

LITTLE WAIF.

AN OLD TRAMP'S STORY.

A little waif on the street—
The city's crowded thoroughfare—
With head unshaded from the heat,
Save by a mesh of yellow hair.

With blistered feet she toils along
Beneath the noonday's scorching rays,
Upon the hurrying, panting throng
She turns a weary, pleading gaze.

They crowd her off the narrow walk,
Each caring only for himself,
And hurry on with oaths, or talk,
Intent on rest, or gain, or self.

And no one sees her pallid cheeks,
Her livid lips and glaring eyes,
And no one hears the words she speaks
They faint upon her lips in sighs.

Without a home—without a friend,
She wanders on, she wanders on,
Still thinking vaguely of an end—
It she will find the streets end soon.

Thinking how the sunbeams burn,
Would ring why her sight is dim,
Thinking which way she must turn,
Would ring why the pavements burn.

Would ring why the sky is green,
Why the sunshine grows so red,
Trying hard her eyes to screen,
Would ring, oh! if God is dead!

Before a mansion's sculptured door,
A child lies shrunken with the heat;
A red tide drips the marble o'er,
And slowly trickles to the street.

The moist hair round her wan face clings
Like curling tendrils of the vine;
Neath white lids stained with purple rings,
Her eyes like dew wet pansies shine.

A dead cart rumbling to the Morgue,
A crier with a lazy yawn,
A doctor looking wise and large,
A sexton—"Death from cause unknown."

Some cold clay in a pine-box sealed,
A dead cart once more rumbling by,
A small grave in the Potter's Field,
Another angel in the sky.

FRANK OAKES ROSE.

BUTTONS.

A TALE OF TREACHERY.

It is the out-of-town season, and London, particularly Pall Mall Square, is empty. Pharissee Crescent is empty, too.

Why do I mention these facts? Merely to enlist public sympathy in my own forlorn situation in being confined to town.

Not a bit of it. I remain in town for choice, and in Pharissee Crescent, because, occupying a drawing-room floor in one of these genteel residences, and the house being comparatively unfurnished, I can enjoy a blissful season of liberty and music. For I am fond of music, and like, now and then, to tinkle on the flute, to twang the guitar, or scruple, as it is vulgarly termed, on the violin. Only I am unfortunately situated with respect to my neighbours, who have no souls for music.

My apartments are between those of a maiden lady—on the upper floor—who goes into fits on the slightest provocation, or none at all—say upon the hasty shutting of a door, or the servant slipping down two or three stairs, with or without the tea-things, a casualty which happens almost every other day, while in the parlour beneath me lurks a savage who calls himself a journalist. It is difficult to get at any correct idea of this profession, but it seems to me to consist in being out all night when everybody else is in bed, and in being at home and asleep all day when other people want to be up and moving about.

To these agreeable personages music is, in the one case, torture; in the other, infirmary. So it is only in the rare absence of both that I can suffer either of my instruments to be heard.

Now is my time, when the epileptic one being out of town, and the journalist gone to Jericho, or the seat of war, I am sure I don't know which, or care: I can tinkle, or twang, or scruple, or all together, to my heart's content. There is only the landlady and "Lyzer," the slavery, in the house besides myself, but neither of these will object, of course; so, after a little hesitation between my three charmers, I choose my especial favourite, the violin, and begin to tune up.

It is a warm, drowsy afternoon. The French windows of my room are wide open. They open upon a balcony, which balcony is continuous to every two houses of our crescent. Before taking my seat near the window, I just give a glance outside, to see whether there is anyone on the balcony on either side of me. I do this for two reasons—first, because, you see, I am fearful of giving offence to my unmusical neighbours; and, secondly, not being above the weakness of desiring one or two sympathetic auditors. There are some nice girls on one side of me, and they might—you know. Only I need not have given myself such concern, for I ought to have known they were out of town like everybody else, and that, in fact, I had Pharissee Crescent all to myself.

Stop a minute, though; not quite so much to myself, after all. There is no one in the balconies, indeed, but, as I return to my seat, and prepare to commence a somewhat difficult symphony—a work requiring some study and absence of all outward distractions to master it thoroughly—I become conscious of a melancholy wailing proceeding from the open window of the next house.

Pausing to consider what these dismal utterances portend, I remember me that there is

harboured next door a pestilent creature, called a page. I recollect, too, that this creature is inspired with a passion for the penny whistle.

He is in possession of one now, and, in the absence of "the family," is enjoying his ease in the drawing-room next to mine, and plaintively murmuring through his dulcet pipe the air of "There Stands a Post."

"Let it," I remark, as I involuntarily repeat the title of the piece.

"He always came home to tea," is the exclaiming response of the penny whistle.

"Well, there's some hope in that," I think, "it'll only go home for his tea."

But either it isn't his tea-time yet, or the penny whistle has more charms for him than the proverbially cheering cup. Or perhaps he requires rest rather than refreshment, for he now requests, in agonizing accents, to "put him in his little bed."

"Put him in his little bed, indeed! I'd put him in the—well, say the station-house, not to mention anything worse."

With which murmur I take up my violin again, and begin to play in spite of him. Abandoning the symphony, I try instead a loud bravura, in the hope of drowning his horrible screeching, or of driving the demon of discord out of his savage breast. It is, surely, not to be charmed out. But, above my loudest passages, I can hear him still bewailing, in harrowing strains, that "You'll Remember Me."

"I think you'll remember me, my friend, before I've done with you!" I observe, considerably above my breath; and just now am sensible of a momentary darkening of my window. Looking up, I catch the glimpse of a ditting figure, and the echo of certain impertinent remarks touching a "humbuggin' fiddle."

It seems my instrument has disturbed him at his studies; still, his resentment takes only the mildest form. But it aggravates mine almost to frenzy, when, in tones of tenderest reproach, he threatens to "Strike me with a Feather."

"If I could only strike him with that atrocious whistle!"

With this revengeful thought I put down my violin in despair, and resign myself to the entertainment of murderous designs upon that engine of discord. A soft cadimination, like the laughter of a baby-hyena, now comes through the next windows. It may come from the page or the whistle, I don't know which, and don't care. We shall see who will laugh presently.

Eureka!

I have it. A bright idea has just struck me.

A man over the way is crying strawberries. At first it occurs to me to purchase a basket of them, and offer it to the manager as a welcome refreshment after his exertions, with the object of slyly abstracting the penny whistle, and dropping it into our area. The idea of strawberries, however, suggested another and a more useful fruit for my purpose.

What about cherries, now? There are stones in cherries. And how about a cherry-stone in a penny whistle? Boys, like this tuneless page, I reflect, are generally of an inquiring turn of mind; wherefore the following problem occurs to me—

Given—A, a tuneless page; B, a penny whistle; and C, a cherry-stone. What are the odds against C finding its way into B through the agency of A?

Anyhow, the experiment is worth trying. So I ring the bell, and send "Lyzer" for a pound of the best bigarones.

Eliza has brought the bigarones—fine, large, tempting fruit, with good big stones inside, as I find upon tasting a few. I go out upon the balcony, and throw these stones upon the adjoining one, which is continuous with ours.

Just as I expected, these have interrupted my neighbour's appeal to Tommy to make room for his uncle, and brought him to the window, whistle and all, to see, as he would phrase it, "What's up?"

In the most seductive manner I can assume, I compliment him upon his proficiency on the whistle, extol the instrument, and offer him the cherries.

He answers, obscurely, "Gammou" designating, I suppose, the maker of the whistle. But he has accepted the cherries, with a huge condescension, and retired with them into private life.

The penny whistle is silenced.

He is evidently devouring the cherries, but what is he doing with the stones? Throwing them out of window? No. Swallowing them? Not likely. He must be saving them up, and there is—yes, there is just a chance that some of them may find their way into that whistle.

A knock at my door.

Eliza enters to say there's a man downstairs wants to see me, and says he "knows as I'm at home, 'cause he sees me in the balcony." Some obtrusive tradesman with a little bill, I surmise; but as there is no help for it, I go down to him, obsequiating him and his class in general.

I have been gone some minutes, having had a little difficulty with the man, whom I found to be a singularly pertinacious tailor; but I have pacified him, and come back rejoicing.

As I enter, I fancy I perceive a figure scurrying away from the window in the direction of the whistling amateur's apartment. My friend Buttons, I suppose, come to look for some more cherries, or to reproach me with the ruin of his pipe, plugged up and silenced through my treachery.

I rub my hands, and chuckle in anticipation. I listen. All is still next door. Not a sound

of the penny whistle, or of its master's lamentations. Perhaps the end is not yet attained; perhaps he is experimenting now. He has surely eaten the cherries by this time. A few minutes more, and that abominable engine will be securely bunged up.

At all events, I think I may now get through my symphony in peace, or, at least, attempt it again.

I take up the violin—

Ha! what is that?

Something rattles in the inside.

I shake it. Gracious! It rattles like a bladder of peas.

What can it be?

I rush to the light! I peer into the sound-holes, and see—

That page!—that monster! has put all the cherry-stones into my violin!

And none in the whistle!

For there it is again, invoking the "Two Obadias."

I have fled from Pharissee Crescent.

H. C. S.

THE PROMPTER'S LAST CALL.

He was an old man, his hair white and thin. He had been sick for some time past at the M. Hotel. The company would constantly drop in to see how the poor old fellow thrived and minister to his wants as well as they could.

A drizzling rain was falling on the lamp-lit street below. The fire of the grate played with a ghastly effect upon the old man's emaciated face, and he tossed his head restlessly on his pillow.

Two ladies of the company sat by his side; one with fair hands smoothed the tangled grey hair from his damp brow. The silence in the room was really oppressive; nothing could be heard but the loud ticking of the clock on the mantel and the pattering of the rain on the window without.

The door opened noiselessly and the physician entered. All made way for the man of science. How eagerly they watched him, as he felt the invalid's pulse! The fair-haired *scotch* was the first to break the silence.

"Doctor, is there any hope?"

The physician slowly shook his head, as he tenderly dropped the poor thin hand, and softly said:

"The end is very near."

Ten minutes passed, twenty. The sufferer was very quiet. A *groom* in the street below called loudly to a companion. The old man suddenly opened his eyes and distinctly said in an authoritative voice—

"Half-hour! half-hour!"

All was quiet again. The company in the room seemed awed by the presence of death, and reverently bowed their heads, waiting meekly for the end. Some one below stairs opened a door, and the soft notes of a piano were distinctly heard in the room. The old Prompter roused himself from his stupor and clearly called—

"Overture!—all down to begin!"

Then they understood him, poor old man! Actor and actress looked into each other's faces and truly realized that the ruling passion was indeed strong even in death. In his last moments his head was with his beloved profession. Ah, alas! it was his life-drama, and he was in the last scene of the last act. From this moment he began to sink rapidly. The friends gathered closer around the bedside with pitiful faces; one of the ladies with a sob turned away. It seemed to rouse him. He feebly said—

"Everybody ready to end act?"

A terrible paleness came over his face, dark rings formed around his poor eyes. It was the ghastly hue of death. He did not move. They thought he had passed away, he was so quiet and motionless. The doctor leaned over softly and listened. The loud ticking of the clock grated harshly upon their ears, but no one moved. The door of the parlour below opened, and again the soft notes of the piano could be heard.

At this instant the clock upon the mantel struck one. The old look of intelligence stole over his wan face, his dim eyes brightened for a moment.

The physician, stooped to catch his feebly-whispered sentence—

"Ring down!—the drama is over!"

The fair-haired girl tenderly closed his sightless eyes, and thus, like a plaintive melody, the old Prompter's life passed softly away.

FRANK OAKES ROSE.

BRELOQUES POUR DAMES.

"EXPERIENCE is a dear teacher." Not half so dear as a pretty school-marm.

It will shortly be time to sit on the front stoop with a girl and a Japanese fan and listen to the street musician and the mosquito.

OUR extra-strong-minded woman has remarked that an old bachelor is a man who, through selfish motives, has refrained from making some woman wretched.

THE latest caprice of a New York bride was to wear a thread lace veil heavily embroidered with pearls. This was made in France especially for the occasion.

ANOTHER woman has shot a burglar—this time in Bradford, Pa. Before going through a

house a burglar should make sure there is nobody but men around.

THE pity of mankind will soon be attracted by the root beer bottle that will be doomed to swelter all day under the raging sun in a vat of warm water in front of the fruit stands.

A LITTLE Brookline girl, being reproved the other day by her elder sister for using a slang expression, sharply retorted, "Well, if you went into society more, you would hear slang."

A TRUE story in two chapters. Chapter I. Mrs. Malton, of Jersey City, had a habit of smoking a pipe in bed. Chapter II. The other night she changed that habit for a shroud. The end.

ANY decent-looking and respectable man can get a wife for the asking that will stick by him; but nothing short of cash will secure a hired girl, and then she is not liable to stay over two weeks.

"In buying furniture don't get a bed later than Queen Anne's time, because it isn't fashionable." If the author of the above will inform us what time Queen Anne got to bed we'll try and follow suit, even if we have to get up again and return to the club.

WE have never been able to understand how it is that a woman, who is apparently dead when her husband asks her where that half-dollar is he left in his pantaloons pocket before going to bed, can hear the wail of her two weeks old baby down two flights of stairs and through three dead doors.

WE hear of a lad who is much given to the perusal of reports of accidents. "My child," remarked his fond mother the other night, "you have neglected your cat-chism lately." "Yes, my dear mother," he replied, after a moment's profound thought, "I—I was afraid it might explode."

HE was an entire stranger to the girls present, and the boys were mean and would not introduce him. He finally plucked up courage, and stepping up to a young lady, requested the pleasure of her company for the next dance. She looked at him in surprise, and informed him that she had not the pleasure of his acquaintance. "Well," remarked Cadenova, "you don't take any more chances than I do."

THE GLEANER.

THE Hoosac tunnel is to be illuminated with the electric light.

New umbrellas are of French Levantine silk, and the English pug's head is as much in demand as ever.

MADONNA'S pitchers, representing ears of corn, pineapples, etc., are a fashionable addition to the dinner table.

RECENTLY Chiquet's Needle was brought to its final resting-place—that is, for the next thousand years or so.

It is announced that Don Augustin Edwards, an American, who has just died in Chili, left a fortune of \$25,000,000. He had, it is stated, a monopoly of the copper mines of the country.

It has been decided to hold the international congress for the investigation of the history of America before the time of Columbus in Brussels during 1879, instead of in some American city.

A "Society for the Smuggling of Married Men who attend Dancing Parties and leave their Wives at Home," is the latest notion among the young ladies of Boston. Hundreds are joining it.

"MARK TWAIN" is now in Europe. A reporter interviewed him on board the steamer just as he was starting, and Mr. Samuel M. Clemens told the reporter this:—"I am going to write something when I get settled. I can't write when I am interrupted. I turn three pages out of four and begin over again. In Germany, where I can't understand a word they say, I can settle down and write it off." What ever he writes is sure to be worth reading. He is one of the truest of living humorists.

It is well known that the Empress of the French has long felt the inconvenience of living so far out of the London world as Chisclhurst, and that her Majesty has more than once thought of taking up her residence at the West End. The Empress has long been on the look out for a house in the neighbourhood of Kensington or South Kensington, if she is not already in treaty for one. The Prince Imperial finds Chisclhurst dreadfully dull; and it is natural that she should like to see a little more of society than is possible at the distance of eight or ten miles from London.

DR. PIERCE'S Golden Medical Discovery will cure a cough in one half the time necessary to cure it with any other medicine; and it does it, not by drying it up, but by removing the cause, subduing the irritation, and healing the affected parts. Sold by druggists.

NOTICE TO LADIES.

The undersigned begs respectfully to inform the ladies of the city and country that they will find at his Retail Store, 196 St. Lawrence Main Street, the choicest assortment of Ostrich and Culture Feathers, of all shades; also, Feathers of all descriptions repaired with the greatest care. Feathers dyed as per sample, on shortest delay. Gloves cleaned and dyed black only. J. H. LEBLANC. Works: 547 Craig St.