

Choice Literature.

GRANDFATHER'S FAITH.

BY JULIA A. MATHEWS.

"Charlie," said Harry, one evening, as they sat in the school-room, where the boys had all been preparing their lessons for the next day, speaking in a low whisper, "how would you like to see 'the Great Unknown' to-night?"

"First rate," said Charlie, eagerly. "Where is it?"

"You sit still a minute, while I go and find it"; and the next moment, he had slipped out of the room, only to reappear almost immediately at the door, and beckon him to follow.

"What are you two fellows up to?" called out Will Perkins, as Charlie left his seat.

"Nothing much," said Harry, "we'll be back in no time."

"They have some nonsense on hand," said Will, as the two disappeared together.

"We'll find our beds sewed up, or our pillows floured, or something. That little Clifford's eyes looked as if they'd dance out of his head. I mean to track them," and he followed them from the room.

Harry led his companion across the hall, up-stairs and through a long, narrow passage, which led to a small room occupied as an *omnium gatherum* for all the disused maps, charts, school-books, specimens, etc., which had been laid aside from time to time, as worn out or worthless. The room was entirely dark, but a faint glimmer of light shone beneath a door on the opposite side from that by which they had entered.

"Do you want to know what you are going to see?" asked Harry, in a sepulchral voice.

"I don't think there's much chance of seeing anything in this dungeon," replied Charlie. "What have you got to show?"

"Mr. Braisted's baby. But, Charlie," a sudden thought striking him, "you're not easily scared, are you?"

"Not I," laughed Charlie. "Show up your baby."

"He's very tall of his age," said Harry, without moving from his side.

"So he ought to be to pay me for waiting so long for him. Bring on your giraffe, show-man."

"Very well, sir," said Harry, stepping forward to the door beneath which the line of light showed itself. "Allow me to introduce—Mr. Braisted's Baby."

He threw open the door of the closet. For a moment, Charlie's heart seemed to stand still; then he broke out into a perfect shout of laughter, and springing forward, caught Harry by the coat-collar, and shook him, until, convulsed with merriment, they both sank helplessly upon the floor.

"You rascal!" said Charlie, as soon as he could get his breath; "I owe you one for taking me in like that. I'll pay you off yet. My! isn't he a big fellow though?" and he sat up on the floor to gaze at a lank skeleton which hung in the open doorway before him, shown off to the fullest advantage by means of a bright light which Harry had taken care to place behind "the Baby" before he had exhibited it.

"It's a jolly good joke, any way," he said, after a minute, during which Harry lay back on the floor, too weak from laughing to attempt to raise himself. "Wouldn't it be grand to play him off on somebody who'd be scared half to death. I tell you my own heart went down into my boots for a minute."

"Did it? I was half sorry I'd brought you in at night after we got here, for I thought perhaps you would have a real start; but you seemed so plucky, I thought I'd try you. But it would be mean to frighten anybody who was timid with it, Charlie. Didn't you look as if you'd seen stars though, that first minute?" and back went Harry's head again, and he laughed until he fairly rolled over and over in his intense enjoyment.

Charlie aided him most heartily, and the next moment another voice joined in the musical peal. Both boys started up from their recumbent position, and facing about, met the laughing countenance of Will Perkins.

"I came out to see what the fun was," he said. "I saw that there was something in the wind. I never thought of 'the Baby,' though, until I saw you come in here; then I knew what Harry's game was. How do you like him, Brownie?"

"Oh, he's splendid! I tell you what I'd like, Will. To get somebody in here that would 'most go into fits at him. Wouldn't it be jolly?"

"Wouldn't it?" said Will, his face lighting up in a moment. "We'll do it, too. Let's see; who is there that we could get hold of? It would have to be some outsider, for all the fellows here know 'the Baby,' and it wouldn't take with them. Who could we bring in, Clifford?"

"Oh, don't let's try it on anyone who will be really frightened," said Harry. "It's all

well enough for us fellows who can stand it; but a scarey little chap might be hurt by such a thing. All's fair in war if you're fighting with men of your own size; but it's mean to hurt one of those half-and-half kind of fellows."

Will laughed, and said, "Well, that's all right, I suppose;" but when Charlie looked up at him, greatly disappointed by his ready acquiescence in what he thought Harry's very unreasonable remonstrance, Perkins gave him a wink and a nod, which somewhat surprised him.

"You'd better put that light out, Clifford," said Will. "Go in carefully, or you'll knock 'the Baby' down."

Creeping cautiously round the three iron uprights, from a hook in the converging point of which the tall skeleton was hung, Harry reached the lamp without disturbing "the Baby," and brought the light into the room.

"I'll arrange it," whispered Perkins to Charlie, as Clifford passed into the closet. "You keep quiet, and don't say anything to him."

As Harry turned his face toward them again, Will sauntered to the window, making some remark about the brightness of the night, and went out of the room, leaving Charlie feeling like a traitor toward his bosom friend.

"Come on, now. Let's go back to the rest of the fellows," said Clifford, blowing out the lamp. "They'll be wondering what has become of us. If they'd known that I was going to introduce you to 'the Baby' they'd have been after us, every mother's son of them, to see the fun. But I thought I'd have you all to myself. Wasn't it prime, though?" and he shook his head merrily. "Can you find your way in the dark? Here, give me your hand, old man."

"I'm all right," said Charlie. But all the while he felt all wrong, and couldn't bear to have Harry call him "old man" in that affectionate, friendly tone.

VII.

TEMPTED.

Some weeks had passed since the night of the exhibition of Mr. Braisted's "Baby;" but nothing farther had transpired with regard to it. Charlie purposely avoided the subject. He did not want to displease Will by refusing compliance with his scheme, nor did he wish to grieve Harry by acting contrary to his wishes. Beside these two reasons for maintaining silence on the point, he had another. Harry's words had had their effect on him, and although he would have liked nothing better than the fun, as he considered it, of suddenly introducing some timorous little mortal into the appalling presence of "the Baby," he could not but feel that it would be a mean thing to do, and with all his faults, Charlie shrank from a small deed, if his eyes could only be opened to its littleness. The great trouble with him was, that his love of fun and excitement often blinded him to the meanness of such conduct, and led him on into cruel acts of mischief which he would not have committed if their evil consequences had been pointed out to him beforehand.

As for Harry, he had quite forgotten the suggestion which had been made in "the lumber-room," as it was termed, that night, and never alluded to it, or thought of it, again, until it was brought forcibly to his mind by later occurrences.

But Will Perkins had conceived a strong desire to carry out the joke, and was quite determined to have his own way in the matter, notwithstanding Clifford's objections. He had not misunderstood Charlie's reticence on the subject, and knowing Harry's influence over him, he resolved to remain silent until a good opportunity to satisfy his love of mischief offered itself, and then to present it to Charlie, and urge him into a share in it, before Harry should have a chance to dissuade him. Week after week went by, and no unhappily nervous individual presented himself as a fitting subject for a fright. The only newcomer to the seminary was a young Irishwoman, newly arrived from the Green Isle, the very impersonation of innocence and good nature. Will had, at one time, thought of trying his powers upon her; but, after consideration, had concluded that her sturdy form and brawny arms were quite as likely to stand their ground, and prepare to do battle with "the Baby," as to fall before it. So he was still waiting for his victim, although poor Norah was, after all, doomed to suffer for his amusement.

"Boys," said Mr. Braisted, as they sat at dinner in the long dining-hall one day, "Du Chaillu is to give one of his gorilla lectures in the Town Hall this afternoon. How many would like to listen to him? Let me count the hands."

The hand of every boy at the table was raised.

"You all want to hear him, eh? Be ready to leave home at five o'clock. The lecture begins at half-past five. Rather an unusual hour, but he is only to be here for the afternoon. He takes the northern train at eight

o'clock. You will go, Mary?" he added, turning to his wife.

"I should like to do so, but I have promised to let the servants go down this evening to see the menagerie, to which you took the boys last night. You will need Mr. Travers with you, of course, and it will scarcely do to leave the house entirely empty, as it would be for about an hour, if I should go."

"Oh, the house will be safe enough," said Mr. Braisted. "The servants will not need to leave before seven, and we shall be back by eight, if not a little earlier."

"And if ye please, ma'am, it's meself as'll bide at home the night," said Norah, in a half whisper from behind Mrs. Braisted's chair. "Wasn't me cousin here the morn to tell me he'd got lave to go the morrow, and to ask me wouldn't I go wid him. I towld him I would, knowin' 'twas me afternoon out, and ye'd take no offence wid it."

"Very well," said the lady. "Then I will leave the house to your care."

"I am glad I determined to try to train that girl," said Mrs. Braisted, when Norah had left the room to obtain something that was needed at the table. "It is a case where charity has brought its own reward. She is so quick and bright, and so willing to learn, that it is pleasant to teach her. Oh, by the way, she saw 'the Baby,' as the boys call it, this morning, and I wish that you could have seen her face."

"Was she frightened?" asked Mr. Braisted, as his wife laughed over the recollection.

"No, hardly that, I think; I had prepared her for the apparition. I wanted to have the walls of that closet dusted down; so I took her into the lumber-room, and, after explaining to her what it was, opened the door myself, and remained in the room while she was in the closet. She made no objection to doing as I wished, but the way in which she crept about close to the wall, and guarded even her dress from touching 'the Baby,' throwing back at him, from time to time, looks of infinite disgust, was very amusing. When her work was finished she came out, and standing back at a little distance, surveyed him from head to foot. 'What do you think of him, Norah?' said I, for she was looking at him with a most uncomplimentary expression of countenance. She turned up her nose to an extent to which I never saw human nose turned up before, and giving a little sniff, said, 'Och, but he's the ugly baste, in a tone of such utter aversion that I laughed outright. She seemed amused, too; but I noticed that she accepted my proposition to close the closet door, while she put the room in order, with great alacrity."

The boys were very much entertained by Mrs. Braisted's story, especially Will Perkins, who laughed immoderately; but, as he was noted in the school for his keen appreciation of fun and humour, no one gave him another thought in connection with Norah; not even Harry, for he knew nothing of Will's half-purpose of making her the victim of his joke.

According to her own suggestion, Norah was left at home to pass about an hour's time alone. The afternoon had been dull and cloudy, and as the evening set in, a drizzling rain began to fall. By the time the lecture was concluded the streets were quite wet, and the short distance between the Seminary and the Town Hall was passed over rapidly by the little procession, which was headed by Mr. Braisted and his wife.

"I don't see any light in the kitchen," said Mrs. Braisted, as they neared the house. "It can't be possible that Norah has gone out."

"Oh, no; we shall find her here," said her husband. "There she is, sitting on the steps! Why, what ails the girl? Does she want to make herself ill? What are you doing out here in this rain, Norah?" he asked, as they reached the house, and found the girl seated on the door-step, wrapped in a cloak, but with the rain pattering down on her rosy face and waving hair. "Why do you not stay in the house?"

"And I will, sir, now yer is come. But, indade, and I'd sooner be wet to the skin than bide in the house alone with that lad."

"What lad?" asked Mr. Braisted, glancing back as he entered the door, as if to assure himself that all his young people were with him. "The young gentlemen were all with me. What lad do you mean?"

"Sure an it's the lad in the big closet beyant. The cratur widout a ha'p'orth o' skin on his bones, nor even a morsel o' flesh to make hisself dacent, bad luck to him. Indade—"

A roar of laughter interrupted her. The boys had all entered the house, and were gathered in the wide hall, listening to her explanation; and now they fairly shook the floor, as, shouting with merriment, they stamped their feet, clapped their hands, and gave voice to their amusement in peal after peal of laughter.

Norah bore the ordeal very well, smiling upon the merry-makers with an untroubled face, until Mr. Braisted stilled the tumult; although, even after he had enjoined silence, a gurgling laugh broke out now and then, in spite of all efforts at gravity.

"Indade, gentlemen," Norah went on, as soon as comparative quiet was restored, speaking in a general sort of way, as if she felt that an apology was due to the whole school; "ye'd no call to be surprised that I don't like the look of him, for he's countenanced like an uncle of mine that I left in the ould counthry, as evil a man as ever ye see. Batin' the big hook in the top of his head, he's as like him as two peas, barrin' the digression of his wantin' the nose."

Another shout silenced her again, and Mr. Braisted, saying kindly that he was sorry she had been made uncomfortable by her fears, sent her down to her own domain, to which she retired, still smiling broadly upon her merry audience.

(To be Continued.)

MARION CRAWFORD.

Mr. F. Marion Crawford is, as Mr. Andrew Lang says, the most "versatile and various" of modern novelists. He is an American, though born on Italian soil, and has studied at the Universities of Cambridge, Carlsruhe, Heidelberg and Rome. A scholar, a linguist, and a wanderer over three continents, he has gathered much experience of society and of very diverse types of men and women in different countries. He has great adaptability and subtleness of mind, and whether dealing with life in modern Rome, or at the court of Darius at Shushan, in the wilds of Northern India, or in the fashionable quarter of New York, in the Black Forest or in a lonely parish of rural England, he is equally facile and sure of his ground; a master of narrative style he throws a subtle charm over all he touches. A polished man of the world, urbane, tolerant and genial, though of marked originality, his ready appreciativeness commands sympathy and renders his pages delightful reading; and his great breadth of view, keen intuition, and artistic feeling, invest his observations with a peculiar interest and value. Though Mr. Crawford admits that "Zoroaster," which has been translated into six modern languages, contains some of his best work, it is undoubtedly by his great trilogy of Roman life, which has just been completed by the publication of "Don Orsino," that he will live longest. The three volumes "Sarcinesca," "Sant' Ilario," and "Don Orsino" together give a vivid description of society in Rome during the last twenty or thirty years, beginning at a time when the city was in great measure its old self down to the present day. The special excellence of these three books lies in the drawing of the characters, the dialogues, and the high dramatic quality of various scenes, and in these respects the power shown is so considerable as to raise Mr. Crawford to the highest level as a psychological novelist, and as a painter of manners and character. In the earlier volumes of this series a graphic picture of the political and social condition of the city during a stormy and changeable time is laid before us.

Mr. Frederick Treves, the well-known surgeon of the London Hospital, in his "Manual of Operative Surgery," has some striking remarks on the risks attending operations on the bodies of drunkards. He says:—"A scarcely worse subject for an operation can be found than is provided by the habitual drunkard. The condition contra-indicates any but the most necessary and urgent procedures, such as amputation for severe crush, herniotomy, and the like. The mortality of these operations among alcoholics is, it is needless to say, enormous. Many individuals who state that they 'do not drink,' and who, although perhaps never drunk, are yet always taking a little stimulant in the form of 'nips' and an 'occasional glass,' are often as bad subjects for surgical treatment as are the acknowledged drunkards." "Of the secret drinkers," continues Mr. Treves, "the surgeon has to be indeed aware. In his account of 'Calamities of Surgery,' Sir James Paget mentions the case of a person who was a drunkard on the sly, and yet not so much on the sly but that it was well known to his more intimate friends. His habits were not asked after, and one of his fingers was removed because joint disease had spoiled it. He died in a week or ten days with spreading cellular inflammation, such as was far from unlikely to occur in an habitual drunkard. Even abstinence from alcohol for a week or two before an operation does not seem to greatly modify the result." Dwelling on the immense importance to an operator of cultivating "a surgical hand," the same writer points out that "a shaky hand" may be developed by irregular modes of living, by the moderate use of alcohol, and by smoking.—*Journal of Inebriety.*

THE TESTIMONIALS.

Published on behalf of Hood's Sarsaparilla are as reliable and as worthy your confidence as if they came from your best and most trusted neighbour. They state only the simple facts in regard to what Hood's Sarsaparilla has done, always within truth and reason.