

ONLY A SHOP-GIRL. I

Only a Shop-Girl! Stop your sneer! or listen at least to her tale, and then
You'll feel the ache, and you'll taste the tear, in the hearts of women who trust in men.
It wasn't like this in the dear old times, with mother and father alive, that day
When a party of innocent country girls went off to the cricket where gentlemen play:
And it seem'd no harm, in the eventide, when the sun had sunk and the tents were furled,
To wander away to the leafy lanes, by the side of the handsomest man in the world.
There was nothing on earth that he could not do: she knew so little, and he so much:
His touch was tender, his eyes were blue:—Dear women! You know there are thousands such!
With women so silly, and men so vain, 'tis sweet to begin, and sorry to stop.—
It was only a Shop-Girl learning to love! Only a Girl of the Shop!

And the man meant well—as they sometimes do—and he loved this child in his selfish way:
He could speak so soft, and his eyes were blue, and he bought so much—with so little to pay:
But her father stormed, and the mother she wept, and the dear little home in the country lane
Was emptied quite of its great delight—she had gone, and could never return again.
For youth that loves—it's the way of the world—will leave old age, that has loved, in the lurch:
And the careless lovers to London came, to be married by law—yes! instead of the Church!
So they dream'd a little, and, when they awoke, it wasn't the good little woman who shirk'd.
For she took her place at the counter-side, where many a brave little woman has worked:
But the country roses left her cheeks: if she didn't quite starve, she was ready to drop.
It was only a Shop-Girl learning to live! Only a Girl of the Shop!

But the lips that love can be lips that lie, and a manly mouth may be cruelly curled,
Though women keep loving the eyes that are blue, and liking the "handsomest man in the world,"
So the toy that is broken is thrown away, and the heart embittered that once was prided:
And women who work like slaves can find their labor of love is at last despised.
They profess to be sick of the shop—these men—who nail their wives to counter and till:
They snarl and snap when they find her faint, and proceed to curse when they see she's ill.
For brave little wives must be mothers at last,—there is little for three, when sufficient for two.
So the Gordian knot is cut by the man—who departs, as such chivalrous gentlemen do.
'Tis only a wife and a child who are left, by the cowardly fool or the ignorant top:
And it's only a Shop-Girl—thinking of sin—only a Girl of the Shop!

Only a Shop-Girl! Spare her, men! Who have sisters to love and mothers to pray:
She would like to be honest, but must not look ill: at least, so the good-natured customers say:
So they kindly suggest that a down-trodden wife does not fit with the trade of a practical age,
And she looks the wide world pretty full in the face, and turns, with a sigh of relief, to the stage:
Not the stage as it should be—the stage as it is—with its dazzle of jewels and glamor of dress,
Where womankind buzz round the candle of fame, and scorch their poor wings—they could scarcely do less!
From the shop to the stage 'tis a natural step—for the bitter in spirit and broken in heart.
Who find that, no matter how little the wage, the profession contrives to be mightily smart!
But the life is worth living! So say it becomes! From pleasure to pleasure it spins like a top:
See! it's only a Shop-Girl—painting her face!—only a Girl of the Shop!

What a sermon is here! Is Morality dumb? Or why doesn't virtue whine and preach
At a woman who's driven from shop to the stage, and discovers that honesty's out of her reach!
She thinks once more of the days at home: as down on her pillow she sinks her head:
She sees her sisters faintly fine, and hears her little one cry for bread!
And then comes love—not the old, old love, as she felt it once in the country lanes—
But a passionate fever of riddled youth,—who reckons the cost, and who counts the gains?
Still, a dinner or so in a time of need! and a soft new dress for a lovely form.
Are things that most women are grateful for, they are sails of life that weather the storm.
Only a Shop-Girl fallen away!—by the road of life! Samaritan, stop!
Only a Shop-Girl! Waiting the end! Only a Girl of the Shop!—Punch.

"LEEK-SEED CHAPEL."

Soon after the promulgation of Methodism in England it spread with great rapidity over the counties of Devon and Cornwall, and especially among the miners and lower orders. For a long period after its introduction the clergy and higher classes of society in the west of England manifested a dislike to the new doctrines which can scarcely be imagined in these days of modern toleration. It was thought by many young gentlemen good sport to break the windows and nail up the doors of a Methodist chapel. The robbery of a Wesleyan preacher, as a spree, by two young gentlemen, became the subject of an investigation, and the frolicsome young men had to pay very dearly for their practical joke.

Among the uneducated local preachers was one known by the name of "Old Gardener." This old man was no common character—in fact he was quite original, and by far the most popular preacher among the disciples of John Wesley in the vicinity.

He kept a small nursery garden about two miles from the town of St. A., working hard at his occupation of gardener by day, and praying and preaching to his fellow-sinners, as he called them, in the evening. He lived in the poorest manner, giving away all the surplus of his earnings in charity, distributing Bibles, and promoting to the utmost of his ability the extension of Methodism. His complexion was a sort of dirty, dark, iron grey, and his whole appearance lean and grotesque. Although extremely ignorant, he possessed no small degree of cunning; of this the following incident affords ample evidence:

The "Old Gardener" was once subjected to a burglary and attempt at robbery. He lived with his wife in a small and somewhat dilapidated cottage, not far from the high road. Three

young "squires," who all despised and hated Methodism, having heard that the old man had been recently making a collection to build a Methodist chapel, thought it would be a good frolic to rob him temporarily of the proceeds of this collection. The result of the frolic is best related in the words of one of the actors:

"We set out," said he, "upon our expedition with blackened faces, upon a dark night, a little before twelve o'clock. We had dined late, and all of us had Dutch as well as Cornish courage; yet I confess, when it came to the point, I felt myself a coward. I began to reflect that it was but a dastardly frolic to frighten the poor old man and his wife in the dead of night."

"The clock struck twelve. 'Now is the very witching time of night,' exclaimed Tom."

"Don't let us frighten the poor people out of their wits," said I.

"No," said Ryder, "we will be gentle robbers—gentle as Robin Hood and Little John."

"I said that I would rather return than proceed. 'Recollect,' said I, 'the old fellow is an old soldier, as well as a saint, and fears nothing human.'"

"Nonsense," exclaimed Ryder, "here goes." He pressed the feeble door of the cottage in which the old man resided; it immediately gave way and flew open. We entered, and found ourselves in a sort of kitchen. To our great surprise there was a light shining from an inner room. This made us all hesitate.

"Who is out there at this time of the night?" exclaimed a hoarse voice from within. I knew it to be the unmistakable voice of the "Old Gardener."

"Give us your money, and no harm shall befall you," said Tom, "but we must have your money."

"The Lord will be my defence," rejoined the "Old Gardener." "You shall have no money from me; all in the house is the Lord's—take it if you dare."

"We must and will have it," said we, as we entered the inner room, after taking the precaution of fastening the chamber door as we entered.

"We soon wished we had suffered it to remain open, as you will see."

"Now, consider us face to face with the 'Old Gardener,' and a pretty sight was presented. Three ruffians (ourselves) with white waggons' frocks and blackened faces; before us the 'Old Gardener,' sitting on the side of his bed. He wore a red worsted nightcap, a checked shirt, and a flannel jacket; his iron grey face, fringed with a grizzly beard, looking as cool and undisturbed as it had been in the pulpit preaching.

A table was by the side of the bed, and immediately in front of him, on a large deal table, was an open Bible, close to which we observed, to our horror, a heap of gunpowder, large enough to blow up a castle. A candle was burning on the table, and the old fellow had a steel in one hand and a large flint in the other. We were all three paralyzed. The wild, iron-faced, determined look of the "Old Gardener," the candle, flint and steel, and the great heap of powder, absolutely froze our blood, and made cowards of us all. The gardener saw the impression he had made.

"What! do you want to rob and murder?" exclaimed he; "I think you had better join with me in prayer, miserable sinners that you all are! Repent, and you may be saved. You will soon be in another world."

"Ryder first recovered his speech."

"Please to hear me, Mr. Gardener. I feel that we have been wrong, and if we may depart we will make reparation, and give you all the money we have in our pockets."

"We laid our purses on the table before him. 'The Lord has delivered you into my hands. It was so revealed to me in a dream. We shall all soon be in another world. Pray, let us pray.'"

"And down he fell upon his knees, close to the table, with the candle burning, and the ugly flint and steel in his hand. He prayed and prayed. At last he appeared exhausted. He stopped and eyed the purses, and then emptied one of them out on the table. He appeared surprised, and I thought gratified at the largeness of its contents."

"We now thought we should have leave to retire; but, to our dismay, the 'Old Gardener' said:

"Now, we will praise God by singing the 100th psalm."

"This was agony to us all. After the psalm, the old man took up the second purse, and while he was examining its contents, Ryder, who was close behind Tom and myself, whispered softly:

"I have unfastened the door, and when you hear me move make a rush."

"We did so; and at the same moment heard the old fellow hammering away at his flint and steel. We expected to be instantly blown into fragments. The front door, however, flew open before us; the next step we found ourselves in the garden. The night was pitchy dark. We rushed blindly through brambles and prickly shrubs, ran our heads against trees, then forced ourselves through a thicket hedge. At last, with scratched faces, torn hands, and tattered clothes, we tumbled over a bank into the high road."

"Our horses we soon found, and we galloped to Ryder's residence. Lights were produced, and we sat down. We were black, ragged, and dirty. We looked at each other, and, in spite of our miserable adventure, roared with laughter."

"We may laugh," exclaimed Tom, "but if this adventure is blown, and we are found out, Cornwall will be too hot for us the next seven years. We have made a pretty night of it. We

have lost our money; been obliged to pretend to pray for two long hours, before a great heap of gunpowder, while that grim-faced, ugly, red-capped brute threatened us with an immediate passage into eternity. And our money forsooth must go to build a meeting house! Bah! It is truly horrible. The old fellow has played the old soldier on us with a vengeance, and we shall be the laughing-stock of the whole country."

"The affair was not yet ended. Reports were spread that three men disguised as black demons, with horns and tails, had entered the cottage of the 'Old Gardener,' who had not only terrified them, but had frightened them out of a good sum of money, which he intended to devote to the building of a new Methodist meeting-house. It was given out that on the following Sunday, 'Old Gardener' intended to preach a sermon, and afterwards solicit subscriptions for the meeting-house, when he would relate the remarkable manner in which he had been providentially assisted with funds for the buildings. Our mortification was complete. Tom, whose hatred of Methodism was intense, declared he would blow up the meeting-house as soon as it was built. Our curiosity, however, was excited, and we all three determined to hear our adventure of the night related by 'Old Gardener,' if we could contrive to be present without being suspected."

"Sunday evening arrived. The meeting-house was crammed to suffocation; and with the dull lights then burning in the chapel, we had no difficulty in concealing ourselves. The sermon was short, but the statement of our adventures was related most minutely and circumstantially in the old man's quaint, homely, and humorous phraseology. This evening he seemed to excel himself, and was exultingly humorous."

"I never," said he, "saw black faces pray with greater devotion. I have some doubt, however, he silly observed, 'if their prayers were quite heavenward. They sometimes turned their faces towards the door; but a lifting of the flint and steel kept them quiet.'"

"He then added, with a shake of the head and an exulting laugh. 'But they had not smelt powder like the old soldier they came to rob. No, no; it was a large heap—ay, large enough to frighten old General Clive himself. The candle was lighted, the flint and steel were ready. You may ask, my friends, if I myself was not afraid. No, no, my dear friends,' shouted he, 'this large stock of apparent gunpowder was—it was my whole year's stock of leek (onion) seed!'"

"The whole congregation somewhat irreverently laughed; even the saints almost shouted; many clapped their hands. I was for a moment stupefied by the announcement, but at last could hardly suppress my own laughter."

"We subscribed to the fund to avoid suspicion, and left the meeting. After the sermon we joined each other, but could not speak. We could hardly chuckle 'leek seed,' and then roared with laughter."

"It was a good joke, though not exactly to our taste. It has, however, more than once served for subsequent amusement."

"The chapel was built with the money collected by the gardener. Time and circumstances now induce me to think that there has been no detriment to morality or religion by the erection of the meeting-house, which was afterwards known as 'The Leek-seed Chapel.'—*St. James' Magazine.*

THE OLDEST PAPER IN THE WORLD.

The oldest newspaper in this world is called the *King-Pau*, or Capital Sheet. It is now, and has been, published at Peking, China, ever since the reign of the Emperor Quang-Soo, who, as it is generally known, died late in the afternoon of the tenth century.

When the first number of the *King-Pau* was called on the street of Peking, in the month of May, A.D. 911, some of the smartest men in the town shook their heads and predicted that it would not last more than three months, at the outside.

There are plenty of these smart men now.

A very peculiar feature of this Chinese organ is that for the first five or six centuries of its existence it only appeared at irregular intervals. There were intervals of fifty, sixty, and even a hundred years, between the issues; so it was not a daily paper by any manner of means. It appeared semi-occasionally, so to speak. China is not a progressive country even now, and a thousand years ago a newspaper that managed to get to press once in fifty years was regarded as a marvel of journalistic enterprise. The people were not accustomed to rushing things, and shook their heads at the recklessness of the editor.

There must be a great many advantages in managing a paper according to the ancient Chinese plan. After the paper was out, the editor could take such a nice, long rest. He could go out fishing, stay as long as he pleased, and still have time to prepare some copy for the next issue. If a long haired poet came prowling about with a long-winded atrocity of a poem, instead of having to stand him off with lame excuses, the editor could say, "I print your poem with pleasure. It will appear in my next issue, seventy-five years and six months from to-day." That would settle the matter. In those days, when a man paid a nickel for a paper, being anxious to obtain the latest news, the mere fact that the last issue of that paper was published before he was born, did not matter.

We should think that there was some danger of the editor becoming a little confused as to

dates. The editor never received any postal cards complaining that the three last issues of the *King-Pau* had not been received, as that would cover no less than 250 years. Unless the mails were much like our own mails, there was not much danger of the country subscribers getting two issues of the paper at one and the same time. It must have been very difficult for the public to ascertain when that kind of a newspaper was really dead. If there was no issue for a hundred years, the constant reader would begin to say, "It seems to me I haven't got my last number of the *King-Pau*. It must have got lost in the mail." If the paper did not appear after a lapse of a century and a half, rumours unfavourable to the financial standing of the paper were heard, and there was some talk of a splendid opportunity to start a new paper; that there was a void in the newspaper world that might be advantageously filled, if some parties with brains and capital were to go at it with a vim. Regular subscribers were in the habit, no doubt, of dropping into the *King-Pau* office, and asking when that paper was coming out. People who wanted to insert advertisements in the coming issue did not have to hurry up to get them in the paper, when there was seventy-five years or more time to write them out, and take them to the office. During the latter part of the twelfth century, the proprietors of the *King-Pau* determined to push things, so it appeared regularly every fifty years. Everybody said that the proprietors were crowding on too much steam, and that there would be an explosion, but they were mistaken. About the time that Columbus discovered America a new partner was admitted into the firm, and he had the paper out every twenty-five years. For several centuries it came out regularly on the year of publication. After a while the western barbarians began to educate the Chinese up to the English standard, and now it is flourishing. Here is what an exchange says of the present status of the *King-Pau*:

"Now, however, it appears in three editions daily. The first, issued early in the morning and printed on yellow-paper, is called *Hsing-Pau* (Business Sheet), and contains trade prices, exchange questions, and all manner of commercial intelligence. Its circulation is a little over 8,000. The second edition, which comes out during the forenoon, also printed upon yellow-paper, is devoted to official announcements, fashionable intelligence, and general news. Besides its ancient title of *King-Pau*, it owns another designation, that of *Shuen-Pau*, or 'Official Sheet.'"

ECHOES FROM PARIS.

Paris, Nov. 25.

THE Advanced French Republicans, who already have civil marriages and civil funerals, are now beginning to practice civil baptisms.

Among the latest fashionable arrivals in Paris are the Duchess of Newcastle and her daughter. They have the intention of passing the winter here.

MRS. MACKAY has, we are glad to hear, quite recovered from her recent severe illness. Mr. and Mrs. Mackay have returned to the Rue Tilsit, Paris, where society hopes that they will soon resume their most pleasant parties. Mr. and Mrs. Mackay are most deservedly popular, and they spend their enormous wealth right royally; ungrudgingly seeking to make others enjoy that which riches only can procure.

THE Prefect of the Seine is about to remove from the gates of cemeteries crosses and other symbols not accepted by all religions. Families will still be at liberty to place such symbols on the tombs of relatives; but the divisions between Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish graves being about to disappear, under a recent law, the gates or other accessories will henceforth be of a neutral character.

MR. TENNYSON's new drama has during the past week attracted larger and more favorable audiences than might have been anticipated from the augury of its stormy first night. It may, therefore, eventually prove a satisfactory production, at any rate from one point of view; but it should be borne in mind by those who are anxious to reverse the earlier verdict, that such a success may, through various causes, be attained without any real reference to the qualities of the piece as a work of dramatic art.

It is rumored that M. Loyson (Père Hyacinthe) is about to visit London with his wife, in order to raise funds for the expenses of a new chapel—the one he now occupies in the Rue d'Assai being too shabby to tempt fresh proselytes to his Gallican creed. Père Hyacinthe will be accompanied by his wife, who is an excellent canvasser, having before her first marriage acted in that capacity to Mme. Domergat, a famous dress-maker of New York—for whose book of fashions she was a most successful agent for some time. It seems that Mme. Loyson was the inventor of an ingenious method of bracing for young girls, and the patent taken out at New York is still in activity. It was this circumstance that caused the report which appeared in all the Paris papers at the time of the union that Père Hyacinthe had married a staymaker.