

fused than ever. At Blake's suggestion he had spread all the various poems out on a table in the green-room, and was reading them all over to himself "just to put a finishing touch to them," as Blake remarked.

It was nearly time for him to go on. Half a dozen fellows clustered round him.

"Well, old man, which piece are you going to give them?"

"Oh, don't bother! I don't know. I can't make up my mind."

"It's about time you did, then. What do you know best?"

"I'm getting mixed. I thought I was all right with 'Horatius,' but now I've forgotten the end of it."

"Give them 'Queen of the May,' Jones," suggested one.

"Or 'The Inchcape Rock,' old chap," said another.

"Or 'Mr Name is Norval'—you said that all right last night, you know."

"No, try 'The Schooner Hesperus'—that's a fine thing."

"For goodness' sake don't bother me any more!" cried the unfortunate Jones, stuffing his fingers into his ears.

Just at that moment in rushed Sinclair. "Come along, Jones," he said, "they're waiting for you!"

"Half a moment, Sinclair, please. I don't know—"

"Can't wait a second, I tell you. Come along!"

He seized the unhappy reciter by the arm and literally dragged him to the platform. If Jones Minor was confused before, his memory became hopelessly muddled when he found himself face to face with the audience, and heard the cheers and clapping that were purposely started by his school-fellows. His brain was in a whirl. Every piece that he had learned mixed itself up in his head.

"Go on, you duffer!" whispered Sinclair. "Can't you begin?"

Driven to desperation, Jones advanced a step or two, and then delivered himself of the most remarkable medley that had ever been heard with-

in the walls of the school.

"Ladies and Gentlemen," he began, "I'm going to give you a recitation. It's called 'The—Schooner Horatius.' No, I mean 'The Village Rock.' No, that isn't it. It's 'How the—the Blacksmith kept the Bridge.' I mean it's—it's a thing by Longfellow, you know; that is, I think it was Tennyson!"

"The Boy Stood on the Burning Deck," whispered Blake, loud enough for him to hear.

"Yes, that's it," went on Jones. Then he fixed his eyes on a point in the roof and blurted out in jerks and starts, as the odd lines came before him, the following effusion:

"The boy stood on the burning deck,
He—he stood upon his head,
Because his arms and legs were off,
So he waved his sword and said:
My name is Norval. On the Grampian
Hills

The village smithy stands;
The smith, a mighty man, was—was
wrecked

On the pitiless Goodwin Sands.
And by him sported on the green
His little grandchild, Wilhelmine;
The doctors had given her up, sir,
The darling of our crew!

And—and the cheek of Argyll grew
deadly pale,
And all for that bit of blue.

Then we rushed for the signal rockets,
'Let's fire them quick, we cried,
And the good Abbot of Abberbrothok
plunged headlong in the tide.

Then who will stand on either hand
and keep the bridge with me?

On board the schooner Hesperus that
sails the wintry sea,

I, with two more to help me, will hold
the foe in play,

For I'm to be Queen of the May,
mother; I'm to be Queen of the May."

When it was all over, and the roars of laughter had subsided, Jones rushed off the stage and hid himself for the rest of the evening. And the memory of his famous recitation is still an evergreen one in the annals of the school.—Boys and Girls.