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DION CLAYTON CALTHROP

Essays of To-day and Yesterday

First Volumes

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ESSAYS OF
TO-DAY AND YESTERDAY

DION
CLAYTON
CALTHROP



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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

HAS the dress of the modern man ever been summed up more effectively than by our author in the sentence "We look like so many clerks hesitating between mourning and vulgarity"? Yet Dion Clayton Calthrop can invest even the humdrum frock-coat with romance and make the story of the costermonger's buttons read like a fairy-tale. He knows, indeed, enough about clothes to excuse him from knowing anything else. Yet when you have said that he is a complete master of the subject of dress and has written a classic work on English costume you have but begun the tale of his activities. For he is an artist, and has exhibited at the Royal Institute and the Royal Academy. He is a dramatist, and has plays produced both in London and in New York. He is the author of some excellent short stories, and he has not only written books, but also illustrated them.

Dion Clayton Calthrop was born in 1878, and was educated at St Paul's School. Later he attended art schools in Paris, and the Bibliography will indicate sufficiently how extremely busy he has been since that time.

F. H. P.

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THE HISTORY OF THE CLOTHES WE WEAR

VERY few gentlemen walking the streets have the least idea that they carry on their backs a crabbed catalogue of English History, that they are sandwich-men advertising the past ages. Ladies who fly yearly into the past, ransack the world from top to toe for new ideas, and vary their figures to suit the fashion, know also just as little of the interesting thing they are doing. From the Egyptian hobble skirt to the trousers of the Turk is a far cry.

Men, however, can date the day on which the true modern clothes began for them and, with a little knowledge, can see how they have sunk to the present prevailing ugliness from the fair and fine creatures they were. Bag-wigs, gentlemen, swords and ruffles, full-skirted coats of peach-coloured silk, diamond buckles and roses "worth a family," where are they now? We look like so many clerks hesitating between mourning and vulgarity.

On the thirteenth of October, 1666, King Charles the Second, having read John Evelyn's pamphlet entitled *Tyrannus, or the Mode*, became enamoured of the idea of the Persian coat. He had one made. So had the Duke of York. They tried them on.

Picture to yourself the fifteenth of October, when they first wore them in public. A far more drastic change than the changes of to-day, a far more amazing sight than the first harem trousers, or the close-fitting dress of the Directoire, for they were an utter and complete renunciation of all tradition. It is the violent

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change from the tunic of the Middle Ages to the ancestor of the frock-coat of to-day. Mr Pepys describes it: "A long cassocke close to the body of black cloth, and pinked with white silk under it, and a coat over it, the legs ruffled with black ribband like a pigeon's legs."

There's a point there, take heed of it. In other words, this was a black frock-coat, the first black frock-coat. Would that it had been the last!

On October the seventeenth the King saw Lord St Albans in an all-black suit, and, discarding his own black and white, which he said made him look too like a magpie, he ordered one all of black velvet. Sir Philip Howard, if you please, an extremist in the new Eastern fashion, wore a nightgown and turban like a Turk.

On November the twenty-second of the same year King Louis the Fourteenth of France, having a quarrel with King Charles, said that he would dress all his footmen in vests like the King of England. But the new fashion conquered in the end, and all the fashionable world with one accord gave up the little short tunic and the petticoat-breeches, and the infinity of ribbands, and went into frock-coats.

From thence to our own day the frock-coat has been the base of all our sartorial efforts. The cuffs altered, grew small, grew huge, narrowed, were split, and finally gave us the cuff of to-day. Our cuffs still carry the marks of their birth in the now useless row of buttons that adorns them. The costermonger alone has kept faithful to the turned-back real cuff, which, though we use it occasionally, is nearly dead.

The costermonger is one of the most interesting and complete survivals of an earlier age, for his coat with its square skirts, deep-flapped pockets, velvet and button

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ornaments, and his long waistcoat, likewise ornamented, is pure Georgian, while his striped jersey and bell-bottomed trousers are the very cut of the old sailor; the trousers, as they say down East, "cut saucy over the trotters." Like every other historic part of our raiment, the cuff has shrunk into nothingness, and in the present day its width is measured only by the few inches necessary to allow of the appearance of the shirt-cuffs.

In 1727 we find the world getting a little more modern, frock-coat, waistcoat, and tie, but still there is the cocked hat and the wig. It is the wig that really divides us sharply from the past, those wonderful erections, staircase-wigs, cut-bobs, long-bobs, pigeon-wings, clubs, cornets, grizzle-majors, and all the host of bag-wigs, the remains of which are only to be seen in judges, barristers, coachmen, and in the powdered hair of menservants. The bag of the wigs remains on the tunics of the Welsh Fusiliers, on the coat-collars of certain coachmen, and on the Court suit. One other very curious thing remains in connexion with the cocked hat and wig, and that is the *aiguillettes*, or shoulder-knots, on the left shoulder of *aides-de-camp* and footmen. Mr Caton Woodville suggests that these long gold cords that pass under the shoulder as well as before, and are looped on to the top button of the tunic, are the cords of the cocked hat of the Marlburian soldier.

The *aides-de-camp* were then mounted on light, fast horses, and in order to guard the very expensive full-bottomed wig and heavy hat, they passed the long cords of their hats through the wig, round the shoulder, and looped them on the top button of their coats. This is a very likely suggestion, though it has also been said that they are a portion of the old bandolier, the remains

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of which are to be found in the chains and pricklers of the Hussars' shoulder-belt.

From the Georgian full-skirted coat we get the two buttons that remain on the back of our frock- and tail-coats, where they were once placed to hold back the skirts while riding; and we get also the footman's vertical pockets with buttoned flaps, which were once slits through which the sword-hilt passed.

The first black necktie was the Steinkirk, worn during the wars in Flanders and twisted instead of being elaborately folded, as the soldiers had no time for dandyism. Ties indeed are of the most ancient origin, and there are volumes of Cravatiana. The first ties are probably those worn by Roman orators to protect their throats—the *focalia* or orator's chincloth. Both Napoleon and Beau Brummell were very particular about their cravats, and both, curiously enough, changed them for the first time in their lives on the morning of their great defeats. Napoleon, who always wore a black silk tie, appeared on the morning of Waterloo with a flowing tie of white; and Brummell, who always wore a white linen tie round a twelve-inch folded collar, wore a black silk tie just before he died in poverty at Caen.

Great men have often been very particular about their clothes. Brummell invented the modern dress-suit and the first black dress-trousers and white evening waistcoat. Napoleon's grey coat marks him well in our eyes, and, besides that, he had a perfect passion for clothes, and arranged and overlooked all the suits and dresses for his coronation. Byron is known by his open loose collars in the days of the stiff-starched neckcloth. The Iron Duke is said to have sat for hours regarding himself before a glass in his peer's robes. George the Fourth, who, if he was not great, was at least

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notorious, invented a shoe-buckle. And almost the last person whom one would accuse of dandyism, George Washington, wrote a minute and complete order for his coats to his tailors, from a Newmarket coat with a hood, down to a dress-coat, for every buttonhole of which he sent the measurements.

As for Brummell, he alone is responsible for the English idea of cleanliness in clothes. He it was who had his neckcloths slightly starched to counteract the slovenly, sloppy ties of his day. He it was who really invented the constant use of clean linen, the appearance of what we call 'smartness,' the regular uniform dress of a gentleman both for morning and evening. His blue cloth coat with brass buttons shaped like our present evening-dress coats, except that they buttoned across; his buff-coloured waistcoat with the slip of a thinner waistcoat showing above the buff; his boots, of which he was proud to the last days before he went mad, varnished with *vernis de Guiton*; his primrose-coloured gloves and top-hat and cane were to the fashionable world of his day the last word in dress. He is responsible for our uniform appearance in the evening; and one may imagine him folding his collar and tying his tie, the first of our kind, whose ghost looks over our shoulders and shudders at our awkward attempts.

Why don't we wear blue coats for evening-dress now? Our dress-clothes are really very dull, even the waistcoat-buttons are quiet and subdued. White is undoubtedly the colour for the shirt, the tie, and the waistcoat, and black for the trousers, but a blue coat would be a real relief: witness the effect of hunting-pink at a dance.

If it were not for women, the streets and restaurants, the parks and promenades would look for all the world

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like the remnants of a cheap funeral, as if the nation had never been able to get over the death of Dickens. Even the white top-hat has recently almost vanished, and colours seem to remain only in the vivid socks of undergraduates, and the wonderful waistcoats of the sportsmen. Racing, of all the sports, has kept up its tradition of the wearing of odd clothes. Since the days of George the First, when sporting men pushed back their wigs to show the natural colour of their hair underneath, the sporting man has pushed back whatever he wore on his head, and the angle of the billycock proclaims the man—the billycock being the hat once made for William Coke, of Norfolk, by Mr Bowler, the hatter, of Houndsditch: Billy Coke's hat.

When the riding-chairs called cabriolets came in from France, in 1751, it was not only the sporting, but the most fashionable thing to ride in them, and not only to ride in them, but to wear patches on the face to represent them, and to have them embroidered on waistcoats, and to have the hair dressed like them in form. And the cab, later improved by Mr Hansom, became an emblem of the sporting idea in England. It provoked a new dress just as the motor-car has done. It gave us the Gentleman Joe coat with huge pearl buttons, and the curly-brimmed top-hat, and the thick dogskin driving-gloves, all of which, with very tight trousers, were worn by young gentlemen utterly innocent of cab-driving, and by them paraded in the streets with a sprig of geranium in the buttonhole, a straw in the mouth, and a reckless hat of curly brim or of nearly no brim at all. And it was all very gay and splendid. Now gentlemen equally innocent of motor-car knowledge wear leather-lined coats of voluminous size, and affect an anxious, nervous appearance

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and an absent manner. How gorgeously young the world is!

History straying from the dressing-room lingers in the hall. The very marks on the backs of our gloves come to us from the times when the fingers were embroidered. Look at the three middle fingers of your hand and you will see exactly how, by carrying down the embroidery between the fingers, the three points on our gloves are arrived at. And there they remain. Why these things remain that have long ceased to have rhyme or reason is a mystery, and can only be explained by remembering how long, how very long, it takes to kill anything in such a conservative country as ours, or indeed in any country, for I think that all men are at heart Conservatives.

We keep about our dress so many odd, needless, quaint things that it is almost a wonder we don't keep more, despite the tendency of the age that seeks to level everything into a series of grey numbered slabs. By rights we should all be dressed like seals in a smooth black waterproof covering, but thank goodness even the Upper Norwood Cricket Club cannot exist without colours, and blazers burst forth from myriad clubs every summer, and Margate Pier looks like a mad dream of heraldry.

With the gloves in the hall is a silk hat. Concerning this very type of hat, I find the following delightful story in Mr Clinch's book on costume. The first silk hat ever worn in London was worn by John Hetherington, a haberdasher of the Strand, on January 15th, 1797. He appeared in the street, and at once a great crowd collected, so great that several women fainted, and children screamed and dogs barked, and a young son of Cordwainer Thomas, who was returning from

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a chandler's shop, was thrown down and had his arm broken. Mr Hetherington was arraigned before the Lord Mayor on a charge of breach of the peace and inciting to riot, and was required to give bonds in the sum of £500. The evidence went to show that Mr Hetherington appeared on the highway wearing upon his head what he called a silk hat, a tall structure having a shiny lustre, and calculated to frighten timid people. Mr Clinch, quoting from one of the London papers of the time, says: "The new hat is destined to work a revolution in headgear, and we think the officers of the Crown erred in placing the defendant under arrest."

This goes to show that the harem skirt is not the first garment to raise a riot. The silk hat did not come from the East, although the shape has some fellowship with the hat of the Greek priest, but so many of our garments are derived from the East that one wonders at the outcry at the Turkish trousers. Certainly in the reign of Richard the First our streets and roads presented quite an Oriental appearance, for men swathed themselves in draperies and women wore stuffs from Eastern looms, and many were the Eastern customs brought home from the wars in the Holy Land.

So many things remain in our clothes of the past ages that, once we begin to analyse, we seem to put on the whole History of Man after our morning bath. Our socks—good heavens, our socks!—take us miles away from home, so that we lose ourselves in vague unknown dates. Our pumps are absolutely Elizabethan. "Get good strings to your beards, new ribbons to your pumps," says Shakespeare. Our shirts! Look along history's washing-list and see how we have come from the plain shirt-vest with a button and loop, such as the

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Egyptians wore, to Tudor shirts with collars and cuffs and fronts embroidered with black silk, and shirts to hold huge ruffs like cartwheels, and, behold, the ruffs fall flat, unstarched, and become Vandyke collars, and these become the Puritan bands still worn by barristers and bishops, and beribboned shirts home from the wars in Flanders, and shirts for Dr Johnson to dirty with snuff and tea-stains, and shirts washed at Weymouth while Farmer George enters the water to the strains of a band, and shirts with the studied neglect of Byron and the precise and exquisite propriety of Brummell, till we reach our own hideous conventional garment of boiled rag armour with its stiff cuffs.

Then to our brogue shoes, all fitted with ornament like a Roman sandal, just in the selfsame way. Then trousers, monuments of antiquity far beyond the pale of mere guesses, the most ancient of garments, and showing in their shape but one peculiar survival, and that in the silk braid down the outside seams of dress-trousers. These are the survivals of the times when the tight military trousers unbuttoned down the side to allow of the wearing of top-boots underneath, and the buttons were covered by a flap lined sometimes with a colour. It is this flap that remains, and it is by reason of this that military trousers boast the broad red band.

In all this, in the putting on of all these garments, you may notice one very peculiar and interesting fact, that whereas a man always without exception has his buttons on the right side of his clothes, a woman always has them on the left. It has been suggested that this peculiarity arises from the habit of women carrying children mostly on the left arm, and that it would be more convenient to carry the buttonhole on the right side over to the button on the left, and so, in closing the

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garment worn over the breast, not to disturb the child asleep. Also, that the man, in order to keep his right arm free, should carry the buttonhole over from the left to the button on the right. This discussion would seem finicking were it not for the insistence of a peculiarity that must have had at some time a very definite and necessary reason.

Buttons, of course, are a history in themselves. The boy Buttons, the successor to the Tiger, who was a very small boy who rode behind every smart turn-out, wears a perfect feast of buttons arranged like a skeleton suit such as Jackanapes wore. And a careful study of club servants reveals the most curious dispositions of buttons, all bound by strict laws of below-stairs, and showing that the higher a man rises in his profession as a servant the fewer buttons he wears. The boy in the hall wears the most, the hall-porter has so many on his cuffs, pockets, and the tail of his coat, the house-servants in their order wear an exact number of buttons, right up to the house-steward, who wears just as many buttons as a gentleman, and looks like a guest except that he has more dignity. In like manner do the maids as they go up discard the cap and white apron for the lace cap and black silk apron of the housekeeper. Aprons, indeed, occupy a large part of the world's wardrobe: green baize; the white of the grocer; the blue and white of the butcher; the black of the bishop.

The three most interesting survivals actually in our streets are the clothes of the Bluecoat boy, the black jacket of the Eton boy, and the cockade in coachmen's hats.

The Bluecoat boy is familiar enough in his long gown of Edward the Sixth's time, his black knee-breeches and yellow stockings and buckled shoes that are all Georgian,

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and his bands that are Geneva bands. The Eton boy's black suit and tall hat were first worn in black in mourning for George the Third. The cockade is the remains of the old chaperon, or hood, worn in the colours of their masters by the menservants all through the fourteenth century, and remaining now complete in shape, with the cut edge of the hood sticking out fan-shape and the curl of the liripipe twisted round in a neat coil. This hood remains also on the shoulder of the Garter mantle and in the dress of the French barrister.

Every year these interesting survivals become more rare; one feels that the butcher will discard his apron, the confectioner his white cap, the cook his double-breasted white jacket, the last growler-driver his last cape. The Georgian dustman with his knee-breeches and white stockings has not long gone; the Bluecoat boy has not long discarded his Statute Cap; the Scotsman will lose his Glengarry with the strings, and the powdered flunkey is a dying race. So much to-day is utilitarian, and we do not indulge in enough foolishness; and the protection of ancient remains of clothes is a good thing, for it serves to remind a forgetful generation of the history of its country.

The splendid comedy of the streets still goes on, lightened here and there by a dandy, by the red flare of a Guardsman's big coat, by a much befurred motorist, by the uniform of bank messengers and the importance of commissionaires. Our bus-driver swaddled against the cold has nearly gone, gone to give place to grimy, dull mechanics, whose attire is a negative of all the arts of dress. Our fine cabdrivers with their suggestion of decayed aristocracy have given way before a race of uniformed officials with apparently uniform minds. But women are the flowers of the pavements,

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a constantly changing stream of shapes and colours; they know no stern account of history, and change so quickly from bishop sleeves to Empire gowns, and from Empire figures to hobbled sausage-like bodies, that mere man cannot tell what his wife will look like next month. This is why woman has no place in the search for the origin of things; her charm is eternal, nothing withers her infinite variety, nothing disturbs her ever-changing mood. The brilliant colours of the silks set out to catch her eye make our gay streets sing with colour harmonies. Her secrets now are set in all the shops, her figure mocks us from the corset-maker's window, her hair is all displayed in the full light of the hair-dressers' establishments; all the openwork *lingerie*, cases for her dainty feet, polish for her dainty nails, rouge for her fading cheeks are unblushingly set out before us, yet for all this knowledge, even as when in toyshops the conjurer's tricks are given away, we cannot piece her together as a living, breathing, historical creature as we can a man, for when we set up our dummy to write a little essay on her kind no life is there. We are steady as rocks, wearing all the tags and bobtails of older civilizations, keeping our old customs and costumes so that we may see ourselves the mirrors of other days, but she, elusive ever, the living embroidery of life, discards a century or so every season, wears Directoire clothes for a second, and when we seek to pin her down, behold, she walks like a king's daughter in Turkish trousers, or floats before us in a cloud of silks, or catches the tropics in one hand and wears them in her hat.

For all this women may and do laugh at us. We do change our figures, but so quietly that not one notices it until they look back along the tailors' books and see

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us only eighty years ago, or even fifty years ago, and but a step less, the day before automobilism, when we knew not black leather coats, or goggles, or German-looking caps, and were still on the horsey side for choice and very particular to wear frock-coats and top-hats in Piccadilly and observe all the correctness of Bond Street. Petrol is helping to kill dandies, alas; and I am all for a nation of well-dressed people, as I am certain that clothes are a reflection of character.

Show me a man's top-hat and I'll give a good guess at his ideas; show me a woman's hat and I am utterly dumbfounded.

I suppose in ten years' time we shall have swept away many of these traces I have just explained; that we shall have succumbed even more to the deadening effect of this mechanical age which seems to have utterly exhausted our power of invention for anything but electricity and instruments of destruction; and that photographs of ourselves will look laughable and wonderfully old-fashioned and our clothes queer and ill-suited to men even as do those we look back on now, though it seems to me that there was some glory in the big stocks and the rolled collars, in the strapped trousers and fine fobs that we miss in our neutral, rather sloppy times. However, it is interesting to think that even the end of the world will hear the steady snip of the cutter's scissors.

THE CASE OF THE SHABBY GENTEEL

THERE were half a dozen men standing by the hearse waiting for the grim parcel to come downstairs to the last post. One and all had the same look, a look of utter indifference to all happening, even to this coming event—the last page of the Tragedy. One and all were, at first glance, well dressed. The religion of gentility showed its outward symbol in the accurate crease of their trousers. A deference to society showed in their carefully brushed hats. Their collars spoke the fashion. Their bearing was that of privates in that huge regiment of the Middle Class. Yet when the man who was watching them looked more closely he could see the frayed and trimmed edges of their cuffs and the suspicion of vaseline on the gloss of their hats, and the shining shoulder-blades and worn elbows of their coats.

Presently there was a little stir among the group and they arranged their features becomingly, and one furtively threw away a cigarette, and another pulled on some cheap black gloves, and another glanced at his watch of rolled gold, and yet another turned down the ends of his trousers, which had been turned up to save them.

Then through the open door the coffin was carried by two men in seedy black clothes. It was a common coffin, with a good deal of varnish and cheap effect about it, just a proper box for a man who had a good deal of varnish and cheap effect about him. It was hoisted into the hearse and banged down rather heavily, and one of the undertakers wiped his forehead. The few men shuffled about near the single carriage in

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a ridiculous attempt at manners—"After you, old boy!"—with a certain ungainly ceremony of standing back from the door. One man with a slight sense of humour smiled, and was at once reproved by the frowns of the others. Neighbours, bored by the poor display, hung listlessly about waiting for the hearse to start. Everything was done that could be done to take away from the majesty of Death, and everything gave merely a vivid suggestion that Death was very respectable, but that to be buried from a bed-sitting-room was nearly as common a thing as to be married from one. The parade was civilization's idea of the decent thing in such cases, and the ceremony was as cheap and shabby and genteel as the civilization that invented it.

The name on the coffin-plate was Richard Carrington Smith. The Carrington had been put in at the baptism of the man as a sop to society, as a vain hope that it might bring success where mere Smith might fail. As it was, both the Smith and the Carrington had failed, failed dismally to the tune of thirty shillings a week. And it had been thirty years since the Richard had been shortened into Dick, and forty years since the curate had hastily pronounced the words Richard Carrington Smith over an undersized baby.

As the hearse drove away to place the body in the only plot of earth it had ever owned a man standing by said, "So that is all!"

And the man who had been watching turned round at the sound of the voice, and, looking at the speaker, saw just such another as one of those who had gone away in the carriage—top-hatted, creased-trousered, eminently respectable, and decidedly shabby. A Clerk, one of millions of the same cut. He spoke to the Clerk.

"Why do you say, 'So that is all'?"

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"Not even a bunch of violets," said the Clerk.

"You seem to take it to heart."

"I have no heart to which to take anything," said the Clerk, "but I saw it all. I was interested because it was my funeral."

The other man, who by his clothes was a Tramp, nodded as if he understood.

"We lived together," said the Clerk, "and, when he was dying, I asked him to die in my name. No one knew. It was very simple. No one cared."

"But those men, six of them?" the Tramp asked.

The Clerk smiled grimly. "You would scarcely believe it," he said, "but, as I was to be buried in an outside cemetery, they went for the drive. In fact," he continued, raising his voice, "they got a holiday from the firm, and they needed the change. Even this was an excitement in their lives."

"And may I ask," said the Tramp, "why you chose to die?"

"It is the only thing I can do," he replied, "without asking anybody's permission."

"Yet you regretted the lack of flowers?"

The Clerk thought for a moment before answering. "Flowers," he said, "are all the life I have ever had. I wanted to see what it would be like if I died, and I found it, as I thought, just as shabbily genteel as my life has been. Well, it doesn't matter, but until now I did not know how I had hoped there would be at least a bunch of violets. Now I know what it is like I have no regrets."

"You are a philosopher," said the Tramp.

The Clerk turned to him with a weary smile. "Happy men," he said, "have no need of a philosophy."

They had been walking slowly down the street, now quite normal after the departure of the hearse. Rows of

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meaningless houses, a publichouse called the Three Jolly Gardeners, and a standing mockery of the name, a bleak church, and a newspaper-shop formed the landscape.

"I wasn't wanted and I shan't be missed," said the Clerk. But his head was more erect, and his walk more upright, and his tread more firm.

"Where are you going?" the Tramp asked.

The Clerk turned almost savagely on him. "Somewhere," he said, "where I shall be wanted; somewhere where it will matter if I live or die; somewhere out of this ghastly machinery that compels me to wear this ridiculous dress and put on this ridiculous hat. There's a decent blue sky somewhere unchoked by soot and dust, and a decent clean field somewhere where I can rest; and flowers—flowers not tortured with wire and rotting in their staleness; not fashionable buttonhole flowers, but living hedge flowers that I can pluck, and breathe, and"—his voice sank into a whisper—"and love."

They walked on until the day crept into afternoon, and the shadows came out from where they had lain hidden since the morning. They walked past packed and crowded streets and into growing suburbs. These last were an object of fresh fury to the Clerk, and yet his eyes were brighter and his cheeks were flushed. So far his gaunt figure in its sober black did not look amiss in the surroundings. It is still a city wherever a man looks in place in a top-hat; when that becomes an anachronism then it is the country. The suburbs are the citadel of the shabby genteel, but it is not always shabby outwardly, and it is by a state of mind. They were walking past rows of small, semi-detached houses, built to look as if these were solid constructions of huge oak beams and deep walls, but the oak beams were half-inch slats of stained wood nailed on outside, and the

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doors and windows were mostly warped like the people inside, and the gardens were the work of a firm of nurserymen, and the names on the gates were the work of that particular devil whose name is Snob, the friend of Shoddy. "Albemarle" and "Burlington," "Cromartie" and "Dangerfield," "Eglinton" and "Fortescue" they were called, and the gentlemen who lived in them had a certain pleasure in their addresses, and sometimes they added "Towers" to the name when they had a cheap builder's tower over the attics, and sometimes they added "Vista," when the only vista was composed of bad bricks and peeling mortar. And yet at the back of it all the trumpet-call of Romance sounded, and the Towers was an aspiration founded on poetry, and the Vista was only the dream view of Castles in Spain.

And then they walked beyond the suburbs and entered a region as desolate as a new mining camp, estates cut up into imaginary streets, roads without houses, avenues without trees, and here the Clerk cast away his top-hat and threw it on a rubbish-heap where old bootsqueened it with sardine tins. It was the edge of the drift of civilization's sea. Here you might pick up a battered six-penny novel, or one patent-leather shoe, or a copy of *How to Get Rich Quickly*, or an empty bottle of nerve tonic, the flotsam and jetsam of hurried lives. Out of the Richard Carrington Smith the Carrington shone predominant; high-sounding phrases flowed from his lips; hope, fire, the not-extinguished spark of youth flamed.

A gasworks, a factory, the end of tram-lines, the beginning of real cottages made the landscape.

"And what are you going to do?" said the Tramp.

"Eat," said the Clerk, "for I am hungry."

Then they came to an Inn that was a House of Rest

THE SHABBY GENTEEL

and Refreshment and not a ' Pub,' and they ate bread and cheese there and talked very big.

Later the Tramp said, " What are you going to do? "

And they were passing a little village all quiet and snuggled in a valley, and a child came out of a cottage and looked at them and gave them " Good day," and the Clerk took off his tail-coat and hung it over his arm. And the Tramp said, " What are you going to do? "

The Clerk answered, looking back at the child, " Love, because I am hungry! "

They came into the deep of the valley, where a river played and the trees sang in the wind. And here the Clerk looked at his purse and found something to please him. And later he bought strong boots and a rough suit at a country town, and gave away all his old things. He looked a man, storm-beaten, but still a man, and he walked lame, and talked little. And it was late afternoon.

At last they came to a village, all still and like a harbour for the quiet lights golden in the windows. And the Tramp said again, " What are you going to do? "

There was a stone church there, quiet, battered, strong, and an organist was there at practice, for the organ music came out, filling the night with a hundred suggestions.

" What are you going to do? " said the Tramp again.

" I am going in here," said the Clerk by the door of the church, " because I am hungry."

So the Tramp left him and heard no more of him for many years; but later he did, for he saw a man by that very village digging in the pound. And a last time he asked him what he would do. And the Clerk answered him, " The work at my hand."

There is a certain rose-bush grows in a city garden, and it comes from that village and it makes people glad.

A HOLIDAY IN ELIZABETHAN ENGLAND

HERE is a romance that is true. I am looking at a clearing in a forest where a laughing spring of glistening water threads a dainty way through grass as smooth as velvet. It goes suddenly, with a gurgle and plomp, out of sight. It is lost. It has altered its tune and its song, which was all about the poulpican, and the korrigan, and the fairies who make rings in the grass, and now I can hear it chanting solemnly. It has gone into a deep well, a stone well with two stone steps up to it all worn by the knees of pilgrims. And above is a stone Calvary, rough and weather-beaten.

On all sides trees catch the sun, and throw fantastic shadows on the grass, and above is a patch of sky, all blue, and the stream catches the blue so that it looks like a live ribbon running through the grass.

By the side of the stream there is a path worn through to the brown earth. And a little way off is the sea at the foot of the hill, an inland sea that has been locked in wooded arms and is more gentle for it, and carries boats on its broad bosom very quietly.

But now comes a great black-and-white cow, smelling sweet of milk, and behind the cow comes Anna.

Anna is knitting. How they knit, these Breton women! We are in Brittany. It is difficult to think we are not in England. Everything is so English, and yet so curiously unlike anything English. I know what it is. It is that we are in Elizabethan England. Anna suggests that. In fact, everything suggests it—the

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people, the clothes, the houses, the customs; even the songs. Last night a man sang a song even older. It is called *Ar Goulenn, or The Asking of the Bride*. The man who sang it did not know I could hear him, and he practised it this way and that, so as to be ready, for he was the village tailor, and the tailor in the Breton village is the one who makes the first advances from the young man to his sweetheart. He carries a rod of flowering broom with him, a *baz valan*, and with this staff of office interviews the young woman, and puts forward the claims of the wooer.

Anna has been asked. She and Pierre have drunk from the same glass, and eaten with the same knife, and she has bought the little silver mirrors for her bridal cap.

And Anna is in complete Elizabethan dress; her big ruff stands out all starched and stiff about her neck. She has starched it herself, using straws to keep all the pleats quite stiff and in order. She has her working dress on, and her *bonnet du matin*, with a cherry-coloured ribbon round it. But her working dress is of blue, with wide sleeves, edged with velvet, and a skirt worn with a farthingale, so that it sticks out all the way round. And she has bare legs and sabots.

Standing there, in that space of green trees, she might have come straight out of an English market town in the sixteenth century. Her hair, even, is correct, being drawn back tight from her forehead, and showing very little under her white linen coif. And her face is oval, and her eyes a deep blue, and her eyebrows very beautifully arched.

She tethers the cow, and goes then to the well, and kneels to say a prayer.

She does not see me; she is, in fact, kneeling with

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her back to me, and now she takes two pins from her bodice, and leans with them over the well, and then, after crossing herself, she drops the pins. It is a moment of great agitation for her: those pins must fall so that they lie crosswise when they rest on the bottom. The well is not deep, and the water is clear, but the bottom of the well is full of pins. They have been thrown there by hundreds of girls who sought to know if they would marry within the year, as they were certain to do if the pins fell crosswise.

When Anna turns round I can see that it has all gone well. Her face is alight with happiness. She sits down on the edge of the well and begins her eternal knitting again.

When Anna is married the wedding will be just like an Elizabethan country wedding.

Her father's great barn will be hung with white sheets with garlands hung over them; and Anna, in a dress covered with embroidery, will sit under an arch of flowers and branches. On empty cider-casks the blind piper and the *biniau* will be seated, playing till you think their lungs will burst. And the guests will dance between the courses, just as they have danced in procession through the streets from the church all garlanded with flowers. And they will dance and eat right into the small hours; and next day all the beggars will come and be seated at the tables to eat the broken meats of the feast, while the bride and bridegroom wait on them.

This you may see any day by just going across the water to Brittany. You may see it in the south of the country, for it is in the districts of Quimper and Quimperlé and Pont Aven that they wear the ruff and

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farthingale. An hour or so from Pont Aven, and the people are more in the eighteenth century. An hour or so in another direction, and you will find black high hennins of the fourteenth century. At Auray are people like those in sixteenth-century Dutch pictures. In the north you can see men dressed as Spaniards. In one village—Pont l'Abbé—you will meet women looking almost Chinese, with pitch-black, straight hair strained off their foreheads, and dressed with peculiar combs and marvellous embroideries. None of these things are for show merely, but are of everyday wear.

It is market-day. The little town is filled with a crowd from all the neighbouring villages. Looking down, one sees a great array of bobbing white caps and coloured aprons and black shawls. A little space is cleared in front of the hotel, and a man, dressed in baggy trunks and embroidered gaiters and a wonderful waistcoat, produces, as if by magic, a calf. The calf stares at the crowd. A number of old ladies commence to shout at the calf. Its antecedents, its figure, its price are hurled by quick, crying voices, this way and that. There is a feeling in the air that there must soon be a free fight. Umbrellas of immense age prod the calf. Men with sea-battered faces examine the calf as if the future of France hung on their judgment.

Through this seething, shouting mass of people, over whom the sun plays brilliantly, comes a cart on which are piled eggs, ducks, geese, fruits, and cheeses, and above all the young wife of the farmer who is driving. It is Anna, who comes with Pierre to sell the produce of the farm. Had an Elizabethan gentleman a camera, he could have taken a photograph of them just as they were, and found every detail the same as in his own

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day. The picture is a bridge across four hundred years. And the same may be said of the crowd. Here and there, of course, are people in ordinary clothes, a bowler hat, or commonplace trousers, yet common people in the time of Elizabeth did wear trousers. Of course, you must look on the picture with eyes of imagination, and wait for glimpses of proper setting, as, for instance, this: Through the wood opposite the Bois d'Amour (which is the name of the wood at Pont Aven), there come two children in their best *fête*-day clothes. They are dressed just as grown-up people, the girl in a big ruff and farthingale, with her white cap and silk apron, and the boy as his father in that very peculiar Breton dress that is a hotch-potch of many ages. They are coming into the market with sous clasped tight in their hot little hands, for they are going, like the pilgrims of old, to buy lead medals of St Fiacre, whose day it is. And St Fiacre was an Irishman.

Britanny is full of Irish saints, but St Fiacre, who is a Patron of Gardeners and Cabdrivers, is one of the most notable. He died in about the year 670, and they are faithful to him still.

At St Fiacre, which is near Quimperlé, there is a day in June when young men come to be hired as servants, each man carrying a switch. When you have engaged your man, he breaks the switch across his knee as token that he enters into the agreement with you. This is like the old Lincolnshire hiring-days, when men and women come into the market-place to be hired—"flitting," it is called.

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Anna and Pierre have a child now, a round-eyed, wondering girl, who is old enough to sit on a little betel of wood by her mother's feet and listen to Breton

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fairy-tales. There is a wood at the back of the farm, and in the wood a little secret pool with a spring that feeds it so that it bubbles and murmurs. It is a fairy pool, and Anna, who has known it since a child, tells the little Anna Marie the story of the fairy who lives there. These people have just as much knowledge of the fairies as the Irish, and they will talk for hours of the fairies of such and such districts, of those who chase cattle, or frighten sheep in the night, or tumble into the cream in the dairy and turn it sour, or who keep the fireplace clean for goodwives.

Anna and Anna Marie are sitting outside the big stone doorway, and while the mother talks she embroiders a new apron for her daughter to wear at the Pardon. It is an exact copy of her own, as hers was of her mother's. The avenue of trees leading to the road has a bend which hides the highroad from the house, and nothing modern, nothing of our hurried life, disturbs this ancient picture. It is evening, and a golden sunlight glints through the trees. A bell rings, quickly and then slowly three times. It is the hour of the Angelus. Pierre will hear the bell in the fields, and will take off his hat and wait until the bell has ceased. Pigeons coo in the trees, the faint sound of the cattle in their stalls can be heard. And then, from the highroad, the hideous shriek of a motor-car whistle tears across the peace.

At the Pardons you will see the wealth of country costume and a perfect picture of an Elizabethan fair. Autolycus will be there peddling his ribbons and mirrors. A row of booths, gay with shawls and sashes, coloured papers, and little tight Early Victorian bouquets of flowers—you know them: a rosebud in

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the middle, then a circle of tight-packed mignonette, and then forget-me-not, and an outer row of soft-eyed pansies. There will be food of all sorts, as thin as wafers. And there will be a long tent where you can sit on the ground and eat a hearty country meal very cheaply, and drink rough cider, or red wine, or mead.

This particular Pardon where Anna has taken Anna Marie is in a wood where there is the quaintest of chapels, and the most peculiar Calvary of stone saints. Just by are two small farmhouses, and that is all. The rest is trees. Inside the chapel there are no seats, but only a beaten, uneven floor, and grotesque fifteenth-century carvings, all coloured bright red and green, and blue and gold, but now dim with age. Outside, on the steps of the Calvary, a dozen or more people are saying prayers or rosaries. Those who have brought provisions for the day put down their baskets and kneel there while the crowd all round them sways and sings and shouts, and hucksters bawl their wares, and glasses clink, and boys blow trumpets.

It is early morning yet, about eight o'clock, but all the world and his wife are there ready and waiting for the procession. You can hear it coming from a long way off—drums and bugles sounding through the trees—and soon it appears, hot and dusty after a long walk of six miles. First come men in their best dresses, new ribbons to their hats, and the sashes of their Confraternities about their waists. They carry banners, the ropes of which are strung with flowers. Then comes the band, four drums and four bugles, waking a thousand echoes in the wood. And lastly, before the mob of followers, the priest comes, in all his vestments, his broad-toed, buckled shoes white with dust. As he passes everybody kneels for his blessing, and you see

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the row of bent heads, and the circles of white ruffs, and the spread of embroidered skirts sweep down and up as the priest passes.

The chapel will not hold the congregation, but the big doors open wide into the wood, and people kneel anywhere under the trees.

It is all very simple and dignified: the marvellous faces of the old women under their snowy-white coifs, their hands, gnarled with field-labour, plucking at their beads; the earnest, clean-cut, English-looking faces of the men (for here, alone in France, all the men are clean-shaven); the numbers of children; and the strange medley of food and drink and ribbons and religion make an unforgettable impression. It carries the mind back to the years when our own nation was as simple and dignified, when such a place as this, in England, held its fairs, when there must have been something of the same look on the men's faces as there is here. They are nearly all fine faces. The older men have very nearly all been sailors, and have bright blue eyes and swarthy complexions; and most of the young men are sailors on leave, or fishermen who have served their time in the army. So that one does not see, as in England, the open-mouthed yokel, the dull-witted field-labourer, or the peculiar shuffling slouch of our own countrymen. Indeed, the very faces are not of a modern type. The old women, with sunken eyes and brown skins, look like people out of pictures which age has darkened to glowing mellow colours; and the men could only be matched in the fishing-villages of the West of England.

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Over those houses where you can get a drink there hang for signs bushes, generally of mistletoe, on staffs.

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Sit at the door of one of these primitive inns and see the quaint interior. There are the great box-beds, all carved, that are arranged like bunks one over another. They have sliding doors, most of them, which are closed in the daytime, and long brass hinges, kept brightly polished. There are the brass candlesticks on the mantel, and the big family soup-bowl, and the jugs for wine and cider, of Quimper pottery. And often there is a large pendulum clock, with dazzling brass weights.

The place has so much the appearance of something you have seen in pictures or on the stage that it will not appear to be quite real, just as at first sight Venice does not appear quite real. The figure of the goodwife framed in the polished wood, and only dimly lit by the small curtained window, her face looking more bronzed by reason of the white of her coif, the barefooted children, the mongrel dog, and the heap of vegetables waiting to be prepared for *déjeuner* on the table, give one an almost uncanny feeling that some picture in the National Gallery has come to life. All one's ideas of Elizabethan England wake up and surround one with a dreamy atmosphere. In such a place Sir John Falstaff might well have drunk his fill. To such a place queer foreign sailors, with earrings in their ears, and white, glistening teeth, and with a parrot's wing stuck in their caps, might have come.

If you look away from the interior and out upon the landscape the illusion still carries—the telephone-wires do not seem to matter; the distant outline of an hotel fades away, and leaves you looking over a harbour, at an island in it on which stands a tiny walled town, just as it stood in the fourteenth century. This is Concarneau, where the boats from the Bay of Biscay come loaded with tunny-fish or sardines; and where,

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when the boats are in, the light blue nets hang up to dry like fairy gauzes. The boats have sails of all colours, from white to tawny brown, from tawny brown to deep orange; and the masts and rigging make marvellous patterns across the sky. You can see, dimly in the distance, a crowd of fishermen and fishwives, a crowd of colour so unlike an English crowd, for the blue caps and blue and orange clothes of the men, the coifs and aprons of the women, make a bright and cheerful picture.

A boat sails out of the harbour. The sense of romance and adventure is upon you at once; and then, quite close at hand, comes the new music of the romance of modernity—a telephone-bell rings.

When you see the dainty Parisian children in their plaid frocks and straw hats, the little boys in cloaks and *bérets*, you see by them a figure plump and comfortable, with either the mob-cap, big pins, and tartan streamers of Normandy, or the close coif and peculiar apron of the Breton. They are very delicious people, as much out of keeping with the electric atmosphere of Paris as, it seems, are the primroses they sell in the streets. They sit or walk in the Bois, or the Luxembourg, or the Gardens of the Tuileries, monuments of past ages, of a different type.

The nervous, small faces of the city children look up at them with wonder and love. They are calm, these nurses, in the midst of traffic. They soothe after frights from the Guignol show of Punchinello in the gardens; they carry with them an air of belonging to some finer, greater country than that which Paris herself suggests. They remain products of the Elizabethan Age, and are saturated with the spirit of their province.

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Those of them who are Bretons have been on a pilgrimage to the nurses' shrine of Notre Dame de Kergonet at Pont Scorff, Hennebont. Hennebont carries one back absolutely to the Middle Ages with its gabled houses and gates, and ramparts and castle, all perched above the river Blavet. Here on fair-days, when the streets are alive with busy people, come dresses from all round about, as quaint as one can dream of.

Did Lincoln look like this? Did Canterbury once keep on this air of bustling crowds? They looked like this when Shakespeare wrote *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. And here stands Hennebont to-day almost untouched. The electric lights seem in keeping under the shadow of the great Gothic church of Our Lady of Paradise. And about the streets, and over the bridge, come people talking an old tongue like enough to Welsh for Welsh people to be enabled to understand it; people clothed in clothes peculiar to their villages and to their state in life, so that a man may say: "Here comes a fisherwoman from Pont l'Abbé who is not yet married," or "Here is one of the beautiful girls of Quimperlé," merely by glancing at their clothes.

I saw Hennebont once on the eve of a market-day when the streets were full of shadows, and the old houses nodded at each other drowsily across the way, and the spire of Our Lady of Paradise pointed its three hundred feet, all purple-black, against the evening sky. Then all modernity was blotted out, and it all looked like an illustration to some old romance, with its twisted streets and gables, and dark archways and heaps of fruit and vegetables glowing on trestle-board stalls. And I remember the organ was being played in the church, and I remember how still the river was, and

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how, in the middle of the town, we stopped to buy more petrol.

A coast is always interesting; the vast mystery of the sea, the sand, the mourning of the waves, their anger, or their joy, all go to make the imagination alive. The Breton coast is the very background for romance. It is a torn and a jagged coast, a coast littered with islands, fringed here with long, dreary salt marshes, there awful with savage rocks like teeth for crunching boats. Long, silent arms of the sea stretch inland for miles, forest-fringed, or stealing through wild moorlands on which stand huge Druidical stones.

By the sea you will find plenty of widows' crosses, and cemeteries for those who have been lost at sea, some even devoted alone to those who have been drowned off the coast of Iceland. Paimpol is a port of the Iceland schooners, and, in consequence, is a town of many widows, who mourn in the black months for those whom the sea has chosen.

Everywhere you may hear the Breton prayer: "*Mon Dieu, protégez-nous, car la mer est si grande et nos bateaux si petits.*" It is a cry wrung from many aching hearts.

At Roscoff you may watch those men start to sea whom we know so well in our streets in Southern England, those brown-faced men with two streamers in their caps, or salt-discoloured *bérets*, who carry across their shoulders strings of beautiful coloured onions.

In the south and west are the tunny and sardine fishers, and the salt-marsh workers, and deep-sea fishermen. And each fishing village has its distinct dress, and each person, as I have said, the air of looking as if they belonged to the olden times.

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If they are superstitious, they are so with the superstitions of centuries ago. If they are gay, they dance long, ceremonious country dances in the streets, just as our ancestors did, and they sing to their dances airs of long ago. They seem to be part of the time when men dreamed of the New Country, of El Dorado, of high-pooped galleons, and treasures in pieces-of-eight or bars of gold; when they lived hard, and drank home-brews hard, and played hard, and held bear-baitings, and pastoral plays and masques, and told old stories and legends round the winter fires. So they do now tell old legends after the new threshing-floors are laid and after a big supper has been eaten; so do they now look for ships bringing home treasure of cod, or of whale's blubber; so do they now drink home-brewed cider and wine of the district, and play bowls in the streets, and cards at the little *cafés*.

And I wonder if the telephone and the motor-car are going to stamp out the simplicity from this unique corner of the world where we may go and see ourselves as we were in Elizabethan times? Will the influx of staring tourists kill the old-time customs? Will the ideas of modern dress kill the beauties of the dress the Bretons wear? Shall we stamp our hideousness, our nervousness, our stupid hurry, our *ennui*, on these great people?

What will the children of Pierre and Anna grow up to be like? Their parents grew up in all the health of great traditions, they retained all that goes to make a nation solid—its songs, its legends, its individual dress and manners, and its speech. Now comes the levelling hand of modern civilization, whose main idea seems to be to turn out people as one turns out boxes—all of one pattern, and made to hold so much and no more.

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But because they have retained these things the Bretons are a great nation, and move and act together; so much so that when their men leave the French Army and go home to Brittany they get clean-shaven at once. And they think as one nation. Witness their undivided action in the matter of the investigation of their churches.

Steal a little time from the hurry of your lives and go to France, to Brittany, to see how your own country once looked and moved and had its being.

THE PAVEMENT ARTISTS

LONDON, the witch, can assume all sorts of disguise. One day after rain she will be a water-colour broadly painted with luminous shadows and pavements streaked with coloured reflections; another day she will clothe herself in a silver mist, and another she will look just like a coloured engraving. Shad and I have seen Trafalgar Square look quite Italian, and the river at Chelsea in the evening blue like a Japanese print. By night and day she is the most beautiful of cities, always changing, always offering those who have eyes to see the wonder of her infinite variety. Where will you find more lovely women and children, more handsome men, more prize dogs and sleek cats? You may eat as the world eats in London. You may eat French, Italian, Chinese, Spanish, Jewish, Russian in her thousand thousand restaurants.

One might say "everything there is to write about London has been written," but you would be wrong: there is always more to be written about her always, just as a lover can never cease to praise and find new beauties in the lady of his choice.

Says Shad to me one fine day, "The moment has arrived, but first, by way of confession, I have rather swindled. I can do half a salmon."

It is of no use questioning Shad when he is oblique like this, I just wait.

"I have a pitch," says Shad, "and a very good one, too, in Kensington. It cost me five bob. In ten minutes' time we shall be pavement artists. I have the chalks and know the subjects. We must draw for them out of a hat. You first."

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I cottoned on to the idea and drew out a slip of paper. "Shipwreck," said I. Shad's face fell. "I rather wanted to do the shipwreck," said he. "But never mind." I saw his face light up as he read his slip. "All right, old chap," he said. "I've got the half-salmon. Now it's your turn."

I opened my slip somewhat anxiously. "I've got 'All my Own Work,'" said I. "That's a good one," says Shad. "That's a jolly good one. You know, a lace border and copperplate writing in three colours, and you can chuck in an orange with a black shadow. I shall draw some beastly politician, I'll bet. No! 'Sunrise on the Alps.' I'll knock 'em with that. What's yours?"

"Mine's the Prince of Wales. Rather a tall order."

"Do it from a photograph," says Shad.

"I can't," says I. "I should make an awful botch of the Prince; can't I do a plate of fruit?"

"Very well," says Shad generously. "We'll leave out the Prince this time. I've drawn 'Daddy's Homecoming.' I can do that; sailor, young wife, tea on the table. That will take time, but I can make something of it. If the weather's all right we ought to have great fun."

I found it a very strange experience kneeling on the pavement trying to draw a storm at sea. "Broad effects," said Shad. "Use the flat of the chalk. Plonk the stuff on and remember we are drawing for the masses."

Our first penny came from an old lady, who took a long time getting it out of her purse. "Very pretty," she said to me, just as I was thinking my storm was getting very terrific. I thanked her, and put in a vivid flash of lightning for her especial benefit. "And what

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do you do in wet weather?" said this kind old person.

Shad helped me out by saying, "We study, mum."

The answer seemed to please her, for she went away giving us a bright smile. But the fact of this form of personal criticism rather unnerved me.

Very soon small boys became giants of horror. "Call that a ship?" said one. "It's more like a bus." "What's 'e want to mess the pavement about for?" said another

I envied Shad, who finished his half-salmon quickly and had started on a whole mackerel; the boys remarked on his good luck in fishing, and one adventurous grocer's boy asked for a lobster. "I'm the police," he said, "and anything you draw will be used as evidence against you."

I caught sight of Shad's face; he was grinning with delight, he was in his element, and I believe he would readily have drawn all the known fish if he had been asked. It was interesting to see the true artist in him coming out on the stone. "This is ripping stuff to work on," he said. "It takes chalk beautifully."

I stopped working at my rotten shipwreck and watched him. He was turning his fish into a regular 'still life' composition. He arranged some oysters round the salmon and lobster, and drew a wonderful half-lemon with a sparkling drop of lemon juice bursting out of it.

Men going to work paid little attention to us; they were glancing at their morning papers on their way to bus, train, and tube, though one old gentleman asked us why we didn't do some honest work. He stopped to say this, and took a second look at Shad's picture. "Where did you learn to do that?" he asked. Shad

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pointed to his head and his heart, giving him at the same time one of those smiles of his which will melt even the shyest child. "Here you are," said the old gentleman, throwing half a crown into Shad's cap; then he marched off, growling something about vagabonds.

By the time the nurses and perambulators arrived Shad had nearly finished a beautiful thing: his fish and vegetables lay on a silver dish; a juicy cabbage and a branch of celery backed the fish. I had given up my shipwreck long ago.

"Not so bad," said Shad, sitting back on his heels and cocking his head sideways the better to view his work. "Now for 'Daddy's Home-coming.'"

A policeman came and eyed us. "What's happened to Charlie?" he asked. "We are giving him a day's holiday," said Shad. "Have a cigar."

The policeman pocketed the cigar, thereby turning himself into a human being.

Shad had just begun to sketch out "Daddy's Home-coming" when a small girl in a blue coat and white gaiters approached him and said, "My name is Mary Tomlinson." "And a very nice name too," said Shad. He smiled at the nurse, who was very pretty, and asked her if it wouldn't be a good idea to let the baby in the pram sleep in the sun for a little while. "I see you've got a camp-stool and a book, and I want to draw Mary."

She was a nice girl and she agreed, so Shad sketched and talked nineteen to the dozen. He talked to Mary, and soon found out the names of all her dolls and where she lived and what she had had to eat for breakfast. He found out where the nurse came from and how long she had been in London, and all the time he was

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drawing away at a furious pace. Quite a number of people came to watch, but Shad was not in the least disturbed; he might have been drawing on the pavement all his life. Of course it was only a sketch, but it was a wonderfully good portrait, and of course Mary wanted to take it away.

"I should get into trouble if I removed this bit of pavement," said Shad.

"Then draw me a dog on paper," said the wise child.

So Shad drew a dog on a piece of paper and gave it to her and got a kiss for it, and Shad had the cheek to ask the nurse if she would like her portrait done for the same price. The baby saved the situation by waking up.

It was the very day for youth and folly, and people chattered to us as if we were part of the large romance of London. An old lady gave me twopence for my neat writing of "All My Own Work," and advised me to wear a chest protector as the evenings were chilly.

A passing lout spat on Shad's beginning of "Sunrise on the Alps," and Shad terrified him with a steady flow of language and a clenched fist. The lout wilted away, cowed by virtuous anger, and Shad did not speak for quite half an hour.

We did well during the shopping hour, well enough to give an old tramp a shilling to mind our pitch while we went into a small publichouse and had bread and cheese and beer and a much-needed pipe. "More money about in the afternoon," said Shad. "Women will have finished housekeeping and have their pocket-money to spend. I'm going to draw a fashion-plate this afternoon."

He did, and he was right. It hit the young and the old; it was superbly comic, but they never saw the humour of it; clothes are a serious matter, and the

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women never saw the sly dig Shad was giving at the absurd mode of the moment.

Speaking about our lunch, it is curious to note what a great leveller is fashion. I could no more have gone into a saloon bar with a dingy old scarf on in place of a collar, a shiny cap, and an out-at-elbows coat than the neat clerks in the saloon bar could have sat with me in comfort, even though we were all having the same meal and the same drink.

Shad arranged all the detail; I smoked Woodbines and he smoked a pipe of shag, which he declared he enjoyed, and he talked football and racing to me, and called the barmaid "miss," and told me a long story about a dog as to the manner born.

The afternoon began rather slowly, the people being more taken up with their digestion than Art, the nursemaids seemed more sedate, the perambulator people more asleep. However, it gave Shad time to do a splendid "Sunrise on the Alps," and I did quite a good, for me, drawing of a Chelsea Pensioner being saluted by a Boy Scout. I was doing this when I saw a man stop and look keenly at Shad; he was a well-dressed man with a face rather like a smiling Dante. "What fun!" he said. "Chuck over your coat, I must have something to kneel on." He knelt down and began to draw rapidly. "What a surface!" he cried in the exhilarated tones of the true artist. "I must get some paving-stone."

Trees grew under his hand and the light of sunset grew into the trees and their long shadows trailed across the ground. Shad and I watched eagerly; the man seemed to have plucked sunlight and set it on the pavement. We had a little crowd of people about us in no time, and quite a shower of pennies and small silver.

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At last the man stood up and regarded his work. "Come and dine at the studio to-night," he said. "Come as you are. We'll have a tramps' party. Eight o'clock. Good luck."

"Thanks awfully, Sir Reuben," Shad managed to stammer.

"We'll have a real old-fashioned rag," said our friend as he left us and swept away up the street, filling it with his tremendous vitality.

"You don't mean to say——" I began.

"I do indeed," said Shad, gazing after him. "That's a MAN. There's nothing he can't do, but I've never seen him do a landscape before. He's a sculptor, painter, etcher, architect, musician, and he writes jolly well too. Come on, I've finished."

The evening was straight out of the Arabian Nights, a duchess in beautiful rags, an Irish poet, a Russian dancer who looked like the moon on earth, a man from the Board of Trade who did conjuring tricks, an animal painter who told stories, about sixteen people in all. The menu was written out on scraps of paper, the food was marvellous, and I suppose the servants were used to the sort of game because they waited without a smile. Nobody felt awkward, we all felt young and happy. At one o'clock an orchestra appeared and we all danced, and at four Shad and I walked home on air.

Next morning Shad and I went to see what had happened to our pitch. There was our seedy friend from whom we had hired the use of the paving-stone. He had dusted out all my efforts, but he had kept Shad's 'still life' and Sir Reuben's sunlight in trees, and beside them he had written in copperplate, "All my Own Work." He too was an artist.

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(HAD and I have a habit of walking aimlessly about London, we are collecting it. If either of us sees a new kind of pavement man we feel we have scored. The Crimean veteran can now and again be seen in the red of the Chelsea Pensioner, the Boer War man makes no appeal, he has given way to the man with the Mons ribbon.

There is nothing so extravagant but you may see it in the London streets; you may gaze at the stars through a telescope for a penny, or see a man tie himself into knots on a strip of dirty carpet, or watch elephants go by, or camels, or strings of racehorses, but the performing bear is no more.

At certain corners which Shad and I frequent there stands the Punch and Judy show, tall and narrow like a lighthouse of fun. There is old Punch in his Elizabethan clothes, and there is Ketch, the hangman, and Judy, and Toby the dog, and the clown, but, most curious of all, one can hear the oldest imitation in the world, the high squeaky voice of that fifteenth-century Italian comic who first made Punch popular. Even older than that are the Pipes of Pan played by the showman. Shad and I watch the children all agape with wonder, all rosy with laughter at this deathless tragi-comedy.

Every one makes his own London. Ours is not the vast London of Dickens, or the Belgravia of Thackeray, or the Kensington of Barrie, or the London in which roamed Prince Florizel of Bohemia at the will of Robert Louis Stevenson; ours is a book of coloured scraps from the pavement, we are nomads, wandering

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Arabs of the London streets. We take for calendar the seasons of roast chestnuts, ices, pegtops, lavender cries, sweet-smelling violets, roses all a-growing and a-blowing. Ours is the London of the cats'-meat man, and "Log O!"; of policemen holding up tons of traffic for one perambulator; of streets cleared by the swift beauty of fire-engines, or held in order for Royal Processions.

It is a bargain with us that we take the first bus that comes along and, asking no questions, pay threepence. Having received the rose-coloured ticket to Adventure, we then ask where we are going. "Put us off at the end of threepence," says Shad. The conductor agrees. He is a great student of humanity is the conductor; he knows that the lady inside dressed in her best is not willingly sitting next to a coalheaver returning from work. He knows to a T the kind of woman who always drops her purse, and the person overloaded with parcels, and the child who stands on people's feet. As a rule he is a preoccupied person who takes a pencil from behind his ear and adds up figures on a card. He is interminably helping people on and helping people off, and he is amazingly good to foreigners who say, "'Ave you ze Bonk?" or "If you please to place me at Sootamtong Row." He is in many ways the encyclopædia of his route, which is an open book to him; but off the route he is hazy. Poor man, he is forced to see humanity at its worst every day, especially at the crowded hours. Alas, how quickly women shed modesty and truth when they wish to board a bus! They push and shove and dig people with umbrellas and claim the right to first place; they glare, their voices become shrill, they force men to lose their chivalry, they become fiends. As Shad says, "Let a young man about to become engaged stand at the bus stop in Picca-

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dilly for half an hour about five o'clock and he will see the sweetness of woman blown away like chaff."

To what curious places Shad and I have adventured! In the midst of squalor we have found beautiful old houses dying of decay as if they were members of good old families ruined by fate and made to spend the winter of their lives in terrible surroundings. Only their outer dignity remains. Inside they have been ruthlessly stripped, the fine old fireplaces have been sold with the panelling and the best doors. Inside you may find decayed gentlefolk waiting like the old house for the end, feeding in tattered regiments off tattered food, saving every farthing they can, their old ornaments gone to provide food and shelter, the hearth of their hearts unkindled by warming fires, but still retaining like the old house some presentable exterior with which to brave the world.

There are streets and squares in London being slowly crushed by that restless tide whose rise and fall are not marked in any table. Two generations ago saw one or all of these squares neat, trim, fashionable, with flunkeys and carriages and red carpets laid down for parties. Then came the tide, and when it had retreated behold the brass plates of doctors and dentists and Insurance Companies and Commissioners for Oaths. The tide comes up again, retreats, and every doorway has a number of little plates announcing chiropodists and dressmakers, and bedrooms for single gentlemen, while up at the top, in what were the servants' attics, artists and authors are working and trying to sell some glimpse of beauty for a few pounds. The little public-house round the corner, once the haunt of gentlemen's gentlemen, has become a gin palace, and the glittering windows of the pawnbroker shine in the greyness of

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the broken side-street round the corner. Babylon is sand and Rome is ashes. Very soon the enterprising builder will come along and Vulgarity will be queen. Oh that the Prince could kiss the Sleeping Beauty of old times and tear away the artificial roses in which she has become entwined!

It would be absurd to think all progress to be sadness; many and many a rat-haunted insanitary slum must be pulled down to give way to decent dwelling-houses, but the artist in both Shad and myself trembles to think of what horror may be put up. Sham Gothic has had its day, the pseudo-medievalism has gone with its one-inch beams and bad bottle glass. What next? It is curious to find the remnants of the country still living in the heart of a city, old trees, little green spaces, little flagged courtyards, country inns, the traces of lanes showing the old irregular twist of the first pedestrian, eel-pie shops only two stories high, and water-troughs for horses and cattle. Lansdowne Passage and Hampshire Hog Lane, what sights have you seen?

If in our wanderings we are apt to tears we are also prone to laughter. The urchin still dances to the barrel-organ, and the Lord Mayor's Show carries out its comic death even in the rain.

It takes custom long to die in London Town, and every Fifth of November brings us a battered image of Guido Fawkes carried about by small boys wearing masks just as executioners wore masks. They cry to us to "Remember, remember the Fifth of November, Gunpowder, Treason, and Plot," which we do to the extent of a penny, and much good may it do the little historians.

Shad, who has the dramatic instinct highly developed, dresses the part of the London loafer to perfection. He appears sometimes in a disguise intended to represent

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a small jobbing carpenter, bag and all, and sometimes he carries a spade in the character of a working gardener. I am always in an old tweed suit as his mate. Shad has not yet learnt the art of smoking a clay pipe held upside down; the tobacco will fall out, and he has much ado preventing himself from catching fire, but I must say it gives a neat finish to his appearance.

Of all the street trades we see it is difficult to know which is the most odd; on a fine day one may see girls painting the spots on rocking-horses, or men airing elephants before their turn in a music-hall, or men with a barrow-load of tortoises or goldfish in bowls, or the one day year men who sell hot cross buns on Good Fridays, or favours for the Boat Race. The man who sold Dutch dolls for gentlemen to stick in their hats on Derby Day has vanished.

Perhaps of all the sad things we see the saddest are the vacant lots on the fringe of London. They are pegged out in a dreary waste, as a rule with a good view of a factory. There is a board up announcing "Building Land For Sale," and the mind's eye can see those few old trees being uprooted, those Bohemian dandelions dug in, the wild currant-bushes consigned to the bonfire, and those old tins, broken bottles, and jam-jars carted away. Where do they go?

In no time there will be a colony of villas here, "Two sit: one recept: four bed: kitch: outhouse, usual offices." And the hacking cough of the child in Number 4 will be heard in Number 40, and every one will know the intimate garments of every person in the neighbourhood.

First the old Park and the Manor House, then the few small houses, then the Destroyer: Park, Manor House, small houses torn up by the roots, then Jerry the

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Swindling Builder, the man of Shoddy, the man of unseasoned wood and rotting plaster, cheap bricks and bad mortar, and then, by the Grace of God, the Gardener.

The sweetpeas of Number 10 vie with the snapdragons of Number 8 and the roses of Number 6. The nasturtiums of Number 9 call across the road and the bachelor's buttons are brave in the front patch of Number 7, and Number 5 flaunts his geraniums in the sight of the entire row.

Shad once left a penny packet of seeds at every one of twenty-four houses in just such a place, and we have been rewarded by the result. As Shad and I walk about this great untidy, careless London, walking sometimes over the graves of Romans, slipping through doorways into the scented hush of medieval churches, entering Elizabethan inns, waiting for a bus by the site of a plague pit, noting the tulips nodding by the statue of William of Orange, standing by the grave of Sterne, by the Pepys monument in St Olaves, standing where Dickens stood, or seeing Marconi pass by in his swift car, we are swept by such a tide of history that it is a relief to step into some little publichouse and there take our bread and cheese and beer and get into perspective again.

The modern young man does not busy himself with tradition or the great dead. His wireless, his broadcasting, all the wonders of modern science are his toys. He can sit in a cottage in Sussex and hear Big Ben strike by means of a simple instrument costing no more than three and twenty shillings. Dick Turpin's ride to York is nothing to him who can ring up Paris from an ordinary Exchange and arrange a lunch that afternoon in Antwerp. "Fly with me," the prophetic lover used to say to his beloved, and off they would go by post-chaise to Gretna Green. "Fly with me,"

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says our lover to his lass to-day, and off they go in a little two-seater aeroplane and get married in Madrid. "Faster, faster, faster," cries this impetuous race, while Shad and I go as far and see more in a two hours' walk.

One day Shad, who tries to experience everything, said we must have a woman's day. I asked him what he meant, and he said we must do a day's shopping, and when I said I didn't want to buy anything he laughed. "I said shopping, not buying. We must put on our best clothes and each take ten shillings and shop. We are going to treat London as an Eastern bazaar," he said. "We can try new golf sticks, and have a bun and a glass of milk for lunch, and go to a few Sales and ask the price of fur coats and country houses and ask to see odd things. Now you have a hole in your sock and I'll bet there is such a thing as a patent darning, or if there isn't there ought to be. To-morrow at eleven, top-hat, patent-leather boots, and ten shillings."

I knew nothing about women, but I know now how colossally strong they are. Shad and I had to have two huge whiskies and sodas when we came home after our day's effort. Never again.

We bought in a fury. By five o'clock I had spent three pounds. Shad would not let me off the bun and milk lunch. I became helpless and without hope under Shad's guidance. I bought a packet of two thousand pins for sixpence halfpenny, and the paper burst and any amateur detective could have traced us home on the steel trail. Shad's composed manner took in the shop assistants. He invented an aunt in the country who wanted a particular kind of washing silk and a bee-keeper's veil and a harmonium on approval, and I bought a trouser iron and a new kind of metal polish and some dreadful ties all out of sheer shame. I nearly

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bought a collapsible boat, but fortunately Shad hurried me on.

All I know is that we went out like little gentlemen and came back like Christmas-trees, and when I looked at women coming home all chatty and keen I wondered at their amazing strength. They started out with dogs and umbrellas and large bags and high heels and little books with pencils, and they came back with things the cook wanted at once and packets of hairpins and bunches of flowers and boxes of soap and books of patterns and library books and boxes of sweets, all on a bun and a glass of milk. Marvellous!

Shad threw his parcels on the floor, and there was a sound of broken glass. "What's that?" I asked. "I think it must be those cheap tumblers," he answered savagely. "I don't care, I don't care a tinker's curse for anything until I get my hands unstiffened; they are numb with the cut of string and I've ruined a pair of gloves and life is just mud. How about your feet?"

I eased my feet tenderly out of their patent-leather prisons and twiddled my toes for comfort. "I have no feet," I said; "I have two well-stoked furnaces. Never again."

"Never again," he echoed.

This was but one of our London efforts. Shad by some means obtained permission for us to attend a rehearsal of a musical comedy, and we spent an evening at a Piping Bullfinch Competition, and we have been down the sewers, and have seen a cinema story being photographed on "the floor." We have been to a big sale at Christie's, to a Royal Command performance, to a Covent Garden Ball, and an opium den, but I am trying to set down our thoughts about the streets and their curious floating population of itinerant vendors.

PAPER WINDMILLS

FROM one end of the world to the other man, woman, and child know the wonderful virtue of coloured paper. Colour is Joy. At Christmas the little presents are all the merrier for being wrapped in coloured paper and tied with coloured string; even the solemn Government office papers are brighter for a bit of red tape, and brown sugar must have its blue packing. As to confetti, the very sight of it on a drab pavement causes the passer-by to wish good luck to the bride. The Serpentine and the Teaser, the Blazer and the Sports Coat are a feast to the hungry eye.

It is a spring day, and Shad and I are prowling; we have put aside winter like young conquerors; we have discarded all our winter garments and are out and about in newly cleaned and pressed suits; we wear white waistcoat slips; we are at one with the buds and the birds, and we firmly believe that Income Tax Collectors have flowers on their desks.

London is in her lighthearted mood, the crocus is out, the almond-trees show like fairies in a world of brick, chestnut buds are sticky and there is a faint purple haze on lilac-trees, and very soon laburnum tassels will flaunt their gold.

It is good to be young and healthy. It is good to dash for shelter from an April shower and to be rewarded by the rainbow in the sky.

The perambulators are stuffed with Kings and Queens wheeled by Ladies-in-waiting. The Royalties hold strange converse, some hold monkeys on sticks by way of sceptre, some wave woolly bears by the leg,

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and others adventure forth with tóy balloons. In Kensington Gardens young sturdy heralds with bare knees announce the spring with joyful blasts from tin trumpets, while others equally joyous perform deafeningly on drums. Policemen cast off their overcoats. Postmen deliver Valentines and members of the Athenæum speak to one another.

As if by magic coloured advertisements appear on the hoardings, taking the place of those dealing with Winter Sports and now showing golden sands and blue seas. The first straw hats appear and the tops of buses are full.

Shad and I are principally concerned with the Hawkers of Joy, the toy-balloon sellers, the paper-windmill merchants, the people who sell jumping dolls and green tin frogs that run about.

A child director of railways pulls the whole of his rolling stock on a piece of string, while a six-year-old member of the Road Transport Committee drags along a tin motor-bus regardless of the fact that it has turned over on its side.

But of all things the paper windmills are the most joyous. They twist and twirl and are so merry and lighthearted, and even Joseph's coat of many colours would look dull by them. A puff of wind is their master. They are paper laughter; one will start as if the wind had made a good joke, two others see the joke, the rest pick it up, and now we get such a *crescendo* of colour and movement that Shad says he wonders that no musician has set paper windmills to music.

Standing next to the Windmill Lady is the Toy-balloon Man, who is also a master of joy, and what with the spring breezes and the note of the cuckoo (it is a Holland Park cuckoo really, but you can hear

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him in the Gardens) and the general air of bravery Shad and I have a longing for hoops with which we could gaily bowl along and join in the games in the Children's Mile.

Anyhow, we set a trap, and sure enough a pink-faced little girl in a white rabbit-skin coat fell into it. Shad had bought a windmill, and we sat on a bench and watched the fascinating thing buzz round in the wind. Sure enough the little lady in the rabbit-skin came up, looked at the windmill, looked at Shad, and then put a hand in a not very clean white wool glove on Shad's knee. She smiled at me out of politeness and pointed to the windmill. A nurse said, "Mabel!" in a shocked voice.

"Won't you sit down?" said Shad, moving to give her room. "I was just going to tell a story."

Now nurses love stories as much as anybody, so she sat down. (Shad is very good to look at, and the nurse wasn't much more than a child herself, and it was spring.) The child climbed on to Shad's knees and took the paper windmill out of his hand.

"Once upon a time," Shad began, "there was a man called . . . now what was he called?"

"Robert," said the child.

"You are quite right," said Shad; "his name was Robert, and he had a dog called Robert to make it easy."

"Why?" said the child.

"Because," said Shad, "if anyone called Robert they both came."

"Is your name Robert?"

"No," he replied, "my name is Arthur Gustoliver Pinwhistle Yours Sincerely." The child laughed, and it was like the ring of silver.

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"This man," Shad went on, "lived in a mill all made of white paper." The child looked at the flashing paper jewel in her hand and then she looked at Shad.

"I'm coming to that," he said.

"What did the mill do?" said the child.

"Almost everything," Shad replied. "It ground coffee and made envelopes and dolls' shoes and jam."

"What sort of jam?"

"Orange jam," said Shad.

For a moment the child was puzzled, but Shad whispered "Marmalade" into a coral ear. They were great friends now. "More," said the child, "make the mill make more things."

"It made pickles and pins and pennies and pinafores and puddings."

"What sort of puddings?" the child asked.

"Are you sure she's not bothering you?" said the nurse.

"Oh, no, nurse." Shad answered quickly. "I'm enjoying myself immensely. The mill made every sort of pudding you can think of, but best of all it made tucked up puddings, you know, those puddings with jam all tucked up inside to keep warm."

The child nodded. "Did the man have any children?" she asked.

"Only one," said Shad, "and that was a little girl just like you."

"Nurse," cried the child, "the man had a little girl just like me."

"I'm sure she got out of bed quicker in the mornings," said nurse.

"Did she?" the child asked.

"You had only to say 'Mill time' and she was out of bed like a streak of lightning," said Shad for the

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benefit of the nurse. Of course they had to try it then and there, then and there being the right time in a child's mind. This child closed her eyes, and the nurse falling in with the idea waited a moment and then said "Mill time," and the effect was electric.

With the curious persistency all children exhibit this child went back to the paper windmill and the reason for its having once been white. "You promised," she said, "to tell me how it got coloured."

"Bless me," said Shad in real surprise, "so I did. One day a rainbow got lost."

"What's a rainbow?"

"After you've been crying you smile," said Shad. "And after the sky's been crying it rainbows when the sun comes out."

The wise child nodded.

"One day," said Shad, "a young rainbow fell out of the sky and was picked up by a Paper-windmill Man. He couldn't put it back in the sky, so he wondered and wondered what to do with it. At last he put it in his pocket and took it home and placed it in the little room where he made all his windmills, and he went to bed and forgot all about it. In his dreams he found himself in Paperland, where all the boats were paper boats and all the mills were paper windmills and all the sea was ink. When he woke up he heard a strange whirring noise, and he remembered that he had left the window of the little room open and that all his mills must be grinding out dreams. So he got up and went into the little room, and there were all his paper windmills painted every colour, and there was a paper stuck up on which was written, 'From a grateful rainbow,' and when he looked out of the window there was his rainbow glowing in the sky."

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Shad stopped, and the child looked at him with joy in her eyes. She held up the toy and looked from it to Shad. "I 'spect this was one of those ones," she said.

"I 'spect so too," he answered.

The incident closed here, as the nurse announced she had some shopping to do, and nurse and child went on their way rejoicing.

We both had the seriousness of youth and its tendency to occasional introspection, and after a while, when Shad had rolled and lit a cigarette, he said, "I have started a club of which you shall be the first President; it is called the Paper Windmill Club, and its address is Kensington Gardens. We will now elect the members. All children are elected to start with."

"How do we know who are to be members?" I asked.

"They have P.W.M. faces," said Shad. "Now, there is one."

A smiling old gentleman wearing a white top-hat passed us. He was plump and pink and walked with steps which almost danced.

"And there is one who is certainly not a member," said Shad. This was a dour, thin-lipped woman, who looked straight ahead of her with a haughty expression.

It was astonishing how many P.W.M.s there were about that morning, toddling mites who gave us the true member's smile, laughing schoolgirls, keen young men, pleasant park-keepers and gardeners, kind old ladies whose eyes gleamed behind gold-rimmed spectacles, men with weary faces, but warm hearts—a whole crowd of people. We sat and watched the procession go by, and then naturally began to talk about our friends and relations. "My Aunt Clara is a member," said Shad. "But my Aunt Anne is not, nor is her husband. Then

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Tom Ash and Harry Vane are members, but that swine Griggs isn't."

I also summed up my people and friends, and so we passed the morning.

"We must have an inaugural lunch," said Shad. "Which I will pay for because I was paid for a picture this morning."

So we went to a place we both liked and had Chianti and sardines and lobster and spaghetti and coffee and Italian cigars. There were, we judged, about fifteen members of the Paper Windmill Club in the restaurant.

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