

"At last Jules gave up in despair."

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## WANDERERS IN THE WAR.

BY A. A. METHLEY.

(Continued from page 239.)

FOR a moment there was silence, and then Val clasped her hands, and turned to the young soldier eagerly. 'A war! Oh, how frightfully exciting! Do tell me all about it. Who's going to fight? And where? And why?'

'Why?' the man shrugged his shoulders. 'Who knows, but it's the Germans again—as it was before—in 1870. My grandmother is old. She remembers. That is why she weeps.'

'Yes, I remember.' Suzanne rose heavily from the bench on which she had been sitting, and stood upright, looking very old and pathetic, in spite of her stout figure, and round, sunburnt face. 'I remember it all. Forty years ago it was, and more, but it seems like yesterday. The Germans killed my husband and my eldest son—and now it's all coming over again.'

'Oh, no, you mustn't say that.' The soldier threw back his head, and showed his white teeth in a gay laugh. 'It will be very different this time. You will see. We shall give the Prussians the beating they deserve. We shall teach them a lesson. But I must be going. Good-bye, Grandmother, wish me good luck.' He stooped and kissed the tear-stained cheek affectionately. 'Mademoiselle, farewell.'

And then Suzanne dried her eyes, like the brave Frenchwoman that she was, and steadied her quivering lips into a smile, so that, when the young soldier had crossed the cobbled courtyard, and turned at the gate for a last good-bye, he saw his grandmother waving a large and rather wet handkerchief to him, and kissing her hand as cheerfully as if he were setting off on some holiday excursion. It was only when the red and blue figure had quite disappeared round the corner that the old woman's face changed again, and she sunk down wearily on to the bench. 'You don't understand what it means, you young ones,' she said. 'But I was here in 1870 when the Prussians came to St. Denis—and I know.'

## CHAPTER VIII.

TWENTY miles does not look much on a map, especially if the map is a small one, but when you come to walk the distance on a hot August day, and across hilly, unfamiliar country, things are very different. Roger and Jules found this out to their cost, and they were both very tired and footsore long before they came to the end of their day's journey.

'Twenty miles! Why, that's nothing,' Roger had said disdainfully, before they set out. 'It's only four times five miles, and any one can walk four miles in an hour. We'll call it three miles an hour, as you're rather small, Jules, and then there will be rests. We ought to get to St. Denis-sur-Meuse quite by tea-time.'

Jules had nodded cheerfully, although he did not understand a word of his friend's speech, and at first everything had gone well, and then they trudged along at a good pace. As time went on, however, the miles seemed to become longer and longer, and when tea-time came—or rather five o'clock, for there was no tea to be had that day—the two wayfarers were still many miles from their destination.

'We shall get there before dark,' Roger declared, when they started off once more, after leaving the little town where they had encountered the soldiers; and later on this was modified into 'We shall get there some time to-night.' As dusk fell, however, he began to feel less confident, for they were in a thickly-wooded district now, and with every step the country seemed to grow wilder and more deserted. By seven o'clock they had lost their way completely, and, had they only known it, were walking steadily away from St. Denis instead of in its direction.

At last Jules gave up in despair, and sitting down on a moss-covered rock, announced that he was too tired to walk any further. Toto also seemed to be at his last gasp, and looked a very draggled and woebegone little figure. He threw himself down at his master's feet, and stretched himself with a sigh of relief and utter weariness.

Roger looked down at the exhausted couple ruefully, for although he could hardly understand a word of the French boy's explanation, it was quite evident that neither he nor his dog could go any further without a rest. 'All right,' he said. 'You stay here, and I'll go and have a look round. You may feel better before long, or perhaps there may be an inn near here where we can stay for the night, and get something to eat. I don't know what to think about it, Jules, but I'm most frightfully hungry.'

Jules leaned back against the rock behind him, and shut his eyes, and Roger, with a rather superior smile, walked on through the trees. He peered eagerly from side to side as he went, on the look-out for some trace of a path or glimpse of a building.

It was nearly dark now, there in the forest, and the ground, besides being rough and uneven, was thickly overgrown with gorse, brambles, and low bushes. The air was hot and heavy, and not a breath of wind stirred the branches. Except for the occasional hoot of an owl or the rustle of dead leaves as some animal made it way through the thickets, there was not a sound to be heard, and Roger could not help an occasional shiver of nervous apprehension. He was not at all a timid boy, as a rule, but he had never been alone at night in a forest before, and the darkness, together with the unnatural silence, gave him an eerie sensation. He felt as if something were lying in wait, ready to spring out upon him from every shadow or thick clump of brushwood.

'What a horrible, creepy place this is,' he said to himself, as he glanced round uneasily; and then he remembered that he was fifteen, a man almost, and much too old to be scared at foolish fancies. He squared his shoulders and trudged on manfully, trying to recall the things he had learnt as a boy scout, and to notice the shapes and characteristics of the trees and bushes, so that he might be able to find his way back to the place where he had left Jules.

At last, after walking for about a quarter of a mile, the boy saw in front of him a hill which rose sharply in a rocky peak from the forest. He made up his mind to climb this, thinking that, perhaps, from the summit it would be possible to get a view of the surrounding country, for, if some village were in sight, where food and lodging could be obtained, all difficulties would be at an end, and it would be a simple matter to go on to St. Denis on the following day.

'Val does not know that I'm coming, so she won't be disappointed,' Roger told himself; and for his part he

was not altogether sorry that his arrival at the school should be delayed. He had thoroughly enjoyed his tramp with Jules, and the one glimpse of war which the day had afforded had been a glorious and encouraging one. His heart beat quickly even now as he remembered the triumphant music of the 'Marseillaise' and his ride on the flower-decked gun. The prospect of a summer at Monkton Ashe Rectory seemed very dull and commonplace in comparison with all the excitements and vicissitudes of the past two days.

The French were going to beat the Germans, of course, but that was in the future, and there would most likely be no battles for a long time. Everything had seemed so peaceful as he and Jules made their way across country, and to-morrow would be quite time enough for him and Val to start on their homeward journey. Roger did not foresee any difficulties about that journey, and he could not help feeling sorry that his adventures were coming to an end. He wished that he could dispatch Val under a safe escort to England, and stay on himself in France to share the experiences and excitements of his new friend, Jules.

These thoughts, and others like them, flitted through the boy's head as he scrambled up the hill, which, although not very high, was steep, rugged, and thickly grown with prickly bushes. He was hot and breathless by the time the summit was reached, and threw himself down among the heather and whortle-berry bushes for a short rest. It was lighter here than it had been in the gloomy forest beneath, and the air felt cooler and less stifling.

After a few moments, Roger raised himself on one elbow and looked about, still panting after his exertions. All around could be seen a wide panorama of wooded hills, standing out black against the clear, pale sky, in which a few stars were beginning to sparkle. There was no sign of any town or village, so far as could be seen at a first glance, but far away in the distance was the silvery gleam of a river.

Roger was just beginning to wonder whether he and Jules would have to spend the night in the woods, when suddenly a strange buzzing noise broke the silence. It was loud and insistent, like the humming of some gigantic insect, and the boy, startled out of his weariness, sat up and listened intently.

Not far away, on the apex of the hill, there was a great tree, and it seemed as if it was from there that the noise came. The tree was dead—perhaps it had been struck by lightning, for the huge branches were leafless and stood out, gaunt and naked, against the sky. It was like the ghost of a tree, towering up there among the thick undergrowth, for most of the bark had fallen away from the massive, smooth trunk, and it gleamed pale and mysterious in the fading twilight.

The noise ceased after a few minutes as suddenly as it had begun, and in the following breathless silence it seemed to the boy that he heard a soft rustle, as if some one—or something—were moving among the dense bushes that grew closely round the tree. He did not wait to hear anything more, but fled away, stumbling through the low undergrowth and almost hurling himself down the deep descent. A sudden panic had seized him there on the lonely hill, and now he was only anxious to reach the bottom of the slope and to have once more the comfortable human companionship of little Jules.

(Continued on page 254.)

## THE STORY OF SOME ORDERS AND DECORATIONS.

By CONSTANCE M. FOOT.

### IV.—ORDERS OF CHIVALRY OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

ALTHOUGH, in common with all other Orders of the United Kingdom,

#### THE MOST HONOURABLE ORDER OF THE BATH

gives place to that of the Garter, the Red Order of England is really as ancient as the Blue one; indeed it may be looked upon as almost the older of the two, for from the time that a man came to place his sword at the disposal of his God and his Sovereign, from that time the Order of the Bath has practically existed. You will remember, too, that at the installation of a knight of old (of whom we spoke in the first paper) there were no rules or regulations, only those special ceremonies of prayer, watching by night, and bathing (the latter as an emblem of purity), so that of all the great companies of Western knights who carry on the ancient traditions of chivalry, none can claim longer descent than those of the Bath.

As far as the actual institution is concerned, this Order probably dates from the reign of Henry IV., who at his coronation, in 1399, made forty-six esquires Knights of the Bath. Charles II. at his coronation created sixty-eight knights, but after his time the Order fell into neglect, being revived, as a military one only, by George I., when it consisted of the Sovereign, a Grand Master, and thirty-six knights. At the conclusion of the Great War in 1815 it was still further enlarged by the Prince Regent for the purpose of rewarding the distinguished services of many officers (both military and naval) who had taken part in that campaign. Yet again it was increased in 1845, while two years later an important change took place, civil knights, commanders, and companions being then added. Its present organization was finally established in 1861, consisting then, as it does to-day, of three classes: (1) Knights Grand Cross; (2) Knights Commanders, each being entitled to use 'Sir' before his name after being invested with the insignia; and (3) Companions.

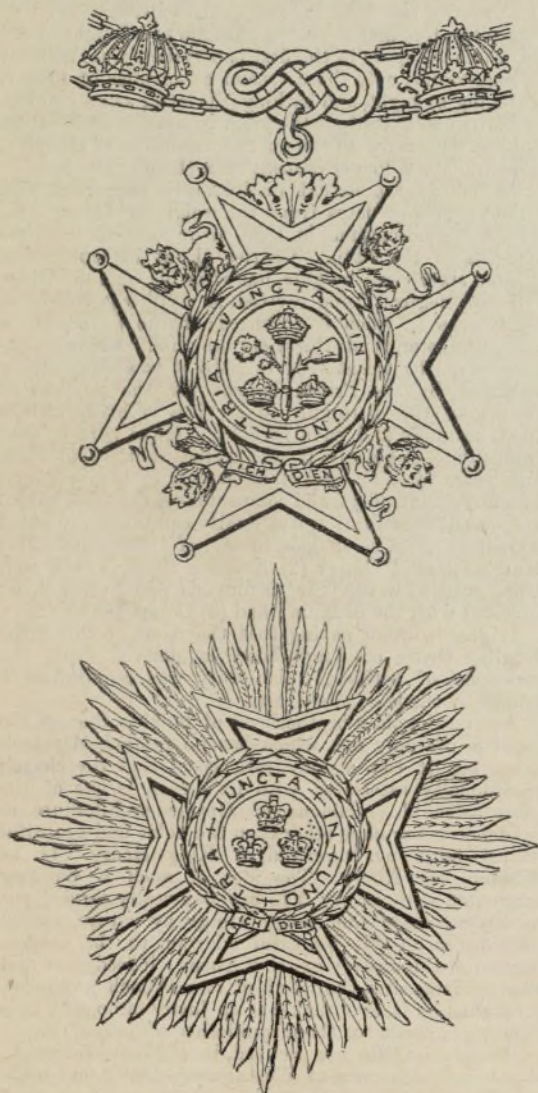
It goes without saying that the name of this great English Order of Knighthood is derived from the ceremony of bathing, which duty was required of a knight by the laws of chivalry.

Among the older brotherhood of knights that of the Bath is the only one which has no recognised patron saint, but it can at any rate boast that the chapel, traditionally associated with its Order, is one of the most splendid specimens of Gothic architecture in existence, being none other than the noble and beautiful chapel built by command of King Henry VII. at Westminster Abbey. The idea of such a building originated with Henry VI., but was really carried out by his successor who, though stingy by nature, spared no expense on this beautiful addition to the eastern portion of the already existing Abbey: indeed, it is said that it represented the worth of two French provinces. And what is it that makes it so justly famous? It is chiefly renowned for the magnificence of its roof.

When the Order was revived, in 1725, by George I., this beautiful portion of Westminster Abbey was made the Chapel of the Order, and the plates and banners of the Knights of the Bath were placed over the stalls. Although since that date it has always remained (in

name) its home, as testified by the stall-plates and dust-begrimed banners which hung above them, it had, since 1815, fallen into disuse for the religious ceremony or knightly installation, and it was not until a July day in 1913 that it was solemnly re-dedicated to this purpose, the most honourable Order of the Bath thus coming into its own again after nearly one hundred years.

We must now imagine ourselves, on that memorable day, inside the Abbey. Following the choir came the procession of knights, looking like a moving crimson stream in their rose-red mantles as they paced with slow and stately steps up the long nave of the beautiful Abbey—first, the Knights Grand Cross two and two; next, those to be installed; while behind these followed



The Badge and Star of Knight Grand Cross of the most honourable Order of the Bath.

the Officers of the Order—among whom were the Gentleman Usher, Bath King of Arms, and the Dean of Westminster (the Dean of the Order). By himself, immediately in front of the Sovereign, walked the Great Master, the Duke of Connaught. The King, who came last, was robed exactly like the other knights, only that his train was longer and borne by two Pages of Honour. A very magnificent and picturesque procession it was, the crimson-mantled knights carrying their white-plumed velvet hats in their hands and each wearing the particular decoration belonging to his rank. The ceremony which followed, though short, was exceedingly impressive—perhaps no part more so than the taking of the oath, or again at the 'offering of the sword,' as it is called, when each knight drew his sword and held it forward by the blade with the hilt towards the Altar, only sheathing it when the Great Master sheathed his. This closed the ceremony in the Chapel, and the procession re-formed to return to the choir of the Abbey, where the first portion of the service had been previously held.

Before, however, leaving (in imagination) the historic Chapel, we must notice how it has been transformed. The tattered banners, so long familiar, have disappeared—they have been sent to the descendants of the knights to whom they had belonged—while in their place hang the bright, fresh banners of the newly-installed knights. Their helmets, swords, and mantles have been arranged over the stalls, and at a glance it is possible to tell if the knight is a peer or not. If a peer, the helmet has bars across it; if not, a raised visor. In either case his crest rises from the helmet, while on each stall will be found a brass plate with his arms wrought in enamel.

But you will be wanting to know something more of the Robes and Insignia of this great Order. To begin with, the robes of olden days were not always crimson as they are now. At the coronation of Henry IV., the knights wore a green robe with a furred hood and a white silk cord hanging from the left shoulder. Later on, their costumes seem to have been varied. For instance, before the ceremonial of the bath it consisted of a monk-like garment of brown or grey, with hood and girdle. After the bath they donned a red surcoat and mantle, finally exchanging these for a blue (or purple) velvet or satin gown with miniver-trimmed hood. Nor must we forget the white cord which always continued to hang from the shoulder until removed by king or lady for some deed of bravery. To-day, as we have seen, the mantle is of crimson velvet lined with white satin.

And the Insignia—of what do they consist? A Collar of gold composed of nine Imperial crowns, with alternating devices of rose, thistle, and shamrock, joined by white enamelled knots. Hanging from this is the Badge of the Order—an eight-pointed gold Maltese cross enamelled in silver, in the four angles of which stands a golden lion. Here again we find shamrock and thistle, while between these are three golden Imperial crowns within a red circle bearing the motto of the Order, 'Tria juncta in uno' (Three joined in one), this in turn being encircled by laurel branches rising from a blue scroll with the words 'Ich dien' in golden letters upon it. The decoration is worn by Knights Grand Cross pendent from a red ribbon across the right shoulder, when it is known as the 'Red Ribbon of the Bath.' Although principally a military, it is a civil Order, but the decoration of the two varies so slightly that the difference is not worth describing: the chief thing to



The Collar, Badge and Star of the most exalted Order of the Star of India.

recollect is that Knights Grand Cross only, whether military or civil, wear the red ribbon of the Bath across their right shoulder.

There are likewise Stars—both military and civil—but it will be sufficient to describe the military one of the Knights Grand Cross. This is formed of rays, or flames, of silver with a gold Maltese cross placed upon it, in the middle of which, within the motto, are branches of laurel.

A Knight Grand Cross is entitled to wear Collar, Badge, and Star; a Knight Commander, only the Badge suspended by a red ribbon from his neck and the Star embroidered on the left side; while the Companion may only wear the Badge hanging by a red ribbon from the button-hole.

When reading down the roll of the Knights of the Bath we find many an illustrious name; but being mostly a military Order, we are not surprised that those of great soldiers are the first to catch our eye, such as the late Field-Marshal Earl Roberts and Field-Marshal Lord Kitchener of Khartoum, to say nothing of others whose names are becoming increasingly familiar to us to-day—for instance, Admiral Lord Jellicoe, Sir Douglas Haig, and many such another. Nor must we forget to include a civil knight—perhaps none more appropriate than that most recent one, the Right Honourable Sir George Houston Reid, High Commissioner for Australia, and one of her most distinguished sons. The honour was enhanced by the fact that at one step he rose to the full dignity of G.C.B., being the first ever to receive it in this manner. We have full confidence that he (in common with the illustrious names already mentioned) will be true to that beautiful knightly vow to honour their God, their King, and the Right!

We next come to one of the three British Orders of

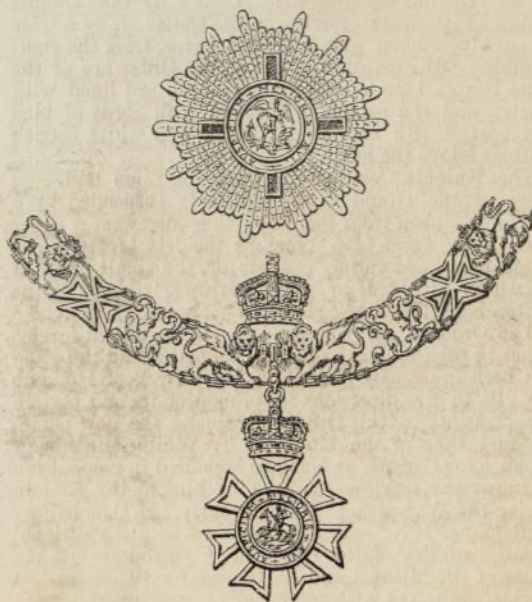
Knighthood which take their name from the Land of the Gorgious East.

THE MOST EXALTED ORDER OF THE STAR OF INDIA, as it is called, was instituted by Queen Victoria in 1861, being further enlarged in 1866 and again in 1878. It is conferred for services connected with India, and consists of the Sovereign (the King-Emperor), a Grand Master (the Viceroy for the time being), and three classes of members—namely, Knights Grand Commanders, Knights Commanders, and Companions, who are entitled to place respectively after their names, G.C.S.I., K.C.S.I., and C.S.I.

Its Insignia is very beautiful. The golden Collar is formed of roses, lotus flowers, and palm branches, the roses being alternately red and white. From the Imperial crown in the centre hangs the magnificent Badge—a brilliant five-pointed star, to which is attached an oval-shaped cameo bearing the bust of the Queen in profile, and encircled by a band of light blue enamel carrying the motto 'Heaven's Light our Guide.' Even more magnificent is the diamond Star, also five-pointed, resting on waving rays of gold, which bears the same motto on a light blue circle, but in this case is composed entirely of diamonds. The ribbon of the Order is light blue with thin white stripes, and the robes are of the same colour in satin lined with white.

#### THE MOST DISTINGUISHED ORDER OF ST. MICHAEL AND ST. GEORGE

ranks next. This was created by George IV. (when Prince Regent) in commemoration of Britain assuming the protection of the Ionian Islands, and was originally 'for natives of the Ionian Islands, of the Island of Malta and its dependencies, and for such other subjects of His Majesty as may hold high and confidential situations in the Mediterranean.' At its first formation it consisted of sixty-five Knights Grand Cross, two hundred Knights



The Collar, Badge and Star of the most distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George.

Commanders, and three hundred and forty-two Companions, the first-named being privileged to surround their coats-of-arms with the full insignia of the Order, the Knights Commanders only with the ribbon and motto, and the Companions merely to use the Badge.

In 1865, when Britain decided to abandon her protection of the Ionian Isles, the Order was re-formed and extended, then providing for such of 'the natural-born subjects of the Crown of the United Kingdom as may have held or shall hold high and confidential offices within Her Majesty's Colonial Possessions and in reward for services rendered to the Crown in relation to the Foreign Affairs of the Empire.' At intervals it was still further extended, but in 1902 was limited as to membership.

The Chapel of the Order is in St. Paul's Cathedral, and was dedicated to that purpose on St. George's Day, 1906, by a most impressive service which has been repeated annually since that date. On these occasions the banners of any knights who have died during the year are reverently taken down from their place and laid upon the altar.

The Star of the Knights Grand Cross is formed of gold and silver rays with the Cross of St. George in red over all, and in the centre the Archangel St. Michael encountering Satan; the motto of the Order, 'Auspiciis melioris ævi' (A pledge of better times), is inscribed on a blue circle. The golden Collar is composed of alternating lions, Maltese crosses, and the letters (or cyphers, as they are called) S.M. and S.G. In the centre are two winged lions holding seven arrows and a book, these being surmounted by the Imperial crown. The Badge, a gold cross of fourteen points, has in the centre of one side the Archangel St. Michael meeting Satan, and on the other St. George on horseback slaying the dragon. The motto, similarly to that of the Star, lies on a blue circle. There is also a Cross, surmounted by an Imperial crown, which is worn by the Knights Grand Cross either attached to the Collar or, by a wide Saxon blue ribbon with a scarlet stripe, from the right shoulder. The mantle and hat of the Order are of the same Saxon blue as the ribbon; both are lined with scarlet, and the mantle is fastened with cords of blue and scarlet silk and gold. Black and white ostrich feathers adorn the hat.

The Knights Commanders have the same Badge as those of the Grand Cross, but it is suspended by a narrower ribbon from the neck; they also wear a silver Star in the form of a cross on the left breast. The Companions' decoration consists of the small cross of the Order attached, by a yet narrower ribbon, to the button-hole.

The Order is still conferred for distinguished service either in the Colonies or foreign countries, and the King has been graciously pleased, in the New Year Honours of 1916, to give directions for promotion in, and certain appointments to, this Order. Amongst the new names we find that of the Hon. W. T. White, Minister of Finance for Canada, as being so honoured in recognition of important services rendered by him to the Empire during the War period. Quite recently, too, Commander Littlejohns, R.N., was appointed to be an additional member of the Third Class of Companions of the Order of St. Michael and St. George for 'distinguished service connected with command of armoured trains in Flanders.'

(Concluded on page 253.)

## RUSSIA IN ENGLAND.

**F**EW people are aware that there is a Russian village in England. Yet such is the case.

This village, or hamlet, is that of Tuckton, in the parish of Christchurch, and on the Southbourne side of the river Stour. It was a Russian named Vladimir Tchertkoff who founded the foreign settlement in this lovely spot. In Russia, Tchertkoff had been a wealthy landowner and an officer in the Imperial Guards. But his warm sympathy with the suffering peasants brought him into disfavour with the Government of his own country, and he was in danger of being sent to Siberia. So he took refuge in England, bringing with him several other Russians, who afterwards received others into their midst. Work for everybody was found at Tuckton, where you meet with Russians of all classes, living together in peace and brotherhood. Mr. Tchertkoff, who furnishes his own rooms as plainly as the poorest of his fellow-countrymen, is the head, the guide, the 'little father' of this happy family.

E. D.

## AN OLD-FASHIONED FEAST DISH.

**F**URMETY, or Frumenty, used to be a very favourite dish in the olden times, but few British boys and girls of nowadays have even heard its name. In the lives of their great-grandparents, however, it was just as certain to find a place at the Christmas dinner as was the turkey, plum-pudding, or the mince-pie.

'Take clean wheat and bray it in a mortar,' runs an ancient recipe; 'seethe it till it burst, and let it cool. Take sweet milk of almonds, or sweet milk of kine, and temper it all; and take the yolks of eggs. Boil it a little, and set it down.' In the olden days, furmety (from the old French word for wheat, *froument*) was often eaten with venison. But it was also eaten alone as a peculiar dainty, sweetened with sugar, and thus it appeared on the table at other festivals beside Christmas.

One of these was Mothering Sunday. On the fourth Sunday in Lent it used to be the custom for lads and lasses in service to be given a holiday, for the purpose of visiting their homes. This was a great event, as you may be sure, not only to the young servants themselves, but to the mothers who expected them, and in very many cottage homes a special dinner was provided for the welcome guests. Furmety was a very favourite dish upon that day.

A friend of mine tells me of a custom that was common in Devonshire about fifty years ago. The farmers would hold a feast for their friends and workers at harvest-time every year, when the corn was safely home. Hams and tongues, huge joints and savoury puddings, always graced the festive board at these times, but first and foremost of all dishes was the furmety. This was prepared specially from the new wheat of the year, just picked, and was boiled in cream, sweetened and served in small dishes to each one of the guests. Furmety plates, by the way, can still sometimes be seen in old curiosity shops, they are of willow-pattern and other quaint designs, and are like soup-plates of a very small size.

I was reading not very long ago that this old English dish should be a very suitable one to serve just now on some of our meatless days; in any case, it is interesting to read about as an old-fashioned fast dish which our ancestors used to enjoy.

## CHINNA.

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

(Continued from page 234.)

'BEHOLD my servants who do my bidding,' said Chinna, pointing to the children and using, to Nancy's dismay, the very words she had meant herself to employ. But there was no need for her to speak, she found, so cowed the people were. They had no doubt whatever at that moment that Nancy and Brian and Frederick were in truth spirits whom the little wizard had summoned. They had left the hut empty save for their prisoner; they found it thus filled. What other explanation could there be save one in which magic had a share?

'Ye have seen,' Chinna went on. 'Now close the door again, and leave me alone to finish the spell. 'Tis well for you that these great ones did not cause you to fall dead at sight of them. Thus far they have shown mercy. But, should ye hear them speak, your doom, as I have said, is sealed.'

The silent crowd slunk back. Already eager hands were outstretched to close the door, and with hearts beating high with hope and relief, Chinna, Brian, and Nancy watched. Only Frederick was disappointed. Only Frederick felt that everything had fallen a little flat, that this scene was not quite equal to many a tale to which he had listened, and eagerly he searched his small memory for a more appropriate ending. And, all at once, he sprang forwards, waving his hands in what he hoped was a most spirit-like manner.

'Go away! Go away!' he shouted, 'or we will turn half of you into snakes, and the other half into tigers.'

And then he stopped, most bitterly dismayed, for no longer the people retreated, but, slowly, they came surging back again. And no longer fear ruled in their faces, but an eager curiosity was taking its place. Perhaps it was the sound of Frederick's voice, so altogether human, which roused their suspicions. Perhaps it was the fact that in the hurry of the moment he had let the snake-skin slip a little from his shoulders. Whatever the reason, they were cowed no longer, but bold, impertinent instead. And they determined to examine these strange spirits more closely.

'Go!' Chinna shouted; 'go, ere ye die!' But his words fell now on ears that did not heed them. No longer could he bend the crowd to his will.

'These are children only,' one man breathed. And then another clamoured: 'Let them die with the wizard. Without doubt they are his.'

## CHAPTER XXV.

AND, almost before the children realised what had happened, there was an ugly rush in their direction. Grasping hands were pulling the skins from their shoulders; fierce, cruel faces were thrust close to their own. They were hustled hither and thither, and pushed finally into the corner of the hut furthest from Chinna. They knew that the plan they had thought so splendid had failed altogether, and now they, as well as the little hunter, were in the utmost danger.

'We belong to the white people!' both Nancy and Brian cried desperately. But this assertion met with incredulous looks and scornful laughter. Not one among the villagers doubted in that moment of excite-

ment that these children were in truth the children of Chinna, and that he had magicked them into this resemblance in order to frighten his enemies. And it seemed an additional proof of this fact that Brian should be neither white nor black, as though in his case Chinna's charms had partially failed. And there were even some among the crowd who were eager to suggest that the little wizard should be forced to turn the children their proper colour again before he was punished for his other misdeeds. But they were those on whose houses the sickness had as yet no hold, and who could therefore afford to amuse themselves, and were in no particular hurry for Chinna's torture and death.

But the village priest was not of this party, and he was by far the most powerful person present; and it was he who decided now that Chinna should first be dealt with, and that afterwards, if it seemed desirable, the children should be killed, so that the whole brood of sorcerers might be exterminated. And he ordered some among the villagers to stand in front of the children and hold them back if they tried to interfere, while he called to others to look to the irons which had all this time been heating in the fire.

'And bring the sick man,' he ordered, 'and lay him in front of the sorcerer. This last chance we will give him that all may be done in due manner, and none may say, "We acted in haste, and therefore we did not well."'

And into the house the sick man was carried, protesting still against his fate, and turning away his head so that he might not meet Chinna's eyes, the evil glance of which he was sure was so potent that it could carry death with it. And, thus turning, he met Brian's eyes instead, and stared intently, surprised. And something like gratitude softened his face, and Brian saw it, and felt as if hope had peeped again into the little hut; hope, which a moment since seemed to have flown for ever. Yet in what way could the sick man help, seeing that he himself was almost powerless?

But Brian was not the only person who, it appeared, felt hopeful. Much to the children's surprise, Chinna had taken the discovery of their disguise in the most tranquil fashion. Though torture and death now awaited him, it seemed, yet he was smiling as if he cherished a most satisfying secret. And he did not flinch, nor seem unduly disturbed even when a piece of red-hot iron was brought in a pair of tongs and held immediately beneath his nose, and he was told that, unless he could cure the sick man, the iron would be placed next on the soles of his feet.

'And bring the bamboo also,' the priest demanded, 'that he may look upon it, and know the manner of the death we have prepared for him should he still refuse to make due reparation.'

And two men brought an enormous bamboo, and laid it at the hut door, for it was too long to find room inside. And the crowd fell to quarrelling as to who should stand upon the ends. Apparently, though every one was anxious for Chinna's death, no one coveted the post of executioner lest the little man should return to plague his slayer in some ghost-like form afterwards. And, at last, lots were cast, and the gruesome wrangle came to an end. And all through it Chinna smiled happily. And every now and then he put his hollowed hand to his ear as though he listened attentively to some sound which interested him greatly.

(Continued on page 250.)



"Grasping hands were pulling the skins from their shoulders."