

The Vicar's Nephew; or The Orphan's Vindication

CHAPTER I.—(Cont'd).

He sent Molly away, and then he began a laborious apology for the wickedness of Jack, the "devil's limb." Seeing how much he took the matter to heart, the visitor cut him short good-humoredly, giving his own version of the story, as of a mere school-boy prank, and turned the conversation to other subjects.

Presently tea was brought in, and together with it came Mrs. Raymond, a stout, submissive, motherly woman, older than her husband, with indefinite eyebrows plaintively raised in an arch of chronic surprise. Her black gown was the perfection of neatness, and not a hair of her head was out of place. Molly, in a clean white pinafore, the thick curls carefully brushed and tied back with a ribbon, made a graceful little picture, clinging shyly to her aunt. An air of peaceful domesticity seemed to enter with the woman and child. The bread, butter, and cake were too good not to be home made; and when, after tea, Mrs. Raymond sat down by the window to finish embroidering a frock for Molly, the visitor saw that she was no less excellent a needlewoman than a cook. She was also charitable, as appeared from the red woollen comforter which Molly was learning to knit; the little girl had evidently been taught that the making of warm garments for the poor is an important duty. It occurred to him that this woman of plastic virtues must sometimes find it a little fatiguing to stand a perpetual buffer between husband and nephew.

"Sarah," said the Vicar, when tea had been cleared away. "I've been telling Dr. Jenkins how deeply we regret what happened on the cliff road yesterday. He is so kind as to take the matter very lightly, and not to demand any formal apology."

Mrs. Raymond lifted her mild eyes to the visitor's face.

"We are very sorry that you should have had any annoyance. But we have done our best, indeed; and it is most kind of you not to want the boy punished."

"He will be punished in any case," said the Vicar quietly. "The entry is already made in the conduct book." "Not on my account," said Dr. Jenkins put in. "I regarded the whole thing really as a joke, and should never have thought of complaining if you had not happened to hear of it."

"You are very kind," replied the Vicar; "but I never overlook an offence."

"Good Heavens, what a puffed-up account there must be against that boy!" thought the doctor. He turned the conversation away, as soon as he could, from the sore subject of Jack's delinquencies. On other topics the Vicar proved a very agreeable talker; practical, clear-headed, and fairly well informed. He took a great interest in local philanthropic and pious enterprises, particularly in missions. He was giving the visitor an account of his connection with the Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen, when the house-door was violently slammed and Mrs. Raymond looked up in nervous anticipation.

"Jack!" called the Vicar, rising and opening the door of the room. "Come in here. Molly, my dear," he added, turning to the little girl; "you had better run upstairs and play."

"Mind you change your pinafore," said Mrs. Raymond, as the child went out. "And ask Mary Anne—Oh, Jack, where have you been to get into that state?"

Jack had slouched into the room with his hands in his pockets. He took the situation at a glance, and stopped short beside the door, scowling at the visitor. "You're grumpy," he remarked, "but I don't care. I'm not in the mood for a lecture. I've been training for a professional acrobat. From there he swung himself up by the ivy to a projecting ledge running round the house between the two stories, and scrambled in at an upper window like a cat.

Mrs. Raymond turned to the visitor or in despair.

"What am I to do with him?" she said.

CHAPTER II.

The boys came trooping out from school. It was a half-holiday and a glorious midsummer afternoon, and every one, or almost every one, was in high spirits. Jim Greaves, the eldest boy, who was nearly seventeen, and a person of consequence, having always plenty of pocket-money, walked arm in arm with his special friend, Robert Polwheal, the "lamb," so called for his habit of bullying the little ones. The two boys were not popular in the school; but as Jim was richer and Rob stronger than most of the others, a good many things were forgiven them, or, if not forgiven, submitted to in silence. The dullness of life at Portcharick had induced them to join Jack Raymond's gang of larks, which enrolled boys of various characters, sizes, and social ranks; and though both were much older than the captain, his dominant will kept them fairly submissive to orders. Yet neither of them had any natural gift for parading, and there was small love between them and Jack; they still remembered, though they pretended to forget, how last year he had fought them, one after the other, for ill-treating a puppy. Though physically somewhat overmatched, he had succeeded, by dint of sheer pugnacity, in giving both of them as much pommeling as they cared to have; and had then gone cheerfully home with a swollen nose and one eye bunged up, to be, as usual, thrashed by his uncle for fighting.

Since then they had treated him with the respect due to a warlike captain; and had indulged their secret ill-will only by making, in his presence, remarks which they knew would have infuriated him had the double meanings but been intelligible to his ignorance. When his back was turned the gang would shriek with laughter at the incongruity of a leader in wickedness too "green" to understand Rob Polwheal's jokes. It was perhaps as much the general enjoyment of a comic situation as the fear of his big fists which saved him from enlightenment.

He, for his part, had nearly forgotten the incident of the puppy, and certainly bore no ill-will on account of it. Thrashing was matters of common occurrence; and, for the rest, he was still in the barbaric stage of cub-hood, and had fought as much for pure joy in fighting as for any sentimental reason. Nevertheless, he instinctively disliked both Greaves and Polwheal, just as he disliked Charlie Thompson, the fat, short-winded boy whose hands always disgusted him—wherever I go, I shall have to set up a placard on my door. It is requested not to talk about the crimes of the Vicar's nephew."

In the garden was a shed used for storing fire-wood. Passing beneath it he heard a noise overhead, and looked up. Jack, serene in the consciousness of a position at once dangerous and impregnable, was sitting astride on the corner of the sloping roof, with a huge chunk of bread in one hand and a sour green cooking-apple, probably a remnant of yesterday's loot, in the other. He was devouring the two in alternate bites.

"Hullo!" said the doctor. "How did you get there? I thought you were sent upstairs."

The imp glanced at him laconically and took another bite out of the apple. The deliberate crunching sound set the doctor's teeth on edge.

"You'll have a stomach ache if you eat unripe fruit at that pace."

"I haven't time to talk," Jack replied, with his mouth full. "I've got to go indoors and be thrashed in a minute—and I want to finish my tea first."

"It doesn't seem to affect your appetite."

Jack shrugged his shoulders and began upon another apple. Mrs. Raymond came running down the path, stout and panting, with clasped hands. "Jack! Jack! Where are you? Go in at once, you wicked boy! Oh, my dear, do make haste and go in; your uncle will be so angry!"

She caught sight of the visitor standing in the path, and stopped short. Jack looked round, grinning. "Isn't she soft? She always blubbers when I get a licking."

"You don't I suppose?"

"I?" said Jack, with a contemptuous stare. "I'm not an old woman. I'm uncle going upstairs now. Aunt Sarah? I'll bet you I'll be there before him."

He jumped down from the roof and took the sill of the bow window with as clean a run and spring as if he had been training for a professional acrobat. From there he swung himself up by the ivy to a projecting ledge running round the house between the two stories, and scrambled in at an upper window like a cat.

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SITUATION IN THE BALKANS.



The map shows how Bulgaria's entrance into the war would facilitate the march of the German allies to the aid of Turkey. German forces are now said to be bombarding Serbian positions on the frontier, while Bulgaria is also mobilizing troops on the eastern frontier.

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WATCH THAT OLD BOOK.

There May Be a Small Fortune in Some Musty Volume.

The next time you are tempted to throw away that old book, take some expert advice as to its value. It may be worth its weight in gold.

A few years ago the butler of Thorbeck Hall, Lincolnshire, sold an apparently worthless old book to a pedlar for ninepence. A chemist who bought it from the pedlar for three shillings disposed of it to a bookseller for £2. Eventually the book—Dame Juliana Berners' "Boke of St. Alban's"—realized £420, says London Answers.

One can sympathize with the young who unwittingly let such a tidy sum slip through their fingers. But the bookseller who bought a copy of the first edition of Swift's works at the sale of a deceased nobleman's library for a few shillings, sold it for a guinea, and then learnt from the papers a few days later that he had lost over £1,000 by the transaction. He deserves one's deepest commiseration.

Another lucky find was made at Cam Hill, Hampshire. In an old orchard "Justinian's Laws" was discovered amongst a collection of old, long-forgotten books. This book, printed by the famous Caxton, our first English printer, was valued at £1,000.

One of the most valuable books in existence is the "Magna Carta," which was published in the fifteenth century. In 1911, at the dispersal of the Huth library, one of the greatest of modern book collections, this Bible was sold for £5,880. The first edition of the Bible, in vellum, dated 1462, is worth over £3,000.

The value of a book depends on its rarity and the fame of the author. First editions, as a rule, command the greatest price. But there are other considerations to which connoisseurs attach importance. A book must be in good condition; if it is re-bound, or has its edges cut, its market value is depreciated by at least fifty per cent.

An author's autograph on the flyleaf of his book adds considerably to its value. Even books bearing the signature of such modern authors as Oscar Wilde, R. L. Stevenson, Lewis Carroll, George Meredith, and Edward Fitzgerald are worth anything from twenty-five shillings upwards.

E. A. Poe's "Tamerlane and other Poems," published in Boston in 1827, was picked up at a bookstall for a few pence and sold for £300. At a stall in St. Martin's Lane, two friends of Dante Gabriel Rossetti's discovered a number of copies of Edward Fitzgerald's "Omar Khayyam" on sale at one penny each. Rossetti and Swinburne read the poem, and came back next day for more copies. The stall-keeper asked twopence. In a few days the few remaining copies sold for a guinea.

At night the vision along the cliffs of the "Million Fire-works" tiny electric bulbs in thousands among the trees—and the thousands and thousands of gaily clad women and children visitors shepherded by the more sombre-clad men, give the traveller two distinctly delightful sensations before reaching the illuminated falls themselves. The tiny lights come and go among the trees in a bewitching way. The single light, says the Kobe Chronicle, which illuminates the highest fall will perhaps appeal to many rather than the colored lights thrown on the lower fall, and the lamp-rays, giving the fountain the hues of the rainbow, may be regarded as artificial. Nevertheless, the general effect is attractive, and the surprising coolness of the gorge after a blazing day must tempt many to linger there and enjoy the beverages provided by the many refreshment booths that have been erected.

To any one who knows China, it is impossible not to draw a comparison favorable to the Japanese in viewing the crowd. Entrance to the gorge is perfectly free, yet the thousands flocking there every evening are neatly dressed in summer gowns, every one clean and respectable, while the conduct of the great crowd is orderly and marked by a sense of quiet enjoyment. Such a scene would be almost impossible in China, and until the idea of "personal cleanliness" may be introduced among the swarming millions of that country, we are afraid the Japanese will continue to look down upon their neighbors as inferior.

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"What's In A Name"?

Well, if the name is

"SALADA"

it means irreproachable quality and value.

SOLDIERS LIKE BOMB-THROWING

ANARCHISTS' WEAPON BECOMES HIGHLY RESPECTABLE.

Sharp Work with Cold Steel, Short Weapon Preferred, Follows Target Practice.

It was at a bombing school on a French farm, where chosen soldiers brought back from the trenches were being trained in the use of the anarchist's weapon, which has now become as respectable as the rifle. Specialist develops as the war goes on. There are no M.B. degrees for Master Bombers yet; but that may come, any day, writes a correspondent at British headquarters.

Present was the chief instructor, a young Scotch subaltern with blue eyes, a pleasant smile, and a "cock of the north" spirit. He might have been 20 years old, though he did not look it. On his breast was the purple and white ribbon of the new order of the Military Cross, which you get for doing something in this war which would have won you a Victoria Cross in one of the little wars.

Also present was the assistant instructor, a sergeant of regulars—and very much of a regular—who had three ribbons which he had won in previous campaigns. He, too, had blue eyes, bland blue eyes. These two understood each other.

"If you don't drop it, why it's all right," said the sergeant. "Of course, if you do—"

We did not drop it.

"And when you throw it, sir, you must look out and not hit the hind and knock the bomb out of your hand. That has happened before now to an absent-minded fellow when you throw bombs."

"They say that you sometimes pick up the German bombs and chuck them back before they explode," it was suggested.

"Yes, sir, I've read things like that in some of the accounts of the reports, who write from 'Somewhere in France.' You don't happen to know where that is, sir? All I can say is that if you are going to do it you must be quick about it. I shouldn't advise delaying your decision, sir, or perhaps when you reach down to pick it up neither your hand nor the bomb would be there. They'd have gone off together, sir."

"Have you ever been hurt in your handling of bombs?" one asked. "Surprise in the bland, blue eyes."

Being Courteous to Bombs.

"Oh, no, sir! Bombs are well behaved if you treat them right. It's all in being thoughtful and considerate of them."

Meanwhile he was jerking at some kind of a patent fuse set in a shell of high explosive.

"This is a poor kind, sir. It's been discarded, but I thought that you might like to see it. Never did like it! Always making trouble!"

More distance between the audience and the performer.

"Now I've got it, sir—get down, sir!"

The audience carried out the instructions to the letter, as army regulations require. We got behind the protection of one of the practice trench traverses. He threw the discarded bomb beyond another wall of earth. There was a sharp report, a burst of smoke, and some fragments of earth were tossed into the air.

In a small affair of 200 yards a trench the other day it was estimated that the British and Germans, together threw about 5,000 bombs in this fashion. It was enough to sadden any Minister of Munitions. However, the British kept the trench.

"Do the men like to become bombers?" one asked the subaltern.

"I should say so. It puts them up in front. It gives them a chance to throw something—and they don't get much cricket in France, you see. We had a pupil here last week who broke the throwing record for distance. He was pleased as punch with himself. A first-class bombing detachment has a lot of pride of corps."

To bomb became as common a verb with the army as to bayonet. "We bombed them out" means a section of trench taken. As you know, a trench is dug and built with sandbags in zigzag traverses. In following the course of a trench it is as if you followed the sides of the squares of a checker-board up and down and across on the same tier of squares. The square itself is a bank of earth with the cut on either side and in front of it.

When a bombing party bombs its way into the possession of a section of German trench there are Germans under cover of the traverses on either side of them. The German is waiting around the corner to shoot the first British head that shows itself.

"It's important that you, and not the Boches, chuck the bombs over first," explained the subaltern. "Also that you get the bombs into their traverse or they may be as troublesome to you as the enemy."

With the bombs bursting in their faces the Germans who are not put out of action are blinded and stunned. In the moment when they are thus off guard the aggressors leap around the corner.

"And then?"

"Stick 'em, sir!" said the matter-of-fact sergeant. "Yes, the cold steel is best. And do it first. As Mr. MacPherson said, it's very important to do it first."

Handy Work with Cold Steel.

It has been found that something short is handy for this kind of work. In such cramped quarters—a ditch six feet deep and from two to three feet broad—the rifle is an awkward length to permit of prompt and skillful use of the bayonet.

"Yes, sir, you can mix it up better with something handy, sir—to think British soldiers would come to fighting like assassins, sir," said the sergeant. "You must be spry on such occasions. It's no time for wool-gathering."

Not a smile from him or the subaltern all the time. They were the kind you would like to have along in a tight corner whether you had to fight with knives or fists or 17-inch howitzers.

The sergeant took us into the storehouse where he kept his supply of bombs.

"What if a German shell should strike your storehouse?" it was suggested.

"Then, sir, I expect that most of the bombs would be exploded. Bombs are very peculiar in their habits. What do you think, sir?"

It was no trouble to show stock, as the clerk at the stores said. He brought forth all the different kinds of bombs which British ingenuity has invented—but, no, not all invented. These would mount into the thousands. Every British inventor who knows anything about explosives has tried his hand at a new kind of bomb. One means all the kinds which the British War Office has considered worth a practice test.

There were yellow and green and blue and black and striped bombs, egg-shaped, barrel-shaped, conical and concave bombs; bombs that were exploded by pulling a string or pressing a button—all these to be thrown by hand, without mentioning grenades and other bigger varieties which were thrown by mechanical means which would have made a Chinese warrior "Confused" time or a Roman legionary feel at home.

GERMANS MUST TAKE BATHS.

Rule Applies to All Teutons in Russian Prison Camps.

Side lights on the life of Russian prisoners in the Siberian detention camps are given in a letter received by an English merchant in Moscow, a translation of which is printed in a London newspaper.

"At the present time," says the letter, "we have 14,000 prisoners on our books—6,000 in the villages and 8,000 in town. A further transport of 10,000 prisoners will be taken in within a month."

The Germans are kept separate from the other nationalities. For two hours in the morning the prisoners are allowed to take gymnastic exercises, to play games, sing, or play music. Gardening is also allowed. The prisoners may smoke in places especially allotted. They get the same food as our Russian soldiers.

"Every fortnight a Russian bath is provided, and every one must make use of it. This time of the year the prisoners go to bathe in the river at least once a month."

The letter says the Germans are denied certain privileges accorded to the other prisoners, but the treatment of all is good. No prisoner needs to work more than five hours a day. The sanitary conditions are considered satisfactory. The officers get 50 rubles (82s) monthly and must provide their own food. Each house has a kitchen and there is a servant for every five officers. All complaints of ill treatment, the writer says, are immediately attended to, and those who are guilty are punished.

Coquettes are like weather vane—only fixed when they become rusty.

From the Middle West

BETWEEN ONTARIO AND BRITISH COLUMBIA.

Items From Provinces Where Many Ontario Boys and Girls Are Living.

During the month of August, Calgary contributed \$6,557 to the Canadian Patriotic Fund.

Alex. Weir, who lives near Brandon, Man., threshed 556 bushels of wheat from an 11 acre field.

Henry Stringer, 73 years old, jumped off the Redwood bridge in Winnipeg, and was drowned.

At Moose Jaw the Royal skating rink, one of the largest in Western Canada, was destroyed by fire.

F. A. Griffiths, of Eastwood, Alberta, has a sunflower growing in his garden which is 13 feet 4 inches high.

A woman in Edmonton, has "put down" 40 pounds of wild strawberry preserve, the second growth this year.

Bruce Robinson, of Calgary, who lost his legs in a street car accident, was awarded \$200 by the City authorities.

Alberta Licensed Victuallers' Association is in debt \$55,000 for its campaign in the prohibition vote recently taken.

It is estimated that western soldiers who worked in the harvest fields will receive about \$80,000 for their services.

For carrying "knuckle-dusters," Mike Buderik, Austrian, was fined \$100 and given three months in jail at Lethbridge.

Capt. Stanley J. Anderson, of Moose Jaw, was married at Portland, Me., just as he was notified of being awarded a D.S.O.

Major J. A. Allen, of Saskatoon, says there is too much pro-German talk allowed in Western Canada among enemy-alien.

Winnipeg is considering the advisability of contributing \$30,000 towards the establishment of an aviation school in that city.

In July, 49 died from tuberculosis in Saskatchewan and 29 from pneumonia. There were 47 fatal deaths, and 3,155 births.

In the middle of October, Prince Alberta, Sask., will sell 5,000 lots for taxes, on which the outstanding charges are about \$270,000.

Absence of the blackbird is remarkable this year in the west. In previous years these birds would make raids upon the oat fields in swarms of hundreds, doing much damage. This year they seemed to leave for the south about the end of August.

TO JUDGE DISTANCES.

Certain Rules Which May Be Safely Relied On.

One of the most important accomplishments in the Army is the ability to judge distances correctly. Every soldier ought to be able to estimate, more or less accurately, how far off from him any object lies, and for this purpose there are certain rules which may be pretty safely relied on by any man of average sight.

At thirty yards, for instance, it is possible to see the white of a man's eye quite plainly, and the eyes themselves remain visible up to a distance of eighty yards. At a hundred yards it is possible to distinguish the details of dress and all the parts of the body, slight movements being perceptible.

At two hundred yards the contour of a face becomes confused, and rows of buttons lose their individual appearance, resembling mere stripes. At four hundred yards the face becomes a speck, but leg and arm movements are still perceptible. But at six hundred yards you can no longer make these out. At eight hundred yards the number of men in a crowd cannot be counted.

At a thousand yards a line of soldiers becomes a broad belt and nothing more. If you can distinguish cavalry from infantry, you may judge that they are not more than twelve hundred yards away; while at two thousand yards what is really a man looks like nothing but a tiny dot.

HOLDS ONE PLACE 59 YEARS.

Japanese Maid Has Many Marriage Proffers, But Refuses.

In some foreign countries where the servant question is always a problem, says the Japan Advertiser, the story of 59 years of continuous service in one family by a maid would not be generally credited. But that is the record of Kawana Sen, 76 years old, who is employed by Mitani Chosaburo, a hardware dealer of Nishi-cho, Tokio. She became a servant in the household at the age of 12 years. Recently the district association took recognition of her long service and gave her an umbrella with a silver handle. The pupils of the sewing class of the Imagawa primary school also sent her a cushion made by them. This model servant has had plenty of opportunities to marry, but has turned them down because of her loyalty to her employer.

Whom the gods would destroy they first induce to marry foolishly.

Scen men are so forgetful that they even fail to remember the poor.