BILLIAM

BY S. R. CROCKETT.

"No, father," said Billiam, with decision; I am not good enough to make a parson of. You must give the living to Harry. He will make a first-rater. He is all the time mousing about among books!"

Billiam and his father were standing together in the rectory garden, which looked over the beautiful vale of St. John. Helvellyn slept above them, stretched out like a lion with his head low between his paws. The lake glimmered beneath all, dreamy in the light midsummer haze. Bees hummed in the old garden, and the flowers on which they made themselves drunken reeled and shook with the press of the revellers.

The old rector of Applethwaite was dead. This day of midsummer had been his funeral day. An old man full to the brim of years and dignities, he had lived all his life under the wing of his brother, the Squire, rooted safely in the family living, dining every Sunday and Thursday at the Hall, and reading his 100 sermons in a rotation as settled and regular as that of the crops. But now the old order was changed, and, according to the Squire's providential arrangement, the new order was to be—Billiam.

His real name was William, with something very distinguished after it. Yet nobody thought of calling him anything but Billiam—except only the Squire, when, as at present, Billiam and he differed in opinion. Then he said: "William Reginald Setoun Ormithwaite, will you dare to disobey your father?" and Billiam hung his head, for he knew that a day was coming when he would.

At school he had been called Billiam, for the reason that a "Yorker" is called a "Yorker," because it was obvious that he could be called nothing else. The boy whose Latin verses he did, said to him, "Now, go on, old Billiam, hurry up! I want to go out to the playing fields to smite that young toad, Scott Miner, for making faces at me, and making me laugh in chapel!" So to save time, Billiam gave him his own copy of verses, and saw the plagiarist pass to the head of the form next day, on the strength of Billiam's iambics. Yet that boy never even thought of thanking the author and origin of his distinction. Why should he? It was "only old Billiam."

Billiam failed also in gaining the love and respect of his masters to the extent which, upon his merits, was his due. For one thing, he was forever bringing all manner of broken-down sparrows, maimed rabbits, and three-legged dogs into the school—and, if possible, even into the dormitory. Then smells of diverse kinds arose, and bread quarrelsome dissension of a very positive kind. The house master came up one night to find Billiam with an open knife in his hand, driving fiercely into a throng of boys armed with cricket bats and wickets. Whereupon he promptly dashed at the young desperado and wrestled the knife out of his hands.

"Do you wish to murder somebody?" cried the house master, shaking him.

"Yes,' said Billiam, stoutly, "if Lowther throws my white mice out of the window."

No further proceedings were taken, because, upon examination, Billiam proved to be scored black and blue with the wickets of his adversaries. He was, however, from this time forth, given a bedroom upon the ground floor, with a little court in front which looked upon the laundry. And here Billiam, still unrepentant, was allowed to tend his menagerie in peace, provided always that it did not entirely destroy the sanitation of the school. But when the Government Committee came to inspect the premises, the head master carefully piloted them past the entrance of the court wherein dwelt Billiam, keeping well to windward of it.

Anybody else would have been promptly expelled, but Billiam's father was a very important person, indeed, and the head master had known him intimately at college. Besides, no one could have possibly expelled Billiam. The very ruffians who whacked him with cricket bats would straightway have risen in mutiny.

By and by Billiam's father tried him at Oxford, but, though Billiam stayed his terms, he would have none of it. So when the rectory fell vacant it seemed all that could be done to make arrangements by which Billiam would succeed his uncle. The Right Hon. Reginald Setoun Ormithwaite, Billiam's "pater," saw no difficulty in the matter. He had been at Eton and Christ Church with the Bishop of Lakeland, and the matter lent itself naturally to this arrangement. Everyone felt this to be the final solution of a most difficult problem. Everybody even remotely connected with the family was consulted, and all expressed their several delights with relief and alacrity. But in the meantime nothing was said to Billiam, who had a setter with a broken leg upon his mind, and so lived mostly about the kennels and smelled of liniment.

But when his father told the proximate rector that he must begin to prepare for the Bishop's examination and go into residence for some months at St. Abb's famous theological college (called in clerical circles "The Back Door"), Billiam most unexpectedly refused point blank to have anything to do with the plan. He would be no parson; he was not good enough, he asserted, Harry could have it. The Right Hon. Reginald Setoun Ormithwaite, ex-Cabinet Minister and P.C., broke into a rage almost as violent as when his party leader proclaimed a new policy without consulting him. He informed Billiam (under the designation of William Reginald Setoun) how many different kinds of fool he was, and told him as an ultimatum that if he refused this last chance to establish himself in life he need expect no further help or consideration from him.

Billiam listened uneasily, and with a deep-seated regret obvious upon his down-cast face. It was pitiful, he thought privately, to see so dignified and respectable a man as his father thus losing control of himself. So Billiam fidgeted, hoping that the painful scene would soon be over, so that he might get back again to the lame setter at the kennels.

When Billiam's father had at once concisely and completely expressed his opinions as to Billiam's sanity, Billiam's ingratitude, Billiam's disgraceful present conduct and unparalleled future career, and when he had concluded with a vivid picture of Billiam's ultimate fate (which was obviously not to be drowned) he paused, partly in order to recover his breath and partly to invite suggestions from the culprit, not that he expected Billiam to answer. Indeed he held it almost an insult for one of his children to attempt to answer one of his questions at such a moment.

"What have you to say to that, sir?" What excuse have you to make? Answer me that, sir. Silence, sir, I will not listen to a word. You may well stand abashed and silent. Have I brought a son into the world for this—kept you, given you an expensive education only for this?"

So Billiam kept silence and thought hard of the setter down at the kennels. Those bandages ought to be wet again. It was an hour past the time. He kept changing from one foot to another upon the gravel walk.

"Don't insult me by jumping about like a hen on a hot griddle," cried his father, "tell me what you think of doing with yourself, for I will no longer support you in idleness and debauchery."

"I should like to be a veterinary surgeon, sir," said Billiam, scraping with his toe.

"Let that gravel alone, will you—a veterinary devil—an Ormithwaite, a damned cow doctor. Get out of my sight, sir, before I strike you with my cane."

And accordingly Billiam went—down to the kennels to visit the setter, wondering all the way whether, as the skin was not broken, he ought to use an embrocation, or stick to the cold water bandages.

And this is briefly why Billiam found himself in Edinburgh and established in a nest of unfurnished garret rooms which he had discovered by chance at the end of Montgomery-street, in the Latin quarter of the city. Billiam had £130—a hundred of which had been given him by his father with the information that it must see him through a year, and £30 which his elder brother Herbert (Captain in the 110th Hussars) had sent him.

"Young fool, Billiam—always was!" said Capt. Herbert. "Guess he's pretty tightly off." And with that he stuffed into the envelope the £30 he had set apart as a sedative for his tailor.

"The young blackguard will need the money more than old Moses!" said the Hussar.

Billiam had, to save appearances, compromised on the question of the veterinary surgeon. He was to study hard in order to become an ordinary surgeon and physician of humans. He was only to be allowed to come home once a year. He had agreed not to pester his father with requests for more money. In every way Billiam was made to feel that he was the prodigal son and a disgrace to the Ormithwaites of Ormithwaite. "One of the families, sir," said his father, "which have constituted for 300 years the governing classes of these islands."

So it was in this manner that Billiam took the very modest portion of goods which pertained to him, and departed to the far country of Montgomery-street, South Side, just where that, notable, thoroughfare gives upon the greasy gloom of the Pleasance. How Billiam spent his living, and upon whom, this history is to tell.

Day by day the student of medicine scorned delights. Day and night were to him alike laborious. For Billiam, all unknown to his father, was also taking classes at the Veterinary College upon a most ingenious system of alternative truantry. He attended his medical professors upon such days as it was likely that cards would be called for. And in addition to this he procured a certain interim continuity in his studies by "getting a look at another fellow's notes."

Billiam's "piggery" in Montgomery-street, as it was called by the few of his comrades who had ever seen its secrets, was something to wonder at. Instead of taking a comfortable sitting room and bedroom in a well-frequented and sanitary neighborhood, Billiam entered into the tenancy of an entire suite of rooms upon the garret floor of one of the high "lands," which are a distinctive feature of the old quarter of St. Leonards.

Within this tumble-down dwelling Billiam found himself in possession of five large rooms, with wide windows, and in some instances with skylights also. He was to pay at the modest rate of £8 in the half year for the lot. Billiam counted down his first quarter's rent, and went out to order a brass plate. This cost him 30 shillings, and he had to pay separately for the lettering, which said, somewhat vaguely:

CONSULTATION FREE.
Every Morning Before Nine
and
Every Evening After Six.

This Billiam burnished up daily with the tail of his dress-coat, which he had torn off for the purpose. "I don't think I shall need it any more," he said, "so I may as well use it."

So he used it. It did very well, being lined with silk.

Then Billiam double-bolted the plate to the door, for he understood the ways of Montgomery-street, and sat down to study the monograph of Herr Doctor Pumpenstock of Vienna upon headaches. Billiam had three chairs to start with—two stiff-backed chairs for clients and an easy chair, which, in time of need, could be leaned up against the wall. It was a deck-chair, and cost 2s. 11 1-2d. at a cheap sale of furniture in Nicholson-street. Billiam felt that he might go that length in luxury.

Billiam had once possessed more furniture than this. He had a wooden bed, which he bought in the Cowgate for 4s., and carried up the Pleasance himself, post by post and plank by plank. He only slept upon it one night. The next day he began to cut it up for firewood. It was a good bed though, he said, but not for sleeping on. After the first five minutes it began to bite you all over.

So Billiam burned the 4s. bed, and it turned out all right that way. It crackled like green wood as it burned. Presently the fame of Billiam's brass plate waxed great in the land. Dr. Macfarlane, a short-winded and tempered man, came upon the announcement quite unexpectedly as he was puffing his way up the weary, grimy, stone stairs, to visit the sister of the seamstress who lived upon the other side of the landing from Billiam.

To say simply that Dr. Macfarlane was astonished, does considerable injustice to his state of mind. He stood regarding the brightly polished, clearly-lettered announcement for fully ten minutes. Then he rang the bell, and an answering peal came from just the other side of the panel. But no one arrived to open, for it was the middle of the day and Billiam was at his classes. Dr. Macfarlane could learn little from the seamstress or her sister, beyond the general suspicion that their neighbor upon the other side of the landing was "maybees no verra richt in his mind."

It was not the seamstress, but the seamstress's sister who volunteered this information.

"But he sent us in these," added the seamstress, who was a pale and exceedingly pretty girl, pointing to some nobly plumped purple grapes which lay on a plate on the little cracked table by the bedside.

"He'll be a kind o' young doctor seekin' a job, nae doot!" said the seamstress's sister, sinking back on the pillows. For gratitude was not her strong point.

The suggestion excited the doctor. For he was a man who had worked hard at his most uncertain and unremunerative practice. Besides which, he had a young family growing up about him. If, therefore, he was to have a younger interloper settling in the centre of his sphere of influence, it was as well to know with whom he had to contend.

So he called upon Billiam.

It was 6 o'clock in the evening when Dr. Macfarlane came stumbling up Billiam's stairs. The door stood slightly ajar, and there came from the other side a confused murmur of voices, the yelping of dogs, with sundry other sounds, which even the doctor's trained ear could not distinguish. But, above all, there rose fitfully the shrill cry of an infant. Upon hearing this the doctor pushed the door with the brass plate open and entered unceremoniously. He found himself in a large unfurnished room, which, when he stepped within, seemed at first nearly full of people. It was brightly enough lighted, for the broad flame of a No. 6 gas burner hissed with excess of pressure above the bare mantelpiece. A fire burned in the grate, which shone cheerfully enough, being heaped high with small lumps of coal.

Most of the people were ranged along the walls of the room, sitting with their backs against the wall-paper, upon which their shoulders had made a glossy brown stripe all round—young lads with dogs between their knees, girls holding cats in baskets, middle-aged women nursing birds in cages. They talked to each other in subdued tones, or to their pets in reproving whispers. Sometimes a dog would become excited by the voice of a cat complaining of bonds and imprisonments near him, but he would be promptly cuffed into submission by his master; or a canary would suddenly flutter against the bars, warned by instinct of the proximity of many enemies.

Mostly, however, there was a respectful silence. The Doctor stood awhile, rooted in amazement, and did not even take any notice when some of his former patients nodded affably across to him.

Presently, from an inner room, there came forth a hard-featured man, carrying a large book under his arm. Billiam followed behind him, his shock of hair tossed and rumpled. He was stooping forward, and eagerly explaining something to the man. So intene was he upon the matter in hand, that he passed the Doctor without so much as noticing him.

"And I'll look in and see how the pair of you have got on to-morrow," Billiam said, shaking the hard-featured man warmly by the hand at the door.

Billiam turned, and, for the first time, looked the Doctor fair in the face.

"My name is Dr. Macfarlane. I have a practice in this neighborhood," said the physician, "and I should like the favor of a few words with you."

"Certainly. By all means—with pleasure," replied Billiam. "Come this way."

And they went together into the second of the Montgomery-street garrets. It was nearly as bare of furniture as the first. There was no more than a table, some bottles, and an instrument case, while round the room, arranged so as to make the most of themselves, stood Billiam's three chairs.

"Take one," said the student politely. But Dr. Macfarlane preferred to stand till he knew exactly where he was.

"I have the honor of addressing——" he said, and paused.

"William Reginald Setoun Ormithwaite," said Billiam quietly.

"You are a doctor?" queried his visitor.

"By no means. I am only a student," said Billiam quickly. "But I give these people a hand with anything they bring along."

"Do you possess any qualifications?" persisted Dr. Macfarlane.

"Qualifications?" said Billiam, a little perplexed. "Well, I've been patching up dogs' legs and things all my life."

"But, sir," cried the Doctor, indignantly, "this is no better than an equivocation. I heard you with my own ears prescribing for the man who went out just now—an old patient of my own, if I mistake not. And I saw you with these eyes taking a fee from him as he passed through the door. Are you aware, sir, that the latter is an indictable offence?"

Billiam smiled with his usual quietly infinite tolerance.

"Dr. Macfarlane," he said, "it may sound strange to you, but the fact is that man came to see me about a separation from his wife. And he brought his family Bible out of the pawn-shop to show me the dates of his marriage and births of his children. I gave him something when he went away, so that he would not need to take the Bible back into pawn, at least not immediately. Do you think I need any qualification for that?"

"And those people outside?" said the Doctor, not yet entirely convinced.

"'Will you go around the wards with me?' said Billiam, smiling brightly and irresistibly.

Without another word he led the way to the door of the next room. It seemed to the doctor fuller than ever.

"Lame dogs this way," said Billiam, in a matter of fact manner, and half a dozen men slouched after him. Very deftly Billiam laid out a row of small, shining instruments upon the table, with salve, lint and bandages arranged behind him.

Then he took animal after animal into his hand, set it upon the table, passed his fingers lightly to and fro over his head and ears a time or two, listened to the owner's voluble explanations without appearing to notice them, and forthwith proceeded to deliver a little clinical lecture. His deft fingers snipped away the matted hair from a neglected and festering sore. He cleaned the wound tenderly, the dog often instinctively turning to snap. Yet all the time Billiam never once flinched, but talked steadily and sympathetically to the animal and his master till the sore was dressed and the patient delivered with all due directions to his owner.

Before long Dr. Macfarlane became so interested that he waited while case after case was disposed of with the unerring accuracy of a hospital expert. Sometimes he would instinctively have the lint or the bandage ready in his hand, just as if he had still been dresser at the old infirmary and waiting for Lister to work off his batch.

At the end of half an hour he had no more remembrance of Billiam's want of qualifications. He asked him to come round for supper and smoke a pipe. But Billiam only smiled and said: "Thank you a hundred times, Doctor, but I have some cases in the back room to attend to yet, and then I must read up my stuff for to-morrow."

After a while there came to visit Billiam a minister or two familiar with the district, the young resident missionary from the Student's Hall, a stray lawyer's clerk or two—and the Superintendent of Police. They all came to cavil, but, one and all, they remained to hold bandages and be handy with the vaseline.

On one occasion the minister of St. Margaret's offered Billiam the use of a pew in his church. But Billiam said: "Sunday is my day for outpatients, or I should be glad." For Billiam was a gentleman, and always answered even a dissenting clergyman politely.

"You should think of your immortal soul," said the minister.

"Who knoweth," said Billiam, "the spirit of the beast, that goeth downward into the earth?"

And Billiam could never find out why the minister went away so suddenly, or why he shook his head ever afterward when they met in the street. It never crossed his mind that Mr. Gregson of St. Margaret's had taken him for an infidel and a dangerous subverter of the system of religion as by law established. Yet so it was.

In due time Billiam's nest of garrets became known as the "Lame Dogs' Home," and grew famous throughout the entire city.—that is, the southern city of high lands, steep streets, winding stairs, and odorous closes, with their Arab population of boys and dogs.

"You let that long, lanky chap alone," cried one brawny burglar to another, "or I'll smash your dirty face like a rotten turnip. Now mind me! Don't you know the Dog Missionary?"

Every policeman befriended Billiam and the greater number of the policeman's ordinary clients. He could often be seen walking along the Pleasance or past the breweries in the Laigh Calton attended by a dozen dogs which had followed Billiam far from their wonted haunts, on the chance of a word from him, and which departed obediently, if unwillingly, when he bade them return to their own places in peace.

Year by year Billiam studied and practised, never a penny the richer, but more and more loving and beloved. His garret, however, grew somewhat better furnished. Through the mediation of his soldier brother, his father became so far reconciled to him that he increased his allowance. But Billiam lived in no greater comfort than before. He bought a cheap bedstead, it is true, and for a month or two dwelt in luxury, sleeping upon a real mattress with a clean sheet, and folding his overcoat for a pillow. But even that came to an end.

The circumstances were these:

Billiam had been at Ormithwaite seeking his father, and his brother (of the 110th Hussars) insisted upon returning to Edinburgh with him.

"You'll have to rough it, mind you," said Billiam, warning him.

"I'm a soldier," said his brother, stoutly, "and I guess your hole can't be worse than some places I've put up in."

"All right," said Billiam, "mind, I've warned you. Don't grumble when you get there."

So at their journey's end Billiam opened the door of the garret and invited his brother to step in. A curious damp smell met them on the threshold.

"That's all right," said Billiam, reassuringly. "I washed out the whole blooming shop with chlorate of lime the night before I came away. It's healthy no end, if it does stink a bit."

"May be," said his brother, the Captain, "but it certainly does smell like stables."

"Well, I'll have the fire lighted, and we'll have some supper before the people begin to come," said Billiam calmly, "you'll be picking these old rags for lint and laying out the bandages."

The Captain and Billiam dined upon a rasher of bacon and eggs, which Billiam fried in the pan, along with sliced potatoes and butter. The Hussar, being exceedingly hungry, thought he had never tasted anything more delicious.

"They don't do anything like this at the club. It is such a jolly flavor, too, quite unique," he said, with enthusiasm; "seems as if it were seasoned with anchovy or some French sauce—quite Parisian in fact."

"Yes," Billiam answered simply, "that is the red herrings I had in the pan last week. With us coming in so quick, I hadn't time to clean it out properly."

The outer room was filling up all this time, and the yelping, whistling and mewing grew louder than even the cawing of the rooks in the old trees above Ormithwaite.

"Tarantara! Tarantara!" cried the Hussar, cheerfully. "Turn out for kennel parade." And for two hours he was kept busy enough with his lint and bandages.

"But where does the money come in?" he said, when all was finished. He was smoking a cigarette and Billiam was polishing up his instruments.

"Do it for nothing! Don't they even pay for all that vaseline and plaster? You are a blamed young fool, Billiam, and will die in the workhouse."

Then the Captain yawned a little. "It's too late for the theatre," he said, "even if you knew where one was, which I don't believe. I'm deuced tired; let us go to bed."

Billiam looked about him doubtfully, and then suddenly threw up his hands with a gesture of despair.

"I forgot, old chap; on my life and honor, I quite forgot. I lent my bed to Peter Wilkins, the water-color man. He had pawned his to pay his rent, but he thought he could get it out again before I came back."

"You bet he couldn't," said the Hussar, twirling his handsome mustache; "I've seen that kind of a man; there are several in my regiment."

"Let's go and look Peter up," said Billiam; "perhaps we can get the bed after all."

So the Hussar accompanied Billiam through the dimly lighted street, under gloomy archways, past great black chasms, yawning between lofty houses, till they arrived at the dwelling of Wilkins, the "water-color man," as Billiam said. It was a room upon the ground floor, with a sunk area in front.

"It does not look promising," said Billiam; "the beast isn't lighted up. I guess old Wilkins is either drunk or gone to the country.

"Perhaps he has pawned your bed, too," said the Hussar, bitterly.

Billiam was hurt at the suggestion. "Wilkins is a gentleman," he said, "and it was only last week he sent me his skye terrier for me to doctor up and have all right for him when he came back. Peter isn't the chap to sell my bed and then blik."

They tried Wilkins' door in vain and rang the bell repeatedly without producing the least effect. Apparently others had done the same, for at the first tug the bell pull slid out about six inches in an uncanny, unattached manner.

"That's no use," said Billiam, "let's climb up on the railings."

"Ah!" he cried, as soon as he had mounted himself upon the area railings, whence he could look into the room of Wilkins, "there is my bed standing against the wall, and the mattress beside it. You see good old Wilkins is all right. It is a first-rate bed. Better take a look at it, for it is all you will see of it this night."

"Come doon oot o' that!" commanded a stern voice. "What for are ye loitering wi' intent there for? I'll hae to tak ye up."

A portly policeman was standing behind them with much suspicion on his face. Billiam turned himself about quietly.

"John," he said, "I wish you could get me my bed. I lent it to Peter Wilkins, and his door is locked."

"Guid save us!" cried the policeman, "it's the Dog Missionary. Is that your bed?" he added, climbing up beside Billiam, and looking critically at the object. The rays of a gas lamp upon the pavement shone upon it so that it glowed with a kind of radiance not its own.

"It looks a guid bed eneuch!" the policeman said as he climbed down.

"Can you not get it for us, John?" repeated Billiam.

"Dod, sir, I canna do that withoot hoose-breakin,' an' I've been thirty years in the force," answered John; "but there's nae doot that th' bed's a guid bed,"

And with that he walked heavily away.

The Hussar stood on the pavement with his legs very wide apart, and whistled firfully.

"Well," he said, "what do you propose to do about it, Billiam? Say, let's both go to a hotel and get supper. Then we can stop the night there."

Billiam looked at him with a kind of sad reproach in his eyes.

"You forget," he answered, "that the new collie's bandages must be changed, and the little Yorkshire will need looking to twice or thrice during the night. But you can go, and I'll call round for you in the morning on my way to college."

"Get out, you raving young idiot! On my word, I've heard of all kinds of lunatics, but I'm hanged if I ever heard of anybody before gone dotty on beastly stray dogs."

"And there's the bull with the bad tear on his jaw. I must see that the stitches are keeping and give him some water," continued Bliiam meditatively.

"Of all the fools!" cried the Captain. "Well, come on Billiam. I'll be your keeper to-night, and see that you get a neat thing in straight jackets right away."

And the Hussar strode on with the air of a man who determines to see a desperate venture through to the bitter end.

They came in time to the corner of Montgomery-street, and again mounted up the crazy stairs. The fire had died down, and when Captain Ormithwaite went to the coal box it was empty.

"Hello, Billiam!" he said. "How do you propose to keep us warm. Has somebody taken out your coals on loan as well as your bed?"

Billiam threw up his hands again with the same pathetic little gesture of despair.

"I don't know what you'll think of me, Herbert," he said, "but when I went away I gave all I had to the seamstress next door."

"Well," said the Captain, "go and see if she can give you any back." But at the suggestion Billiam's pale cheek flushed.

"I can't quite do that," he said, "but I think I can get some. You wait a minute and I'll run down and see."

Then Billiam proceeded to array himself in an old ulster, remarkably wide and baggy about the skirts. He opened it, and showed the Hussar how ingeniously he had sewn two large pockets of strong canvas to each side.

"I bring home the coals in these," he said. "Isn't it a prime idea?"

"Where do you buy them?" asked the Captain.

"I don't usually buy them," answered Billiam, simply. "I pick them!"

"Pick them and steal them," said Captain Ormithwaite. "You young beggar, what would your governor say if he knew?"

Billiam looked up a little wearily, as if the subject had suddenly grown to large for discussion.

"I shan't be very long he said, and went on buttoning the ulster about his slim young body.

"In for penny, in for pound," said the soldier. "I'll come and help you to steal coals if I'm cashiered for it."

Billiam pointed to an old overcoat which hung upon a nail behind the door.

"That's got pockets for coals and things, too, if you really want to come along," he said, not very hopefully, "but I think you had better look to the collie till I come back."

"I'm in for it," said the Hussar, "it's my night out. Come on!" he cried, pulling at the coat, which threatened to turn out too small across the shoulders for him. "What a rum smell it has, though," he added, lifting up one of the lapels and sniffing at it.

"Oh!" said Billiam, "that's only the dogs. Sometimes I wrap the worst cases up in it. But it's all right, old chap," he added, hastily. "I always disinfect it carefully."

They went down the dimly lighted, greasy stairs without meeting a soul. When they arrived at the foot Billiam turned sharp to the left, and the Hussar found himself in a darkish wide lane, in which were no gas lamps. At the end of the lane was a great coal station, full of wagons and stacks of coal, black and shining, dimly seen behind two tall gate posts. The latest delivery wagons of the day were just leaving the yard on the way to the city coal stores, there to be ready for the morning demand. They rumbled out in a long procession, manned by men as rough and grim and black as the coal they worked among.

The coal carters kept up a brisk interchange of compliments with one another, varying this with an occasional lump of coal. Great wedges and nuts of it were also being jolted overmuch by ally off the carts as they jostled and lurched through the dark and deeply rutted lane.

"Come on," said Billiam, "we'll soon get enough."

And he ran off among the grinding wheels, nipping up every piece of coal which lay on the road, and pushing it into his ulster pocket with trained alacrity. His brother endeavored to imitate him, but he was unaccustomed, and clumsy, and got but few pieces, and those small. It was interesting work, however, for the wagons surged and roared like a maelstrom between the high walls and the tall houses. The Hussar found that it needed much quickness to seize the prey and bag it, evading meanwhile the succeeding carts, which came on at a pace that was almost a brisk trot.

Presently a huge coal carter, standing up on his wagon, caught sight of the Captain lifting a piece of coal from the side of the road. He sent a ready missile after him, which took effect just between his shoulder blades.

"Get out o' that, ye—— shulker, ye!" he shouted.

Capt. Ormithwaite of the 110th Hussars sprang toward his assailant to take him by the throat. But the watchful Billiam had his brother promptly by the arm.

"Mind what you are about," he said. "See, stand in there, and we'll soon get enough to last us three or four days."

The brothers took shelter in a cellar doorway both of them grimmed to the eyes. Billiam produced a hideous mask out of his side pocket and put it on. Then he slid off the doorstep, and took up his position on a little mound of hard trodden earth and engine ash.

"Ho! Ha!" he cried. "Ye are a set o' dirty, lazy Gilmerton cairters!"

Every coalsman on the wagons leaped up at the word as if he had been stung, and the rain of coal cobs which fell about Billiam was astonishing and deadly; but by long practice he evaded everyone of them, letting some slip past him, and catching the straight ones as cleverly as ever he had done the ball when he kept wicket on the green playing fields.

Presently the Captain found Billiam, now a very swollen and bulky Billiam, once more beside him.

"You go and fill up at the back of the mound, where I was guying 'em," he said; "there's quite half a ton there."

And very obediently the Hussar went, with a grim delight in his heart to think what a fit his C. O. would have, if he could only have seen him. Presently, he had filled up, and, leaving the roar of the coal avenue for the quiet of the house, Billiam and his brother slunk laboriously upstairs to their garet.

"Lord, shall I ever be clean again" groaned the Captain, looking at his hands. "To think what you have led an officer of the Queen into—you blessed young gallows bird, Billiam."

"Empty the coals here," commanded Billiam; and his brother poured out his hoard into a large compartment built beside the window. How Billiam could have carried so great a load was a puzzle, but certainly there could not have been less than a hundred-weight of coal in his canvas pockets alone. He hastened to fill a pot with water, and in a little while he had a shallow bath full of warm water. This he set out in the corner, behind a screen made of grey sheet, which hung upon a cord.

"Go in there," he said, "and get yourself clean, you horrible Sybarite! I'll go round the wards. Dogs don't object to a little grime."

When he came back to take his turn at the bath, a fresh pot full of water was ready, and the room was bright and warm. The Hussar had attended to the fire and swept the floor. The brothers were in the inner room, in which Billiam generally camped. There was a sofa in it now, and easy chair of wicker work.

"I'll toss you for the sofa, young 'un," said the Captain.

"Right," said Billiam, promptly. "Tails!"

"Heads it is!" cried the Hussar.

"Glad of that," quoth cheerful Billiam, "I prefer the floor anyway. You can make quite a decent thing out of rugs and overcoats. And besides, sleeping on the floor makes you so jolly glad to get up in the morning."

So they turned in and slept the sleep of the just. Billiam was up by daylight, and had a cheerful fire burning when his brother awoke. He brought him a cup of tea, and told him to roll over again. But the Captain was now wide awake and eager for talk.

"Why do you keep on at this kind of thing?" he said, "and why don't you buy your coals like an ordinary being?"

"Well," said Billiam, "this is the sort of thing I take to, you see. It's interesting all the time. I suck in oceans of learning all day till I'm tight, and then I practice it all the evening. And as for coals—well, sometimes I do buy them. But £150 a year doesnt spread far in rent, classes and victuals—not to speak of dressings and lint. And picking up coals in the lane down there is just about as exciting as soldiering, I guess."

"See here," said the Captain, "I think I could get over the governor to double your allowance. I've been pretty light on him lately, and he thinks me a good little man. If I do, will you leave of pigging here, and live decent?"

Billiam seized his hand.

"You are a good chap, sure," he said. "Try it on the Dad. Heb! I could get proper cubicles for the beasts then, an operating table, and perhaps I might even afford to hire a yard."

The Captain leaped from his sofa, and began to pace up and down in his panjamas.

"Of all the fools God ever made, Billiam, you are the most confounded. Why in creation didn't you settle down and be a proper parson, if you wanted to do all this kind of thing? It makes me sick."

Billiam looked at him a while as if for once he would try to explain. But the hoplessness of the task made him turn away sadly. Nobody would ever understand. He must just go on and on, till they put him in a lunatic asylum.

"See here," he said, "better put on your clothes, Herbert. You'll be sure to catch cold prancing about there in your night things. And you don't look pretty," he added, looking at him critically.

"But why wouldn't you be a parson, Billiam? That beats me dead. Your just the sort of soft chap for a parson."

"Stuff," said Billiam, "who ever heard of a parson just for spilting up dogs and cats and things? There's enough of the other kind to go round, surely. And there's only one of Billiam for this sort of parsoning."

"Well, Billiam," said Captain Ormithwaite a little later, "I'm off up town. This is all very well for a night, but a little more of it would kill me. I declare, I shall smell doggy and chlorafey for a month. Here's some sinews for you, Billiam. It's all I can spare."

"Thank you," said Billiam, pocketing the notes without demur. "I may be the prodigal chap in the parable, but I'm blowed if you are the old kind of elder brother, the fellow who would not go in."

"That's all right," said the Captain. "Let us hear that you keep ribald. I guess you'll slip into heaven ahead of some of the parsons yet, Billiam."

"It'll be when Peter's not looking, then," said Billiam, shaking his head, "but if they do nick me at the gate, why I guess there'll always be plenty for a fellow like me to turn his hand to in the other place."

This is not, however, the end of Billiam. For there was a seamstress across the landing who seriously interfered with his plans.)

THE SEA QUEEN WAKES.

A Martial Poem Which is to be Taught to the Rising Generation in B.C.

The exciting war rumors of the past few weeks have brought to the surface in this province a fiery military spirit and fierce devotion to the British Crown, of which, in times of peace profound, few, if any, indications would be discovered by the passing observer. This feeling is clearly expressed in the following passage from the Speech from the Throne with which Lieutenant-Governor Dewdney opened the Provincial Legislature a few days ago:

The strained relations existing between Her Majesty's Imperial Government and certain foreign countries has called forth a spirit of loyalty from all parts of the Empire, and British Columbia cordially unites in the expressions which have been exhibited."

Going much further in his expression of patriotism, Captain Clive-Phillips Wolley has published a martial poem of the day, which first appearing in The Colonist, has been reprinted in almost every other daily of the province, and which the Education Department has now decided to furnish to all the public schools, there to be taught to the rising generation. The poem is entitled "The Sea Queen's Waking," and is based on the rapid preparation for active service of the British Flying Squadron. It is as follows:

She wakes in the furthest West the murmur has reached our ears,
She wakes! in the furthest East the Russian listens and fears—
She wakes! the ravens clamor, the winds cry overhead,
The wandering waves take up the cry, "She wakes whom Nations dread!"
At last ye have roused the Sea Queen; at last, when the World unites,
She stirs from her scornful silence, and wakes to her last of fights.
Alone, with a World against Her, She has turned on the snarling crew.
No longer the Peaceful Trader, but the Viking the North Seas knew.
She calls and Her ships of battle—dragons Her seas have bred—
Glide into Plymouth harbor, and gather round Beachy Head.
She wakes! and the clang of arming echoes through all the Earth,
The ring of warriors' weapons; stern music of soldier's mirth.
In the World there be many nations and there gathers round every Throne
The strength of earth born armies, but the Sea is England's own.
As She ruled, She still shall rule it, from Plymouth to Esquimalt;
As long as the winds are tameless—as long as the waves are salt.
This may be our Armageddon; Seas may purple with blood and flame.
As we go to our rest forever, leaving the world a name.
What matter? There have been none like us nor any to tame our pride
If we fall, we shall fall as they fell, die as our Fathers died—
What better? The seas that bred us, shall rock us to rest at last,
If we sink with the Jack still floating nailed to the Nation's mast.

J. S. says: "I was in a dreadfully weak and nervous condition, unable to rest and utterly unfit for work, and Miller's Compound Iron Pills cured me."

WE MAY NOT ALL BE BEAUTIES!

But we may have SMOOTH, SOFT SKINS and CLEAR COMPLEXIONS, which are in themselves the first elements of BEAUTY, and which make the plainest face attractive.

DR CAMPBELL'S SAFE ARSENIC COMPLEXION WAFERS AND FOULD'S ARSENIC SOAP

Cause the skin to become SOFT, SMOOTH and VELVETY, and the COMPLEXION is made CLEARER and WHITER by the use of the above WORLD-FAMOUS REMEDIES.

DR. CAMPBELL'S SAFE ARSENIC WAFERS

Are a permanent beautifier, building up the wasted tissues underlying the skin, thus preventing the formation of WRINKLES, cleansing the pores thoroughly of their secretions and all impurities which find lodgment in them.

EVERY LADY, young or old, should use them. FOULD'S ARSENIC SOAP is a wonderful protection to the skin from the ravages of the wind, sun and weather.

DR. CAMPBELL'S SAFE ARSENIC WAFERS

And FOULD'S MEDICATED ARSENIC SOAP are the only REAL BEAUTIFIERS of the COMPLEXION, SKIN and FORM. They are simply wonderful for removing FRECKLES, BLACKHEADS, PIMPLES, VULGAR REDNESS, ROUGH, YELLOW or muddy skin, and, in fact, ALL blemishes, whether on the FACE, NECK, ARMS or BODY. Wafers, by mail, 50c and $1 per box; six large boxes, $5. Soap, 50c. Address all mail orders to THE LYMAN BROS. & CO., 71 Front-street east, Toronto. Ont. Lettersof a confidential nature should be addressed to H. B. FOULD, Sole Proprietor, 214 6th-avenue, New York.

SOLD ALSO BY DRUGGISTS IN EVERY TOWN IN CANADA. 7

TRUSTS CORPORATION OF ONTARIO.

Safe Deposit Vaults 19-21 King St. W., Toronto.

Capital.....$1,000,000

President—Hon. J. C. Aikins, P.C.
Vice-Presidents—Sir R. J. Cartwright, K.C.M.G., Hon. S. C. Wood.

Acts as Administrator, in case of Intestacy, or with will annexed—Executor, Trustee, Guardian, Committee of Lunatic, etc., and undertakes all kinds of Trusts.

Moneys to invest at low rates.

Estates managed, rents, incomes, etc., collected.

Deposit Boxes to rent in vaults, absolutely fire and burglar proof. Wills appointing the Corporation executor, received for safe custody, without charge.

Solicitors bringing estates to the Corporation retain the professional care of same.

A. E. PLUMMER, Manager.
13

Greenwood's Restaurant, 84 King St W. Dinner tickets, 6 for $1; board by the week, $2.50; full dinner, 20 cents.

Feb. 5 bill of fare:

Soup	Cream of Chicken.
Fish	Boiled Sea Salmon, with Shrimp Sauce.
Boiled	New England Dinner.
Roast	Young Turkey, with Cranberry Sauce, Prime Ribs of Beef, with Brown Potatoes.
Entrees	Baked Rabbit Pie, Apple Fritters, Wine Sauce.
Cold Meats	Roast Beef, Roast Lamb, Corned Beef.
Vegetables	Boiled or Mashed Potatoes, Boston Baked Beans, Cabbage.
Pastry	Custard Pie, Hot Mince Pie, Deep Apple Pie.
Pudding	Steamed Fruit Pudding, with Brandy Sauce.
Tea.	Coffee. Milk.

How the Entire SEXUAL SYSTEM

of the male may be brought to that condition essential to health of body and peace of mind. How to DEVELOP stunted, feeble organs EXPLAINED in our new Treatise, "PERFECT MANHOOD." A simple, infallible, mechanical method, indorsed by physicians. Book is FREE, sealed. Address (in confidence),

ERIE MEDICAL CO., Buffalo, N.Y.

SHORT PROSPECTUS.

For sale—$50,000 Preference Stock, shares $100 each, in a well established Manufacturing Company. The stock is terminable in ten years. Interest 7 per cent. per annum, payable quarterly. No bonds are ahead nor can any be issued. The common stock is $175,000, paid up, and is not entitled to dividends until the interest upon the Preference is paid and a reserve of $5000 is annually set apart. The annual net earnings for last five years show about five times more than is required for the interest upon the Preference