



STARS OF THE SUMMER NIGHT.

A TALE OF FOUR CHAPS IN FOUR CHAPS.

CHAP. I.

Twankle twankle twank a twank a twank twank twank.

Hist!

Borne on the midnight breezes of the month of July, odorous with the fragrance of a million roses and freighted with the sense-cathrilling perfumes of a fish that had seen better days, and whose spirit had winged its flight from the shores of the Present to the boundless confines of the Hereafter some two weeks previously to the hour when this romance opens, came those sounds of melody mellifluous, disturbing the sleeping echoes of yonder bosky dell, and mingling their twankle twankle twanks with the booming resonances of the warbling bullfrog's kloop-a-kloop, kloop-a-kloops.

'Twas very peaceful.

The shrewd reader will have surmised from my mention of midnight breezes that the hour was midnight.

It was.

Enclosed by high stone walls and embosomed in the leafy obscurity of noble oak, elm, bamboo, hazel, acacia, maple, asparagus, basswood, and other forest giants, stands a plain but comfortable house. 'Tis the dwelling-place, the home of Florence Speckles.

Launcelet l'oulin de Boulogne, a fiery, untamed youth, has vowed by his spotless escutcheon to win her hand, and, knowing that the peerless Florence is of a romantic temperament, has resolved to serenade her, which project he has confided to three bosom friends, who have determined to see him through, and have accordingly, having found the entrance gate of the grounds secured, scaled the walls, bearing their instruments of torture, a flute, very asthmatic, an accordion, broken winded and well-nigh keyless, and two guitars, the manipulation of which was a dim and vague mystery to those who carried them, and now stand beneath the lady's window with the instruments of torture from which emanated those twankle twankle twanks which open our tale, and which, borne on the midnight breezes of the month of July, etc.

CHAP. II.

"Stars of the summer ni-night,

(twankle, twank twank, a booin a boom, tootle tootle tootle toot toot toot)

Far in yon azure dee-heeps,
(tinkle tink, tink, tink)

Hide, hide your go-holden li-hi-hight,
(twankle twank a twank tootling)
She slee-heeps, my la-hady sleeps,
She slee-heeps, she slee-heeps,
(twankle a twankle a twum twum twum)

It is Launcelet who is singing, whilst he accompanies himself on his guitar, and his comrades thrum and tootle and jam in a note or two as opportunity occurs. Florence's window still remains closed, and the blind drawn down.

Excuse me, reader, but my forte is descriptive writing, and I must have another shy at it. Have at ye.

Afar off the village clock chimes two: beyond the distant eastern hills pale Luna now appears, and casting her tempered rays around brings objects from the obscurity in which they were wrapped.

Launcelet and his friends have stood for three mortal hours beneath the loved one's trellised casement, and yet no sign that she has heard has been given. All four are weary, angry and dispirited.

"Possibly," suggests Launcelet, "she may have moved to the other side of the house during the hot weather. Let us go round."

They went.

CHAP. III.

"Mou-hoon of the su-hummer ni-hight,"

and so on, with guitar accompaniment, for another weary hour sings Launcelet, and daylight begins to streak the Orient horizon. No signs of Florence; not so much as a snore. All is silent and still. Every blind in the house is drawn. The increasing daylight reveals this fact.

The morning breeze fans the fevered brows of the serenaders and, sporting by, mingles its whispers with the clarion cock-a-doodle-doo of proud chanticleer at yonder low-thatched farm house.

Arthur Measlymug, Launcelet's sworn friend, advances closer to the front door, now visible in the deep old-fashioned porch o'er which the myrtle and the honeysuckle twine, and stands before it, having apparently made a discovery, for, ere long, he shouts to his companions, "Come here, you fellows: well, I'll be jiggered." They advance to the door.

CHAP. IV.

"To LEE for 3 months.

Family at the sea-side."

Such is the placard which greets the four pair of eyes that are fixed upon it.

Two minutes later four worn-out, up-all-night serenaders skulk down the avenue leading to the outer road and in a few seconds are 'over the garden wall.'

WHAT WAS THE MATTER WITH HIM?

"Good morning, Sergt.-Major," said we as the old gentleman dropped in for a bit of a chat, we refer to Sergt.-Major O'Shaughnessy, whose story of the hero of the Tubberingoooley Cavalry was related last week. "How do you find yourself?" "Well, sorr," responded the old fellow, "I can't say that I'm feelin' particler well to-day." "Sorry to hear it, Major; what have you been doing?"

The old gentleman looked uncommonly sly as he replied, "Ax me no questions and I'll tell ye no lies, but I feel much as my uncle said he done after he seen the marmalade."

"Come, come, Major: with all due respect for your uncle's veracity, I must disagree with him in this one matter." "Shure an' it was something besides yerself as disagreed with him the time I'm spakin' of." "Well, tell us all about it: what was it?" we asked.

"The way av it was this: my uncle not only seen one but he held discourse wid her, an' I've heard him spake av it, many's the time; an' it's truth, ivery word av it. My uncle was a Kerry man, an' was returnin' home late wan evenin' after payin' his rints—" "Ha, ha!" we laughed, "why man I've caught you out already: I thought this was to be a true story: the idea of a Kerry man paying his rent: tell us something else." "It's truth I tell ye sorr; my uncle was a gentleman, ivery inch av him, an' always paid his debts an' was what ye'd call a prominent citizen here, though he wasn't a bankrupt onct, an' he was comin' home along the cliffs above Dingle Bay, an' the moon was shinin' bright as a new tinsaucepan an' glitherin' on the water like any-thin' when, feelin' overcome wid the heat, it was summer, he sits down on a bit av a rock close handy to Roshen Point an' pulls out a bottle from his pocket an' takes a sup, an' feelin' it done him good, he takes another, when up, right formist him out of the say, pops the purtiest slip av a craythure an' looks at him wid her cyes like dimints an' hair all athramin' over her shouldhers like goold; an' thin she takes a bit av a lookin' glass from undher the wather an' a coomb all shinin' an' falc goold an' begins combin' her illigant hair. 'Cush-la machree,' said me uncle, low like, 'but yere a purty darlint,' sez he, and he takes another gollyogue out av his bottle. 'Will you come wid me, Phaylim?' sez she, 'It's yerself is the boy I'm waitin' for' sez she, 'Shure an' I'm married,' sez he, an' he looks over his shouldher for she was a rale purty beauty 'That's nothin',' sez she, an' thin the marmalade commenced singin' the sweetest song my uncle iver heard. It was a mixther of Aileen Aroon an' Lanigan's Bawl, an' my uncle felt his legs begin to thrimble an' thin to dance, aisy like at first, but soon he was wel-tin' away on the rock till he got closter an' closter to the marmalade, whin she ups an' pulls him into the say wid her, an' they sank an' sank an' sank till they come to a big palash, an' there was millions of marmalades and marmalade sittin' round a table covered wid jools an' whiskey, an' illigant stuff it was, my uncle said, an' lashins of it; 'Hurrah for Phaylim O'Shaughnessy,' they cried, 'he's one av us now, an' the colleen as brought him had him fasht by the waist an' he couldn't escape av he'd wanted to, an' down he sits an' ates an' dhrinks an' fills his pockets wid the jools, an' such dancin' as there was, an' the harps they danced to was all pure goold, an' they danced an' danced, down the middle an' back agin. Whoops! but it bated my grandmother's wake, my uncle said, whin suddenly he thinks of the misthress at home, an' he ups an' said he must lave 'em, but the purty creature wid him began to cry. But he tore himself away an' was off like mad wid all the crew after him, an' the next he remembered he was sittin' on the rock, an' the say was lappin', lappin' at his feet, an' his bottle was lyin' by his side, inupy, for all the stuff had run out whin he put it down on its side, an' the sun was shinin' an' my uncle was all stiff an' sore wid dancin' an' bein' undher the wather so long, an' whin he felt for the jools they was all gone, an' he knew he'd dhroped 'em whin he come away in such a hurry an' if ye don't believe it sort the rock's there at this minit." The Major paused here, "Is that all?" we asked. "It is, sor, an' I feel just like my uncle said he done." "Didn't you say your uncle was a perfect gentleman?" we asked. "It's that he was," answered the old fellow. "Then why did he pocket those jewels?" But Sergeant-Major O'Shaughnessy was gone.

ANSWER TO CHARADE.

"GRIP-SACK."