout the noble building and echoed in the hollowness—echoed amid the multitude of pillars which silently and sternly as guardians of the House of Prayer rose heavenwards in their majestic columns—echoed, and pealed, and swelled, and died away into liquid-like tenderness of tone, then grew again in strength and thundered forth in sonorous music, closing in a final outburst of harmony.

Nevertheless, the strong nervous fingers did not appear to have tired, for they wandered over the keys in an absent, dream like manner, as if they could never quite be satisfied, while the player called out in a mellow voice that breathed the spirit of the man:

"Sonny, you need not blow any longer, thank you. I have kept you too long as it is. You must be very tired."

"Yes, I is vewy tired," lisped a wee little woman's voice in sharp reply, "I is vewy tired, 'deed, sir! Johnny told me you 'ood on'y want me to blow for half a' hour and the clock has struck two times since I beginn'd."

"Dear me, child, and who are you? How did you come to blow for me this afternoon? Gracious me! it's a wonder you were able to blow at all!"

"Johnny wanted to do a boat he was doing, and so he brought me to the 'thedral. I's of'en blowed for you afore. He show'd me how the little thing jumped up and down a long time ago."

"Well! Well! Well! And what's your name, Childie?"

"That's it!"

"What! Childie?"

"Ye—s, Childie!"

"And how did you get that name?"

"I's chris'n'd Childie!"

"Heavens! But tell me, little one, what is your mother's name?"

"Mum—mie's name is Rogers—Missus Will'm Rogers."

"Ah! But what was her maiden name."

No answer.

"What is her Christian name, child, then, her first name? Quick! Tell me," and the organist, in his anxiety to know, had caught hold of the little pink-white form that was touching his knees.

"Daddy calls mum—mie Matty!" answered the child.

"My God! and you are my—" escaped from the tremulous lips of the questioner, and the strangely dim eyes filled, then overflowed with tears, which, gushing forth with the sudden pain, fell unheeded down the cheeks.

"What is you crying for? Kiss and make it up," and the little face was raised in expectancy. But the generous offer was not accepted, seemingly not heeded, so deep in meditation or in dreams was the favoured one.

"Come, Childie!" he said at last, with a strange quietness in his voice, "climb on my knees and I'll tell you all about it, and you shall be my confessor and absolve me for crying." And, as the bright little woman crawled on to the organ seat and from thence to the lap of the long-haired musician, he asked: "What colour is your hair, Childie? Is it like your mother's?"

"Oh, dear no!" proudly expostulated the little maiden.

"Mine's more prettie than mum—mie's. Mine is gold and mum—mie's is on'y brown—'cept when the sun shines on it; but mine is gold ev'wy time, and my eyes is blue! What colour is your eyes? Why there's somethin' the matter with them. They is so funny. I's afraid of you. Let me go! I want to go to Johnny!" But the long, strong fingers were now fast entwined round the little waist and in a tone that spoke of a peaceful resignation came the pitiful truth: "Childie! I am blind. Do you want to leave me now?"

"Oh, no! no! I see you home. I will. Johnny never told me. Oh, I's so sorry. How did you get blinded? Was you born blinded? My kitties was born blinded. Was you?"

"No, little one. Now listen and I'll tell you a story." And preparatory to the tale that was to be told, Childie leaned up against the sad looking man with every assurance of good faith.

"Once upon a time," he began, "before you were born, little woman, when I was a young man, I was deep—deep in love. Ah! she had just such pretty golden brown tresses as you say you have, and every bit as soft and silky. Well, Childie, do you understand me?"

"Ye—s, thank you. Did you get marr'ed?"

"Hush! We will come—nearly—to that later on. I was learning to play this dear old organ, and I was to be allowed to marry when I could play sufficiently well to get a position as an organist. One day when I was learning (I was trying to read some difficult piece—quickly, I remember), it became very dark and I couldn't see very well, and I made mistakes and I grew cross and very angry, and

finally when it became so dark I could play no longer and I would have to leave off, I swore a dreadful oath, and just at that moment a flash of lightning lit up the church and darkened my eyes—for ever. Ah! truly it was the Lord's doing for my desecration of his sanctuary."

Up went the little arms and twined round the blind man's neck: "Did it hurt you vewy much?"

"No, Childie, not that; it was what came after. When I became blind, my occupation, my studies, my learning, all were gone. I would have to begin anew. When I was carried senseless from the cathedral that day, the ill tidings travelled speedily to the home of my future wife—to my—to her I loved, that her lover had been struck blind. Vainly she pleaded for me, for my utter helplessness, God bless her. She loved me then, but parents' wills are oft-times stronger than a daughter's love, and she yielded when she found that I would not have her throw herself away upon a sightless log. Years rolled by, and, as each year passed, I became more masterly at this dear old organ. I put my whole soul, my whole strength, into my life's work. I learnt to love my organ, and at last I could play this grand old fellow as well, if not better, than I could have done had sight been left me. Lastly I was appointed the organist, and thank God! I have played for them ever since!"

"What did the pretty lady do?" asked Miss Curiosity.

"Ah! ha! Childie, she did what was right and proper for her to do. She married, and, I think, lived happy ever after."

"Then why did you cry jus' now?"

"There, little sweetheart, you wont understand me. My tears were only tears of pleasure not of woe. A thought—a sign—came to me thro' the darkness and told me my dear one had not forgotten me in my loneliness. But come, come, you must see me home now, and I must close the organ. There, that will do. Put your little hand in mine. My! how warm it is. Just like—ah! well! we'll say good night to the 'thedral. Good night! Good night!"

Clank, clank, clank, sounded the blind man's stick, and soon the great door creaked as he pulled it to.

Hand in hand through the quaint old town the child and the blind man walked until they reached a little white-washed cottage, with its roof of thatch gilded in the noon tide rays. The wee guide looked longingly at the hollyhocks and modest daisies. She said, as her companion stooped to where the Sweet Williams grew beside the wall-flowers, that leaned so lazily up against the walls so white: "Was you sorry the pretty lady—" but the rest of the sentence was never completed, for the childish curiosity had been satisfied with a kiss and a bunch of the garden's sweetness.

TYNDALL GRAY.

AN EARLY CHINESE BANK NOTE.

Within the last few days the trustees of the British Museum have become possessed of a Chinese bank note, which was issued from the Imperial Mint just 300 years before the circulation of the first paper money in Europe. Whatever doubts may attach to the priority of certain other inventions claimed by the Chinese, it is impossible to deny that they were acquainted with the art of printing many centuries before the days of Gutenberg. According to native records, the art of printing was in use in China in 593 A.D., but it does not appear to have been employed in the preparation of bank notes until the ninth century. From that date notes were periodically issued until the middle of the 15th century, when the practice fell into disuse, and was only revived about 40 or 50 years ago.

The note of which we are now speaking is one which was issued in the first year or one of the first years, of the reign of the first Emperor of the Ming dynasty, after the overthrow of the Mongol dynasty established by Kublai Khan. It was of the notes issued by the last-named Sovereign—who was a profuse floater of paper money—that Marco Polo speaks when he says:—"The Great Khan caused the bark of trees, made into something like paper, to pass for money all over his country." According to the Venetian traveller, the notes were made "of the bark of a certain tree, in fact, of the mulberry tree, the leaves of which are the food of silkworms—these trees being so numerous that whole districts are full of them. What they take is a fine white bast or skin, which lies between the wood of the trees and the thick outer bark, and this they make into something resembling sheets of paper, but black." This exactly describes the material on which the present note is printed, and it is probable that paper manufactured in this way continued to be used for bank notes until their issue was suspended in about 1455.

None of the notes seen by Marco Polo, and indeed none earlier than the present one, are known to exist, and of these only three copies are said to survive. The interest attaching to this rarity is, therefore, very great. It is older than the first real bank in Europe—that of Barcelona (1401); exactly three centuries separate the date of its issue from the establishment of the Bank of Stockholm (1668), which was the first bank in Europe to issue notes; and it is only a century later than the pieces of stamped leather—the prototypes of European bank notes—which were issued by the Emperor Frederick II. at the siege of Faenza in 1241.

It is noteworthy that Kublai Khan's bank notes were imitated in Persia by Kaikhatu Khan in 1294; and by Sultan Mahomed Tughlak in India in 1330-31. In both these instances the over-issue of notes caused the suspension of the practice, and in China the same cause led to the same result in 1455.—*Times*, May 23.

S. C. L.

[This piece of satire was suggested by the "Notes and Queries" meeting of the Society for Historical Studies and the Society of Canadian Literature.]

There may be folks—an' I don't doubt
Ye'll find a plenty uv them out—
Who speak right loud in meetin', cool
Ez hunks uv ice; I'm not no fool,
Leastways, I b'lieve I'm not—but, sakes?
To think uv sech, jist plumly takes
Away my breath; "No sir," sez I,
"I can't an' I'm not goin' to try."
Ye reely might ez fairly count
On seein' me ketch an' try to mount
A buckin' broncho from the plains
(The kind yer friend there took the pains
Uv trainin' when he wuz out west,
Reckon he wished he'd let them rest).
But seein' ez how ye're pow'rful bent
On hearin' us, I'm jist content
To put my think in writin'—fair
For them ez wants to read, an' square.
To-night, ye say, is set apart
Fur notes an' queries. Well, to start,
I'll tell ye, this here is my note—
Or 'twill be when I have it wrote—
An' queries—well, the pint's jist there,
I want to query, fair an' square,
Why is it—fur ye know it's true—
The last thing a Canuck will do,
Is read a work that's from the pen
Uv one uv his own countrymen?
The chaps themselves that writes the stuff,
They read each other's, smart enough.
But, fur the gen'ral public, why
I most believe they'd rather fly
Than buy an' read Canadian work,—
They'd liefer read a bloomin' Turk?
There's the Roberts, now, a likely lad
Ez this young country ever had,
Squash full o' po'try too, the kind
That makes ye see things in yer mind.
I tell ye, Roberts knows the ropes,
Goes straight ahead, an' never gropes
Fur words an' things. He'll let ye drop
Plump down 'mongst a pitaty crop,
Or take ye wanderin' out, afar,
Beside them dikes o' Tantramar.
Well—ask yer nex' door neighbor how
He looks on Roberts, an' I vow
He'll say, "Who's Roberts? Never knew
The chap?" An' yet, ye know it's true,
He'll know what collars Byron wore,
An' the sort o' knob on Tenn'son's door.
Then that young chap in Ott'wa town,
That's got frog music jist done brown?
(I vow when Archie up an' spoke,
Ye'd thought ye heard the cretur's croak?)
Why, readin' uv his pieces will
Jist give ye sort uv warmin' thrill,
To think he's ondeni'bly ours—
A b'y uv his reel dazzlin' pow'rs?
An' yet, ye'll find there's mighty few
What knows uv Lampman ('sides uv you
An' me an' other lit'ry folk).
Now don't it seem a tidy joke!
They'll know about Ralph Waldo's ma,
An' Charlotte Brontë's cranky pa,
But nary thing about the men
In their own land that drives the pen?
Take Willyum Wilfurd Campbell, he
Can tell ye everythin' he see
About them grand old lakes uv his,
At sunset or at pale moon riz!
Bliss Carman writes real dandy things,
There's somethin' in them fairly rings.
Our own Miss Crawford writ ez good
In di'lect verse ez Riley could.
There's other scribblin' women too,
Reckon ye know a tidy few?
Then, comin' nearer to us, there
Is our own risin' Chateaucclair,
Who writes as dignified a pome
As could be writ away from home?
I know they're mostly jinglers, those,
But we have lots a-writin' prose.
Although it's true, jist at this time,
The most uv them jist sticks to rhyme,
There's dozens more—a fine, spruce set!
Worth bein' rightly proud uv—yet
They're not, by no means, treated right,—
Expect they're mad enough to bite!
But, law! jist see how much I've wrote—
A most uncommon drawed out note!
An'—hope ye wont think I'm to blame—
I'll make a query uv my name.

It is hard to say how much we could forgive ourselves if we were secure from judgment by another whose opinion is the breathing medium of all our joy; who brings to us, with close pressure and immediate sequence, that judgment of the Invisible and Universal which a self flattery and the world's tolerance would easily melt and disperse. In this way, our brother may be in the stead of God to us; and his opinion, which has pierced even to the joints and marrow, may be our virtue in the making.—*George Eliot*.