

## WHO SETS THE FASHIONS?

Who sets the fashions, I'd like to know  
For the little people beneath the snow!  
And are they working a weary while,  
To dress themselves in the latest style?

There's Mrs. Primrose, who used to be  
The very picture of modesty:  
Plain with her dresses, but now she goes  
With crimps and fringes and furbelows.

And even Miss Buttercup puts on airs  
Because the colour in vogue she wears:  
And as for dandelion, dear me!  
A vainer creature you ne'er will see.

When Mrs. Poppy—that dreadful flirt—  
Was younger, she wore but one plain skirt—  
But now I notice, with great surprise,  
She's several patterns of largest size.

The Fuchsia's sters—those lovely belles!  
Improve their styles as the mode compels:  
And, though every body is loud in their praise,  
They ne'er depart from their modest ways.

And the Pansy family must have found  
Queen Elizabeth's wardrobe underground  
For in velvets and satins of every shade  
Throughout the season they're all arrayed.

Pinks and Daisies, and all the flowers,  
Change their fashions, as we change ours;  
And those who knew them in olden days  
Are mystified by their modern ways.

Who sets the fashions, I'd like to know,  
For the little people beneath the snow!  
And are they busy a weary while,  
Dressing themselves in the latest style?

—Scottish American.

## TOM BOLLIVAR'S WIFE.

Somebody knocked at the door. And such a night as it was! the snow and the wind making it dreadful to think of while you sat beside a roaring fire, let alone being out on the dismal flat where the little house braved the fury of the elemental war. It was quiet inside, the loudest sound being the moan of the wind and the hiss of the feathery snowflakes falling down the wide-mouthed chimney to the flaring logs below.

A woman was sitting by those flaring logs mending a little child's frock. The six little shoes, in various worn stages, placed before the fire told a story that oftentimes, louder noises than the moan of the wind and the hiss of lost snowflakes on the fire, disturbed the room. Sitting there sewing, and with a woman's mind far away from what she was busy at, and yet tied all the stronger here by reason of her wandering thoughts, the woman started—somebody knocked at the door.

She arose hurriedly, suppressing a cry, and unlocked and flung the door open. A man's voice in the snowy darkness said harshly:

"Where do Tom Bollivar's wife live at—here?"

"Yes," she answered, her hand upon her heart, her eyes peering out in the night. "I am Tom Bollivar's wife; what do you want of me?"

"Lass, will you ask me in? I've news of Tom."

"You have? Come in, sailor, and tell me what you know."

Into the light and warmth stepped a rough, brawny fellow, dressed in the slipshod manner of a sailor upon shore. He shook the snow from his shaggy coat and his beard, slapping his slouch hat upon his knee, and looking fiercely down into the little woman's face all the time as though to intimidate her. She returned the look with an odd expression—not frightened, but startled, bewildered—the look that had come in her face when she opened the door and peered out at the man; then from the bewildered look another came, one of understanding, comprehension, and she said to him calmly:

"Sit by the fire; you must be chilled through this gruesome night."

The startled look seemed to have flown from her face to his, but he said more harshly:

"I am chilled through. Tom Bollivar's wife, and that ain't no lie 'cordin' to Scripture. Are ye all alone here, woman?" and he glanced about him.

"No," she said, pointing to the six worn little shoes. The man looked at them and then turned his face away from her for an instant.

"Now, sailor," she said, "what's this great news o' yours?"

"An't ye afeared o' me, ye a lone 'oman?"

"Bosh! Tell me the news."

"Tom Bollivar's wife, ye frustrate me. But it's right ye an't afeared o' me—why should ye be? I—I kinder thought ye might be, though. But I'm a rough sailor, and—"

"O pshaw! hurry up with the news."

"I—I don't know how to commence the yarn, wi' you a settin' there so unskered."

"Oh! it is a yarn, eh? Well, wait, sailor, till I put some wood on the fire, then fire away."

She put the wood on, sat down on the stool in the red light of the blaze, and took up the little frock again.

"Now," she said, "I'm ready."

The man had his mouth open. Despite his bronzed skin and the fire from the logs, something else sent that flush over his face that now suffused it.

"He'n't ye a little nervous anyways?" he asked.

"O my! no, not at all. I'm steady enough to count the threads while I stitch this band of our Susy's frock. Nervous! Me! O dear!"

"Tom Bollivar's wife, I've that to tell as will not make ye brag of being steady. Tom Bollivar's been gone three years and over, eh?"

"If you know it, sailor, why do you ask me for? Don't you suppose that I can count the months that make three years?"

"When did ye hear from Tom last?" he gulped, and his eyes were wrathful.

"Six months ago," she said easily; "he was sailing for Madagascar, and hadn't time to say much."

"Tom Bollivar's wife," said the man solemnly, and suppressing his strange anger, "ye'll not be likely to hear from him agin in a hurry; he won't write soon."

"I expect not. There an't much use o' him writing, anyway, seeing I can't answer, not knowing if I'd send my letters to sea that they'd find him."

"Lass, he'll never write agin no more. Tom won't. There, now."

"That's a pity for Tom," she said, biting off her thread, "for he always likes to write a bit about the children. O dear!"

The man looked at her in blank amazement.

"Tom Bollivar's wife, I think I'll commence that there yarn I promised."

"Lor, sailor, you don't mean to say you an't begun it yet? What a tedious one you can be, to be sure! Bless my heart!"

Again the man gulped and gritted his teeth. He went on madly:

"Ye know, six months ago, Tom he sailed around Madagascar, don't ye? Well, I was along wi' Tom, I was. Me an' him we was chums; wheresomever he went, theresomever went I; whensomever he writ to ye, I seen that there letter, true as Gospel. When he was thinkin' o' ye I knowed it. But there's storms at sea, lass—oh! sich storms. Why, this here storm outside is a baby-squall compared with them there at sea, creaking and groaning, and cussing and ordering, and there's storms as makes ye think of home and your wife and your babies, and to look up into the face of the angry sky and try to peer out the pitying face of Jesus Christ as he walked on the waters, and told the waves to be still—storms as makes ye look up at that sky that seems to be fighting with the mad sea that rises up to clinch with it, and falls back all shattered and broke; there's storms as makes a sailor's heart cry for the help of God for them as he loves, even if the help don't save his own life. Who knowed more about storms nor me and Tom Bollivar! We'd followed the sea night on to twenty years, and never separated. I can't tell ye, for ye'll feel that bad."

"No, I won't, sailor: upon my word, I won't. I like it—I like to hear you talk; it seems old-fashioned!"

"Old-fashioned?"

"Yes; Tom used to sit where you sit, and I sitting in this blessed identical spot, sewing as I do now, and he'd tell his awful yarns and try to make me believe them. You see, I don't swallow all I hear."

"Ye don't think I'm a-deceivin' ye do ye?"

"I don't think much about it, so you needn't have that in your noddle. Go on, do; for mercy's sake, what ails the man?"

Such a look as he gave her!

"Well, there comes a storm one day, an' the skipper he comes to us and says, says he: 'It's all up wi' us, as ye see. Try to save yourselves.' The ship had sprung a leak, the whole side was stove in on a rock, an' the pumps was no use, an' we was a-goin' down, an'—O, Tom Bollivar's wife I how kin I say it!—your husband he wouldn't desert that there ship as he'd knowed, man and boy, since him an' the ship was both young."

"That's right in him," she said, shaking her head and setting herself on the stool, a light in her eyes; "that's right in him! I wouldn't own Tom Bollivar if he'd forsook his work because it got troublesome."

"Yes, but lass, Tom he was aboard till the last two hung together. He wouldn't go. He got the others off an' helped wi' the cargo; but there he stayed, a-lookin' out in the direction o' his home, and a-thinkin' o' ye an' the babbies."

"True for you, sailor," she said, her voice tremulous and almost glad, "and good for Tom Bollivar!"

"But why don't you get frustrated? Didn't ye kear nothin' 'bout Tom? Why don't ye get into a reg'lar tetter?"

"Oh! I'll get that way after a bit."

Again that dreadful look at her.

"Then ye didn't kear nothin' for Tom?"

"Now, look here, sailor," she said, "you know Tom powerful well, you say. Didn't Tom ever know of the time and time again when I've sat here all alone through the night, after I've tucked the children up in bed, and stayed at the window looking out at the raving storm, thinking of my husband? Didn't he ever know at such times that my heart went away over the cruel sea hunting for him—went further than the sea, up to heaven, to Him who holds the sea and the storm in the hollow of his hand? Didn't he ever know how I treasured up every hope, every dream of him, every word he'd ever said—that I searched the children's faces day after day, seeing his likeness there so that I'd never forget his looks and should know him always, no matter when or how I met him? And didn't he know how, when I was timider for him than usual and wanted him more than usual, I'd go the children and cry, 'Babies, babies, wake with mammy and pray for daddy on the wild, wild seas? and how we would kneel down and say 'Our Father,' and feel sure

that the Lord know what we were asking for and would answer our prayer? Didn't Tom ever know how I must have counted days, then weeks, then months, and at last years wanting him, writing, watching for him, ever true in words and thought? Couldn't he tell you that he guessed I loved all sailors for his sake, and I pitied lonely one that come to port here, and who made friends with me? For I've gone to them and said: 'Cheer up, my lads, I'm Tom Bollivar's wife, and he's on the briny deep. Let me help you all I can; if you're sick or lonesome, or want little jobs of woman's work done for you, why, come to me! I'm Tom Bollivar's wife, and he's on the briny deep. And how often has this room been crowded with sailor men! And how they've kissed the children, in case they'd pass Tom's ship, they said, and would seem to take the kisses to him; or they'd kiss 'em because they had little ones of their own far away, who must looking out to sea and thinking of their daddies. And I've helped 'em all I could—indeed, indeed I have; and me and the children, why, we've gone down to see their ships off, and have made the children wave their hands and say, 'Good-by!' right loud, and the men have called, 'Three cheers and a tiger for Tom Bollivar's wife, and God care for the babies!' And I've done all this for love of Tom. And you don't say that he ever thought of that, only that I don't care for him. If he didn't know me without words, then he didn't love me as I always thought he did."

And she wiped her eyes on the frock she was mending. The man looked at her for a minute, seemed to hold back something he was about to say, put his hands nervously in his pockets, and went on:

"Well, lass, he knowed it. He thought he knowed it for a truth, but—and now comes the all-firedest, awful part o' this here Gospel-truth yarn."

"Yes, sailor."

"Well—now don't ye cry out, and don't ye flop down—but Tom Bollivar he won't never, never come home no more."

She smiled up in his face.

"Why?" she simply asked.

"Because—he's drowned dead," he replied.

"I don't believe it, sailor."

"But I was wi' him all the time; I orter know."

"Then why wasn't you drowned too? If you thought so much of him as you say, why didn't you drown trying to save him, if nothing else?"

"I—I—well, I washed ashore. But poor Tom!—O Lor! poor Tom, he's went."

"O dear if that's the case I might as well make up my mind to be a widow."

"I rather think so. Well—why don't ye get frustrated, Widder Bollivar?" cried the man aghast; "ye promised that, anyway."

"I'll get that way after a while, sailor."

"But I tell ye, Tom Bollivar an't no more; he's drowned dead, him that was your husband."

"Well, I can't help it, can I? I didn't drown him, did I? I'm a widow, ain't I? Now I'll tell you what I think about it. You see, sailor, I can't live here all alone, now, can I?"

"What do you mean, Widder Bollivar?"

"That's it—that's right—I'm Widow Bollivar. But I musn't be Widow Bollivar all my life, so I must get married."

"Married! My God! woman, your husband, he an't cold yet."

"I can't wait until I'm cold because you say he an't quite cold yet, can I?"

"Do you mean to say ye don't love him?"

"It would be foolish to love a dead man and marry a live one."

"Who—who'll have ye for a wife when they knows all I knows? Widder, I'll tell the whole town, I'll tell the whole world, I'll put ye in the 'log'—I mean the papers."

"Bosh, sailor; that's nonsense. Who'll have me? Why you will, sailor; I know you will."

"Git out o' my way, Tom Bollivar's wife. Me have you? Lor! I thought I'd find you crazy mad at the idea o' him bein' dead and leyin' rollin' round wi' the sharks in Davy Jones's locker. An' now to hear ye! O woman, woman! ye don't know what ye've done. I'll go back to my ship; I'll hate all women for your sake; I'll never tell who I—"

"Sailor, you shall have me now."

"Let me out o' this here blasted house."

"Sailor, I'd lock the door. You shall not leave this room till you say you'll have me for your lawful wedded wife."

"Let me out! I'll never say sich words to you. Woman, you're a bad lot, that's what ye are—a bad, ungodly, vicious creeter. Ye've lied to me about lovin' your husband, so ye'd get me to marry ye; ye've saw so many sailors, an' thinks we're all green alike. I don't believe ye ever thought o' your husband; I don't believe even the babies thought o' their poor deceived father—"

"Not of their deceived father, sailor," she said, coming towards him, the tears running down her cheeks, her lips smiling; "but their father, who must always believe me to be true and loving—their father I saw this blessed night."

"Who—who—their father—this night? Where is he? Where is he—"

She threw herself upon his breast, her arms clasped wildly about him.

"Here, here!" she cried rapturously; "here is their father—my Tom, my dear old boy!"

And then cried aloud:

"Babies, children, wake up! Come to mammy, for daddy's come home from the cruel,

cruel seas, and he's tried to make mammy believe he was somebody else, and that daddy was drowned. O Tom! I knew when I opened the door; I never could be mistaken in you, never, never!"

And the patter of children's feet, the crying of children's voices drowned Tom Bollivar's voice deeper than any sea had ever drowned Tom Bollivar.

## ECHOES FROM LONDON.

THE ransom paid for Mr. Suter to the Greek brigands, £15,000, was, it is said, just Mr. Suter's weight in gold.

SOME young ladies who are draped *à la mod*, "pullback," and seem unable to breathe and bend in the "vice" they wear, have added steel spurs to their outfit.

DION BOURCAULT is busy writing a history of Ireland. Perhaps his desire is to show in plain language, how Ireland has through centuries oppressed England.

THE Registrar-General has just issued his report for 1880. In it, it is stated that on the 31st of December, London covered an area of 122 square miles, and contained 1,500 miles of streets and roads.

THE London branch of the Ladies' Land League has just met with a rebuff from an unexpected quarter. They proposed to hold a public meeting, and had selected Exeter Hall as the scene of the campaign. Application was made in due form for the Hall. But when the object for which it was required was made known the Hall was refused.

AN enigmatical paragraph appears in one of the morning papers to the effect that the Carlton Club has summoned a meeting, at which a motion will be submitted for the reduction of the club by one member. This diplomatic way of putting it refers to the case of a baronet, a member of the last Parliament, who has made himself obnoxious in the club.

A CONVALESCENT Home for Ritualistic Postmen is the latest novelty in the operations of the Ritualists. The Rev. A. H. Stanton, commonly called by his admirers Father Stanton, one of the curates of the notorious St. Albans, Holborn, has secured premises at St. Leonard's-on-Sea, which are to be used as a convalescent home for postmen of the St. Martin's League, or, in other words, ritualistic postmen.

THE promoters of coffee taverns have not yet been able to supply us with good coffee, but there is no doubt about their champagne. Recently was inaugurated the Queen's Bench Coffee Tavern and Model Dwellings in London Company. The feast was good, and the champagne very good. It has been said that religion is a good thing for other people, and the promoters evidently had the same idea about coffee.

MR. FRED GODFREY, the eminent musician, has been seized with a brain disease, and he had recently to be placed under confinement in an asylum. As for many years bandmaster of the Coldstream Guards, he has long been celebrated both in London and the provinces, and he is probably one of the best known military band and dance conductors of the day. Some time ago he suffered a stroke of paralysis which has directly led to the present unhappy attack.

MADAME SARAH BERNHARDT'S latest toilette is a dress dotted with white and black dots, with a silk scarf tied below the waist in the Turkish fashion; a coat-bodice in black velvet, with splendid white lace, and a bolero hat veiled in black and white blonde. Her figure looked splendid and charming, like a sword in a beaded silk sheath. This style of corselet is much in favour at present. It extends about half-way down the body.

A LITTLE fact is worth mentioning to show how London has grown in extent. A tramway line is in course of construction between East Greenwich and Plumstead. When this is finished there will be a continuous tramway from Blackfriars and Westminster Bridges to Plumstead—thirteen miles. On the whole route there are houses on either side, and this, bear in mind, is only on the southern side of the Thames.

YET another scheme for crossing the Channel by railway has been brought forward. The originator is Mr. Bradford Leslie, the Engineer of the East India Railway Company. Brushing aside such ideas as those connected with tunnels and bridges, he proposes that we shall travel into France through a cylindrical steel tube submerged 40 feet below the surface of the water. The tube would be so ballasted as to make it weigh 1½ tons to the foot less than the water displaced, its buoyancy being counterbalanced by moorings at every 250 feet. At the shore ends it would be laid in dredged or excavated channels, and would be made to rise from the mid-channel depths by easy gradients. The cost of carrying out this scheme is estimated to be £8,000,000.