

JOHN BROWN'S LEGS.

The poor Laurence begs
A tear for John Brown's legs;
Those lacerated legs
Cut and carved about the knee,
Which 'twere pitiful to see.
What service they have done,
What a gallant's run!
Now gormed with gore,
Alas! no more.
They chase the hens and find the freshest eggs,
Those faithful legs those lacerated legs.
Dressed in his Highland rig,
His plumed bonnet and bright checkered
Plaid.
A bonnie braver lad
Than John Brown never danced a jig
Upon the banks of Balmoral.
Massive as cedar upon Lebanon,
His mighty legs beneath his neat kilt shone,
A new sight to look upon,
And send a thrill of pleasure down one's
back!

Alas! no more
On Scottish hills or by the sad seas shore
Those legs will now see
Gay gamboling o'er the green,
Nor British bairns will dance 'neath their gate shall see
Those firm but supple, waiting there for me;
For scratched and cut and scarred,
By black adventure marred,
They're stiffer than were ever Silas Wegg's,
Those lovable, lamantable legs.

On such a pair of legs Antaeus stood
In a stout wrestle that tired all his blood;
Such heroes when hunting for a stew,
The marble-jawed Nemeans howl;
And such legs as Sir John's, Sir John strode
When Goliath he carried off by night.
As far as Lemuria from the Isle of Wight,
And hauled them flat upon a mountain road;
When also with the jaw bone of an ass
He made a dragon a fatal ass.
And lastly, when Pharaoh's more,
Upon the head to wotter in their gora.
O legal! legs! legs! On, legs wi' hoot compair!
Happy days, when John dislaid them bare!
Now carefully mewed up in salves and rags,
Recovering naught so much as clumsy
legs.
Stuffed out with cotton—what mishap was
there!

Milton his loss of sight deplored
In lines of sounding sorrow; but his loss
To bear was not by half so hard a cross
As Brown's, who, without legs was scored!
What a sight to see him! what to him
Gashed or mangled, maimed in twilight dim?
Hewes with envy: the domestic t'is
Over his dinner swiftly patterning by;
Even the small moving on his track,
Bearing his homely load upon his back,
Stretches the rope that hangs, like any log,
Fix'd in the depth of some Cimmerian bog.
Must hewes le and st'le!
Against his sovereign will.

Thus Brown was fixed, and could not stir his
pes.

Those manly and imitable legs.
Mourn, Albion then, along thy seagirt shore,
And Scotland, too, repeat the sad refrain,
And let the British l' on ramp and roar;
For never, never shall John Brown ariain
Such like the hills and vales among
Upon those legs, now scratched, and cut, and
sore,
Those legs whose praises I have feebly sung,
Those legs, legs, legs,
For which the poet begs
The tribute of a tear, those legs of faithful
Brown,
Which in the Queen's own pages,
Shall reach all future ages,
Of all historic legs of most renown.

DOLLY'S LAST FLIRTATION.

I am Kitty, and Dolly is my twin-sister. I was always sedate, mother used to say; but Dolly was giddy, and fond of flirting.

When we were 17, Dolly became engaged, with our mother's consent, to Frank Wilmot, a young fellow of 24, son of a banker, free and cheery in manner and disposition. He was very indulgent to Dolly, for he felt so confident of her love, and was himself so loyal and sincere that the admiration she excited was his triumph; the freedom with which she received and encouraged it never pained him, though mother and I used to watch her with serious anxiety.

Sometimes our mother would say a few impressive words; then Dolly would throw her arms round her, and with kisses assure her she would be a better girl, or she would pour a little, with tears in her bright blue eyes. She would be very demure through two balls, and at the third worse than ever; scarcely could Frank get one waltz for himself.

One evening he brought to our house a cousin of his, a barrister, a man some years older than himself. He was rather famous, though only 30, being an acute lawyer, and consequently looked up at the bar.

Dolly owned to me that evening that Frank had confided to her that I was Jack Dacre's ideal woman.

"So don't blush so angrily, darling," said she, "for it would be the most delightful arrangement. He is Frank's ideal man and dearest friend. It would be the happiest thing for us all!" And Dolly gave me a hug and a kiss and ran off to bed.

Mr. Dacre came very often after that one visit, and I soon found that he was my ideal man, for he strangely resembled my father, both in manners and his chivalrous courtesy to women, as well as in appearance. It was with a chill at my heart that I was the first to make the discovery that he was falling in love with Dolly—he, the soul of honor, seemed bewitched by the charms of his bosom friend's affianced wife. I knew it before he did, but, of course not before Dolly, who had a genius for unerringly detecting every symptom, however obscure, of dawning love, either in her own case or another's.

My mother and Frank were utterly blind to the danger. I was very unhappy, and exceedingly sorry for Dolly, for Frank, for Mr. Dacre, and, I own it, for myself; for, though I had not fallen in love with Frank's cousin, I must say he was the only man I had seen whom I felt I could fall in love with.

An accident brought matters to a climax.

We were sitting in the drawing-room after dinner one evening, when a noise in the street drew us to the window. The pole of a carriage had entered the shoulder of a cab horse. Dolly became ill and faint at the sight, and Mr. Dacre, who was at her side, threw his arm around her to save her from falling. He led her to a sofa and stood aside as Frank drew near her; but from that night he came no more. He and I only had seen the half-petulant way in which Dolly had turned from Frank, had caught another expression on her face, had seen her vivid blush.

From that evening she became cold, petulant, teasing to Frank. At first he laughed, then was hurt, and finally the engagement was broken off. This is soon told, but what my mother and I suffered must be imagined. I dared neither to tell her the truth nor to hint to Dolly that I knew to whom her heart was given, though I loved her so dearly; and I felt so sure that this was the first true love of her life. This determined, decided, somewhat stern man was sure to charm our little butterfly, if she noticed him at all.

Mother and I arranged that Dolly should go away on a short visit. Frank was to come one evening to return the letters Dolly had sent him. They would not feel the abruptness of this rupture so much as if they were placed personally by him in my hands; and I had his letters also to give to him. Mother was quite unequal to seeing him, for she loved him dearly, and the task was left to me. I was not sorry, for I felt I could say all that was likely to comfort him, loving both of them so deeply.

So poor Frank produced his sorrowful little packet, received the one I had for him, and stood leaning against the chimney-piece, while I sat quite unable to utter a word, but with tears dropping quietly from my eyes. At last he told me that he knew Dolly had been faithless to him. He felt sure she and Jack Dacre loved each other, and he spoke so humbly of himself, and as if it was quite to be expected that his cousin should be preferred above any other man, that I was greatly touched, and my tears fell faster and faster.

"Jack is the soul of honor, Kitty; but I must make it clear to him that he is free to do as his heart dictates. His and her happiness must not be wrecked. I will get my father to send me to our branch house in India, and will not return till they are married. Jack is rich enough to marry at once. I shall embark on Thursday."

Then he charged me with tender blessings for Dolly, and, at his request, I went to ask my mother to bid him farewell. Presently she glided in, pale as death. She held out her trembling hand in silence, but Frank folded her in his arms, and she sobbed on his breast. I stood by, weeping bitterly, and, when we were calmer, Frank embraced us both finally, and, placing me in my mother's arms, left us. Poor fellow: how brave he was, how gentle and patient!

In a month from that time Dolly was affianced to Mr. Dacre, and the marriage was arranged to take place at the beginning of the long vacation. We were by this time convinced that it was the best thing that could happen. No one could see Dolly and doubt for a moment that this was the only man she had loved. His calm, intense character impressed her; his great talents awed her; and her pretty, innocent pride in her manly lover, her meekness and quietness were most promising symptoms of happiness in her married life.

Dear mother was so serenely happy! I was very fond of my new brother; he was such a power for good and peace in our home that we never had been so contented before. Frank wrote freely to us—manly, patient letters, full of unselfish interest in all around him. His sorrow had sweetened, not embittered, his character. He had set himself to alleviate his anguish by doing good, and his first act on reaching his destination had been to use his keen commercial gifts for the welfare of the widow and children of an officer of the army, and, at the cost of time, talent, and energy, to rescue her small fortune from unsafe hands and invest it profitably. His letters were filled with similar incidents, naturally and simply told, and our affection increased for this truly brave man.

Dolly's godmother took it into her head that it was her godchild's duty to pay her a farewell visit before her marriage. Though, as she had never troubled herself much about us, we were rather startled at this demand; all thought it would be best to accept the invitation—for my sister was not looking well—and it was settled that she should go and spend a month with the old lady in her lovely North County home. Mr. Dacre was pressed to go as often as his professional engagements would permit; so Dolly left us in pretty good spirits, in charge of the elderly servant who was our substitute for a regular lady's maid.

She wrote to tell us how she was enjoying the repose and beauty of the country. Mr. Dacre had managed to run down from Saturday till Monday at the end of the first week, and had of course made a great impression; but was afraid he could not come again—long case was pending at Westminster. The letter which followed this I give in its entirety:

Highwood, July 20—Dearest Kitty: I hope you will get this in time to send me back home instead of to grandmama's. I am on a fortnight's visit to Lady Millicent North. Such a charming woman—a widow about 28 years old! She persuaded Mrs. Lloyd to let her have me for a week or two; and, as her daughter-in-law, a confirmed invalid, was coming to spend just that time with her, my godmother was glad to get me out of the way, I know. I can't write much, for the post leaves here at 2 and we drop the latest news into the half box as we go to bed. I expect the gos' every minute. This place is lovely, and the new Baronet—Sir Charles—is the dearest t—. The gos'! Your own DOLLY.

I felt uneasy concerning this letter. I was sorry Dolly should have left her godmother's quiet home to visit a gay young widow just as she was sobering down and growing such a thoughtful little love. It might unsettle her again to pass a fortnight in a country-house with a fascinating Baronet; and I knew Jack Dacre would never permit, never pardon the smallest suspicion of flirting. He had pardoned her defection in Frank's case, for Frank himself had pleaded eloquently, saying that she was very young, so naturally affectionate. But mamma and I felt sure that not for one hour would he permit his dearest tenderness for his girl to be betrayed. Neither her youth, her love of fun, nor her merry heart would plead one atom in her favor, so I read this letter with a heavy heart. My answer was as follows:

Dearest Dolly: Your letter reached me in time to have it sent to Highwood. You will receive it soon after this reaches you. Write very full, for your letter was tantalizing. Send me a full description of every one, for you have roused my curiosity to "Sir Charles," who is the dearest t—.

The rest of my letter contained home news, and I need not transcribe it. But Dolly's answer I will transcribe:

"You ask me for a description of everybody, darling, Lady Millicent is very beautiful, very clever, and devotedly attached to this Sir Charles; but I feel sure her heart is buried in the grave of her noble husband. I send her photo, so need waste no words in describing her."

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So far Mr. Dacre had read, and the mine was sprung.

I locked my room door and fell back, despairing, into an easy chair. I was resolved to hide all from my mother till Mr. Dacre had seen Dolly. I hunted up Bradshaw, and found that a train started about 4 o'clock that would convey me to Highwood by 7:30. If Dolly wrote to me at once I should get her letter by Thursday; but of course I should hear from Jack on Wednesday. I dreaded every ring, every postman's knock. All day Wednesday passed and no letter arrived from my sister or her lover.

On Thursday morning I ran down when I heard the usual welcome sound. On the table lay a thick letter addressed in Dolly's handwriting. I ran up to mamma and gave her the one I found inclosed in it for her; then I sat down to read mine, after fortifying myself with a cup of coffee. I must give every word of it:

"You are well aware that a catastrophe has happened through my heedlessness. The best thing will be, for me to describe fully the whole consequences of that misfortune. On our return from the garden party on Tuesday I found a telegram awaiting me from Jack—'Shall be with you by 7:30.' Of course this awoke no fears in my mind, for I knew Jack might run down at any moment the trains permit. Lady Millicent sent me off at once to be dressed by her artist-maid. What she made of me you must have seen to believe, Kitty. I would not look at myself till the whole process was complete; and, when I glanced in the long glass, I was really amazed at what I saw. It was the result, I now know, of many discussions between Lady Millicent and this gifted young person. You may imagine how I exulted in the thought that Jack would see me look as he had never seen me look before, for I am so improved in health that my whole appearance is changed. Well, the bell rang. Lady Millicent received Mr. Dacre in the morning room, and came to send me down at once.

"Dearest Dolly: Your letter reached me in time to have it sent to Highwood. You will receive it soon after this reaches you. Write very full, for your letter was tantalizing. Send me a full description of every one, for you have roused my curiosity to 'Sir Charles,' who is the dearest t—.

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I entered the room. I noticed Jack give one start; but he received me in such a very un-Jack-like manner that I was terrified. 'Mamma—Kitty?' I cried. 'Quite well when I left them,' said Mr. Dacre; but when he placed me in a chair, and took one opposite to me, I felt matters were desperate. 'What is wrong?' I gasped. 'Dearest Jack, pray speak!' 'Only an address, said he, and put the unfortunate envelope in my hands. 'This contained a letter for your sister, which I, perhaps, fortunately, read before I perceived the mistake. I have just seventeen minutes before I leave for the return train; so, if you wish to say anything, let me beg of you to speak at once.'

"I sank back in my chair and covered my face with my handkerchief, trembling with agitation. 'Will you hear my explanation?' I stammered. 'Needless; the letter can have but one meaning. I came to release you from your engagement to me. Did this soundre know you were engaged?' I covered my face again. To hear Sir Charles North called a scoundrel was too much for me. I did not speak for several minutes; but time was flying fast, and at length I said, 'If this is in truth our last meeting, grant me one favor: say that you will before I tell you what it is.'

"Of course it is a reasonable, honorable request that I wish to make; but I own it is one you will not like to grant. He paused a moment, then said, 'I will do whatever you ask.' 'I ask you to see Sir Charles North.' He winced, but bowed silently. I left the room to see the Baronet. I found him in his own room, intently studying an immense book—but only the illustrations, I believe. I asked him to come with me to speak to a gentleman who was waiting to see him. He flatly refused. Time was rushing on. I knelt by him, implored him. At last I kissed him, and he yielded.

"Taking my hand in a firm clasp, he descended with me to the room where I had left Mr. Dacre. Jack stood, moody and stern, pale as ashes, where I had left him. We entered. I led Sir Charles toward him. 'Mr. Dacre,' said I, 'let me present you to Sir Charles North, Baronet.' Jack started—paused—seized Sir Charles in his strong arms, and—threw him out of the window?—no, kissed him! For this 'scoundrel,' this 'fat, greedy, idle little man' is the dear little son of Lady Millicent, aged just 2 years! Now you see, Miss Kitty, you had better have had a little faith in your sister for once. You put all this into my head, and I could not rest at all the world.

"Jack did not go back by the return train, though he was obliged to leave early this morning; but I do not think I can stay away from him one day over a month. Lady Millicent says you must come to take my place. She will write and ask mamma. You will soon be as madly in love with Sir Charles."

"And so it proved. I went to stay with Lady Millicent; and of all the darling, quaint, noble, chubby little pets I had seen, Sir Charles was the king. At the end of the year Frank returned in time for Christmas. He did not go back to India; he settled in England. He and I were married about six months after Dolly.

We both live in a lovely part of Kent. Dolly's husband pets and loves her devotedly. My husband adds to all his love a delicate, tender homage, infinitely precious to me.

"Kitty, dearest," my mother once said to me, "you and I have tasted the fullest earthly happiness. We both know that reverence is the perfectly peerless jewel in love's crown; but we must earn it."

"A brave Eton boy spends as much time with us as his mother can bear to spare him, and the most welcome guest in Jack Dacre's home is Sir Charles North, Baronet.