

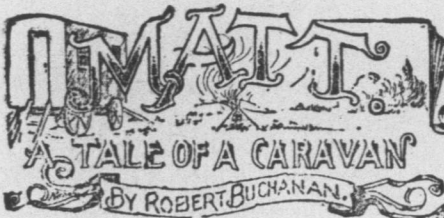
A TRANSFORMATION.

Two but a narrow, city way
Filled by a busy throng,
Before I heard that sun-bright day
A blackbird's joyous song:
Transformed was that squalid street
The while his loud notes rang—
The early dews were round my feet,
The cowbells round me sprang.

No common sounds were in my ear:
I heard the ring-dove's cry,
The thrushes singing sweet and clear,
The skylark's chanson high;
The wind that fanned my brow had come
O'er daisied hills and leas,
O'er hollows pale with hawthorn foam
And wild anemones.

His amber rain the sun-god shed:
I saw the greening haze
O'er opening buds of boughs overhead:
I saw the gorse-gold's blaze;
I saw the crimson fir-cones sway
On odoriferous larch and pine;
A blackbird's song on that spring day
Made vision glories mine.

—M. Rock, in Chambers' Journal.



CHAPTER VI.—CONTINUED.

The old man, who, Brinkley perceived, admitted, certainly bore some resemblance to the Rembrandtish head which Matt had recognized, sat dozing fitfully by the hearth, while his son was busily employed in mending an old lantern.

Upon the entrance of Brinkley the lantern was quickly thrown aside, and William Jones, assuming a most obsequious manner, hastened to give a welcome to the stranger. Brinkley was amused. He accepted William Jones' offer of a seat, then he lit up his briar-root pipe, and, while smoking lazily, he put a few questions to his host. But if he expected to gain information of any kind he was soon undeceived. William Jones was no fool. Combined with excessive avarice, he possessed all the cunning of the fox, and the moment he saw that the stranger was pumping him he was on his guard.

Presently, however, his curiosity gained the day. Categorically, in his turn, he began to question Brinkley about his doings.

"I suppose now, master," said he, "you travel about a deal in that cart o' your'n?"

Brinkley explained that the "cart" in question had been in his possession only a few months.

"But I traveled a good deal before I got it," he explained. "This time last year I was in Ireland."

"In Ireland, master?"

"Yes, on the west coast; do you know it?"

William Jones shook his head.

"There be plenty wreck there, ain't there?" said he, suddenly.

"Wreck?" repeated Brinkley.

"Yes; I've heard tell o' wonderful storms and big ships breaking up. Look ye now, and they do tell wonder-



ful tales; and I wonder sometimes if all they say be true."

Brinkley looked at his host for a minute or so in silent wonder, for the little man was transformed. Instead of gazing upon him with the stupid expression which up till now his face had wore, his face expressed all the keenness of a fox-hound well on the scent.

There was also another curious thing which the young man noticed: the word "wreck" seemed to act like magic on the other members of the Jones household. At the first mention of it the old man started from his sleep; and as now sat staring wildly before him, evidently imagining he was standing on a headland gazing out to sea.

"Wreck!" he murmured. "Ay, there it be, driftin' in wi' the wind and the tide, William—driftin' in wi' the tide."

"Shut up, old man," said William, giving his father a nudge; then, turning again to Brinkley, he said: "Be them tales true, master?"

"Oh, yes; perfectly true," said Brinkley, being in a lively humor, and determined to give his host a treat.

The expression in the eyes of William Jones became even more greedy.

"Praps," he said, "you've seen some of them wrecks?"

"Dear me, yes," answered Brinkley, determined to give the reins to his imagination. "I've seen any number of them. Huge ships broken up like match boxes and every soul on board them drowned; then afterwards—"

"Ah, yes, mister," said William Jones, eagerly, as the other paused; "arter—"

"Well, afterward, my friend, I've seen treasures come ashore that would have made you and me, and a dozen others such, rich for life."

"Dear, dear! and what became of it, mister—tell me that?"

"What became of it?" repeated Brinkley, whose imagination was beginning to give way; "why, it was appropriated, of course, by the population."

"And didn't you take your share, mister?"

"I?" repeated Brinkley, who was

getting muddled. "Well, no—firstly, because I didn't wish to—I have a superstitious horror of wearing dead men's things; and, secondly, because I could not have done so had I wished. The people are clannish; they wanted it all for themselves, and would have killed any interfering stranger."

"I suppose, mister, there be coast-guard chaps there?" said William Jones.

"Oh, dear, no! No coast guards."

"Ah!" sighed the old man, coming out of his trance. "It warn't so long ago when there warn't no coast-guard chaps here neither. Then times was better for honest men. On a dark night 'twas easy to put a light on the headland, and sometimes we got a prize or two that way, didn't we, William, dear? but now—"

"You shut up!" roared William, giving his parent a very forcible dig in the ribs. "You don't know what you're talkin' about, you don't. The old 'un is a bit queer in the head, master," he explained; "and he's allus a-dreamin', he is. There ain't no prizes here, the Lord knows; it's a'most as much as we can do to git a bit o' bread. Matt knows that; don't ee, Matt?"

But whatever Matt knew she evidently meant to keep to herself, for she gave no reply. Presently, after a little more general conversation, Brinkley rose to go. He offered a two shilling piece to William Jones; and, somewhat to his amazement, that worthy accepted it gratefully.

"Good-by, Matt," said Brinkley. But in a trice Matt was beside him.

"I'm going to show you the way," she explained as she went out with him into the air.

"Whew!" said Brinkley when they were fairly clear of the cabin; "the open air is better than that den; but then William Jones is very poor, isn't he, Matt?"

"He says he is."

"But, don't you believe it?"

"Praps I do, and praps I don't; it don't matter to you, does it?"

"Not the least in the world."

They went on for awhile in silence; then Matt, who had been furtively watching his face all the while, spoke again:

"You ain't angry, are you, master?" she asked.

"I angry—what for?"

"Cause I said that just now."

"Dear me, no; whatever you might say, Matt, wouldn't offend me."

If he expected to please her by this he was mistaken.

"That's 'cause you don't care. Well, I don't care neither, if you don't."

She ran a little ahead of him, and continued to precede him until she gained the last sand hill, and caught a glimpse of the caravan. Then she paused.

"You don't want me to go any further, do you?"

"No."

"All right—good-by."

She gave a bound, like a young deer, and prepared for a swift run back, but the young man called her.

"Matt, come here!"

She came up to him. He put his arm about her shoulders, bent over her upturned face and kissed her. In her impulsive way Matt returned the kiss ardently; then, to her amazement, she gave one strange look into his eyes—blushed violently and hung her head.

"Come, give me another, Matt," he said.

But Matt would not comply. With one jerk she freed herself from him; then, swift as lightning, she ran back across the hills toward the sea.

CHAPTER VII. MATT GROWS MATRIMONIAL.

That night the young man of the caravan had curious dreams, and throughout them all moved like a presiding fairy Matt of Abergllyn. Sometimes he was wandering on stormy shores, watching the wrecks of mighty argosies; again he was in mysterious caverns underneath the ground, searching for and finding buried treasure; still again he was standing on the decks of storm-tossed vessels, while the breakers thundered close at hand and the bale-fires burned on lonely headlands. But at all times and in all places Matt was his companion.

And, curiously enough, Matt in his dream was very different to the Matt of waking reality: taller and brighter—in fact, as beautiful as a vision can be; so that his spirit was full of a strange sensation of love and pity, and the touch of the warm little hand disturbed his spirit with mysterious joy.

So vivid did this foolish dream become at last that he found himself seated on a sunny rock by the sea by Matt's side; and he was talking to her like a lover, with his arm around her waist, and she turned to him, with her great eyes fixed on his, and kissed him over and over again so passionately that he awoke!

It was blowing hard, and the rain was pelting furiously on the roof of the caravan. He tried to go to sleep again, but the face of Matt (as he had seen it in his dream) kept him for a long time awake.

"Now, young man," he said to himself, "this is idiotic. In the first place, Matt is a child, not a young woman; in the second place, she is a vulgar little thing, not a young lady; in the third place, you ought to be ashamed of yourself for thinking of sentiment at all in such a connection. Is your brain softening, youngster? or are you laboring under the malign influence of William Jones? The kiss you gave to this unsophisticated daughter of the desert was paternal, or say, amicable; it was a very nice kiss, but it has no right to make you dream of stuff and nonsense."

But the influence of the dream was over him, and in that half sleeping, half waking state, he felt like a boy in love. He found himself calculating the age of his own friend. Let him see! It was fifteen years since, in her own figurative expression, she "came ashore," and the question remained: How old was she on that interesting occasion? As far as he could make out from her appearance she could not be

more than sixteen. For a damsel of that age her kiss was decidedly precocious.

At last he tumbled off again and dreamed that Matt was a young lady of beautiful attire and captivating manners, to whom he was "engaged," and her speech, strange to say, was quite poetical and refined; and they walked together, hand in hand, to a country church on a green hillside, and were just going to enter when who should appear upon the threshold but Mr. Monk, of Monkshurst? But they passed him by and stood before the altar, where the parson stood in his white robes, and when the parson asked aloud whether anyone saw any just reason or impediment that the pair should not be joined in holy matrimony the same Monk stepped forward, with a Mephistophelian smile, and cried: "Yes, I do!" On which the young man awoke again in agitation, to find that it was broad daylight and a fine, fresh summer morning.

Whom should he find waiting for him when he had dressed himself and stepped from the house on wheels but Matt herself? Yes, there she was, as wild and quaintly attired as ever, quite

unlike the ethereal individual of his dreams; but for all that her smile was like sunshine and her eyes as roguish and friendly as ever.

Conscious of his dream he blushed, while greeting her with a friendly nod.

"Well, Matt? Here again, eh?" he said; adding to himself: "This won't do at all, my gentleman; if the young person continues to appear daily, the caravan will have to 'move on.'"

Matt had evidently something on her mind. After looking at Brinkley thoughtfully for some minutes, she exclaimed, abruptly:

"William Jones don't like you, neither. No more does William Jones' father."

"Dear me," said the young man, "I'm very sorry for that."

"He says—William Jones says—you're come here prying and spying. Do you?"

"My dear Matt," replied the young man, lightly, "I come here as a humble artist, seeking subjects for my surpassing genius to work upon. If it is prying and spying to attempt to penetrate into the beauties of nature—both scenic, animal and human—I fear I must plead guilty; but otherwise—"

She interrupted him with an impatient exclamation, accompanied by a hitch of her pretty shoulders.

"Don't talk like that; for then I know you're chaffing. Talk serious, and then I'll tell you something."

"All right. I'll be serious as a parson. Go ahead!"

"Mr. Monk, of Monkshurst, wants to marry me. He said so to William Jones."

The information was delivered with assumed carelessness; but after it was given Matt watched the effect of it upon the hearer with precocious interest. Brinkley opened his eyes in very natural amazement.

"Come, come, Matt; you're joking."

"No, I ain't. It's true."

"But you're only a child—a very nice child, I admit—but to talk of holy matrimony in such a connection is—excuse my frankness—preposterous. People don't marry little girls."

But Matt did not consent to this proposition at all.

"I ain't a little girl," she affirmed, with a decisive nod of the head. "I'm sixteen, and I'm grown up."

The young man was amused, and could not refrain from laughing heartily. But the girl's brow darkened as she watched him, and her under lip fell as if she would like to cry.

"If you go on laughing," she said, "I'll run straight back home, and never come here no more."

"Well, I'll try to keep my countenance but the idea is very funny. Really now? Don't you see it in that light, yourself?"

Certainly Matt did not, to judge from the expression of her face. She turned her head away, and Brinkley saw to his surprise that a tear was rolling down her cheek.

"Come, Matt," he said, kindly, "you mustn't take this so seriously. Tell me all about it—there's a good girl."

"I will—if you won't laugh."

"I won't, then, there."

"Well, when I was lying in my bed this morning I heard William Jones a-talking to some one. He thought I was asleep, but I got up and listened and I heard Mr. Monk's voice; and he said, says he: 'She's over sixteen years old, and I'll marry her; and William Jones said: 'Lord, Mr. Monk; what can you be a-thinking about? Matt ain't old enough, and what's more she ain't fit to be the wife of a 'ne gentleman.' Then Mr. Monk he snatched his foot like he does when he's in a passion, and he said, says he: 'My mind's made up, William Jones, and I'm going to marry her before the year's out; and I don't care how soon.' Then I heard them moving about, and I crept back to bed and pretended to be fast asleep."

The young man's astonishment increased. There could be no doubt of the veracity and sincerity of the speaker; and the story she told was certainly puzzling. Brinkley made up his mind without much reflection that

if Mr. Monk wanted to go through the marriage ceremony with that child he had some special and mysterious reason for so doing, unless—which was scarcely possible—he was of a sentimental disposition, and, in the manner of many men advanced towards middle age, was enamored of Matt's youth and inexperience.

"Tell me, Matt," said Brinkley, after pondering the matter for some minutes; "tell me how long you have known this Mr. Monk?"

"Ever since I came ashore," was the reply.

"Humph!—is he well to do?—rich?" Matt nodded emphatically.

"All Abergllyn belongs to him," she said, "and the woods up there, and the farms, and the horses up at the big house, and—everything."

"And though he is such a great person, he is very friendly with William Jones?"

"Oh, yes," answered Matt; "and I think William Jones is afraid of him—sometimes; but he gives William Jones money for keeping me."

"Oh, indeed! He gives him money, does he? That's rather kind of him, you know."

At this Matt shook her head with great decision, but said nothing. Greatly puzzled, the young man looked at her, and mused. It was clear that there was a mystery somewhere, and he was getting interested. Presently he invited Matt to sit down on the steps of the caravan, and he placed himself at her side. He was too absorbed in speculation to notice how the girl colored and brightened as they sat there together.

"You have often told me that you came ashore," he said, after a long pause. "I should like to know something of how it happened. I don't exactly know what this 'coming ashore' means. Can you explain?"

"I don't remember," she replied; "but I know there was a ship, and it went to pieces, and I come to shore in a boat, or summat."

"I see—and William Jones found you?"

"Mr. Monk, he found me, and gave me to William Jones to keep."

"I begin to understand. Of course, you were very little—a baby, in fact."

"William Jones says I could just talk some words, and that when he took me home I called him 'Papa.'"

"What was the name of the ship? Have you ever heard?"

"No," said Matt.

"Did you come ashore all alone? It is scarcely possible!"

"I come ashore myself. All the rest was drowned."

"Was there no clew to who you were? Did nothing come ashore besides to show them who you were or where you came from?"

CUBA IS SPAIN'S IRELAND.

A Political Situation Which Closely Rivalrs the One in England.

Cuba stands related to Spain and Spanish politics very much as Ireland does to England and English politics. Cuban affairs take up a disproportionate amount of time in the Cortes; the Cuban deputies rival the Irish members of parliament in a fatal fluency of speech and readiness to denounce the government on the slightest provocation; and a standing cause of perplexity and dismay to Spanish cabinets has been the problem of governing Cuba in a way to maintain Spanish supremacy and satisfy native sentiment at the same time. The minister for the colonies recently brought in a bill for the reorganization of the Cuban government which provides for a considerable degree of home rule and distinctly takes away from the despotic power of the captain general. Upon it public opinion in the island and in Spain has been divided, some maintaining that it was a legitimate concession to the desire for self-government, others contending that it was a first and dangerous step towards complete independence. Minister Maura has planted himself on the very modern ground for a Spaniard that it is impossible to govern a free people without having some way of consulting their wishes, and that the majority in Cuba should be allowed to decide on affairs of local government. On the whole the preponderance of opinion in Cuba seems to favor the plan, and as the minister has Sagasta's full assent and backing it seems probable that the bill will be given a trial. It will be nearly as interesting and instructive to watch its operations in Cuba as it will be to observe the working of the new Irish parliament in Dublin.—N. Y. Post.

Paper, Pens and Ink.

Paper, as we learn from recent discoveries, was in use in Egypt as far back as 2500 B. C., and not merely, as old Pliny thought, from the time of Alexander the Great. The ancients, it appears, knew more about pens and inks than they usually have credit for. The Greeks made silver and other metallic pens, and Latin manuscripts show a great variety of inks—red, purple, green, blue, silver and gold. The great Florentine Bible in the British museum shows the skill of the penman in the twelfth century in the use of this mode of decoration; and in somewhat later times it was no unusual thing for scribes to annotate their texts in colored inks—red, green, violet, blue—using each color for a distinct class of notes, historical, biographical, geographical, etc. Scientific works are often made exceedingly attractive by colored diagrams, chronologies by architectural arcades and ornamental panels.—London Academy.

Horse and Horse.

Butler—There's a rian below to see you, sir.

Mayberry—What did you tell him?

Butler—I told him you told me if it was a lady to say you were in and if it was a man to say you were out.

Mayberry—What did he say then?

Butler—He said to tell you he was a lady.—Harvard Lampoon

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