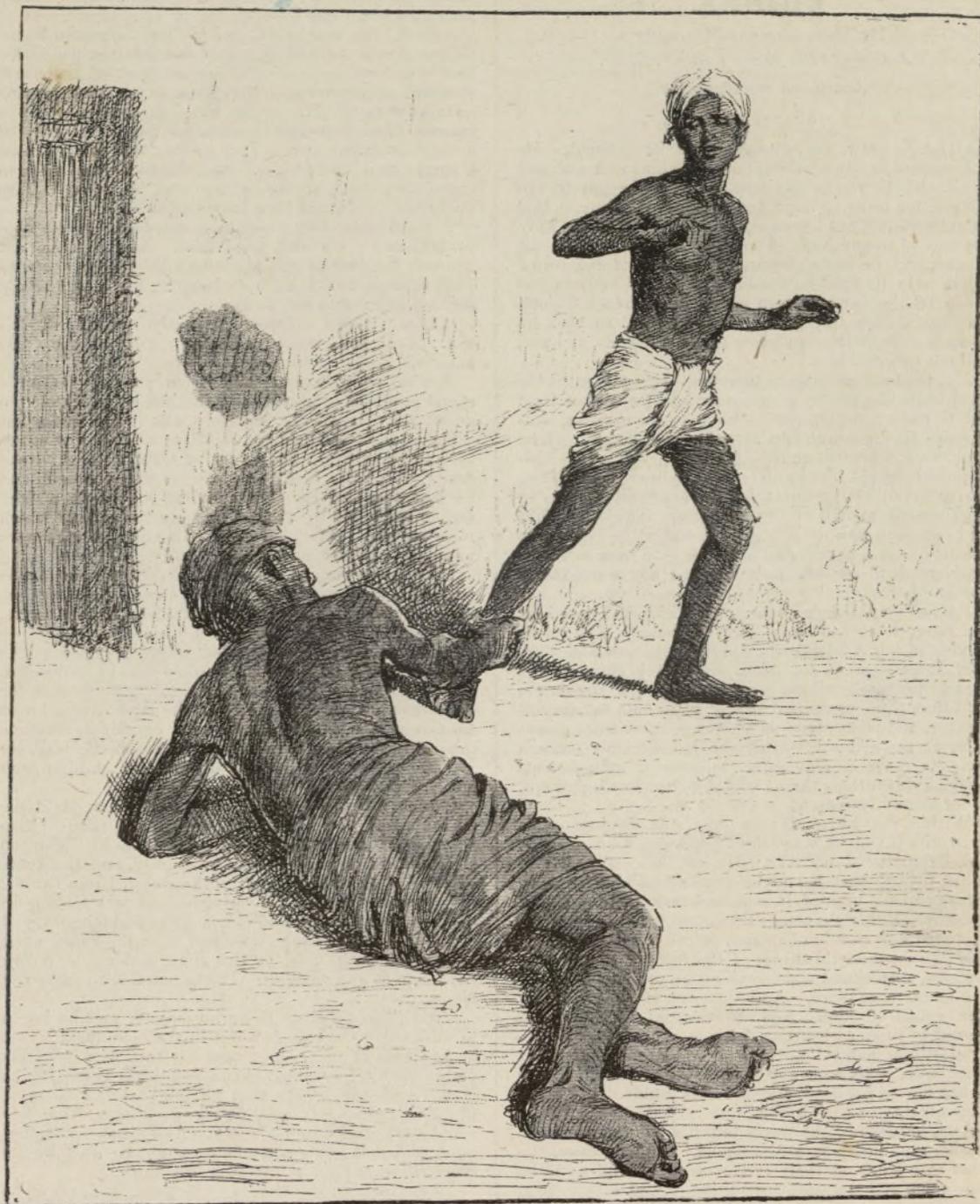


CHATTERBOX.

"Away we go like birds on the wing,
Higher yet! Higher yet! Now for the King,
This is the way we swing—we swing."

FROM "A SWINGING SONG," BY MARY HOWITT.



"The man reached out a hand and caught him by the ankle."

P

CHINNA.

BY MRS. HOBART-HAMPDEN,
Author of 'The Secret Valley,' etc., etc.

(Continued from page 207.)

CHAPTER XXI.

BRIAN grew very indignant as he listened. He wished he dared shout aloud: 'Chinna isn't a wizard at all, and it's you people who ought to be put to the torture, for being so mean and ungrateful.' But, as this would certainly not have helped Chinna, and would have put an end to any hope of rescuing him, Brian held his tongue, and, presently, began edging out of the crowd again. He thought he would try and get as near the house of the headman—in which he gathered Chinna had again been imprisoned—as he could, so that he could let the little man know that his friends, at least, had not deserted him.

Up the village street, therefore, Brian went. He tried to stroll along in as unconcerned a way as possible: not to walk too fast, nor to seem to have any special purpose in his mind; but it was very difficult. If he could have whistled, or if he had had pockets in which to put his hands, his task would have been easier. But native boys do not whistle, neither are there pockets in a waistcloth, and Brian had to manage as best he could without such aids to courage. Luckily the street was almost deserted save for an occasional old woman, bleary-eyed and bent-backed, to whom one boy was exactly like another.

But, about the door of the house which had once held the tiger, a knot of men were gathered. They were talking in low subdued voices, and, every now and then, they stopped as if to listen, or to peep through the round fingerhole which was just beneath the latch. And then they would nod at each other in a mysterious manner, and make signs which Brian knew were meant to avert the evil eye. Often he had seen his father's servants make similar signs, to prevent evil demons jumping down their throat when they yawned, perhaps, or for some like reason.

Within the house all was quiet. It was impossible to be sure if Chinna was asleep or awake, dead or alive, and Brian dared not ask. He strolled on past the house, hoping that he might possibly be able to work his way to the back of it, and find there an unguarded window. But, right across the end of the village street, stretched a barricade of thorns, placed thus as a protection against the wild things of the forest. And Brian, perforce, turned and came back again, and strolled past the house once more. And then one of the watching men called to him. And, at the call, Brian's heart seemed to jump almost out of his mouth.

'Boy,' the man called. 'Go thou and tell the council that the little sorcerer makes new spells within. Twice he has moved his head, and once his hands. Bid them come quickly to punish him.'

And, hardly had the words left his mouth, when the speaker doubled forward, gasping. And, at once, the other men were on their feet, looking at him as if he were some evil and dangerous thing. And all of them seemed to have forgotten Brian completely. 'What is it?' one after another questioned.

And the gasping man answered between moans: 'It is the sickness without doubt. The wizard has ill-

wished me because I bore witness against him. Help me to my house ere I die.'

And at that, with one accord the watching men began to run down the village street towards the pool. No heed did they pay to the anguished cries of their late comrade, no answer did they give to his appeals. So anxious were they to put as big a distance as possible between themselves and Chinna, that they could think of no need but their own. Very swiftly they ran, without a single backward glance. And the sick man began to crawl after them, crying and moaning, falling on his face every few yards, and then crawling on again.

For a moment Brian waited, motionless, scarcely able to believe in his own good luck. And then he ran towards the door of the headman's house and began to push against it with all his strength; but it was firmly secured and would not yield.

'Chinna,' Brian whispered, urgently. 'Chinna? It's me. Are you inside, Chinna? Oh, answer. Do answer.'

But no answer came, and Brian put his eye to the round peephole beneath the latch that he had seen the guard use. Inside the house it was rather dark, but sufficient light came from a small square window at the back to show dimly the figure of Chinna lying on the floor. The little man's hands were firmly bound, and his feet were tied together, and into his mouth a thick wad of cloth had been thrust as a gag, the ends of which were secured behind his head. Luckily his ears were uncovered, so that, at least, he could hear.

'We are coming to rescue you,' said Brian, as fast as he could, and as loudly as he dared. 'All of us. Dressed up in the tiger-skin, and the skin of that snake. Nod your head if you understand, Chinna.'

And, at this, Chinna's head waggled eagerly. He even bumped it on the floor to show that he had heard, and Brian rushed on again: 'I'm going back now for the others. They are waiting at the edge of the forest on this side. We'll come back as quickly as ever we can; only we daren't show ourselves before it's dark, for fear the people should know we are just children, and not be afraid at all.'

Chinna bumped his head again, and Brian could see all the muscles of his cheek working, as he tried to free his mouth from the gag. But his enemies had been too afraid not to do their work thoroughly, and the knots held. And then, at a sound in the street, Brian turned. A woman had opened a house door, and was looking in his direction, it seemed to him a little suspiciously, and he realised that the men who had been on guard must have reached the pool by this time, and might return with help at any moment. It was not safe to delay any longer.

'Good-bye, Chinna,' Brian whispered, and he began to walk down the village street in the same fashion that he had walked up it. But now his task was infinitely more difficult, he wanted to run as quickly as possible to Nancy and the others that he might bring them to Chinna's rescue. It was nearly dark now, and they could start almost immediately. And all the time that must be lost in going and coming might be used by the cruel villagers for the torturing of Chinna.

There was first the woman to be faced, and, try as he might, Brian could not help hurrying a little as he passed her. He was so afraid that she would try and stop him. But, apparently, she was not really suspicious, for, as he came abreast of her, she went into her house

again, shutting the door after her. A little further on, stretched across the street, lay the man who had been seized with the sickness. He could crawl no further, it seemed, but lay on the ground, twisting and moaning with pain. There was just room to step by if Brian squeezed against the wall. Carefully he edged towards it, and, almost, he was safely past when the man writhed anew, reached out a hand, and caught him by the ankle.

(Continued on page 222.)

A RAINY DAY AT SEA.

'T'S raining,' said the Whale,
'Some shelter I must find;
For I have left my overcoat
A mile or two behind.'

'It's raining,' said the Shark,
'How sudden, to be sure!
I hoped to have the weather dry
Throughout my summer tour.'

'Oh, mother!' cried the Sprats,
With whimpers of regret,
'It's raining! Isn't that a shame!
'Twill make us very wet.'

And all around the sea,
As far as I could sail,
I heard the Shark, the Cod, the Sprat,
The Porpoise, and the Whale

Complain about the rain
In tones of sorrow dire;
So running home, I shut the door
And lit the kitchen fire. JOHN LEA.

MUSIC-HATERS.

IT is curious and interesting to notice how many great men have had an aversion to music. Even some of our greatest poets have had no appreciation at all of the beauties of the sister art. It is hard to believe this of Tennyson, although he is said to be among the number, for when we think of the beautiful songs he wrote, such as 'Sweet and Low,' 'The Song of the Wrens, and others, we cannot help thinking that he must have had some feeling for music, or he could never have adapted his writing so exquisitely to it. Sir Walter Scott and Southey are two more, and Pope, it is said, would as soon listen to a street organ as to an oratorio.

The poet Rogers, author of 'The Pleasures of Memory,' who delighted so much in beautiful pictures that he used to fill his house with them, had a real antipathy to the sound of music. Byron had no ear whatever for it, and could find no pleasure in any sort of music at all. Amongst others were Fox and Pitt, the great statesmen, Robert Peel, Hume the historian, Daniel O'Connell, the Irishman, Edmund Burke, and Dr. Johnson, who said that there was 'only one thing worse than a flute, and that was two flutes.'

E. M. HAINES.

THE CHIEF ORNAMENT OF LONDON.

IN the year 1666, after the Great Fire, when nearly the whole of the City of London was a ruin of smoke-blackened walls, several eminent men drew plans for the rebuilding of the city. They designed a model town, and had their plans been carried out, London would have become a city of long, straight streets, with side turnings leaving them at accurate right angles—all very neat and trim, but with none of the crooked passages, narrow courts and alleys, which now give London its charm.

Fortunately, however, the people, after living at first in roughly built shelters in the fields beyond the City wall, grew impatient at official delays and went back to build, each man according to his own choice, new homes among the ruins. So London grew again, not by any plan at all, but with its streets where they had been before the Fire, or altered according to the momentary will of the builders.

These plans, drawn by Sir Christopher Wren, John Evelyn, and others, unappreciated as they were at the time, are of interest now because they show what was regarded as the centre-point of London. When a city is designed by an architect, it is not a jumble of houses and streets built at random; it has its centre, a church, a market-place, a great square, or perhaps a bridge, to which the main streets lead, making it indeed the centre of interest throughout the town. In these designs for a new London, broad, straight streets lead from the Royal Exchange, from the river-side, from Ludgate, and from all the city gates in the northern wall, to one spot where, as the centre-point of London, stands St. Paul's Cathedral.

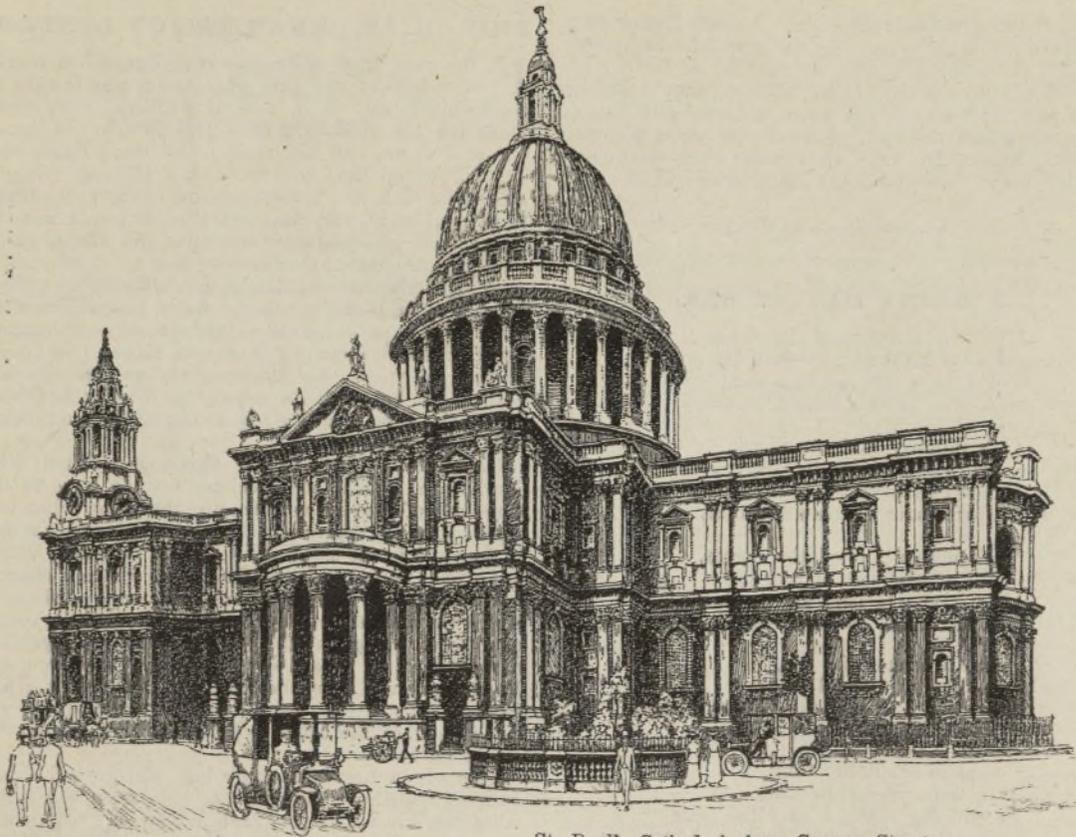
There is in London a single hill: the ground slopes up from the Thames on the one side, from the valley where the Fleet River used to run between Ludgate and Blackfriars on another, from the marsh that used to cover Smithfield on a third, while the fourth lies comparatively flat. On the summit of this mound stood Old St. Paul's, and on the same spot Sir Christopher Wren built the Cathedral that stands there to-day. A tablet on a neighbouring wall says:

'When you have sought the City round,
Yet still this is the highest ground.'

And, without doubt, the site was chosen that St. Paul's might be seen from every village for miles around—Charlton, 'Battersey,' 'Totten Court' (from which comes Tottenham Court Road), Islington, and others which have now become a part of the Greater London—as a constant reminder of the power and glory of God.

When Wren finished his Cathedral in 1710 it was surrounded by a strip of grass, and beyond that lay the open churchyard which then knew comparatively little traffic. Outside that, gabled houses, with uneven roofs (all new, because of the recent fire), were so closely gathered that the Cathedral could hardly be seen from the ground, except from so close a position that the high walls seemed to tower overhead, and little could be seen of the dome and its pillars.

To-day, when those houses of city merchants are replaced by square-topped stone warehouses, the difficulty of properly seeing St. Paul's is even greater; but there are several points within a close radius from which much can be seen, and it is worth while to find these



St. Paul's Cathedral, from Cannon Street.

view-points and peer between houses and over roofs to get a better idea of the Cathedral's size and beauty than can be had either from the direct approach of Ludgate Hill or from the Churchyard itself.

Go first, then, along Little Britain, where the Dukes of Brittany used to stay when they visited the English Court. There, in a three-sided frame of houses, can be seen the dome and the white columns below it, so immense that the houses of Paternoster Square are dwarfed, and the busy people in the street beneath seem too small to live. Then turn across to Foster Lane, where the pulling down of the old Post Office has left visible the whole dome, the two clock towers that have only one clock, and three of the saints that stand below the dome on each side of the Cathedral. Then cross the Thames to Bankside, where very ugly and dirty warehouses have taken the place of Shakespeare's theatres and the bear-baiting houses. Here a cobbled road runs along the very bank of the river, and across the water, over laden barges and smoking tugs, can be seen the crowded buildings on the hill above the river, and over them, huge and majestic, the great Cathedral, with its golden cross gleaming in the sun.

From Bankside you can watch St. Paul's for a mile until you reach Blackfriars Bridge, and there its dome is seen again across the red metal railway bridge, making the trains look puny; and examples of modern engineering seem terribly new in comparison with its two-hundred-year-old self. But forget the ugly railway,

and go down to Waterloo Bridge or Westminster Bridge, where the view is more distant, and—
'silent, bare,

Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky—
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.'

You will now be a mile or more from the Cathedral, and you will have found that the farther you go and the more indefinite neighbouring buildings become, the greater St. Paul's can look. So go right away to the very edge of London. Climb to the top of Parliament Hill, on the edge of Hampstead Heath. If the day is clear, you will see in far distance a ring of hills, by Highgate, Greenwich, Penge, and Richmond, and covering all the circle between them the whole of London. Westminster Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, the Tower Bridge, the Tower of London, the British Museum—you will see them all. And then, in the very centre, higher than any other building and as high as the hill on which you stand, you will see St. Paul's Cathedral, the most beautiful building, white through the hanging smoke of London.

G. BELTON COBB.

A YEAR IN A GARDEN.

VII.—JULY.

IT had been raining steadily all night, but the dawn broke clear; the chaffinch in the wood, though his song-time was nearly over, greeted it with a rapturous

'pink, pink!' the robin's song was as sweet as in April, and the blackbird began a little earlier than usual his daily disputes with his mate. It was just the right weather for planting, and the children decided to make a strawberry bed in their own garden. Their were plenty of runners already potted up from the big beds, and the rain had made the soil beautifully moist. It was early afternoon when they began work, the sun had grown hot, and the numerous little pots were very heavy to carry to the border chosen for the new strawberry bed. But they worked on bravely, looking forward to the time when they would gather fruit that they themselves had grown. The border faced the south and the open common and always got plenty of sun and wind, which is just what strawberries like best. Billy made the holes and Babe followed with a small watering can; each hole was half filled with water before Billy held the pot upside down and carefully took out the little plant with its ball of earth and roots; in this way it was transferred to its new quarters without being disturbed at all.

After two hours' work they set down to rest. The pond on the common at the bottom of the long slope lay just beneath them; the willows on the bank looked cool in their soft grey green, and presently Billy said, 'Let's go down to the pond, and we'll see what things there are that we can get for the water garden.'

Babe jumped up, forgetting she was tired, 'Of course we must have forget-me-nots, and there are lots of little seedlings down there.'

'Well, I suppose it wouldn't hurt them if they were moved now,' said Billy. They ran down the slope to the water's edge. 'And here are kingcups and cuckoo flowers and purple loosestrife. See this loosestrife, Babe; it must be nearly four feet high! And we will have some of that water plantain and that willow-herb.'

'And there's some watercress down at the stream,' Babe remarked. 'It has white flowers, and I think they're very pretty.'

'So they are. And perhaps we might somehow get some of the yellow water-lilies and some more water-soldiers and perhaps bullrushes.'

'And what about sticklebacks in the pond?' Babe asked.



1. King Cups.
2. Cuckoo Plant.
3. Purple Loosestrife.



1. Meadowsweet.
2. Peppermint.

'Well, I believe sticklebacks eat minnows, so we couldn't have both.'

'Oh, what's that purple stuff, Billy? It's lovely!'

'It's only peppermint; but it is pretty. We'll remember to get some when it has done flowering.'

Meadowsweet was also chosen. That was a week later when they went down to the stream to get minnows. In the meantime the pond, or rather the flooded path, had gone dry, and it had been possible to dig out the place for the pond and line it with three inches of clay. Then it had been necessary to refill it with water from the pond on the common. Irises were growing at the sides and Billy thought the roots of the water crowfoot would soon revive. As the plants were in the water Billy decided it would be safe to introduce the minnows. Armed with hand nets and jam-jars, they started early one Saturday afternoon and returned home with water snails, tadpoles, water beetles and minnows. But their first journey was clouded by a tragedy; the next morning they found that the water beetles, though smaller than the tadpoles, had eaten every one.

WANDERERS IN THE WAR.

By A. A. METHLEY.

(Continued from page 206.)

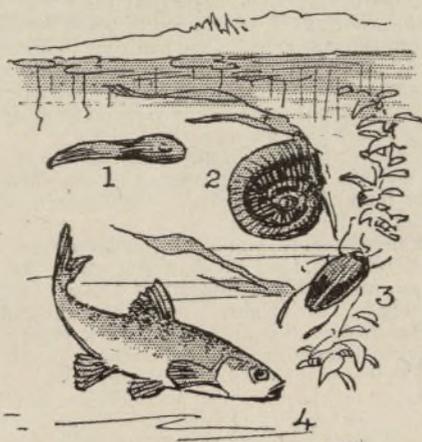
THE stranger might be a detective, of course, for had he not spoken to the man who had arrested Sam? But his voice was kindly, and there was a twinkle in his blue eyes that disarmed suspicion.

'Oh, it's got nothing to do with me,' he answered, 'nothing whatever; but I have a message for—a certain person on board this ship. If you give me your name, it's just possible that, as the newspapers say, you will hear of something to your advantage.'

He laughed then, showing white even teeth, and the boy felt his doubts and fears begin to melt away.

'My name is Roger Mervyn,' he said, and in response the stranger put his hand into his pocket and drew out a well-remembered leather case and a small green booklet.

'A red-haired chap on the wharf, who seemed to have got into some sort of a row, asked me to give these to Roger Mervyn,' he said, and then he laughed again when he saw how eagerly the boy clutched at the treasures.



Pond Life.

1. Tadpole. 2. Snail. 3. Water Beetle. 4. Minnow.

So Sam had not failed him after all. Roger opened the purse, and glanced at the bundle of notes and the little packet of French coins.

The man, meanwhile, turned away as if about to pace up and down the deck; but after going a few yards he stopped, came back to Roger, and stood looking down at him with a puzzled expression in his eyes.

'Look here, my boy,' he said. 'Of course I know it's no business of mine and all that, but it strikes me pretty forcibly that you're in a bother of some sort. Anyway, it's a queer time for a boy like you to be crossing the Channel on his own. How would it be for you to tell me all about it?'

Roger hesitated for a moment, for the dread of being stopped and sent back to Monkton Ashe was still uppermost in his mind; but, at the same time, there was something very friendly and trustworthy in the tall young man's face and manner.

'I know your name,' the stranger went on. 'Mine is John Boughton, at your service. Shall we go for a stroll? There is no need for you to tell me anything whatever about your affairs if you'd rather not; but I have travelled a good bit, and might be able to help you.'

'Oh, please, I should like to tell you. It's awfully good of you,' and then as they trudged up and down the steamer's crowded deck, threading their way among the passengers and piles of luggage, Roger poured out his story. To his delight and relief, John Boughton did not laugh at the project, but treated it quite seriously, and, indeed, seemed to think the boy could not have done much else under the circumstances.

'Of course you must get through to St. Denis-sur-Meuse as quickly as you can,' he said. 'I only wish I could go up there with you; but I'm due in Paris to-night. I'm on a newspaper job, you see, and have to obey orders. Which way are you going? By Rheims, I suppose. You may as well let me have a look at those tickets.'

Roger handed over the green booklet with a long breath of relief. He had lost Sam, it is true, but a wiser and far more dependable friend seemed to have arisen in his place: a friend who knew all about times and trains, the best routes to be taken, and the difficulties and delays that might be expected.

'Your red-haired young man should have kept his mouth shut, if he wanted to get clear off,' Boughton remarked when he had given back the tickets. 'I came down from town in the carriage with that man who fetched him off the boat. Evidently young Sam Wilbur had been swanking in the hotel about where he was going, and what he was planning to do, and old Sam, who came home this afternoon before he was expected, got wind of it. He sent off his man then, post-haste, to bring the boy back. It was not quite certain if he meant to go via Folkestone or Dover; but this way seemed the more likely, and when inquiries were being made, an old man on the pier there, with a white moustache, volunteered the information that he'd come down on the same train as young Wilbur this morning, and knew that he was going by the boat.'

'Poor old Sam, it is rough on him,' said Roger, and the other shrugged his shoulders with a smile.

'Yes; after all his swank, it does seem a bit hard lines,' he said; 'and he must be a good-hearted chap, when all's said and done. He thought about you and the money directly he knew I was coming on board. "I have something here that belongs to a fellow named

Roger Mervyn," he said. "Be sure to give it to him." And then he stuffed the packet into my hand. Poor boy, it must have been galling to be dragged off the boat in that way; but all the same, I think you are well rid of him. Those irresponsible sort of people are apt to be rather troublesome—not to say dangerous—sometimes.'

After that the man and boy paced up and down the deck for a while in silence, then Boughton turned once more to his companion. 'By the way, Mervyn,' he said. 'Can you speak French?'

Roger looked up with his face full of dismay. 'No, at least not enough to be of any use. I had forgotten all about that. Whatever shall I do?'

'Oh, don't bother. I expect you will get on all right. Some one usually turns up everywhere who can talk English. I'm sorry, though, all the same. It's always useful to be able to understand what people are talking about; especially now, when things in France are bound to be a good bit upset and out of gear.'

'A bit upset and out of gear.' Roger remembered the casual words when, an hour or so later, the steamer arrived at its destination, and the passengers stared in bewilderment at the confusion on the quay, and the crowds of excited tourists, eager to escape from France at any price, and the serious faces of the harassed officials.

For the first time the boy seemed to catch a glimpse of the stupendous disaster which had overtaken Europe, and, as he glanced westward over his shoulder, he wondered what would have happened to him before he should see the green hills and white cliffs of Old England again.

CHAPTER V.

'My word! Things do seem to be in a bit of a muddle!'

John Boughton's face grew grave and worried, as the steamer neared the quay of the French port, and he saw the crowds of tourists waiting to embark, and the great piles of luggage which had just arrived by train, or had been left behind by travellers who had already sailed. Some of the unfortunate people sat on their boxes waiting patiently and wearily, others hurried to and fro with anxious, bewildered faces, or pushed their way to the side of the wharf, as if determined to board the steamer even before the new arrivals had had time to disembark. Little children, tired out with all the unaccustomed excitement and discomfort, were crying piteously, and a woman, who seemed to be on the verge of hysterics, was searching vainly for a missing friend.

Everywhere were signs of haste, confusion, and uncertainty; and the officials, although they did their best, evidently found it impossible to contend with all the difficulties of the situation.

'Look here, Mervyn, you had better keep close to me,' Boughton went on, 'and I'll show you where your train goes from, and put you into it—if I can. Got your ticket ready? That's right. Keep as near the gangway as you can. Is that all your luggage? Well, perhaps it's a good thing to be travelling light, under the circumstances.'

Roger tightened the strap of his knapsack, and grasped the basket of provisions, which poor old Sam had left in his charge together with the new electric torch. Roger had offered his new friend some of the fruit and cakes during the short voyage, but Boughton had refused, saying that he should try to get dinner in the train, and that the boy had better do the same, if he got the chance.

The steamer was now moored alongside the quay, and after what seemed endless delays and difficulties, the passengers were allowed to go ashore. 'This way,' Boughton said, gripping Roger's arm, and the two made their way through the struggling, pushing throng of English and American tourists, and towards the platform where several trains were already drawn up. The man went away then to make some inquiries, and when he returned his face looked more worried than ever.

'Your train isn't here yet, and it seems a bit uncertain when it will be in,' he said; 'but that's mine over there, and I simply have to go by it if I mean to get to Paris to-night. I don't half like leaving you here alone, though. It's all such a fearful rush and muddle.'

'Oh, I shall be all right.' Roger did his best to reassure his friend, but his heart sank at the thought of having once more to manage and arrange for himself, this time in a strange country, where every face and every word was unfamiliar. 'I'll just stay here till my train comes. I have my ticket, so there won't be anything else to do.'

'Yes, you'd better wait here, I suppose. This is the platform. And remember everything I've told you. The train will take you straight to —. You don't even have to change at Rheims. And when you get to —, you must find out when there's a train for St. Denis-sur-Meuse. You'll probably have some time to wait, and if you can't find any one who can speak English at the station, there's certain to be some one at the hotel just outside. It's just possible you may have to walk the last few miles to St. Denis; it's only a small place, and all the railways up in that district are bound to be disorganized. Look here, you may as well take this road map of mine, I can get another in Paris. Here's my address, too. If you get into any bother, wire to me; and I'll do my best to help you.'

'Thanks, awfully.' Roger took the folded map and the torn page from a note-book with the scribbled address, and then with a cheery 'Good-bye, old man,' Boughton hastened away, and the boy was left standing on a platform by a pile of luggage; and feeling smaller and more lonely than he had ever done in his life before.

There came a long, weary time of waiting after that, and Roger was sitting on an overland trunk and dozing, with his head against one of the iron pillars which supported the roof of the station, when a man came up in a blue uniform and began to speak to him. His voice sounded fierce and urgent, but the boy could not understand a word, and then the speaker—who seemed to become more and more indignant every moment—or it may have been only his manner—hurried away, and returned with a short and stout, but still more imposing individual.

Roger tried hard to think of some of the French that he had learned at school, but there was nothing that seemed in the least to meet the situation.

'Parlez-vous Français?' It was quite unnecessary to make such an inquiry in face of the voluble flood of language that was being poured out, and remarks about pen-knives, gardeners, and female-cousins would have been equally inappropriate.

'Non, non, non,' one word, at least, he could remember, and he repeated it again and again, feeling certain that these formidable parsonages meant to forbid his journey; and then, as a hand was laid on his shoulder, he dragged himself away and ran down the platform

at the top of his speed, never halting until he had reached the shelter of a great, dusky shed, and was, as he hoped, beyond the reach of pursuit.

And after all there was no pursuit, for the two men had only wished to discover Roger's destination, and assist him to the best of their power. Now that he had evaded them, there was no need to take further trouble; and with expressive shrugs of their shoulders, they went about more important business.

It was a long time before Roger dared leave his hiding-place, and then he found that it was late and growing dark. He wondered whether the train for Rheims had left during his absence; and he was not quite certain whether he could find the platform where Boughton had stationed him. Something that was very like despair began to creep into the boy's heart then, for there seemed to be no English people about, and when he ventured up to one railway official, ticket in hand, he could not understand a word of the information that was given him. Every one seemed to be too busy and too worried to have time to spare for a stranded English boy, and, indeed, there were many people that night who were in far worse straits.

It was about nine o'clock when Roger, who was now wandering vaguely from platform to platform, found a train crammed with soldiers and horses, which was, apparently, on the point of departure. It seemed to be going in the right direction, and, moreover, on the outside of one of the carriages the word Rheims was roughly chalked.

Rheims, the boy's heart beat quickly, for he was to go through Rheims, he knew, on the way to St. Denis-sur-Meuse, and although he felt sure that this could not be the right train, it might, perhaps, be a means of reaching his goal. He ran to a carriage and tried to drag open the door, but a very irate guard strode up, who with many explanations and gesticulations, the meaning of which it was impossible to mistake, forbade him to enter.

The train was for soldiers, soldiers only, that was quite clear, but Roger was desperate by this time, and he fled back along the platform trying to find an empty carriage. It was no use, every inch of space was occupied. Behind the carriages were cattle-trucks, also filled with soldiers, and waggons loaded with fodder and baggage.

The door of one of these was half open, and, peering in, the boy saw that there were trusses of hay piled high on either side, but with a space in the middle—a place where some one—especially if it were some one small—might squeeze in and lie concealed.

For a moment he hesitated. His enemy, the guard, was out of sight, and for some distance the platform was deserted. There was no lamp near. Then the train gave a jolt, began to move very slowly, stopped, and moved on again. A man far away near the engine shouted and waved his arms.

Roger glanced round. There was no other train in sight, and this one was going to Rheims. He must make up his mind at once, or be left behind, and then he pushed his basket into the van, clambered up the high step after it, and burrowed deep between two masses of hay. There was another jolt; the train moved more quickly; a man running alongside slammed the door, and Roger was off once more on his journey, and safe, for the time, at any rate, in the fragrant, prickly darkness.

(Continued on page 218.)



"A very irate guard forba le him to enter."