# In The Days Of The Guild

By

Louise Lamprey

# IN THE DAYS OF THE GUILD

## I

## THE BOY WITH THE WOOLPACK

IN the reign of King Henry II., when as yet there were no factories, no railways or even coaches, no post-offices and no tea-tables in England, a boy sat on a hillside not far from Salisbury Plain, with a great bale of wool by his side. It was not wrapped in paper; it was packed close and very skillfully bound together with cords, lengthwise and crosswise, making a network of packthread all over it. The boy's name was Robert Edrupt, but in the tiny village where he was born he had always been called Hob. He had been reared by his grandfather, a shepherd, and now the old shepherd was dead and he was going to seek his fortune.

The old grandmother, Dame Lysbeth, was still alive, but there was not much left for her to live on. She had a few sheep and a little garden, chickens, a beehive, and one field; and she and her grandson had decided that he should take the wool, which was just ready for market when the sudden death of the shepherd took place, and ask the dealers when they came by if they would not take him with them to London. Now he was waiting, as near the road as he could get, listening hard for the tinkle of their horse-bells around the shoulder of the down.

The road would not really be called a road to-day. It was a track, trodden out about half way up the slope of the valley in some parts of it, and now and then running along the top of the long, low hills that have been called downs as long as the memory of man holds a trace of them. Sometimes it would make a sharp twist to cross the shallows of a stream, for there were scarcely any bridges in the country. In some places it was wide enough for a regiment, and but faintly marked; in others it was bitten deep into the hillside and so narrow that three men could hardly have gone abreast upon it. But it did not need to be anything more than a trail, or bridle-path, because no wagons went that way,—only travelers afoot or a-horseback. At some seasons there would be wayfarers all along the road from early in the morning until sunset, and they would even be found camping by the

wayside; at other times of the year one might walk for hours upon it and meet nobody at all. Robert had been sitting where he was for about three hours; and he had walked between four and five miles, woolpack on shoulder, before he reached the road; he had risen before the sun did that morning. Now he began to wonder if the wool-merchants had already gone by. It was late in the season, and if they had, there was hardly any hope of sending the wool to market that year.

But worry never worked aught, as the saying is, and people who take care of sheep seem to worry less than others; there are many things that they cannot change, and they are kept busy attending to their flocks. Robert, who did not intend to be called Hob any more, took from his pouch some coarse bread and cheese and began munching it, for by the sun it was the dinner-hour—nine o'clock. Meanwhile he made sure that the silver penny in the corner of the pouch, which hung at his girdle and served him for a pocket, was safe. It was. It was about the size of a modern halfpenny and had a cross on one side. A penny such as this could be cut in quarters, and each piece passed as a coin.

Just as the last bit of bread and cheese vanished there came, from far away over the fern, the jingle-jink-jing of strings of bells on the necks of pack-horses. A few minutes later the shaggy head and neck of the leader came in sight. They were strong, not very big horses; and while they were not built for racing, they were quick walkers. They could travel over rough country at a very good pace, even when, as they now were, loaded heavily with packs of wool. Robert stood up, his heart beating fast: he had never seen them so close before. The merchants were laughing and talking and seemed to be in a good humor, and he hoped very much that they would speak to him.

"Ho!" said the one who rode nearest to him, "here's another, as I live. Did you grow out of the ground, and have you roots like the rest of them, bumpkin?"

Robert bowed; he was rather angry, but this was no time to answer back. "I have wool to sell, so please you," he said, "and—and—if you be in need of a horse-boy, I would work my passage to London."

The man who had spoken frowned and pulled at his beard, but the leader, who had been talking to some one behind him, now turned his face toward Robert. He was a kindly-looking, ruddy-cheeked old fellow, with eyes as sharp as the stars on a winter night that is clear.

"Hum!" he said genially. "Who are you, and why are you so fond to go to London, young sheep-dog?"

Robert told his story, as short and straight as he could, for he could see that some of the merchants were impatient. This was only one pack of wool, and at the next market-town they would probably find enough to load all the rest of their train of horses, when they could push straight on to London and get their money. "If you desire to know further of what I say," the boy ended his speech, "the landlord of the Woolpack will tell you that our fleeces are as fine and as heavy as any in the market, so please you, master."

"Hum!" the wool-merchant said again. "Give him one of the spare nags, Gib, and take up the pack, lad, for we must be getting on. What if I find thee a liar and send thee back from the inn, hey?"

"If I be a liar, I will go," said Robert joyfully, and he climbed on the great horse, and the whole company went trotting briskly onward.

Robert found in course of time, however, that when we have got what we want, it is not always what we like most heartily. He had been on a horse before, but had never ridden for any length of time, and riding all day long on the hard-paced pack-horses over hill and valley was no play. Then, when they reached the town, and the merchants began to joke and trade with the shepherds who had brought in their wool for market-day, and all the people of the inn were bustling about getting supper, he had to help Gib and Jack, the horse-boys, to rub down the horses, take off their packs, and feed and water them. He nearly got into a terrible pickle for not knowing that you must not water a horse that has been traveling for hours until it has had at least half an hour to rest and cool off. When he finally did get his supper, a bowl of hot stew and some bread and cheese,—and extremely good it tasted,—it was time for bed. He and the other serving-

lads had to sleep on the wool packs piled in the open courtyard of the inn, which was built in a hollow square,—two-story buildings and stables around the square court where the horses and baggage were left. This did not trouble Robert, however. He had slept on the open hillside more than once, and it was a clear night; he could see Arthur's Wain shining among the other stars, and hear the horses, not far away, contentedly champing their grain.

The next morning he woke up lame and weary, but that wore off after a time. Nobody in the company paid attention to aching muscles; what was occupying the minds of the traffickers was the fear of getting the wool to London too late to secure their price for it. Italian and Flemish merchants had their agents there, buying up the fleeces from the great flocks of the abbeys, and Master Hardel had taken his company further west than usual, this year. No stop would be made after this, except to eat and sleep, for the horses were now loaded with all that they could carry.

On the second night, it rained, and every one was wet,—not as wet as might be supposed, however, considering that no umbrellas and no rubber coats existed. Each man wore instead of a hat a pointed hood, with a cape, the front turned back from his eyes. By folding the cape around him he could keep off the worst of the rain, for the cloth had a shaggy nap, and was close-woven as well. On legs and feet were long woolen hose which dried when the sun came out; and some had leathern tunics under their cloaks.

It was rather jolly on the road, even in the rain. The dark-bearded man, who was called Jeffrey, knew numberless tales and songs, and when he could turn a jest on any of the party he invariably did. No one took any especial notice of Robert, except that the man called Gib shifted as much of his own work on him as possible, and sometimes, when they were riding in the rear, grumbled viciously about the hard riding and small pay. There is usually one person of that sort in any company of travelers.

Robert minded neither the hard work nor Gib's scolding. He was as strong as a young pony, and he was seeing the world, of which he had dreamed through many a long, thyme-scented day on the Downs, with soft little

noises of sheep cropping turf all about him as he lay. What London would be like he could not quite make out, for as yet he had seen no town of more than a thousand people.

At last, near sunset, somebody riding ahead raised a shout and flung up his arm, and all knew that they were within sight of London—London, the greatest city in England, with more than a hundred churches inside its towered city wall. They pushed the horses hard, hoping to reach the New Gate before eight o'clock, but it was of no use. They were still nearly a mile from the walls when the far sound of bells warned them that they were too late. They turned back and stayed their steps at an inn called the Shepherd's Bush, out on the road to the west country over which the drovers and the packmen came. A long pole over the door had on its end a bunch of green boughs and red berries—the "bush" told them that ale was to be had within. The landlord was a West Country man, and Robert found to his joy that the landlord's old father had known Colin Edrupt the shepherd and Dame Lysbeth, and danced at their wedding, nearly half a century before.

Next morning, with the sun still in their eyes as they trotted briskly Londonward, they came to the massive gray wall, with the Fleet, a deep swift river, flowing down beside it to the Thames. They were waiting outside New Gate when the watchmen swung open the great doors, and the crowd of travelers, traders and country folk began to push in. The men with the woolpacks kept together, edging through the narrow streets that sloped downward to the river where the tall ships were anchored. The jingle of the bridle-bells, that rang so loud and merrily over the hills, was quite drowned out in the racket of the city streets where armorers were hammering, horsemen crowding, tradesmen shouting, and business of every sort was going on. Robert had somehow supposed that London would be on a great level encircled by hills, but he found with surprise that it was itself on a hill, crowned by the mighty cathedral St. Paul's, longer than Winchester, with a steeple that seemed climbing to pierce the clouds. At last the shaggy laden horses came to a halt at a warehouse by the river, where a little, dried-up-looking man in odd garments looked the wool over

and agreed with Master Hardel on the price which he would pay. Robert could not understand a word of the conversation, for the wholesale merchant was a Hollander from Antwerp, and when he had loaded his ship with the wool it would go to Flanders to be made into fine cloth. Robert was so busy watching the transactions that when the master spoke to him it made him jump.

"Here is the money for thy wool, my lad," the old man said kindly. "Hark 'ee, if you choose to ride with us again, meet me at Shepherd's Bush on the sixth day hence, and you shall have that good-for-naught Gib's place. And keep thy money safe; this is a place of thieves."

That was how Robert Edrupt rode from the West Country and settled in his mind that some day he would himself be a wool-merchant.

## THE BIOGRAPHER

The little green lizard on Solomon's wallBasked in the gold of a shimmering noon,Heard the insistent, imperious callOf hautboy and tabor and loud bassoon,When Balkis passed by, with her alien grace,And the light of wonder upon her face,To sit by the King in his lofty hall,—And the little green lizard saw it all.

The little green lizard on Solomon's wallWaited for flies the long day through,While the craftsmen came at the monarch's callTo the task that was given each man to do,And the Temple rose with its cunning wrought gold,Cedar and silver, and all it could holdIn treasure of tapestry, silk and shawl,—And the little green lizard observed it all.

The little green lizard on Solomon's wallHeard what the King said to one alone,Secrets that only the Djinns may recall,Graved on the Sacred, Ineffable Stone.And yet, when the little green lizard was ledTo speak of the King, when the King was dead,He had only kept count of the flies on the wall,—For he was but a lizard, after all!

## II

## BASIL THE SCRIBE

BROTHER BASIL, of the scriptorium, was doing two things at once with the same brain. He did not know whether any of the other monks ever indulged in this or not. None of them showed any signs of it.

The Abbot was clearly intent, soul, brain and body, on the ruling of the community. In such a house as this dozens of widely varied industries must be carried on, much time spent in prayer, song and meditation, and strict attention given to keeping in every detail the traditional Benedictine rule. In many mediæval Abbeys not all these things were done. Rumor hinted that one Order was too fond of ease, and another of increasing its estates. In the Irish Abbey where Brother Basil had received his first education, little thought was given to anything but religion; the fare was of the rudest and simplest kind. But in this English Abbey everything in the way of clothing, tools, furniture, meat and drink which could be produced on the lands was produced there. Guests of high rank were often entertained. The church, not yet complete, was planned on a magnificent scale. The work of the making of books had grown into something like a large publishing business. As the parchments for the writing, the leather for the covers, the goose-quill pens, the metal clasps, the ink, and the colors for illuminated lettering, were all made on the premises, a great deal of skilled labor was involved. Besides the revenues from the sale of manuscript volumes the Abbey sold increasing quantities of wool each year. Under some Abbots this material wealth might have led to luxury. But Benedict of Winchester held that a man who took the vows of religion should keep them.

With this Brother Basil entirely agreed. He desired above all to give his life to the service of God and the glory of his Order. He was a skillful, accurate and rapid penman. Manuscripts copied by him, or under his direction, had no mistakes or slovenly carelessness about them. The pens which he cut were works of art. The ink was from a rule for which he had made many experiments. Every book was carefully and strongly bound. Brother Basil,

in short, was an artist, and though the work might be mechanical, he could not endure not to have it beautifully done.

The Abbot was quite aware of this, and made use of the young monk's talent for perfection by putting him in charge of the scriptorium. In the twelfth century the monks were almost the only persons who had leisure for bookmaking. They wrote and translated many histories; they copied the books which made up their own libraries, borrowed books wherever they could and copied those, over and over again. They sold their work to kings, noblemen, and scholars, and to other religious houses. The need for books was so great that in the scriptorium of which Brother Basil had charge, very little time was spent on illumination. Missals, chronicles and books of hymns fancifully decorated in color were done only when there was a demand for them. They were costly in time, labor and material.

Brother Basil could copy a manuscript with his right hand and one half his brain, while the other half dreamed of things far afield. He could not remain blind to the grace of a bird's wing on its flight northward in spring, to the delicate seeking tendrils of grapevines, the starry beauty of daisies or the tracery of arched leafless boughs. Within his mind he could follow the gracious curves of the noble Norman choir, and he had visions of color more lustrous than a sunrise.

Day by day, year by year, the sheep nibbled the tender springing grass. Yet the green sward continued to be decked with orfrey-work of many hues—buttercups, violets, rose-campion, speedwell, daisies—defiant little bright heads not three inches from the roots. His fancies would come up in spite of everything, like the flowers.

But would it always be so? Was he to spend his life in copying these bulky volumes of theology and history—the same old phrases, the same authors, the same seat by the same window? And some day, would he find that his dreams had vanished forever? Might he not grow to be like Brother Peter, who had kept the porter's lodge for forty years and hated to see a new face? This was the doubt in the back of his mind, and it was very sobering indeed.

Years ago, when he was a boy, he had read the old stories of the missionary monks of Scotland and Ireland. These men carried the message of the Cross to savage tribes, they stood before Kings, they wrought wonders. Was there no more need for such work as theirs? Even now there was fierce misrule in Ireland. Even now the dispute between church and state had resulted in the murder of the Archbishop of Canterbury on the steps of the altar. The Abbeys of all England had hummed like bee-hives when that news came.

Brother Basil discovered just then that the ink was failing, and went to see how the new supply was coming on. It was a tedious task to make ink, but when made it lasted. Wood of thorn-trees must be cut in April or May before the leaves or flowers were out, and the bundles of twigs dried for two, three or four weeks. Then they were beaten with wooden mallets upon hard wooden tablets to remove the bark, which was put in a barrel of water and left to stand for eight days. The water was then put in a cauldron and boiled with some of the bark, to boil out what sap remained. When it was boiled down to about a third of the original measure it was put into another kettle and cooked until black and thick, and reduced again to a third of its bulk. Then a little pure wine was added and it was further cooked until a sort of scum showed itself, when the pot was removed from the fire and placed in the sun until the black ink purified itself of the dregs. The pure ink was then poured into bags of parchment carefully sewn and hung in the sunlight until dry, when it could be kept for any length of time till wanted. To write, one moistened the ink with a little wine and vitriol.

As all the colors for illumination must be made by similar tedious processes, it can be seen that unless there was a demand for such work it would not be thrifty to do it.

Brother Basil arrived just in time to caution the lay brother, Simon Gastard, against undue haste. Gastard was a clever fellow, but he needed watching. He was too apt to think that a little slackness here and there was good for profits. Brother Basil stood over him until the ink was quite up to the standard of the Abbey. But his mind meanwhile ran on the petty squabblings and dry records of the chronicle that he had just been copying.

How, after all, was he better than Gastard? He was giving the market what it wanted—and the book was not worth reading. If men were to write chronicles, why not make them vivid as legends, true, stirring, magnificent stories of the men who moved the world? Who would care, in a thousand years, what rent was paid by the tenant farmers of the Abbey, or who received a certain benefice from the King?

As he turned from the sunlit court where the ink was a-making, he received a summons to the Abbot's own parlor. He found that dignitary occupied with a stout and consequential monk of perhaps forty-five, who was looking bewildered, snubbed, and indignant. Brother Ambrosius was most unaccustomed to admonitions, even of the mildest. He had a wide reputation as a writer, and was indeed the author of the very volume which Brother Basil was now copying. He seemed to know by instinct what would please the buyers of chronicles, and especially what was to be left out.

It was also most unusual to see the Abbot thoroughly aroused. He had a cool, indifferent manner, which made his rebukes more cutting. Now he was in wrathful earnest.

"Ambrosius," he thundered, "there are some of us who will live to see Thomas of Canterbury a Saint of the Church. But that is no reason why we should gabble about it beforehand. You have been thinking yourself a writer, have you? Your place here has been allowed you because you are—as a rule—cautious even to timidity. Silence is always safe, and an indiscreet pen is ruinous. The children of the brain travel far, and they must not discuss their betters."

"Shall we write then of the doings of binds and swinkers?" asked the historian, pursing his heavy mouth. "It seems we cannot write of Kings and of Saints."

"You may write anything in reason of Kings and of Saints—when they are dead," the Abbot retorted. "But if you cannot avoid treasonable criticism of your King, I will find another historian. Go now to your penance."

And Brother Ambrosius, not venturing a reply, slunk out.

In the last three minutes Brother Basil had seen far beneath the surface of things. His deep-set blue eyes flamed. The dullness of the chronicle was not always the dullness of the author, it seemed. The King showed at best none too much respect for the Church, and his courtiers had dared the murder of Becket. Surely the Abbot was right.

"Basil," his superior observed grimly, "in a world full of fools it would be strange if some were not found here. It is the business of the Church to make all men alike useful to God. Because the murder of an Archbishop has set all Christendom a-buzz, we must be the more zealous to give no just cause of offence. I do not believe that Henry is guilty of that murder, but if he were, he would not shrink from other crimes. In the one case we have no reason to condemn him; in the other, we must be silent or court our own destruction. There are other ways of keeping alive the memory of Thomas of Canterbury besides foolish accusations in black and white. There may be pictures, which the people will see, ballads which they will hear and repeat—the very towers of the Cathedral will be his monument.

"I have sent for you now because there is work for you to do elsewhere. The road from Paris to Byzantium may soon be blocked. The Emperor of Germany is at open war with the Pope. Turks are attacking pilgrims in the Holy Land. Soon it may be impossible, even for a monk, to make the journey safely. The time to go is now.

"You will set forth within a fortnight, and go to Rouen, Paris and Limoges; thence to Rome, Byzantium and Alexandria. I will give you memoranda of certain manuscripts which you are to secure if possible, either by purchase or by securing permission to make copies. Get as many more as you can. The King is coming here to-night in company with the Archbishop of York, the Chancellor, a Prince of Ireland, and others. He may buy or order some works on the ancient law. He desires also to found an Abbey in Ireland, to be a cell of this house. I have selected Cuthbert of Oxenford to take charge of the work, and he will set out immediately with twelve brethren to make the foundation. When you return from your journey it will doubtless be well under way. You will begin there the training of scribes, artists, metal workers and other craftsmen. It is true that you know little of any work

except that of the scriptorium, but one can learn to know men there as well as anywhere. You will observe what is done in France, Lombardy and Byzantium. The men to whom you will have letters will make you acquainted with young craftsmen who may be induced to go to Ireland to work, and teach their work to others. Little can be done toward establishing a school until Ireland is more quiet, but in this the King believes that we shall be of some assistance. I desire you to be present at our conference, to make notes as you are directed, and to say nothing, for the present, of these matters. Ambrosius may think that you are to have his place, and that will be very well."

The Abbot concluded with a rather ominous little smile. Brother Basil went back to the scriptorium, his head in a whirl. Within a twelvemonth he would see the mosaics of Saint Mark's in Venice, the glorious windows of the French cathedrals, the dome of Saint Sophia, the wonders of the Holy Land. He was no longer part of a machine. Indeed, he must always have been more than that, or the Abbot would not have chosen him for this work. He felt very humble and very happy.

He knew that he must study architecture above anything else, for the building done by the monks was for centuries to come. Each brother of the Order gathered wisdom for all. When a monk of distinguished ability learned how to strengthen an arch here or carve a doorway there, his work was seen and studied by others from a hundred towns and cities. Living day by day with their work, the builders detected weaknesses and proved step by step all that they did. Cuthbert of Oxenford was a sure and careful mason, but that was all. The beauty of the building would have to be created by another man. Glass-work, goldsmith work, mosaics, vestments and books might be brought from abroad, but the stone-work must be done with materials near at hand and such labor as could be had. Brother Basil received letters not only to Abbots and Bishops, but to Gerard the wood-carver of Amiens, Matteo the Florentine artist, Tomaso the physician of Padua, Angelo the glass-maker. He set all in order in the scriptorium where he had toiled for five long years. Then, having been diligent in business, he went to stand before the King.

Many churchmen pictured this Plantagenet with horns and a cloven foot, and muttered references to the old fairy tale about a certain ancestor of the family who married a witch. But Brother Basil was familiar with the records of history. He knew the fierce Norman blood of the race, and knew also the long struggle between Matilda, this King's mother, and Stephen. Here, in the plainly furnished room of the Abbot, was a hawk-nosed man with gray eyes and a stout restless figure, broad coarse hands, and slightly bowed legs, as if he spent most of his days in the saddle. The others, churchmen and courtiers, looked far more like royalty. Yet Henry's realm took in all England, a part of Ireland, and a half of what is now France. He was the only real rival to the German Emperor who had defied and driven into exile the Pope of Rome. If Henry were of like mind with Frederick Barbarossa it would be a sorry day indeed for the Church. If he were disposed to contend with Barbarossa for the supreme power over Europe, the land would be worn out with wars. What would he do? Brother Basil watched the debating group and tried to make up his mind.

He wrote now and then a paragraph at the Abbot's command. It seemed that the King claimed certain taxes and service from the churchmen who held estates under him, precisely as from the feudal nobles. The Abbots and Bishops, while claiming the protection of English law for their property, claimed also that they owed no obedience to the King, but only to their spiritual master. Argument after argument was advanced by their trained minds.

But it was not for amusement that Henry II., after a day with some hunting Abbot, falcon on fist, read busily in books of law. Brother Basil began to see that the King was defining, little by little, a code of England based on the old Roman law and customs handed down from the primitive British village. Would he at last obey the Church, or not?

Suddenly the monarch halted in his pacing of the room, turned and faced the group. The lightning of his eye flashed from one to another, and all drew back a little except the Abbot, who listened with the little grim smile that the monks knew.

“I tell ye,” said Henry, bringing his hard fist down upon the oaken table, “Pope or no Pope, Emperor or no Emperor, I will be King of England, and this land shall be fief to no King upon earth. I will have neither two masters to my dogs, nor two laws to my realm. Hear ye that, my lords and councilors?”

## VENETIAN GLASS

Sea-born they learned the secrets of the sea,Prisoned her with strong love that left her free,Cherished her beauty in those fragile chainsWhereof this precious heritage remains.

Venetian glass! The hues of sunset light,The gold of starlight in a winter night,Heaven joined with earth, and faeryland was wroughtIn these the crystal Palaces of Thought.

## III

## THE PICTURE IN THE WINDOW

ALAN sat kicking his heels on the old Roman wall which was the most solid part of the half-built cathedral. He had been born and brought up on a farm not far away, and had never seen a town or a shop, although he was nearly thirteen years old. Around the great house in which the monks of the abbey lived there were a few houses of a low and humble sort, and the farm-houses thereabouts were comfortable; but there was no town in the neighborhood. The monks had come there in the beginning because it was a lonely place which no one wanted, and because they could have for the asking a great deal of land which did not seem to be good for anything. After they had settled there they proceeded to drain the marshes, fell the woods in prudent moderation, plant orchards and raise cattle and sheep and poultry.

Alan's father was one of the farmers who held land under the Abbey, as his father and grandfather had done before him. He paid his rent out of the wool from his flocks, for very soon the sheep had increased far beyond the ability of the monks to look after them. Sometimes, when a new wall was to be built or an old one repaired, he lent a hand with the work, for he was a shrewd and honest builder of common masonry and a good carpenter as well. The cathedral had been roofed in so that services could be held there, but there was only one small chapel, and the towers were not even begun. All that would have to be done when money came to hand, and what with the King's wars in Normandy, and against the Scots, his expedition to Ireland, and his difficulties with his own barons, the building trade in that part of England was a poor one.

Alan wondered, as he tilted his chin back to look up at the strong and graceful arches of the windows near by, whether he should ever see any more of it built. In the choir there were bits of stone carving which he always liked to look at, but there were only a few statues, and no glass windows. Brother Basil, who had traveled in France and Italy and had taught Alan something of drawing, said that in the cities where he had been, there were marvelous cathedrals with splendid carved towers and

windows like jeweled flowers or imprisoned flame, but no such glories were to be found in England at that time.

The boy looked beyond the gray wall at the gold and ruby and violet of the sunset clouds behind the lace-work of the bare elms, and wondered if the cathedral windows were as beautiful as that. He had an idea that they might be like the colored pictures in an old book which Brother Basil had brought from Rome, which he said had been made still further east in Byzantium—the city which we know as Constantinople.

In the arched doorway which led from the garden into the orchard some one was standing—a small old man, bent and tired-looking, with a pack on his shoulder. Alan slid off the stone ledge and ran down the path. The old man had taken off his cap and was rubbing his forehead wearily. His eyes were big and dark, his hair and beard were dark and fine, his face was lined with delicate wrinkles, and he did not look in the least like the people of the village. His voice was soft and pleasant, and though he spoke English, he did not pronounce it like the village people, or like the monks.

"This—is the cathedral?" he said in a disappointed way, as if he had expected something quite different.

"Yes," drawled Alan, for he spoke as all the farmer-folk did, with a kind of twang.

"But they are doing no work here," said the old man.

Alan shook his head. "It has been like this ever since I can remember. Father says there's no knowing when it will be finished."

The old man sighed, and then broke out in a quick patter of talk, as if he really could not help telling his story to some one. Alan could not understand all that he said, but he began to see why the stranger was so disappointed. He was Italian; he had come to London from France, and only two days after landing he had had a fall and broken his leg, so that he had been lame ever since. Then he had been robbed of his money. Some one had told him that there was an unfinished cathedral here, and he had come all the way on foot in the hope of finding work. Now, it seemed, there was no work to be had.

What interested Alan was that this old man had really helped to build the wonderful French cathedrals of which Brother Basil had told, and he was sure that if Brother Basil were here, something might be done. But he was away, on a pilgrimage; the abbot was away too; and Brother Peter, the porter, did not like strangers. Alan decided that the best thing to do would be to take the old man home and explain to his mother.

Dame Cicely at the Abbey Farm was usually inclined to give Alan what he asked, because he seldom asked anything. He was rather fond of spending his time roaming about the moors, or trying to draw pictures of things that he had seen or heard of; and she was not sure whether he would ever make a farmer or not. She was touched by the old man's troubles, and liked his polite ways; and Alan very soon had the satisfaction of seeing his new friend warm and comfortable in the chimney-corner. The rambling old farm-house had all sorts of rooms in it, and there was a little room in the older part, which had a window looking toward the sunset, a straw bed, a bench, and a fireplace, for it had once been used as a kitchen. It was never used now except at harvest-time, and the stranger could have that.

Nobody in the household, except Alan, could make much of the old man's talk. The maids laughed at his way of speaking English; the men soon found that he knew nothing of cattle-raising, or plowing, or carpentering, or thatching, or sheep-shearing. But Alan hung about the little room in all his spare time, brought fagots for the fire, answered questions, begged, borrowed or picked up somewhere whatever seemed to be needed, and watched with fascinated eyes all the doings that went on.

The old man's name, it appeared, was Angelo Pisano, and he had actually made cathedral windows, all by himself. Although Italian born, he had spent much of his life in France, and had known men of many nations, including the English. He meant now to make a window to show the Abbot when he returned, and then, perhaps, the Abbot would either let him stay and work for the Church, or help him to find work somewhere else.

The first thing that he did was to mix, in a black iron pot that Alan found among rubbish, some sand and other mysterious ingredients, and then the fire must be kept up evenly, without a minute's inattention, until exactly

the proper time, when the molten mass was lifted out in a lump on the end of a long iron pipe. Alan held his breath as the old man blew it into a great fragile crimson bubble, and then, so deftly and quickly that the boy did not see just how, cut the bottle-shaped hollow glass down one side and flattened it out, a transparent sheet of rose-red that was smooth and even for the most part, and thick and uneven around a part of the edge.

Everything had to be done a little at a time. Angelo was working with such materials as he could get, and the glass did not always turn out as he meant it should. Twice it was an utter failure and had to be re-melted and worked all over again. Once it was even finer in color than it would have been if made exactly by the rule. Angelo said that some impurity in the metal which gave the color had made a more beautiful blue than he expected. Dame Cicely happened to be there when they were talking it over, and nodded wisely.

"'Tis often that way," said she. "I remember once in the baking, the oven was too cold and I made sure the pasties would be slack-baked, and they was better than ever we had."

Alan was not sure what the glassmaker would think of this taking it for granted that cookery was as much a craft as the making of windows, but the old man nodded and smiled.

"I think that there is a gramarye in the nature of things," he said, "and God to keep us from being too wise in our own conceit lets it now and then bring all our wisdom to folly. Now, my son, we will store these away where no harm can come to them, for I have never known God to work miracles for the careless, and we have no more than time to finish the window."

They had sheets of red, blue, green, yellow and clear white glass, not very large, but beautifully clear and shining, and these were set carefully in a corner with a block of wood in front of them for protection.

Then Angelo fell silent and pulled at his beard. The little money that he had was almost gone.

"Alan, my son," he said presently, "do you know what lead is?"

Alan nodded. “The roof of the chapel was covered with it,” he said, “the chapel that burned down. The lead melted and rained down on the floor, and burned Brother Basil when he ran in to save the book with the colored pictures.”

The glass-worker smiled. “Your Brother Basil,” he said, “must have the soul of an artist. I wonder now what became of that lead?”

“They saved a little, but most of it is mixed up with the rubbish and the ashes,” Alan said confidently. “Do you want it?”

Angelo spread his hands with a funny little gesture. “Want it!” he said. “Where did they put those ashes?”

Lead was a costly thing in the Middle Ages. It was sometimes used for roofing purposes, as well as for gutter-pipes and drain-pipes, because it will not rust as iron will, and can easily be worked. Alan had played about that rubbish heap, and he knew that there were lumps of lead among the wood-ashes and crumbled stones. Much marveling, he led the artist to the pile of rubbish that had been thrown over the wall, and helped to dig out the precious bits of metal. Then the fire was lighted once more, and triumphantly Angelo melted the lead and purified it, and rolled it into sheets, and cut it into strips.

“Now,” he said one morning, “we are ready to begin. I shall make a medallion which can be set in a great window like embroidery on a curtain. It shall be a picture—of what, my son?”

His dark eyes were very kind as he looked at the boy’s eager face. The question had come so suddenly that Alan found no immediate answer. Then he saw his pet lamb delicately nibbling at a bit of green stuff which his mother held out to it as she stood in her blue gown and white apron, her bright hair shining under her cap.

“I wish we could make a picture of her,” he said a little doubtfully. Angelo smiled, and with a bit of charcoal he made a sketch on a board. Alan watched with wonder-widened eyes, although he had seen the old man draw before. Then they went together into the little room which had seen so many surprising things, and the sketch was copied on the broad wooden

bench which they had been using for a table. Then holding one end of a piece of string in the middle of the lamb's back, Angelo slipped the charcoal through a loop in the other end, and drew a circle round the whole. Around this he drew a wreath of flowers and leaves. Then he laid the white glass over the lamb and drew the outline just as a child would draw on a transparent slate, putting in the curls of the wool, the eyes and ears and hoofs, with quick, sure touches. This done, he set the white glass aside, and drew Dame Cicely's blue gown and the blue of a glimpse of sky on the blue glass. The green of the grass and the bushes was drawn on the green glass, and the roses on the red, and on the yellow, the cowslips in the grass. When all these had been cut out with a sharp tool, they fitted together exactly like the bits of a picture-puzzle, but with a little space between, for each bit of the picture had been drawn a trifle inside the line to leave room for the framework.

Now it began to be obvious what the lead was for. With the same deftness he had shown throughout the old glass-worker bent the strips of lead, which had been heated just enough to make them flexible, in and out and around the edges of the pieces of colored glass, which were held in place as the leaden strips were bent down over the edges, as a picture is held in the frame. When the work was finished, the medallion was a picture in colored glass, of a woman of gracious and kindly bearing, a pale gold halo about her face, her hand on the head of a white lamb, and a wreath of blossoms around the whole. When the sun shone through it, the leaden lines might have been a black network holding a mass of gems. Dame Cicely looked at it with awed wonder, and the lamb bleated cheerfully, as if he knew his own likeness.

Then there was an exclamation from the gateway, and they turned to see a thin-faced man in the robe and sandals of a monk, with sea-blue eyes alight in joy and surprise.

"Is it you, indeed, Angelo!" he cried. "They told me that a glass-worker was doing marvelous things here, and I heard a twelvemonth since that you were leaving Normandy for England. Where have you been all this time?"

The upshot of it all was that after much talk of old times and new times, Angelo was asked to make a series of stained glass windows for the Abbey, with all the aid that the friendship of the Abbot and Brother Basil could supply. He kept his little room at the farm, where he could see the sunset through the trees, and have the comfortable care of Dame Cicely when he found the cold of the North oppressive; but he had a glass-house of his own, fitted up close by the Abbey, and there Alan worked with him. The Abbot had met in Rouen a north-country nobleman, of the great Vavasour family, who had married a Flemish wife and was coming shortly to live on his estates within a few miles of the Abbey. He desired to have a chapel built in honor of the patron saint of his family, and had given money for that, and also for the windows in the Abbey. The Abbot had been thinking that he should have to send for these windows to some glass-house on the Continent, and when he found that the work could be done close at hand by a master of the craft, he was more than pleased. With cathedrals and churches a-building all over England, and the Abbot to make his work known to other builders of his Order, there was no danger that Angelo would be without work in the future. Some day, he said, Alan should go as a journeyman and see for himself all the cathedral windows in Italy and France, but for the present he must stick to the glass-house. And this Alan was content to do, for he was learning, day by day, all that could be learned from a man superior to most artists of either France or Italy.

**TROUBADOUR'S SONG**

When we went hunting in Fairyland,(O the chiming bells on her bridle-rein!)And the hounds broke leash at the queen's command,(O the toss of her palfrey's mane!)Like shadows we fled through the weaving shadeWith quivering moonbeams thick inlaid,And the shrilling bugles around us played—I dreamed that I fought the Dane.

Clatter of faun-feet sudden and swift,(O the view-halloo in the dusky wood!)And satyrs crowding the mountain rift,(O the flare of her fierce wild mood!)Boulders and hollows alive, astirWith a goat-thighed foe, all teeth and fur,We husked that foe like a chestnut bur—I thought of the Holy Rood.

We trailed from our shallop a magic net,(O the spell of her voice with its crooning note!)By the edge of the world, where the stars are set,(O the ripples that rocked our boat!)But into the mesh of the star-sown dreamA mermaid swept on the lashing stream,A drift of spume and an emerald gleam—I remembered my love's white throat.

When we held revel in Fairyland,(O the whirl of the dancers under the Hill!)The wind-harp sang to the queen's light hand,(O her eyes, so deep and still!)But I was a captive among them all,And the jeweled flagons were brimming with gall,And the arras of gold was a dungeon-wall,—I dreamed that they set me free!

## IV

## THE GRASSHOPPERS' LIBRARY

ON a hillside above a stone-terraced oval hollow, a youth lay singing softly to himself and making such music as he could upon a rote. The instrument was of the sort which King David had in mind when he said, "Awake, psaltery and harp; I myself will awake early." It was a box-shaped thing like a zither, which at one time had probably owned ten strings. The player was adapting his music as best he might to favor its peculiarities. Notwithstanding his debonair employment, he did not look as if he were on very good terms with life. His cloak and hose were shabby and weather-stained, his doublet was still less presentable, his cheeks were hollow, and there were dark circles under his eyes. Presently he abandoned the song altogether, and lay, chin in hand, staring down into the grass-grown, ancient pit.

It had begun its history as a Roman amphitheater, a thousand years before. Gladiators had fought and wild beasts had raged in that arena, whose encircling wall was high enough to defy the leap of the most agile of lions. Up here, on the hillside, in the archways outside the outermost ring of seats, the slaves had watched the combats. The youth had heard something about these old imperial customs, and he had guessed that he had come upon a haunt of the Roman colonists who had founded a forgotten town near by. He wondered, as he lay there, if he himself were in any better ease than those unknown captives, who had fought and died for the amusement of their owners.

Ranulph le Provençal, as he was one day to be known, was the son of a Provençal father and a Norman mother. In the siege of a town his father had been killed and his mother had died of starvation, and he himself had barely escaped with life. That had been the penalty of being on the wrong side of the struggle between the Normans of Anjou and their unwilling subjects in Aquitaine. At the moment the rebellious counts of Aquitaine were getting the best of it. Ranulph knew little of the tangled politics of the time, but it seemed to him that all France was turned into a cockpit in which the sovereign counts of France, who were jealous of their

independence, and the fierce pride of the Angevin dukes who tried to keep a foothold in both France and England, and the determined ambition of the King who sat in Paris, were warring over the enslavement of an unhappy people. He himself had no chance of becoming a knight; his life was broken off before it had fairly begun. He got his living by wandering from one place to another making songs. He had a voice, and could coax music out of almost any sort of instrument; and he had a trick of putting new words to familiar tunes that made folk laugh and listen.

Neighborhood quarrels had drained money and spirit out of the part of the country where he was, and he had almost forgotten what it was like to have enough to eat. The little dog that had followed him through his wanderings for a year foraged for scraps and fared better than his master; but now small Zipero was hungry too. The little fellow had been mauled by a mastiff that morning, and a blow from a porter's staff had broken his leg. Ranulph had rescued his comrade at some cost to himself, and might not have got off so easily if a sudden sound of trumpets had not cleared the way for a king's vanguard. As the soldiers rode in at the gates the young minstrel folded his dog in his cloak and limped out along the highway. Up here in the shade of some bushes by the deserted ruins, he had done what he could for his pet, but the little whimper Zipero gave now and then seemed to go through his heart.

Life had been difficult before, but he had been stronger, or more ignorant. He had made blithe songs when he was anything but gay at heart; he had laughed when others were weeping and howling; he had danced to his own music when every inch of his body ached with weariness; and it had all come to this. He had been turned out of his poor lodgings because he had no money; he had been driven out of the town because he would not take money earned in a certain way. He seemed to have come to the end.

If that were the case he might as well make a song about it and see what it would be like. He took up the rote, and began to work out a refrain that was singing itself in his head. Zipero listened; he was quieter when he heard the familiar sound. The song was flung like a challenge into the silent arena.

The Planet of Love in the cloud-swept nightHangs like a censer of gold,And Venus reigns on her starlit heightEven as she ruled of old.Yet the Planet of War is abroad on earthIn a chariot of scarlet flame,And Mercy and Loyalty, Love and MirthMust die for his grisly fame.

Ravens are croaking and gray wolves prowlOn the desolate field of death,The smoke of the burning hangs like a cowl—Grim Terror throttles the breath.Yet a white bird flies in the silent nightTo your window that looks on the sea,To bear to my Lady of All DelightThis one last song from me.

"Princess, the planets that rule our lifeAre the same for beggar or King,—We may win or lose in the hazard of strife,There is ever a song to sing!We are free as the wind, O heart of gold!The stars that rule our lotAre netted fast in a bond ninefold,—The twist of Solomon's Knot."

"So you believe that, my son?" asked a voice behind him. He sat up and looked about; an old man in a long dusky cloak and small flat cap had come over the brow of the hill. He answered, a trifle defiantly, "Perhaps I do. At any rate, that is the song."

"Oh, it is true," the old man said quietly as he knelt beside Zipero on the turf. He examined the bandages on the little dog's neck and forelegs, undid them, laid some bruised leaves from his basket on the wounds. The small creature, with his eyes on his master's face, licked the stranger's hand gratefully to show that he was more at ease. "Man alone is free. This herb cannot change itself; it must heal; that one must slay. Saturn is ever the Greater Malignant; our Lady Venus cannot rule war, nor can Mars rule a Court of Love. The most uncertain creature in the world is a man. The stars themselves cannot force me to revile God."

Ranulph was silent. After months and years among rude street crowds, the dignity and kindliness of the old man's ways were like a voice from another world.

"I can cure this little animal," the stranger went on presently, "if you will let me take him to my lodgings, where I have certain salves and medicines. I shall be pleased if you will come also, unless you are occupied."

Ranulph laughed; that was absurd. “I am a street singer,” he said. “My time is not in demand at present. I must tell you, however, that the Count is my enemy—if a friendless beggar can have such a thing. One of his varlets set his ban-dog on us both, this morning.”

“He will give me no trouble,” said the old man quietly. “Come, children.”

Ranulph got to his feet and followed with Zipero in his arms. At the foot of the hill on the other side was a nondescript building which had grown up around what was left of a Roman house. The unruined pillars and strongly cemented stone-work contrasted oddly with the thatch and tile of peasant workmen. They passed through a gate where an old and wrinkled woman peered through a window at them, then they went up a flight of stairs outside the wall to a tower-room in the third story. A chorus of welcome arose from a strange company of creatures, caged and free: finches, linnets, a parrot, a raven which sidled up at once to have its head scratched, pigeons strutting and cooing on the window-ledge, and a large cat of a slaty-blue color with solemn, topaz eyes, which took no more note of Zipero than if he had been a dog of stone. A basket was provided for the small patient, near the window that looked out over the hills; the old servingwoman brought food, simple but well-cooked and delicious, and Ranulph was motioned to a seat at the table. It was all done so easily and quickly that dinner was over before Ranulph found words for the gratitude which filled his soul.

“Will you not tell me,” he said hesitatingly at last, “to whom I may offer my thanks—and service—if I may not serve you in some way?”

“Give to some one else in need, when you can,” said his host calmly. “I am Tomaso of Padua. A physician’s business is healing, wherever he finds sickness in man or beast. Your little friend there needed certain things; your need is for other things; the man who is now coming up the stairs needs something else.” Taking a harp from a corner he added, “Perhaps you will amuse yourself with this for an hour, while I see what that knock at the door means, this time.”

Whoever the visitor was, he was shown into another room, and Ranulph presently forgot all his troubles and almost lost the consciousness of his surroundings, as the harp sang under his hand. He began to put into words a song which had been haunting him for days,—a ballad of a captive knight who spent seven long years in Fairyland, but in spite of all that the Fairy Queen's enchantment could do, never forgot his own people. Many of the popular romances of the time were fairy-tales full of magic spells, giants, caverns within the hills, witches and wood-folk hoofed and horned like Pan, sea-monsters, palaces which appeared and vanished like moon-shine. When they were sung to the harp-music of a troubadour who knew his work, they seemed very real.

"That is a good song," said a stranger who had come in so quietly that Ranulph did not see him. "Did you find it in Spain?"

Ranulph stood up and bowed with the grace that had not left him in all his wandering life. "No," he said, his dark eyes glinting with laughter, "I learned it in the Grasshoppers' Library. I beg your pardon, master,—that is a saying we have in Provence. You will guess the meaning. A learned physician found me there, studying diligently though perhaps not over-profitably upon a hillside."

"Not bad at all," said the stranger, sitting down by Ranulph in the window and running over the melody on the harp. His fingers swept the strings in a confident power that showed him a master-musician, and he began a song so full of wonder, mystery and sweetness that Ranulph listened spellbound. Neither of them knew that for centuries after they sat there singing in a ruined Roman tower, the song would be known to all the world as the legend of Parzifal.

"I too have studied in the Grasshoppers' Library," said the singer, "but I found in an ancient book among the infidels in Spain this tale of a cup of enchantment, and made use of it. I think that it is one of those songs which do not die, but travel far and wide in many disguises, and end perhaps in the Church. You are one of us, are you not?"

"I am a street singer," Ranulph answered, "a jongleur—a jester. I make songs for this,"—he took up his battered rote and hummed a camp-chorus.

"Do you mean to say that you play like that—on that?" asked the other. "Your studies must have led you indeed to Fairyland. You ought to go to England. The Plantagenets are friendly to us troubadours, and the English are a merry people, who delight in songs and the hearing of tales."

Ranulph did not answer. Going to England and going to Fairyland were not in the same class of undertaking. Fairyland might be just over the border of the real world, but it cost money to cross the seas.

Tomaso came in just then, his deep-set eyes twinkling. "It is all right," he said, nodding to the troubadour.

"I have been telling our friend here that he should go to England," said the latter, rising and putting on his cloak. "If, as you say, his father was loyal to the House of Anjou, Henry will remember it. He is a wise old fox, is Henry, and he needs men whom he can trust. He is changing laws, and that is no easy thing to do when you have a stubborn people with all sorts of ideas in their heads about custom, and tradition, and what not. He wants to make things safe for his sons, and the throne on which he sits is rocking. The French king is greedy and the Welsh are savage, and Italian galleys crowd the very Pool of London. I remember me when I was a student in Paris, a Welsh clerk—he calls himself now Giraldus Cambrensis, but his name then was Gerald Barri,—had the room over mine, the year that Philip was born. We woke up one night to find the whole street ablaze with torches and lanterns, and two old crones dancing under our windows with lighted torches in their hands, howling for joy. Barri stuck his head out of window and asked what ailed them, and one of them screamed in her cracked voice, 'We have got a Prince now who will drive you all out of France some day, you Englishmen!' I can see his face now as he shouted back something that assuredly was not French. I tell you, Philip will hate the English like his father before him, and these are times when a troubadour who can keep a merry face and a close tongue will learn much."

As the door closed the physician sat down in his round-backed chair, resting his long, wrinkled hands upon the arms. “Well, my son,” he said in his unperturbed voice, “I find somebody yonder is very sorry that you were thrown out of the gates this morning.”

Ranulph glanced up quickly, but said nothing.

“He had no idea that you were here, of course. He came to get me to ask the stars what had become of you, as you could not be found on the road. When he found that you would not serve him in the matter of the dagger and the poison, he never intended to let you leave the town, but as you know, your dog, seeing you mishandled, flew at his varlet, and the thick-headed fellow drove you out before he had any further orders. By such small means,” old Tomaso stroked Zipero’s head, “are evil plans made of no account.”

Ranulph drew a long breath. He had lost color.

“But you,” he faltered, “you must not shelter me if he is thus determined. He will take vengeance on you.”

The physician smiled. “He dares not. He is afraid of the stars. He knows also that I hold the death of every soul in his house in some small vial such as this—and he does not know which one. He knows that I have only to reveal to any minstrel what I know of his plans and his doings, and he would be driven from the court of his own sovereign. He can never be sure what I am going to do, and he does not know himself what he is going to do, so that he fears every one. By the twelve Houses of Fate, it must be unpleasant to be so given over to hatred!

“Now, my son, let us consider. You heard what Christian said but now of the need of the House of Anjou for faithful service. A trouvère can go where others cannot. He knows what others dare not ask. He can say what others cannot. Were it not for that prince of mischief and minstrelsy, Bertran de Born, Henry and his folk would have been at peace long ago. Know men’s hearts, and though you are a beggar in the market-place, you can turn them as a man turns a stream with a wooden dam. You shall go with Christian to Troyes and thence to Tours, and I will keep your little

friend here until he is restored, and bring him to you when I come to that place. If search is made for you it will be made in Venice, where they think you have gone."

Ranulph, with the aid of his new friends, went forth with proper harp and new raiment a day or two afterward, and repaid the loan of old Tomaso when he met the latter in Tours some six months later. He did not give up his studies in the Grasshoppers' Library, but the lean years were at an end both for him and for Zipero.

## THE WOOD-CARVER'S VISION

The Hounds of Gabriel racing with the gale,Baying wild music past the tossing trees,The Ship of Souls with moonlight-silvered sailHigh over storm-swept seas,The faun-folk scampering to their dim abode,The goblin elves that haunt the forest road,With visage of the snake and eft and toad,—I carve them as I please.

Bertrand's gray saintly patriarchs of stone,Angelo the Pisan's gold-starred sapphire sky,Marc's Venice glass, a jeweled rose full-blown,—Envy of none have I.Mine be the basilisk with mitered head,And loup-garou and mermaid, captive ledBy little tumbling cherubs who,—'tis said,—Are all but seen to fly.

Why hold we here these demons in the lightOf the High Altar, by God's candles cast?They are the heathen creatures of the night,In heavenly bonds made fast.They are set here, that for all time to be,When God's own peace broods over earth and sea,Men may remember, in a world set free,The terrors that are past.

## V

## THE BOX THAT QUENTIN CARVED

ANY one who happened to be in the market-place of Amiens one sunshiny summer morning in the last quarter of the twelfth century, might have seen a slim, dark, dreamy-eyed boy wandering about with teeth set in a ripe golden apricot, looking at all there was to be seen. But the chances were that no one who was there did see him, because people were very busy with their own affairs, and there was much to look at, far more important and interesting than a boy. In fact Quentin, who had come with his father, Jean of Peronne, to town that very morning, was not important to any one except his father and himself.

They had been living in a small village of Northern France, where they had a tiny farm, but when the mother died, Jean left the two older boys to take care of the fields, and with his youngest son, who was most like the mother, started out to find work elsewhere. He was a good mason, and masons were welcome anywhere. In all French cities and many towns cathedrals, castles or churches were a-building, and no one would think of building them of anything but stone.

While Quentin speculated on life as it might be in this new and interesting place, there was a shout of warning, a cry of terror from a woman near by, a dull rumble and crash, and a crowd began to gather in the street beside the cathedral. Before the boy could reach the place, a man in the garb of a Benedictine monk detached himself from the group and came toward him.

“My boy,” he said kindly, “you are Quentin, from Peronne? Yes? Do not be frightened, but I must tell you that your father has been hurt. They are taking him to a house near by, and if you will come with me, I will take care of you.”

The next few days were anxious ones for Quentin. His father did not die, but it was certain that he would do no more work as a mason for years, if ever. One of the older brothers came to take him home, and it was taken for granted that Quentin would go also. But the boy had a plan in his head.

There was none too much to eat at home, as it was, and it would be a long time before he was strong enough to handle stone like his father. Brother Basil, the monk who had seen his father caught under the falling wall, helped to rescue him, and taken care that he did not lose sight of his boy, had been very kind, but he did not belong in Amiens; he was on his way to Rome. Quentin met him outside the house on the day that Pierre came in from Peronne, and gave him a questioning look. He was wondering if Brother Basil would understand.

The smile that answered his look was encouraging.

"Well, my boy," said Brother Basil in his quaintly spoken French, "what is it?"

Quentin stood very straight, cap in hand. "I do not want to go home," he said slowly. "I want to stay here—and work."

"Alone?" asked the monk.

Quentin nodded. "Marc and Pierre work all day in the fields, and I am of no use there; they said so. Pierre said it again just now. I am not strong enough yet to be of use. There is work here that I can do."

He traced the outline of an ancient bit of carving on the woodwork of the overhanging doorway with one small finger. "I can do that," he said confidently.

Brother Basil's black eyebrows lifted a trifle and his mouth twitched; the boy was such a scrap of a boy. Yet he had seen enough of the oaken choir-stalls and the carved chests and the wainscoting of Amiens to know that a French wood-carver is often born with skill in his brain and his fingers, and can do things when a mere apprentice that others must be trained to do. "What have you done?" he said gravely.

"I carved a box for the mother, and when the cousin Adele saw it she would have one too. It was made with a wreath of roses on the lid, but I would not make roses for any one but the mother; Adele's box has lilies, and a picture of herself. That she liked better."

Brother Basil was thinking. “Quentin,” he said, “I know a wood-carver here, Master Gerard, who is from Peronne, and knows your talk better than I. He was a boy like you when he began to learn the work of the huchier and the wood-carver, and he might give you a place in his shop. Will your father let you stay?”

“He will if I get the chance,” said Quentin. “If I ask him now, Pierre will say things.”

Like many younger brothers, Quentin knew more about the older members of his family than they knew about him.

Brother Basil’s smile escaped control this time. He turned and strode across the market-place to the shop of Master Gerard, beckoning Quentin to follow.

“Master,” he said to the old huchier, who was planing and chipping and shaping a piece of Spanish chestnut, “here is a boy who has fallen in love with your trade.”

Master Gerard glanced up in some surprise. “He likes the trade, does he?” was the gruff comment he made. “Does the trade like him?”

“That is for you to say,” said Brother Basil, and turning on his heel he went out, to walk up and down in the sunshine before the door and meditate on the loves of craftsmen for their crafts.

“What can you do?” asked the old man shortly, still working at his piece of chestnut.

Quentin took from his pouch a bit of wood on which he had carved, very carefully, the figure of a monk at a reading-desk with a huge volume before him. He had done it the day before after he had been with Brother Basil to bring some books from the Bishop’s house, and although the figure was too small and his knife had been too clumsy to make much of a portrait of the face, he had caught exactly the intent pose of the head and the characteristic attitude of the monk’s angular figure. Master Gerard frowned.

“What sort of carving is that!” he barked. “The wood is coarse and the tools were not right. You tell me you did it?”

Quentin stood his ground. “It is my work, Master,” he said. “I had only this old knife, and I know the wood is not right, but it was all that I had.”

“And you want to learn my trade—eh?” said the old man a little more kindly. “You have no father?”

Quentin explained. Master Gerard looked doubtful. He had met boys before who liked to whittle, and wished to work in his shop; he had apprentices whose fathers were good workmen and wished their sons to learn more than they could teach; but very seldom did he meet a boy who would work as he himself had worked when he was a lad, never satisfied with what he did, because the vision in his mind ran ahead of the power in his fingers. He was an old man now, but he was still seeing what might be done in wood-working if a man could only have a chance to come back, after he had spent one lifetime in learning, and use what he had learned, in the strength of a new, clear-sighted youth. He had sons of his own, but they were only good business men. They could sell the work, but they had no inspirations.

“I will let you try what you can do,” he said at last, “that is, if your father is willing. Tell him to come and see me before he goes home. And look you—come back when you have told him this, and copy this work of yours in the proper fashion, with tools and wood which I will give you.”

Quentin bowed, thanked the old wood-carver, walked, by a great effort, steadily out of the shop and answered a question of Brother Basil’s, and then flashed like a squirrel in a hurry across the square and up the narrow winding stair in the side street where his father lodged, with the news. Pierre began two or three sentences, but never finished them. Jean of Peronne knew all about Master Gerard, and was only too glad to hear of such a chance for his motherless boy. And all the happy, sunlit afternoon Quentin sat in a corner, working away with keen-edged tools that were a joy to the hand, at a smooth-grained, close-fibered bit of wood that never splintered or split.

Master Gerard was what might be called a carpenter, or cabinet-maker. He did not make doors or window-frames, or woodwork for houses, because the great houses of that day were built almost entirely of stone. Neither did he make furniture such as chairs, tables, or bureaus, because it was not yet thought of. Kings' households and great families moved about from castle to castle, and carried with them by boat, or in heavy wagons over bad roads, whatever comforts they owned. Modern furniture would have been fit for kindling-wood in a year, but ancient French luggage was built for hard travel. Master Gerard made chests of solid, well-seasoned wood, chosen with care and put together without nails, by fitting notch into notch at the corners. These were called huches, and Master Gerard was a master huchier.

These huches were longer and lower than a large modern trunk, and could be set one on another, after they were carried up narrow twisting stairways on men's shoulders. The lid might be all in one piece, but more often it was in halves, with a bar between, so that when the chest was set on its side or end the lids would form doors. Ledges at top and bottom protected the corners and edges, and there might be feet that fitted into the bottom of the chest and made it easier to move about. The larger ones were long enough to use for a bed, and in these the tapestries that covered the walls, the embroidered bed-hangings, the cushions and mattresses to make hard seats and couches more comfortable, and the magnificent robes for state occasions, could be packed for any sort of journey. Huches were needed also for silver and gold state dishes, and the spices, preserved fruits and other luxuries needed for state feasts. It was desirable to make the chests beautiful as well as strong, for they were used as furniture; there might be a state bedstead, a huge wardrobe and one or two other furnishings in the apartments used by great folk, but the table was a movable one made of boards on trestles, and the carved huches, decorated with the heraldic emblems of the owner, served innumerable purposes. When one sees the specimens that are left, it does not seem surprising that when kings and queens went anywhere in the Middle Ages they went, if possible, by water. Luggage of that kind could be carried more easily by barge than by wagon.

After the first day, when he finished the small carved figure of Brother Basil for his master to see, Quentin did almost anything but carving. He ran errands, he sharpened tools, he helped a journeyman at his work, he worked on common carpentering which required no artistic skill. The work which Master Gerard undertook was not such as an apprentice could be trusted to do. Quentin, watching as closely as he could all that was done in the shop, saw that one sort of wood was chosen for one use, and another kind for a different job; he saw how a tool was handled to get a free, bold curve or a delicate fold of drapery, and he found out more about the trade in a year than most modern carpenters ever learn.

It was hot and uncomfortable in Amiens that summer. Life inside walls, among houses crowded and tall, was not like life in a country village, but it was not in Quentin to give up. When he felt like leaving the noisy, treeless town for the forest he would try to make a design of the flowers he remembered, or carve a knotted branch with the tools that he was allowed to use. He knew that when he should be entrusted with the carving of a chest, if that time ever came, he would have to be able to make his own design, if necessary, for that was a part of the work.

Chests were carved on the lids and ends, which showed when they were set up, and sometimes they were covered with carving. Master Gerard had a chest of his own, full of patterns which he brought out to show his patrons now and then, but which no one else ever touched. These patterns, however, were rarely followed exactly. Each great family had its own heraldic device, and the leopard, the dragon, the dolphin, the fleur-de-lis, the portcullis, or whatever it might be, must form an important part of the decoration. Some of the patterns, while their proportions were perfect, were too simple for the taste of the one who ordered the chest, and had to be varied. Some were too elaborate for a small piece of work, and had to be made simpler. The wood-carver had very little chance of success unless he was also an artist, as he usually was.

One day a great piece of carving was finished, and Master Gerard himself went to see that the workmen carried it safely; it was a chest in the form of a half-circle, for the tapestries and embroideries of the cathedral, in which

the state mantle and robes of the Bishop could be laid flat with all their heavy gold-work. The youngest journeyman, Pol, who was left to mind the shop, slipped out a few minutes later, charging Quentin strictly to stay until he came back.

Quentin had no objection. He wanted to try a pattern of his own for a small huche that was finished all but the carving. He had in mind a pattern of Master Gerard's, a border simple yet beautiful. It was copied from the inner wall of a Greek temple, although he did not know that. It was a running vine with leaves and now and then a flower, not like any vine that he had ever seen. The inclosed oblong on the lid was divided into halves by a bar, in the form of a woman's figure. Quentin thought that that was rather too stately a decoration for a small chest, and he decided to use a simple rounded bar, with grooves, which he knew that he could do well.

He was not sure how the border went. Of course, he might wait until Master Gerard came back and ask to see the pattern, but he did not quite like to do that. It might seem presuming. He wondered how it would do to try apricot twigs laid stem to tip in a curving line, a ripe fruit in place of the flower of the pattern, and blossom-clusters here and there. He tried it cautiously, drawing the outline first on a corner, and it looked so well that he began to carve the twigs.

He was finishing the second when he heard a voice in the doorway.

"Does Master Gerard do his work with elves? Or have the fairies taken him and left a changeling?" The voice was musical with laughter, and the boy looked up to see a lovely and richly-robed lady standing within the door. A little behind her was a young man in the dress of a troubadour, and servingmen stood outside holding the bridles of the horses.

Quentin sprang to his feet and bowed respectfully. "Master Gerard is but absent for an hour or two," he said; "shall I run to the Cathedral and fetch him?"

"Nay," the lady answered, sinking into the high-backed chair in the corner, "it is cool here, and we will await him. Ranulph, come look at this coffret. I

maintain that the fairies teach these people to work in wood as they do. Saw you ever the like?"

The troubadour bent over the just-begun carving. "This is no boy's play; this is good work," he said. "You have the right notion; the eye and the hand work together like two good comrades."

"My lord shall see this when he comes. I like the work." She touched the cheek of the apricot with a dainty finger. "Where did you get the pattern?"

Quentin looked down, rather shyly; he did not feel sure that he would be believed. "I had no pattern," he said. "I remembered one that Master Gerard made for a great house a month since—"

"And so do I!" laughed the lady. "Now I know where I saw that border. Therefore, not having the copy before you——"

"You invented this variation. Upon my word, the race of wood-carvers has not come to an end," laughed the young man. "I think that his Royal Highness will like this coffret well."

All in a flash it came to Quentin who this was. Some time before he had heard that the Princess Margaret, daughter of the French King, was in the city, with her husband, Prince Henry of England. It was for the Prince that Master Gerard had made that other chest. Things linked themselves together in this world, it seemed, like the apricots and blossoms of his design.

"Finish the chest," said the Princess after a pause. "I will have it for a traveling casket. Can you carve a head on the top—or two heads, facing one another, man and woman?"

"Like this?" asked Quentin, and he traced an outline on the bench. It was the lady's beautiful profile.

Master Gerard came in just then, and Pol came slinking in at the back door. The next day Quentin was promoted to Pol's place, and finished his chest in great content and happiness. It was the beginning in a long upward climb to success.

## THE CAGED BOUVEREL

I am a little finch with wings of gold,I dwell within a cage upon the wall.I cannot fly within my narrow fold,—I eat, and drink, and sing, and that is all.My good old master talks to me sometimes,But if he knows my speech I cannot tell.He is so large he cannot sing nor fly,But he and I are both named Bouverel.

I think perhaps he really wants to sing,Because the busy hammer that he wieldsGoes clinking light as merry bells that ringWhen morris-dancers frolic in the fields,And this is what the music seems to tellTo me, the finch, the feathered Bouverel.

“Kling-a-ling—clack!Masters, what do ye lack?Hammer your heart in’t, and strike with a knack!Flackety kling—Biff, batico, bing!Platter, cup, candlestick, necklace or ring!Spare not your labor, lads, make the gold sing,—And some day perhaps ye may work for the King!”

## VI

## AT THE SIGN OF THE GOLD FINCH

BANG—slam—bang-bang—slam! slam! slam!

If anybody on the Chepe in the twelfth century had ever heard of rifle-practice, early risers thereabouts might have been reminded of the crackle of guns. The noise was made by the taking down of shutters all along the shop fronts, and stacking them together out of the way. The business day in London still begins in the same way, but now there are plate-glass windows inside the shutters, and the shops open between eight and nine instead of soon after day-break.

It was the work of the apprentices and the young sons of shop-keepers to take down the shutters, sweep the floors, and put things in order for the business of the day. This was the task which Guy, nephew of Gamelyn the goldsmith, at the sign of the Gold Finch, particularly liked. The air blew sweet and fresh from the convent gardens to the eastward of the city, or up the river below London Bridge, or down from the forest-clad hills of the north, and those who had the first draft of it were in luck. London streets were narrow and twisty-wise, but not overhung with coal smoke, for the city still burned wood from the forests without the walls.

On this May morning, Guy was among the first of the boys who tumbled out from beds behind the counter and began to open the shops. The shop-fronts were all uninclosed on the first floor, and when the shutters were down the shop was separated from the street only by the counter. Above were the rooms in which the shop-keeper and his family lived, and the second story often jutted over the one below and made a kind of covered porch. In some of the larger shops, like this one of Goldsmiths' Row, the jewelers' street, there was a third story which could be used as a storeroom. There were no glass cases or glass windows. Lattices and shutters were used in window-openings, and the goods of finer quality were kept in wooden chests. The shop was also a work-room, for the shopkeeper was a manufacturer as well, and a part if not all that he sold was made in his own house.

Guy, having stacked away the shutters and taken a drink of water from the well in the little garden at the rear, got a broom and began to sweep the stone floor. It was like the brooms in pictures of witches, a bundle of fresh twigs bound on the end of a stick, withes of supple young willow being used instead of cord. Some of the twigs in the broom had sprouted green leaves. Guy sang as he swept the trash out into the middle of the street, but as a step came down the narrow stair he hushed his song. When old Gamelyn had rheumatism the less noise there was, the better. The five o'clock breakfast, a piece of brown bread, a bit of herring and a horn cup of ale, was soon finished, and then the goldsmith, rummaging among his wares, hauled a leather sack out of a chest and bade Guy run with it to Ely House.

This was an unexpected pleasure, especially for a spring morning as fair as a blossoming almond tree. The Bishop of Ely lived outside London Wall, near the road to Oxford, and his house was like a palace in a fairy-tale. It had a chapel as stately as an ordinary church, a great banquet-hall, and acres of gardens and orchards. No pleasanter place could be found for an errand in May. Guy trotted along in great satisfaction, making all the speed he could, for the time he saved on the road he might have to look about in Ely House.

For a city boy, he was extremely fond of country ways. He liked to walk out on a holiday to Mile End between the convent gardens; he liked to watch the squirrels flyte and frisk among the huge trees of Epping Forest; he liked to follow at the heels of the gardener at Ely House and see what new plant, shrub or seed some traveler from far lands had brought for the Bishop. He did not care much for the city houses, even for the finest ones, unless they had a garden. Privately he thought that if ever he had his uncle's shop and became rich,—and his uncle had no son of his own,—he would have a house outside the wall, with a garden in which he would grow fruits and vegetables for his table. Another matter on which his mind was quite made up was the kind of things that would be made in the shop when he had it. The gold finch that served for a sign had been made by his grandfather, who came from Limoges, and it was handsomer than

anything that Guy had seen there in Gamelyn's day. Silver and gold work was often sent there to be repaired, like the cup he had in the bag, a silver wine-cup which the Bishop's steward now wanted at once; but Guy wanted to learn to make such cups, and candlesticks, and finely wrought banquet-dishes himself.

He gave the cup to the steward and was told to come back for his money after tierce, that is, after the service at the third hour of the day, about half way between sunrise and noon. There were no clocks, and Guy would know when it was time to go back by the sound of the church bells. The hall was full of people coming and going on various errands. One was a tired-looking man in a coarse robe, and broad hat, rope girdle, and sandals, who, when he was told that the Bishop was at Westminster on business with the King, looked so disappointed that Guy felt sorry for him. The boy slipped into the garden for a talk with his old friend the gardener, who gave him a head of new lettuce and some young mustard, both of which were uncommon luxuries in a London household of that day, and some roots for the tiny walled garden which he and Aunt Joan were doing their best to keep up. As he came out of the gate, having got his money, he saw the man he had noticed before sitting by the roadside trying to fasten his sandal. The string was worn out.

A boy's pocket usually has string in it. Guy found a piece of leather thong in his pouch and rather shyly held it out. The man looked up with an odd smile.

"I thank you," he said in curious formal English with a lisp in it. "There is courtesy, then, among Londoners? I began to think none here cared for anything but money, and yet the finest things in the world are not for sale."

Guy did not know what to answer, but the idea interested him.

"The sky above our heads," the wayfarer went on, looking with narrowed eyes at the pink may spilling over the gray wall of the Bishop's garden,— "flowers, birds, music, these are for all. When you go on pilgrimage you find out how pleasant is the world when you need not think of gain."

The stranger was a pilgrim, then. That accounted for the clothes, but old Gamelyn had been on pilgrimage to the new shrine at Canterbury, and it had not helped his rheumatism much, and certainly had given him no such ideas as these. Guy looked up at the weary face with the brilliant eyes and smile,—they were walking together now,—and wondered.

"And what do you in London?" the pilgrim asked.

"My uncle is a goldsmith in Chepe," said the boy.

"And are you going to be a goldsmith in Chepe too?"

"I suppose so."

"Then you like not the plan?"

Guy hesitated. He never had talked of his feeling about the business, but he felt that this man would see what he meant. "I should like it better than anything," he said, "if we made things like those the Bishop has. Uncle Gamelyn says that there is no profit in them, because they take the finest metal and the time of the best workmen, and the pay is no more, and folk do not want them."

"My boy," said the pilgrim earnestly, "there are always folk who want the best. There are always men who will make only the best, and when the two come together——" He clapped his hollowed palms like a pair of cymbals. "Would you like to make a dish as blue as the sea, with figures of the saints in gold work and jewel-work—a gold cup garlanded in flowers all done in their own color,—a shrine threefold, framing pictures of the saints and studded with orfrey-work of gold and gems, yet so beautiful in the mere work that no one would think of the jewels? Would you?"

"Would I!" said Guy with a deep quick breath.

"Our jewelers of Limoges make all these, and when kings and their armies come from the Crusades they buy of us thank-offerings,—candlesticks, altar-screens, caskets, chalices, gold and silver and enamel-work of every kind. We sit at the cross-roads of Christendom. The jewels come to us from the mines of East and West. Men come to us with full purses and glad hearts, desiring to give to the Church costly gifts of their treasure, and our

best work is none too good for their desire. But here we are at Saint Paul's. I shall see you again, for I have business on the Chepe."

Guy headed for home as eagerly as a marmot in harvest time, threading his way through the crowds of the narrow streets without seeing them. He could not imagine who the stranger might be. It was dinner time, and he had to go to the cook-shop and bring home the roast, for families who could afford it patronized the cook-shops on the Thames instead of roasting and baking at home in the narrow quarters of the shops. In the great houses, with their army of servants and roomy kitchens, it was different; and the very poor did what they could, as they do everywhere; but when the wife and daughters of the shopkeeper served in the shop, or worked at embroidery, needle-craft, weaving, or any light work of the trade that they could do, it was an economy to have the cooking done out of the house.

When the shadows were growing long and the narrow pavement of Goldsmith's Row was quite dark, someone wearing a gray robe and a broad hat came along the street, slowly, glancing into each shop as he passed. To Guy's amazement, old Gamelyn got to his feet and came forward.

"Is it—is it thou indeed, master?" he said, bowing again and again. The pilgrim smiled.

"A fine shop you have here," he said, "and a fine young bird in training for the sign of the Gold Finch. He and I scraped acquaintance this morning. Is he the youth of whom you told me when we met at Canterbury?"

It was hard on Guy that just at that moment his aunt Joan called him to get some water from the well, but he went, all bursting with eagerness as he was. The pilgrim stayed to supper, and in course of time Guy found out what he had come for.

He was Eloy, one of the chief jewelers of Limoges, which in the Middle Ages meant that his work was known in every country of Europe, for that city had been as famous for its gold work ever since the days of Clovis as it is now for porcelain. Enamel-work was done there as well, and the cunning

workmen knew how to decorate gold, silver, or copper in colors like vivid flame, living green, the blue of summer skies. Eloy offered to take Guy as an apprentice and teach him all that he could for the sake of the maker of the Gold Finch, who had been his own good friend and master. It was as if the head of one of the great Paris studios should offer free training for the next ten years to some penniless art student of a country town.

What amazed Guy more than anything else, however, was the discovery that his grumbling old uncle, who never had had a good word to say for him in the shop, had told this great artist about him when they met five years before, and begged Eloy if ever he came to London to visit the Gold Finch and see the little fellow who was growing up there to learn the ancient craft in a town where men hardly knew what good work was. Even now old Gamelyn would only say that his nephew was a good boy and willing, but so painstaking that he would never make a tradesman; he spent so much unnecessary time on his work.

"He may be an artist," said Eloy with a smile; and some specimens of the work which Guy did when he was a man, which are now carefully kept in museums, prove that he was. No one knows how the enamel-work of Limoges was done; it is only clear that the men who did it were artists. The secret has long been lost—ever since the city, centuries ago, was trampled under the feet of war.

## UP ANCHOR

Yo-o heave ho! an' a y-o heave ho!And lift her down the bay—We're off to the Pillars of Hercules,All on a summer's day.We're off wi' bales of our Southdown woolOur fortune all to win,And we'll bring ye gold and gowns o' silk,Veils o' sendal as white as milk,And sugar and spice galore, lasses—When our ship comes in!

## VII

## THE VENTURE OF NICHOLAS GAY

NICHOLAS GAY stood on the wharf by his father's warehouse, and the fresh morning breeze that blew up from the Pool of the Thames was ruffling his bright hair. He could hear the seamen chanting at the windlass, and the shouts of the boatmen threading their skiffs and scows in and out among the crowded shipping. There were high-pooped Flemish freighters, built to hold all the cargo possible for a brief voyage; English coasting ships, lighter and quicker in the chop of the Channel waves; larger and more dignified London merchantmen, that had the best oak of the Weald in their bones and the pick of the Southdown wool to fill them full; Mediterranean galleys that shipped five times the crew and five times the cargo of a London ship; weather-beaten traders that had come over the North Sea with cargoes of salt fish; and many others.

The scene was never twice the same, and the boy never tired of it. Coming into port with a cargo of spices and wine was a long Mediterranean galley with oars as well as sails, each oar pulled by a slave who kept time with his neighbor like a machine. The English made their bid for fortune with the sailing-ship, and even in the twelfth century, when their keels were rarely seen in any Eastern port, there was little of the rule of wind and sea short of Gibraltar that their captains did not know.

Up Mart Lane, the steep little street from the wharves, Nicholas heard some one singing a familiar chantey, but not as the sailors sang it. He was a slender youth with a laugh in his eye, and he was singing to a guitar-like lute. He was piecing out the chantey and fitting words to it, and succeeding rather well. Nicholas stood by his father's warehouse, hands behind him and eyes on the ship just edging out to catch the tide, and listened to the song, his heart full of dreams.

"Hey, there, youngster!" said the singer kindly as he reached the end of the strophe. "Have you a share in that ship that you watch her so sharply?"

"No," said Nicholas gravely, "she's not one of father's ships. She's the Heath Hen of Weymouth, and she's loaded with wool, surely, but she's for Bordeaux."

"Bless the urchin, he might have been born on board!" The young man looked at Nicholas rather more attentively. "Your father has ships, then?"

Nicholas nodded proudly. "The Rose-in-June, and the Sainte Spirite, and the Thomasyn,—she's named for mother,—and the Sainte Genevieve, because father was born in Paris, you know, and the Saint Nicholas,—that's named for me. But I'm not old enough to have a venture yet. Father says I shall some day."

The Pool of the Thames was crowded, and as the wind freshened the ships looked even more like huge white-winged birds. Around them sailed and wheeled and fluttered the real sea-birds, picking up their living from the scraps thrown overboard,—swans, gulls, wild geese and ducks, here and there a strange bird lured to the harbor by hope of spoil. The oddly mated companions, the man and the boy, walked along busy Thames Street and came to Tower Hill and the great gray fortress-towers, with a double line of wall coiled around the base, just outside the City of London. The deep wide moat fed from the river made an island for the group of buildings with the square White Tower in the middle.

"None of your friends live there, I suppose?" the young man inquired, and Nicholas smiled rather dubiously, for he was not certain whether it was a joke or not. The Tower had been prison, palace and fort by turns, but common criminals were not imprisoned there—only those who had been accused of crimes against the State. "Lucky you," the youth added. "London is much pleasanter as a residence, I assure you. I lodged not far from here when I first came, but now I lodge——"

That sentence was never finished. Clattering down Tower Hill came a troop of horse, and one, swerving suddenly, caught Nicholas between his heels and the wall, and by the time the rider had his animal under control the little fellow was lying senseless in the arms of the stranger, who had dived in among the flying hoofs and dragged him clear. The rider, lagging

behind the rest, looked hard at the two, and then spurred on without even stopping to ask whether he had hurt the boy.

Before Nicholas had fairly come to himself he shut his teeth hard to keep from crying out with the pain in his side and left leg. The young man had laid him carefully down close by the wall, and just as he was looking about for help three of the troopers came spurring back, dismounted, and pressed close around the youth as one of them said something in French. He straightened up and looked at them, and in spite of his pain Nicholas could not help noticing that he looked proudly and straightforwardly, as if he were a gentleman born. He answered them in the same language; they shook their heads and made gruff, short answers. The young man laid his hand on his dagger, hesitated, and turned back to Nicholas.

"Little lad," he said, "this is indeed bad fortune. They will not let me take you home, but——" So deftly that the action was hidden from the men who stood by, he closed Nicholas' hand over a small packet, while apparently he was only searching for a coin in his pouch and beckoning to a respectable-looking market-woman who halted near by just then. He added in a quick low tone without looking at the boy, "Keep it for me and say nothing."

Nicholas nodded and slipped the packet into the breast of his doublet, with a groan which was very real, for it hurt him to move that arm. The young man rose and as his captors laid heavy hands upon him he put some silver in the woman's hand, saying persuasively, "This boy has been badly hurt. I know not who he is, but see that he gets home safely."

"Aye, master," said the woman compassionately, and then everything grew black once more before Nicholas' eyes as he tried to see where the men were going. When he came to himself they were gone, and he told the woman that he was Nicholas Gay and that his father was Gilbert Gay, in Fenchurch Street. The woman knew the house, which was tile-roofed and three-storied, and had a garden; she called a porter and sent him for a hurdle, and they got Nicholas home.

The merchant and his wife were seriously disturbed over the accident,—not only because the boy was hurt, and hurt in so cruel a way, but because some political plot or other seemed to be mixed up in it. From what the market-woman said it looked as if the men might have been officers of the law, and it was her guess that the young man was an Italian spy. Whatever he was, he had been taken in at the gates of the Tower. In a city of less than fifty thousand people, all sorts of gossip is rife about one faction and another, and if Gilbert Gay came to be suspected by any of the King's advisers there were plenty of jealous folk ready to make trouble for him and his. Time went by, however, and they heard nothing more of it.

Nicholas said nothing, even to his mother, of the packet which he had hidden under the straw of his bed. It was sealed with a splash of red wax over the silken knot that tied it, and much as he desired to know what was inside, Nicholas had been told by his father that a seal must never be broken except by the person who had a right to break it. Gilbert Gay had also told his children repeatedly that if anything was given to them, or told them, in confidence, it was most wrong to say a word about it. It never occurred to Nicholas that perhaps his father would expect him to tell of this. The youth had told him not to tell, and he must not tell, and that was all about it.

The broken rib and the bruises healed in time, and by the season when the Rose-in-June was due to sail, Nicholas was able to limp into the rose-garden and play with his little sister Genevieve at sailing rose-petal boats in the fountain. The time of loading the ships for a foreign voyage was always rather exciting, and this was the best and fastest of them all. When she came back, if the voyage had been fortunate, she would be laden with spices and perfumes, fine silks and linen, from countries beyond the sunrise where no one that Nicholas knew had ever been. From India and Persia, Arabia and Turkey, caravans of laden camels were even then bringing her cargo across the desert. They would be unloaded in such great market-places as Moussoul, Damascus, Bagdad and Cairo, the Babylon of those days. Alexandria and Constantinople, Tyre and Joppa, were seaport market-cities, and here the Venetian and Genoese galleys, or French ships

of Marseilles and Bordeaux, or the half-Saracen, half-Norman traders of Messina came for their goods.

The Rose-in-June would touch at Antwerp and unload wool for Flemish weavers to make into fine cloth; she would cruise around the coast, put in at Bordeaux, and sell the rest of her wool, and the grain of which England also had a plenty. She might go on to Cadiz, or even through the Straits of Gibraltar to Marseilles and Messina. The more costly the stuff which she could pack into the hold for the homeward voyage, the greater the profit for all concerned.

Since wool takes up far more room in proportion to its value than silk, wine or spices, money as well as merchandise must be put into the venture, and the more money, the more profit. Others joined in the venture with Master Gay. Edrupt the wool-merchant furnished a part of the cargo on his own account; wool-merchants traveled through the country as agents for Master Gay. The men who served in the warehouse put in their share; even the porters and apprentices sent something, if no more than a shilling. There was some profit also in the passenger trade, especially in time of pilgrimage when it was hard to get ships enough for all who wished to go. The night before the sailing, Nicholas escaped from the happy hubbub and went slowly down to the wharves. It was not a very long walk, but it tired him, and he felt rather sad as he looked at the grim gray Tower looming above the river, and wondered if the owner of the packet sealed with the red seal would ever come back.

As he passed the little church at the foot of Tower Hill a light step came up behind him, and two hands were placed on his shoulders.

“My faith!” said the young man. “Have you been here all this time?”

He was thinner and paler, but the laughter still sparkled in his dark eyes, and he was dressed in daintily embroidered doublet, fine hose, and cloak of the newest fashion, a gold chain about his neck and a harp slung from his shoulder. A group of well-dressed servants stood near the church.

“I’m well now,” said Nicholas rather shyly but happily. “I’m glad you have come back.”

"I was at my wit's end when I thought of you, lad," went on the other, "for I remembered too late that neither of us knew the other's name, and if I had told mine or asked yours in the hearing of a certain rascal it might have been a sorry time for us both. They made a little mistake, you see,—they took me for a traitor."

"How could they?" said Nicholas, surprised and indignant.

"Oh, black is white to a scared man's eyes," said his companion light-heartedly. "How have your father's ships prospered?"

"There's one of them,"—Nicholas pointed, proudly, across the little space of water, to the Rose-in-June tugging at her anchor.

"She's a fine ship," the young man said consideringly, and then, as he saw the parcel Nicholas was taking from his bosom, "Do you mean to say that that has never been opened? What sort of folk are you?"

"I never told," said Nicholas, somewhat bewildered. "You said I was not to speak of it."

"And there was no name on it, for a certain reason." The young man balanced the parcel in his hand and whistled softly. "You see, I was expecting to meet hereabouts a certain pilgrim who was to take the parcel to Bordeaux,—and beyond. I was—interfered with, as you know, and now it must go by a safe hand to one who will deliver it to this same pilgrim. I should say that your father must know how to choose his captains."

"My father is Master Gilbert Gay,"—Nicholas held his head very straight—"and that is Master Garland, the captain of the Rose-in-June, coming ashore now."

"Oh, I know him. I have had dealings with him before now. How would it be—since without your good help this packet would almost certainly have been lost—to let the worth of it be your venture in the cargo?"

"My venture?" Nicholas stammered, the color rising in his cheeks. "My venture?"

"It is not worth much in money," the troubadour said with a queer little laugh, "but it is something. Master Garland, I see you have not forgotten

me,—Ranulph, called le Provençal. Here is a packet to be delivered to Tomaso the physician of Padua, whom you know. The money within is this young man's share in your cargo, and Tomaso will pay you for your trouble."

Master Garland grinned broadly in his big beard. "Surely, sure-ly," he chuckled, and pocketed the parcel as if it had been an apple, but Nicholas noted that he kept his hand on his pouch as he went on to the wharf.

"And now," Ranulph said, as there was a stir in the crowd by the church door,—evidently some one was coming out. "I must leave you, my lad. Some day we shall meet again." Then he went hastily away to join a brilliant company of courtiers in traveling attire. Things were evidently going well with Ranulph.

Nicholas thought a great deal about that packet in the days that followed. He took to experimenting with various things to see what could account for the weight. Lead was heavy, but no one would send a lump of lead of that size over seas. The same could be said of iron. He bethought him finally of a goldsmith's nephew with whom he had acquaintance. Guy Bouverel was older, but the two boys knew each other well.

"Guy," he said one day, "what's the heaviest metal you ever handled?"

"Gold," said Guy promptly.

"A bag that was too heavy to have silver in it would have gold?"

"I should think so. Have you found treasure?"

"No," said Nicholas, "I was wondering."

The Rose-in-June came back before she was due. Master Garland came up to the house with Gilbert Gay, one rainy evening when Nicholas and Genevieve were playing nine-men's-morris in a corner and their mother was embroidering a girdle by the light of a bracket lamp. Nicholas had been taught not to interrupt, and he did not, but he was glad when his mother said gently, but with shining eyes, "Nicholas, come here."

It was a queer story that Captain Garland had to tell, and nobody could make out exactly what it meant. Two or three years before he had met

Ranulph, who was then a troubadour in the service of Prince Henry of Anjou, and he had taken a casket of gold pieces to Tomaso the physician, who was then in Genoa.

"They do say," said Captain Garland, pulling at his russet beard, "that the old doctor can do anything short o' raising the dead. They fair worshiped him there, I know. But it's my notion that that box o' gold pieces wasn't payment for physic."

"Probably not," said the merchant smiling. "Secret messengers are more likely to deliver their messages if no one knows they have any. But what happened this time?"

"Why," said the sea captain, "I found the old doctor in his garden, with a great cat o' Malta stalking along beside him, and I gave him the packet. He opened it and read the letter, and then he untied a little leather purse and spilled out half a dozen gold pieces and some jewels that fair made me blink—not many, but beauties—rubies and emeralds and pearls. He beckoned toward the house and a man in pilgrim's garb came out and valued the jewels. Then he sent me back to the Rose-in-June with the worth o' the jewels in coined gold and this ring here. 'Tell the boy,' says he, 'that he saved the King's jewels, and that he has a better jewel than all of them, the jewel of honor.'"

"But, father," said Nicholas, rather puzzled, "what else could I do?"

None of them could make anything of the mystery, but as Tomaso of Padua talked with Eloy the goldsmith that same evening they agreed that the price they paid was cheap. In the game the Pope's party was playing against that of the Emperor for the mastery of Europe, it had been deemed advisable to find out whether Henry Plantagenet would rule the Holy Roman Empire if he could. He had refused the offer of the throne of the Cæsars, and it was of the utmost importance that no one should know that the offer had been made. Hence the delivery of the letter to the jeweler.

## LONDON BELLS

London town is fair and great,Many a tower and steeple.Bells ring early and ring late,Mocking all the people.Some they say, "Good

provender,”Some they sing, “Sweet lavender,”Some they call, “The taverner,”Some they cry, “The frippererIs lord of London Town!”

London town is great and wide,Many a stately dwelling,And her folk that there abideAre beyond all telling.But by land or water-gate,Aldgate, Newgate, Bishopsgate,Ludgate, Moorgate, Cripplegate,Bells ring early and ring late,The bells of London Town.

## VIII

## BARBARA, THE LITTLE GOOSE-GIRL

ANY one who had happened to be traveling along the Islington Road between two and three o'clock in the morning, when London was a walled city, would have seen how London was to be fed that day. But very few were on the road at that hour except the people whose business it was to feed London, and to them it was an old story. There were men with cattle and men with sheep and men with pigs; there were men with little, sober, gray donkeys, not much bigger than a large dog, trotting all so briskly along with the deep baskets known as paniers hung on each side their backs; men with paniers or huge sacks on their own backs, partly resting on the shoulders and partly held by a leather strap around the forehead; men with flat, shallow baskets on their heads, piled three and four deep and filled with vegetables. That was the way in which all the butter, fruit, poultry, eggs, meat, and milk for Londoners to eat came into medieval London. Before London Wall was fairly finished there were laws against any one within the city keeping cattle or pigs on the premises. Early every morning the market folk started from the villages round about,—there were women aswell as men in the business—and by the time the city gates opened they were there.

It was not as exciting to Barbara Thwaite as it would have been if she had not known every inch of the road, but it was exciting enough on this particular summer morning, for in all her thirteen years she had never been to market alone. Goody Thwaite had been trudging over the road several times a week for years—seven miles to London and seven miles home—and sometimes she had taken Barbara with her, but never had she sent the child by herself. Now she was bedridden and unless they were to lose all their work for the last month or more, Barbara would have to go to market and tend their stall. Several of the neighbors had stalls near by, and they would look after the child, but this was the busy season, and they could not undertake to carry any produce but their own. A neighbor, too old to do out-of-door work, would tend the mother, and with much misgiving and many cautions, consent was given, and Barbara set bravely forth alone.

She had her hands full in more senses than one. Besides the basket she carried on her head, full of cress from the brook, sallet herbs and under these some early cherries, she had a basket of eggs on her arm, and she was driving three geese. Barbara's geese were trained to walk in the most orderly single file at home, but she had her doubts as to their behavior in a strange place.

The Islington Road, however, was not the broad and dusty highway that it is to-day, and at first it was not very crowded. Now and again, from one of the little wooded lanes that led up to farmsteads, a marketman would turn into the highway with his load, and more and more of them appeared as they neared the city, so that by the time they reached the city gate it was really a dense throng. From roads in every direction just such crowds were pressing toward all the other gates, and boats laden with green stuff, fruits, butter and cheese were heading for the wharves on Thames-side, all bound for the market.

Naturally it had been discovered long before that some sort of order would have to be observed, or there would be a frightful state of things among the eatables. Like most cities, London was inhabited largely by people who had come from smaller towns, and certain customs were common more or less to every market-town in England. In the smaller towns the cattle-market was held weekly or fortnightly, so that people not anxious to deal in cattle could avoid the trampling herds. London's cattle-market was not in the Chepe at all. It was in the fields outside the walls, in the deep inbent angle which the wall made between Aldersgate and Newgate, where Smithfield market is now. Even in the Chepe each kind of goods had its own place, and once through the gates the crowd separated.

Barbara knew exactly where to go. From Aldersgate she turned to the left and followed the narrow streets toward the spire of St. Michael's Church in Cornhill, where the poultry-dealers had their stands. Close by was Scalding Alley, sometimes known as the Poultry, where poultry were sold by the score, and the fowls were scalded after being killed, to make them ready for cooking. Goody Thwaite's little corner, wedged in between two bigger stalls, was not much more than a board with a coarse awning over it, but

she had been there a long time and her neighbors were friends. Barbara set down her loads, dropped on the bench and scattered a little grain for her geese. They had really behaved very well.

She was not very much to look at, this little lass Barbara. Her grandfather had come from the North Country, and she had black hair and eyes like a gypsy. She was rather silent as a rule, though she could sing like a blackbird when no one was about. People were likely to forget about Barbara until they wanted something done; then they remembered her.

She penned in the geese with a small hurdle of wicker so that they should not get away; she set out the cherries and cress on one side and the eggs on the other; then she put the eggs in a bed of cress to set off their whiteness; then she waited. An apprentice boy came by and asked the price of the cherries, whistled and went on; a sharp-faced woman stopped and looked over what she had, and went on. They were all in a hurry; they were all going on some errand of their own. The next person who came by was an old woman with a fresh bright face, white cap and neat homespun gown. She too asked the price of the cherries and shook her head when she heard it. "How good that cress looks!" she said smiling.

Barbara held out a bunch of the cress.

"I can't give away the cherries," she said, "they are not mine, but you're welcome to this."

"Thank you kindly, little maid," the old woman said, "my grandson's o'er fond of it. Never was such a chap for sallets and the like."

A few minutes later a stout, rather fussy man stopped and bought the whole basket of eggs. As he paid for them and signed to the boy who followed to take them, Michael the poultryman in the next stall grinned at Barbara.

"Ye don't know who that was, do you?" he said. "That was old Gamelyn Bouverel the goldsmith. You'll be sorry if any of those eggs be addled, my maiden."

"They're not," said Barbara. "I know where all our hens' nests are, and Gaffer Edmunds' too. We sell for him since he had the palsy."

Then a tall man in a sort of uniform stopped, eyed the staff, and without asking leave took one of the geese from the pen and strode off with it hissing and squawking under his arm. But Michael shook his head soberly as Barbara sprang up with a startled face.

"That was one o' the purveyors of my lord Fitz-Walter," he said. "He may pay for the bird and he may not, but you can't refuse him. There's one good thing—London folk don't have to feed the King's soldiers nor his household. Old King Henry,—rest his soul!—settled that in the Charter he gave the City, and this one has kept to it. My grand-dad used to tell how any time you might have a great roaring archer or man-at-arms, or more likely two or three or a dozen, quartered in your house, willy nilly, for nobody knew how long. There goes the bell for Prime—that ends the privilege."

Then Barbara remembered that the stewards of great houses were allowed to visit the market and choose what they wished until Prime (about six o'clock) after which the market was open to common folk. A merchant's wife bought another goose and some cherries, and the remaining goose was taken off her hands by the good-natured Michael, to make up a load of his own for a tavern-keeper. The rest of the cherries were sold to a young man who was very particular about the way in which they were arranged in the basket, and Barbara guessed that he was going to take them as a present to some one. The cress had gone a handful at a time with the other things, and she had some of it for her own dinner, with bread from the bakeshop and some cold meat which Goody Collins, her neighbor on the other side, had sent for. She started for home in good time, and brought her little store of money to her mother before any one had even begun to worry over her absence.

The next market-day Barbara set forth with a light heart, but when she reached her stall she found it occupied. A rough lout had set up shop there, with dressed poultry for sale. A-plenty had been said about it before Barbara arrived, both by Michael and the rough-tongued, kind-hearted market-women. But Michael was old and fat, and no match for the invader. Barbara stood in dismay, a great basket of red roses on her head, her egg-

basket on the ground, and the cherries from their finest tree in a panier hung from her shoulder. The merchant's wife had asked her if she could not bring some roses for rose-water and conserve, and if she had to hawk them about in the sun they would be fit for nothing. The Poultry was crowded, and unless she could have her little foothold here she would be obliged to go about the streets peddling, which she knew her mother would not like at all.

"What's the trouble here?" asked a decided voice behind her. She turned to look up into the cool gray eyes of a masterful young fellow with a little old woman tucked under his arm. He was brown and lithe and had an air of outdoor freshness, and suddenly she recognized the old woman. It was that first customer, and this must be the grandson of whom she had spoken so fondly.

"This man says he has this place and means to keep it," Barbara explained in a troubled but firm little voice. "He says that only the poultry dealers have any right here,—but it's Mother's corner and she has had it a long time."

"Aye, that she has," chorused two or three voices. "And if there was a man belonging to them you'd see yon scamp go packing, like a cat out o' the dairy. 'Tis a downright shame, so 'tis."

"Maybe a man that don't belong to them will do as well," said the youth coolly. "Back here, gammer, out of the way—and you go stand by her, little maid. Now then, you lummox, are you going to pick up your goods and go, or do I have to throw them after you?"

The surly fellow eyed the new-comer's broad shoulders and hard-muscled arms for a moment, picked up his poultry and began to move, but as he loaded his donkeys he said something under his breath which Barbara did not hear. An instant later she beheld him lying on his back in a none-too-clean gutter with her defender standing over him. He lost no time in making his way out of the street, followed by the laughter of the Poultry. Even the ducks, geese and chickens joined in the cackle of merriment.

"Sit thee down and rest," said the youth to Barbara kindly. "We must be getting on, grandmother. If he makes any more trouble, send some one, or come yourself, to our lodging—ask for Robert Edrupt at the house of Master Hardel the wool-merchant."

"Thank you," said Barbara shyly. "There's plenty cress in the brook, and I'll bring some next market-day—and strawberries too, but not for pay."

"Kindness breeds kindness, little maid," added the old woman, and Barbara reflected that it sometimes breeds good fortune also.

This was not the end of Barbara's acquaintance with Dame Lysbeth and her grandson. The old dame had taken a fancy to the self-possessed, quaintly dignified little maid, and the Thwaite garden proved to have in it many fruits and herbs which she needed in her housekeeping. It was a very old-fashioned garden planted a long time ago by a tavern-keeper from the south of France, and he had brought some pears and plums from his old home in the south and grafted and planted and tended them very carefully. There was one tree which had two kinds of pears on it, one for the north side and one for the south.

Barbara's mother did not get any better. One day Robert Edrupt stopped in the Poultry to buy a goose for dinner, to celebrate his home-coming from a long wool-buying journey, and the stall was empty.

"Aye," said Goody Collins, wiping her eyes, "she was a good-hearted woman, was Alison Thwaite, and there's many who will miss her. She died two days ago, rest her soul."

Edrupt bought his goose of Michael and went on his way looking sober. A plan had occurred to him, and when he talked it over with Dame Lysbeth she heartily agreed. A day or two later Barbara, standing in the door of the little lonely cottage and wondering what she should do now, saw the two of them coming down the lane. Dame Lysbeth opened the gate and came in, but Robert, after a bow and a pleasant word or two to Barbara, went on to the next farm on an errand.

Barbara could hardly believe her ears when she heard what the old dame had to say. The young wool-merchant had brought his grandmother to

London to keep house for him because he did not like to leave her alone in her cottage in the west country, nor could he live there so far from the great markets. But neither of them liked the city, and for the next few years he would have to be away more than ever. He and Master Gay had been considering a scheme for importing foreign sheep to see if they would improve the quality of English wool. Before they did this Edrupt would have to go to Spain, to Aquitaine, to Lombardy and perhaps even further. While he was abroad he might well study the ways of the weavers as well as the sheep that grew the fleece. He wanted to buy a farm he had seen, with a tidy house on it, where Dame Lysbeth could have the sort of home she was used to, but with maids to do the heavy farm work. If Barbara would come and live there, and help see to things, she would be very welcome indeed as long as she chose to stay.

Dame Lysbeth had never had a daughter, and she had often thought in the last few months that if she had one, she would like to have just such a girl as Barbara. The young girl, on her side, already loved her old friend better than she had ever loved anybody but her own mother, and so it came about that when the spring turned the apple orchards white about King's Barton, three very happy people went from London to the farm near that village, known as the Long Lea. It had land about it which was not good enough for corn, but would do very well for geese and for sheep, and there was room for a large garden, as well as the orchard. Even in those early days, people who bought an English farm usually inherited some of the work of the previous owner, and as Robert said, they would try to farm Long Lea in such a way as to leave it richer than they found it, and still lose no profit.

"Don't forget to take cuttings from this garden, lass," he said to Barbara in his blunt, kindly way, as they stood there together for the last time. "There are things here which we can make thrive in the years to come."

"I have," said Barbara staidly. She motioned to a carefully packed and tied parcel in a sack. "And there's a whole basket of eggs from all our fowls."

Edrupt laughed. He liked her business-like little way.

“Did you take any red-rose cuttings?” he inquired. “There’s a still-room where the old castle used to be, and they’d use some, I believe.”

“It’s the Provence rose,” Barbara said. “I took the whole bush up and set it in a wooden bucket. Michael won’t want that.”

Michael the poultryman was adding the little garden and the stall in the Poultry to his own business. He would cart away the little tumbledown cottage and plant kale there.

“The Provence rose, is it?” queried Edrupt thoughtfully. “We’ll have it beside our door, Barbara, and that will make you feel more at home.”

Both Barbara and the roses throve by transplanting. When Edrupt came home from his long foreign journey, more than a year later, it was rose-time, and Barbara, with a basket of roses on her arm, was marshaling a flock of most important mother-ducks with their ducklings into the poultry-yard. The house with its tiled and thatched roofs sat in the middle of its flocks and fruits and seemed to welcome all who came, and Dame Lysbeth, beaming from the window, looked so well content that it did him good to see her.

**HARPER’S SONG**

O listen, good people in fair guildhall—(Saxon gate, Norman tower on the Roman wall)A King in forest green and an Abbot in grayRode west together on the Pilgrims’ Way,And the Abbot thought the King was a crossbowman,And the King thought the Abbot was a sacristan.

(On White Horse Hill the bright sun shone,And blithe sang the wind by the Blowing Stone,—O, the bridle-bells ring merrily-sweetTo the clickety-clack of the hackney’s feet!)

Said the King in green to the Abbot in gray,“Shrewd-built is yon Abbey as I hear say,With Purbeck marble and Portland stone,Stately and fair as a Cæsar’s throne.”“Not so,” quo’ the Abbot, and shook his wise head,—“Well-founded our cloisters, when all is said,But the stones be rough as the mortar is thick,And piers of rubble are faced with brick.”

(The Saxon crypt and the Norman wallKeep faith together though Kingdoms fall,—O, the mellow chime that the great bells ringIs wooing the folk to the one true King!)

Said the Abbot in gray to the King in green,"Winchester Castle is fair to be seen,And London Tower by the changeful tideIs sure as strong as the seas are wide."But the King shook his head and spurred on his way,—"London is loyal as I dare say,But the Border is fighting us tooth and horn,And the Lion must still hunt the Unicorn."

(The trumpet blared from the fortress tower,The stern alarum clanged the hour,—O, the wild Welsh Marches their war-song singTo the tune that the swords on the morions ring!)

The King and the Abbot came riding downTo the market-square of Chippenham town,Where wool-packs, wheatears, cheese-wych, flax,Malmsey and bacon pay their tax.Quo' the King to the Abbot, "The Crown must liveBy what all England hath to give.""Faith," quoth the Abbot, "good sign is hereTithes are a-gathering for our clerkes' cheer."

(The song of the Mint is the song I sing,The crown that the beggar may share with the King,And the clink of the coin rhymes marvelous wellTo castle, or chapel, or market-bell!)

## IX

## RICHARD'S SILVER PENNY

RICHARD was going to market. He was rather a small boy to be going on that errand, especially as he carried on his shoulder a bundle nearly as big as he was. But his mother, with whom he lived in a little, whitewashed timber-and-plaster hut at the edge of the common, was too ill to go, and the Cloth Fair was not likely to wait until she was well again.

The boy could hardly remember his father. Sebastian Garland was a sailor, and had gone away so long ago that there was little hope that he would ever come back. Ever since Richard could remember they had lived as they did now, mainly by his mother's weaving. They had a few sheep which were pastured on the common, and one of the neighbors helped them with the washing and shearing. The wool had to be combed and sorted and washed in long and tedious ways before it was ready to spin, and before it was woven it was dyed in colors that Dame Garland made from plants she found in the woods and fields. She had been a Highland Scotch girl, and could weave tyrtaine, as the people in the towns called the plaids. None of the English people knew anything about the different tartans that belonged to the Scottish clans, but a woman who could weave those could make woolen cloth of a very pretty variety of patterns. She worked as a dyer, too, when she could find any one who would pay for the work, and sometimes she did weaving for a farm-wife who had more than her maids could do.

Richard knew every step of the work, from sheep-fleece to loom, and wherever a boy could help, he had been useful. He had gone to get elder bark, which, with iron filings, would dye black; he had seen oak bark used to dye yellow, and he knew that madder root was used for red, and woad for blue. His mother could not afford to buy the turmeric, indigo, kermes, and other dyestuffs brought from far countries or grown in gardens. She had to depend on whatever could be got for nothing. The bright rich colors which dyers used in dyeing wool for the London market were not for her. Yellow, brown, some kinds of green, black, gray and dull red she could make of common plants, mosses and the bark of trees. The more costly

dyestuffs were made from plants which did not grow wild in England, or from minerals.

Richard was thinking about all this as he trudged along the lane, and thinking also that it would be much easier for them to get a living if it were not for the rules of the Weavers' Guild. This association was one of the most important of the English guilds of the twelfth century, and had a charter, or protecting permit, from the King, which gave them special rights and privileges. He had also established the Cloth Fair at Smithfield in London, the greatest of all the cloth-markets that were so called. If any man did the guild "any unright or dis-ease" there was a fine of ten pounds, which would mean then more than fifty dollars would to-day. Later he protected the weavers still further by ordaining that the Portgrave should burn any cloth which had Spanish wool mixed with the English, and the weavers themselves allowed no work by candle-light. This helped to keep up the standard of the weaving, and to prevent dishonest dealers from lowering the price by selling inferior cloth. As early as 1100 Thomas Cole, the rich cloth worker of Reading, whose wains crowded the highway to London, had secured a charter from Henry I., this King's grandfather, and the measure of the King's own arm had been taken for the standard ell-measure throughout the kingdom.

Richard knew all this, because, having no one else to talk to, his mother had talked much with him; and the laws of Scotland and England differed in so many ways that she had had to find out exactly what she might and might not do. In some of the towns the weavers' guilds had made a rule that no one within ten miles who did not belong to the guild or did not own sheep should make dyed cloth. This was profitable to the weavers in the association, but it was rather hard on those who were outside, and not every one was allowed to belong. The English weavers were especially jealous of foreigners, and some of their rules had been made to discourage Flemish and Florentine workmen and traders from getting a foothold in the market.

Richard had been born in England, and when he was old enough to earn a living, he intended to repay his mother for all her hard and lonely work for

him. As an apprentice to the craft he could grow up in it and belong to the Weavers' Guild himself some day, but he thought that if there were any way to manage it he would rather be a trader. He felt rather excited now as he hurried to reach the village before the bell should ring for the opening of the market.

King's Barton was not a very big town, but on market days it seemed very busy. There was an irregular square in the middle of the town, with a cross of stone in the center, and the ringing of this bell gave notice for the opening and closing of the market. It was not always the same sort of market. Once a week the farmers brought in their cattle and sheep. On another day poultry was sold. In the season, there were corn markets and grass markets, for the crops of wheat and hay; and in every English town, markets were held at certain times for whatever was produced in the neighborhood. Everybody knew when these days came, and merchants from the larger cities came then to buy or sell—on other days they would have found the place half asleep. In so small a town there was not trade enough to support a shop for the sale of clothing, jewelry and foreign wares; but a traveling merchant could do very well on market days.

When Richard came into the square the bell had just begun to ring, and the booths were already set up and occupied. His mother had told him to look for Master Elsing, a man to whom she had sometimes sold her cloth, but he was not there. In his stall was a new man. There was some trade between London and the Hanse, or German cities, and sometimes they sent men into the country to buy at the fairs and markets and keep an eye on trade. Master Elsing had been one of these, and he had always given a fair price. The new man smiled at the boy with his big roll of cloth, and said, "What have you there, my fine lad?"

Richard told him. The man looked rather doubtful. "Let me see it," he said.

The cloth was a soft, thick rough web with a long furry nap. If it was made into a cloak the person who wore it could have the nap sheared off when it was shabby, and wear it again and shear it again until it was threadbare. A man who did this work was called a shearman or sherman. The strange merchant pursed his lips and fingered the cloth. "Common stuff," he said,

"I doubt me the dyes will not be fast color, and it will have to be finished at my cost. There is no profit for me in it, but I should like to help you—I like manly boys. What do you want for it?"

Richard named the price his mother had told him to ask. There was an empty feeling inside him, for he knew that unless they sold that cloth they had only threepence to buy anything whatever to eat, and it would be a long time to next market day. The merchant laughed. "You will never make a trader if you do not learn the worth of things, my boy," he said good-naturedly. "The cloth is worth more than that. I will give you sixpence over, just by way of a lesson."

Richard hesitated. He had never heard of such a thing as anybody offering more for a thing than was asked, and he looked incredulously at the handful of silver and copper that the merchant held out. "You had better take it and go home," the man added. "Think how surprised your mother will be! You can tell her that she has a fine young son—Conrad Waibling said so."

Richard still hesitated, and Waibling withdrew the money. "You may ask any one in the market," he said impatiently, "and if you get a better price than mine I say no more."

"Thank you," said Richard soberly, "I will come back if I get no other offer."

He took his cloth to the oldest of the merchants and asked him if he would better Waibling's price, but the man shook his head. "More than it is worth," he said. "Nobody will give you that, my boy." And from two others he got the same reply. He went back to Waibling finally, left the cloth and took his price.

He had never seen a silver penny before. It had a cross on one side and the King's head on the other, as the common pennies did; it was rather tarnished, but he rubbed it on his jacket to brighten it. He thought he would like to have it bright and shining when he showed it to his mother. All the time that he was sitting on a bank by the roadside, a little way out of the town, eating his bread and cheese, he was polishing the silver penny.

A young man who rode by just then, with a black-eyed young woman behind him, reined in his horse and looked down with some amusement. "What art doing, lad?" he asked.

"It's my silver penny," said Richard. "I wanted it to be fine and bonny to show mother."

"Ha!" said the young man. "Let's see." Richard held up the penny. "Who gave you that, my boy?"

"Master Waibling the cloth-merchant," said Richard, and he told the story of the bargain.

The young man looked grave. "Barbara," he said to the girl, "art anxious to get home? Because I have business with this same Waibling, and I want to find him before he leaves the town."

The girl smiled demurely. "That's like thee, Robert," she said. "Ever since I married thee,—and long before, it's been the same. I won't hinder thee. Leave me at Mary Lavender's and I'll have a look about her garden."

The two rode off at a brisk pace, and Richard saw them halt at a gate not far away, and while the girl went in the man mounted his horse again and came back. "Jump thee up behind me, young chap," he ordered, "and we'll see to this. The silver penny is not good. He probably got it in some trade and passed it off on the first person who would take it. Look at this one."

Edrupt held up a silver penny from his own purse.

"I didn't know," said Richard slowly. "I thought all pennies were alike."

"They're not—but until the new law was passed they were well-nigh anything you please. You see, this penny he gave you is an old one. Before the new law some time, when the King needed money very badly,—in Stephen's time maybe—they mixed the silver with lead to make it go further. That's why it would not shine. And look at this." He took out another coin. "This is true metal, but it has been clipped. Some thief took a bag full of them probably, clipped each one as much as he dared, passed off the coins for good money, and melted down the parings of silver to sell.

Next time you take a silver penny see that it is pure bright silver and quite round."

By this time they were in the market-place. Edrupt dismounted, and gave Richard the bridle to hold; then he went up to Waibling's stall, but the merchant was not there.

"He told me to mind it for him," said the man in the next booth. "He went out but now and said he would be back in a moment."

But the cloth-merchant did not come back. The web of cloth he had bought from Richard was on the counter, and that was the only important piece of goods he had bought. Quite a little crowd gathered about by the time they had waited awhile. Richard wondered what it all meant. Presently Edrupt came back, laughing.

"He has left town," he said to Richard. "He must have seen me before I met you. I have had dealings with him before, and he knew what I would do if I caught him here. Well, he has left you your cloth and the price of the stuff, less one bad penny. Will you sell the cloth to me? I am a wool-merchant, not a cloth-merchant, but I can use a cloak made of good homespun."

Richard looked up at his new friend with a face so bright with gratitude and relief that the young merchant laughed again. "What are you going to do with the penny?" he asked the boy, curiously.

"I'd like to throw it in the river," said Richard in sudden wrath. "Then it would cheat no more poor folk."

"They say that if you drop a coin in a stream it is a sign you will return," said Edrupt, still laughing, "and we want neither Waibling nor his money here again. Suppose we nail it up by the market-cross for a warning to others? How would that be?"

This was the beginning of a curious collection of coins that might be seen, some years later, nailed to a post in the market of King's Barton. There were also the names of those who had passed them, and in time, some dishonest goods also were fastened up there for all to see. When Richard saw the coin in its new place he gave a sigh of relief.

“I’ll be going home now,” he said. “Mother’s alone, and she will be wanting me.”

“Ride with me so far as Dame Lavender’s,” said the wool-merchant good-naturedly. “What’s thy name, by the way?”

“Richard Garland. Father was a sailor, and his name was Sebastian,” said the boy soberly. “Mother won’t let me say he is drowned, but I’m afraid he is.”

“Sebastian Garland,” repeated Edrupt thoughtfully. “And so thy mother makes her living weaving wool, does she?”

“Aye,” answered Richard. “She’s frae Dunfermline last, but she was born in the Highlands.”

“My wife’s grandmother was Scotch,” said Edrupt absently. He was trying to remember where he had heard the name Sebastian Garland. He set Richard down after asking him where he lived, and took his own way home with Barbara, his wife of a year. He told Barbara that the town was well rid of a rascal, but she knew by his silence thereafter that he was thinking out a plan.

“Some day,” he spoke out that evening, “there’ll be a law in the land to punish these dusty-footed knaves. They go from market to market cheating poor folk, and we have no hold on them because we cannot leave our work. But about this lad Richard Garland, Barbara, I’ve been a-thinking. What if we let him and his mother live in the little cottage beyond the sheepfold? The boy could help in tending the sheep. If they’ve had sheep o’ their own they’ll know how to make ’emselves useful, I dare say. And then, when these foreign fleeces come into the market, the dame could have dyes and so on, and we should see what kind o’ cloth they make.”

This was the first change in the fortunes of Richard Garland and his mother. A little more than a year later Sebastian Garland, now captain of Master Gay’s ship, the Rose-in-June, of London, came into port and met Robert Edrupt. On inquiry Edrupt learned that the captain had lost his wife and son many years before in a town which had been swept by the plague. When he heard of the Highland-born woman living in the Longley cottage,

he journeyed post-haste to find her, and discovered that she was indeed his wife, and Richard his son. By the time that Richard was old enough to become a trader, a court known as the Court of Pied-poudre or Dusty Feet had been established by the King at every fair. Its purpose was to prevent peddlers and wandering merchants from cheating the folk. The common people got the name "Pie-powder Court," but that made it none the less powerful. King Henry also appointed itinerant justices—traveling judges—to go about from place to place and judge according to the King's law, with the aid of the sheriffs of the neighborhood who knew the customs of the people. The general instructions of these courts were that when the case was between a rich man and a poor man, the judges were to favor the poor man until and unless there was reason to do otherwise. The Norman barons, coming from a country in which they had been used to be petty kings each in his own estate, did not like this much, but little the King cared for that. Merchants like young Richard Garland found it most convenient to have one law throughout the land for all honest men. Remembering his own hard boyhood, Richard never failed to be both just and generous to a boy.

**PERFUMER'S SONG**

The rule of the world is heavy and hard,Taketh of every life a share,Strive as it may to cherish and guardThe dawning hope that was all so fair,And yet, so sure as the night-wind blows,Memory dwells in her place apart,And the savor of rue or the breath of a roseBrings peace out of trouble, dear heart, dear heart!

There was never a joy that the world can killSo long as there lives a dream of the past,For the alchemist in his fragrant stillKeeps fresh the dream to the very last.So sure as the wind of the morning blowsTo heal the trouble, to cool the smart,The breath of lavender, thyme and roseWill bring to thee comfort, dear heart, dear heart!

## X

## MARY LAVENDER'S GARDEN

MARY LAVENDER lived in a garden. That seems really the best way to say it. The house of Dame Annis Lavender was hardly more than four walls and a roof, a green door and two small hooded windows. Instead of the house having a garden the garden seemed rather to hold the cottage in a blossomy lap.

A long time ago there had been a castle on the low hill above the cottage. It was a Saxon castle, roughly built of great half-hewn stones, its double walls partly of tramped earth. Nearly a century had passed since a Norman baron had received the "hundred" in which the castle stood, as a reward for having helped Duke William become William the Conqueror. His domain was large enough for a hundred families to live on, getting their living from the land. The original Saxon owner had fled to join Hereward at Ely, and he never came back.

This rude Saxon castle was not what the Norman needed, at all. He must have, if he meant to be safe in this hostile land, a fortress much harder to take. He chose a taller hill just beyond the village, made it higher with most of the stone from the old castle, and built there a great square frowning keep and some smaller towers, with a double wall of stone, topped by battlements, round the brow of the hill, and a ditch around all. No stream being convenient to fill the moat he left it dry. Here, where the Saxon castle had been, was nothing but a dimpled green mound, starred over in spring with pink and white baby daisies, and besprinkled with dwarf buttercups and the little flower that English children call Blue Eyes. Mary liked to take her distaff there and spin. The old castle had been built to guard a ford. The Normans had made a stone bridge at a narrower and deeper point in the river, and Dame Annis and Mary washed linen in the pool above the ford.

The countryside had settled down to the rule of the Normans with hardly more trouble than the dismantled mound. Travelers often came over the new bridge and stayed at the inn on their way to or from London, and there were more than twice as many houses as there had been when Mary's mother was a girl. Older people complained that the country could never

endure so much progress. This was a rather remote region, given over mainly to sheep-grazing. On the great extent of "common" still unfenced, the sheep wandered as they liked, and they often came nibbling about Mary's feet as she sat on the mound.

There had been a garden about the ancient castle—several, in fact: the herb-garden, the vegetable garden, and a sort of out-door nursery for fruits and berries. The last had been against a southward-facing wall and was nearly destroyed; but herbs are tenacious things, and the old roots had spread into the vegetable patch, and flowers had seeded themselves, until Dame Annis moved into the little cottage and began to make her living.

Most of the old-fashioned cottage-garden flowers could be found there. Thrift raised its rose-red spikes in crevices of a ruined wall. Bluebells, the wild hyacinths, made heavenly patches of color among the copses. Great beds of mustard and lavender, in early summer, were like a purple-and-gold mantle flung down upon a field. Presently violets bloomed in orderly rows in Dame Annis's new herb-garden, and roses were pruned and trimmed and trained over old walls and trees.

It may seem odd that violets and roses should be among herbs. The truth is that very few flowers were cultivated in the early Middle Ages simply for ornament. Violets were used to make perfume. Roses were made into rose-water and also into rose conserve, a kind of sweetmeat of rose-petals, sugar and spice packed in little jars. Marigolds were brought from the East by returning Crusaders for use in broth. Pennyroyal, feverfew, camomile, parsley, larkspur, and other flowers used to be grown for making medicine. One of the few herbs which grow in modern gardens, which the Conqueror found in England when he came, is tansy. The name comes from a Greek word meaning immortality. Tansy was used to preserve meat, and to flavor various dishes. There were also sage, marjoram, thyme, and many other herbs of which Dame Annis did not know the names. One of the most precious finds that she made in her digging and transplanting was a root of woad. This plant was used for blue dye, and was so much in demand that England did not produce enough and had to import it. It was too valuable for her to use it herself; she cherished it and fed the soil,

planting every seed, promising Mary that some day she should have a gown dyed watchet blue, of linen from their own flax. Mary was thinking about that gown as she sat spinning and listening to the hum of the bees. She knew exactly how it would be made from beginning to end.

The flax would be soaked in the brook until the strong stem-fibers were all that were left; it would be hackled and washed and spun and finally woven by their neighbor, Dame Garland, for Mary's mother had no loom. This neighbor was as poor as themselves, but they would pay her in herbs and dyestuffs. The leaves—not the flowers, which were yellow—from the woad, would be crushed into a paste and allowed to ferment, and finally made into little balls that would keep until needed.

Neither perfume nor dye could be bought in shops thereabouts, and there were no factories anywhere for making either. Dame Lavender had been, before she was married, maid to a great lady who had taught her women how to make such things out of the plants in the castle garden. Now, when her husband failed to come back from the wars in France, she turned to the perfumer's trade as the one which she knew best.

There are a great many ways of making perfume at home. If she had had a still, Dame Lavender could have made almost any sort of ordinary perfume, flavor or medicine. In this process, a mixture of blossoms, spices and drugs, or the blossoms alone, or the leaves, is cooked in a glass bottle called a retort, with a long glass tube fitted to it so that the steam must pass through the tube and cool in little drops. These drops run out into a glass flask and are the perfume. Another way was to gather flowers when perfectly fresh and put them into a kettle of alcohol, which would take up the scent and keep it after the flowers are taken out. Strong-scented flowers or leaves were put with salve in a jar and covered, to perfume the salve. Dried plants of pleasant fragrance, mixed with salve, could be left until the scent had been taken up, then the whole could be melted and strained to remove the herbs. Each herb and flower had to be gathered at the proper time, and dried in the little attic. With this business, and the honey which the bees made, and the spinning done by both mother and daughter, they managed to make a living.

One day when they were at their busiest an old man came to the door and asked for a night's lodging. He had a gentle way of speaking, although his cloak was threadbare, and he seemed much interested in their work. He knew some of the plants which they had never been able to name, and told what they were good for. He seemed so old, poor and feeble, that although she really needed all the money she could earn, Dame Lavender refused the coin he offered her. She felt that if he fell ill somewhere, he might need it.

The Norman castle on the hill had not been really lived in for some ten years. There was a company of soldiers in it, with two or three knights who came and went, but that was all. It had been built as a fortress, and was one; and the situation was such that it could not easily be made into anything else. The baron who owned it was in attendance upon the King.

Then, one day, a rumor went floating about the village, like the scent of growing hedges in spring. It was said that the castle was to be set in order for some great lady; and that she would bring with her two or three maids perhaps, but most of the work was to be done by the people of the village. This was rather mystifying. Mary wondered why a great lady should not rather choose to stay at the nunnery, where the Lady Abbess had all things seemly and well-planned. It was an old Saxon religious house and not at all rich; but Mary always liked to have an errand up Minchen Lane. The lane had got its name from the nuns, who were called "minchens" a long while ago. Sometimes they sent to get some roots or plants from the garden of Dame Lavender. She had some kinds that they had not.

It was nearly certain, at any rate, that the housekeeper at the castle would want lavender and violets, and Dame Annis told Mary to get the besom and sweep out the still-room. This was a shed with a stone floor, the only room they had which was not used for living or sleeping. The room they had given their strange guest, Tomaso of Padua as he called himself, was the one where Mary and her mother usually slept, and they had made up a pallet in the attic.

Mary worked briskly with her besom. It was just such a broom as English people still use to sweep garden walks, a bundle of twigs tied on a stick

handle with a pliant osier. While she was at work she heard the gate shut, and saw old Tomaso coming in.

It cannot be said that she was exactly glad to see him. She felt that they might have all that they could do without a lodger just then. She spoke to him courteously, however, and he smiled as if he read her thoughts.

"I have not come to ask for your hospitality this time," he said, "but to bring your good mother something in return for her kindness." Beckoning to a boy who stood outside, he opened the gate, and the boy led in a little donkey laden with the basket-work saddle-bags called paniers. From these Tomaso took all the parts of a still, some fine earthen and glass jars, flasks and bowls, and bundles of spice which were like a whole garden packed into a basket.

"These," he said, "will be of assistance to your mother in her work. I see her coming now, and I will talk with her awhile."

Mary felt as if the earth had turned inside out when she heard the outcome of that conversation. The lady who was coming to the castle was Eleanor of Aquitaine, Queen of England, and her coming was a considerable responsibility to every one concerned. She had been found just ready to join her sons, Richard and Geoffrey, in Aquitaine, where they were fighting against their father, and she was to be shut up in this remote fortress, in charge of one of the King's most trusted knights, until he had disposed of the rebellion and had time to consider the case. She would not, she declared, spend her days in a nunnery, and the nuns of Minchen Lane were anything but anxious to have her. There was a room in the Norman castle which could be fitted up as a still-room, and it was desirable to have whatever was needed made within the walls if possible. Would Mary undertake to go there and make herself useful, either in ways that might aid the cook, or in any other duties that she saw? The cook was an Italian. The maids of honor were daughters of Norman-French families. Barbara Edrupt, the wife of the wool-merchant who owned Longley Farm, was also, it appeared, going to lend a hand with the spinning and train one or two country girls for the rough work. It was no small task to maintain a royal lady in fitting state, even though she was a prisoner. It was more

difficult here because there was little or nothing to do it with, and peddlers, merchants and other purveyors from distant London or Paris might be a source of danger.

Dame Annis Lavender was rather doubtful, but she had confidence in Mary, and it was settled that Mary should go. She was to have the gown of blue sooner than she thought. The flax was already spun, Dame Garland did the weaving, and she and Mary's mother dipped and dipped again until the web was a deep exquisite blue like a summer sky. Barbara made Mary a gift of a fair white linen cap and kerchief. The two girls, Barbara with her black eyes and hair, Mary with her gold-brown braids and calm blue eyes and wild-rose coloring, made a pretty picture together.

So at least thought the troubadour who came riding by and saw them. He was in attendance upon the castellan, Thibaut of Toulouse, and a little group of maids and pages coming to make ready for the Queen, who was expected to arrive the next day. Thibaut's wife had been a Provençal lady, and his daughter Philippa, by whose side the troubadour was riding, was a trifle homesick for her childhood speech. She was very glad of Ranulph's company.

As they came past the garden she bent sidewise in her saddle and looked eagerly toward the gate. "Do you see—there?" she cried. "That is a Provence rose."

"I will bring you some," the troubadour answered, and a moment later he was striding toward the two girls among the flowers. They had never seen any one like him,—so gay, so courteous and so straightforward.

"I come to beg a rose," he said. "Are not these the red roses of Provence?"

"Surely," answered Barbara. "I brought the bush from my own home, and gave Mary a cutting. There never was such a rose for bloom and sweetness, we think. My husband he says so too."

Barbara blushed and smiled a little when she spoke of Robert, and she and Mary quickly filled a basket with the roses. The next morning Ranulph came again with the Provençal maid of honor to get more flowers, and "strowing herbs,"—sweet-scented plants that gave out their fragrance

when trodden upon. The rushes used for floor-covering were often mixed with these on festival days, and when new rushes were to be put down the whole might be swept into the fire and burned. The maids of honor made garlands for the wall, and thus the first breath of air the Queen drew in her grim, small stone rooms high in the castle keep, was laden with the scent of the blossoms of the South.

It was a cheerless abode, Mary and Barbara thought. There were no hangings, no costly dishes nor candlesticks, no weapons or anything that could be made into a weapon, nor any jewels or rich clothing.

Mary wondered a little that certain richly embroidered tapestries which belonged to the nuns had not been borrowed, for she knew that the Lady Abbess had lent them now and then. Philippa could have told her.

"It is well," said the Queen haughtily when she had seen her apartments, "that they have given me no gold-woven arras for my prison. I think I would burn it for the gold—if any of these jailers of mine could be bought perchance."

The captivity of the royal prisoner was not, however, very severe. She sometimes rode out under guard, she was allowed to walk upon the terrace and in the walled garden, and she talked sometimes with the troubadour and with old Tomaso. In one of the older towers of the castle the physician had his rooms, and here he read in ancient books, or brewed odd mixtures in his retorts and crucibles. He taught Mary more about the management of a still, the use of herbs and the making of essences than she had ever dreamed there was to learn. Physicians in those days might be quacks or alchemists. Here and there one was what we call an experimental chemist. Nearly a hundred years later some of Tomaso's papers proved most valuable to the University of Padua.

**PAVEMENT SONG**

All along the cobblestones by Saint Paul's,Clippety-clack the music runs, quick footfalls,Folk that go a-hurrying, all on business bent,They'll come to us in time, and we are content.

So we keep our cobble-shop, by Saint Paul'sHammer-stroke and wax-thread, chasing up the awls,Cobbling is a merry trade,—we'll not change with you,We've leather good cheap, and all we can do!

## XI

## SAINT CRISPIN'S DAY

"Rip-rap—tip-tap—Tick-a-tack—too!Scarlet leather sewed together—Thus we make a shoe!"—WILLIAM ALLINGHAM.

LONDON was a busy town when the long Venetian galleys and the tall ships of Spain anchored in the Pool of the Thames. Leather and silk and linen and velvet and broadcloth came to the London wharves, and London people were busy buying, selling, making and decorating every sort of apparel, from the girdle to hold a sword to the silken hood and veil of a lady. And nobody was busier than the men who worked in leather.

Nowadays we go into a shop and try on shoes made perhaps a thousand miles away, until we find a pair that will fit. But when Crispin Eyre's father sold a pair of shoes he had seen those shoes made in his own shop, under his own eye, and chosen the leather. It might be calfskin from the yard of a tanner, who bought his hides from the man who had raised the calf on his farm, or it might be fine soft goatskin out of a bale from the galleons of Spain. In either case he had to know all about leather, or he would not succeed in the shoe business. The man who aspired to be a master shoemaker had to know how to make the whole shoe. More different kinds of shoes were made in Thomas Eyre's shop than most shops sell to-day, and as he had begun to use the hammer and the awl when he was not yet ten years old, he knew how every kind should be made.

Early in the morning, before a modern family would be awake, hammers were going in the shoe-shops—tap-tap—tick-a-tack—tack! Sometimes by the light of a betty lamp in the early winter evenings the journeymen would be still at work, drawing the waxed thread carefully and quickly through the leather. Hand-sewn and made of well-tanned hide, such a shoe could be mended again and again before it was outworn. Riding-boots, leather shoes, slippers, sandals, clogs, pattens, shoes of cloth, silk, morocco, cloth-of-gold, velvet, with soles made of wood, leather, cork and sometimes even iron, went to and fro in the shadow of St. Paul's Cathedral, and sooner or later every kind crossed the threshold of Thomas Eyre's

shop. The well-to-do came to order shoes for themselves, and the wooden-shod and barefoot came to get the shoes others would wear.

Each trade kept to its own street, even in those early days. When the Guilds had multiplied so that each part of each trade had its own workers, who were not supposed to do anything outside their trade, the man who made a shoe never mended one, and the cobbler never made anything. Each trade had its Guild Hall, where the members met for business councils or holidays, and some of them had their favorite churches. It was like a very exclusive club. Men and women belonged to these societies, they made rules about the length of time a man must work before he could be a master workman, and they took care of their own poor folk out of a common fund. Each Guild had its patron saint, connected in some way with the craft it represented. The especial saint of the shoemakers was St. Crispin, and his day was the twenty-fifth of October.

The leather workers were among the most important artisans of London, and in course of time each branch of the trade had its own Guild Hall. The cordwainers or leather workers took their name from Cordova in Spain, famous for its beautiful dyed, stamped, gilded and decorated leather. The saddlers had their hall, and the lorimers or harness-makers theirs, and the skinners and leather sellers and tanners had theirs. London was rather behind some of the cities on the Continent, however, both in the number and the power of her guilds. King Henry II. was not over-inclined to favor guilds, especially in London, for London was too independent, as it was, to please him. He had observed that when cities grew so strong that they governed themselves they were quite likely to make trouble for Kings, and not unnaturally, he felt that he had trouble enough on his hands as things were without inviting more. If he had allowed it London would have had a "Commune," as the organization of a self-governing city was called, long ago.

Crispin heard this discussed more or less, for all sorts of chattering and story-telling went on in the shop, and he heard also many stories which tended to make him think. The popular tales and songs of the Middle Ages were not by any means always respectful to Kings. The people understood

very well that there were good monarchs and bad ones, and they were not blind to the reasons for the difference.

The story that Crispin liked best was the one about his own name, and on this October day, seated on his low bench beside Simon, the oldest of his shoemakers, he asked for it again.

"Aye, I'll warrant," grunted Simon, "an Eyre would be a born shoemaker, and name him Crispin— — Eh, lad, what be you after with that leather?"

Crispin's fingers were strong, if small, and he was busy with hammer and awl and waxed thread, making a little shoe.

"Just a shoe, Simon—go on with the story," said the boy, with a little, shut-mouthed grin. Simon fitted the sole to the boot he was making and picked up his hammer.

"It was a long time ago—(tap-tap) when the emperor of Rome was a-hunting down the blessed martyrs, that there were two brothers, Crispin and Crispian their names were, who lived in Rome and did nothing but kindness to every one. But there be rascals—(trip-trip-trap!)—who do not understand kindness, and ever repay it with evil. One of such a sort lived in the same street as the two brothers, and secretly ran to tell the Emperor that they were plotting against his life. Then privately the wife of this evil-doer came and warned them, for that they had given her shoes to her feet. So they fled out of the city by night and came to France and dwelt in Soissons, where the cathedral now is.

"This England was a heathen country then, they say, and France not much better. Before long the king of that kingdom heard of the strangers and sent for them to know what their business was. When they said that their business was to teach the people the story of our Lord, he asked who this lord might be, and whether he was mightier than the king, or not.

"Then when the heathen king heard that the Lord of Crispin and Crispian was more powerful than either King or emperor he had a mind to kill them, but he was afraid. He asked if they had ever seen a palace finer than his own, that was made of wood and hung with painted leather, and they said that there were finer ones in Rome. Then said the king, 'Give me a sign

of the greatness of your Lord.' And they asked him what it should be. And the king said, 'Cover the streets of my city with leather and you shall go forth unharmed.' Only the rich had any leather in those parts.

"That night Crispin and Crispian took the leather hide of their girdles and made a pair of shoes for the king. And when they came before him in the morning, they put the shoes upon his feet, the first shoes he had ever seen, and told him to walk abroad and he would find all the streets covered with leather."

The apprentices had been listening, and a laugh went round the shop, as it always did at that part of the tale.

"Thus it came to pass," concluded Simon, "that the two brothers lived at court and taught the king's leather workers how to make shoes, and that is why Saint Crispin is the friend of shoemakers."

"What was the name of him who told you the tale, Simon?" Crispin asked thoughtfully.

"Oh, he is dead these many years, but his name was Benet, and he came from Soissons, and had been to Rome and seen the street where the brothers lived. He had a nail out of one of the shoes they made for the king. People came to our house while he was with us, only to see that nail and hear the story. I heard it so many times that I learned it by heart."

Old Simon drove in the last nail with a vicious stroke that sent it well into the leather. "I'll warrant," he said, "the blessed Saint Crispin made none o' them shoes we make here, with pointed toes and rose windows on the leather, fitten for a lady." He held up the shoe with great disfavor. It was for a courtier, and the toe was two feet long and turned up, with a chain to fasten it to the knee. The front of the shoe was cut into open work in a wheel shape to show the gay silken hose underneath, and the shoe itself was of soft fine leather. With a parting sniff, Simon tossed it to a slim, grinning youth who would finish it by putting on gilding.

The shoe that Crispin was making was of a different sort. It was a little round-toed sturdy thing, about the right size for a child of ten. The mate to it was on the bench at his side, and he put them together and looked at

them rather ruefully. The shoe he had made was plain, and the other was trimmed daintily with red morocco and cut in a quaint round pattern on the toe—the decoration that was known as "a Paul's window," because the geometric cut-work with the colored lining looked like stained glass. Crispin frowned and shook his head.

"What's ailin' ye, lad?" Old Simon peered at the shoes in the boy's hands. "Bless ye, those ben't mates!"

"I know that, but I haven't any colored leather for this one even if I knew how to finish it," Crispin said with a sigh.

"Um-m-m!" Simon looked more closely at the little gay shoe. "That never came from these parts. That's Turkey leather." He gave Crispin a sharp glance. The great bell of Bow was ringing and the apprentices were quitting work. "Where did this shoe come from, now?"

Crispin hesitated. "Don't you tell, now, Simon. I found a little maid crying in Candlewick street—standing on one foot like a duck because she had lost her other shoe. She was so light I could lift her up, and I set her on a wall while I looked for the shoe, but it wasn't any good, for a horse had stepped on it. She cried so about the shoe that I—I said I would make her another. And then her father came back for her and took her away."

"Who might she be?" inquired Simon dryly.

"I don't know. I didn't tell father. She said she would send for the shoes though."

Simon had been rummaging in a leather bag behind his bench. "If she don't there's plenty of other little wenches that wear shoes. If the leather should be blue in place o' red, would that matter?"

"I shouldn't think so; one shoe is no good alone." Crispin began to be hopeful.

Old Simon pulled out some pieces of soft fine leather the color of a harebell and began to cut them quickly and deftly into fine scalloped borders. "This ben't Turkey leather, but it is a piece from Spain, and they learnt the trade

of the paynim, so I reckon 'twill do. Stitch this on the other shoe in place o' the red, and I'll cut the pattern."

Nobody would have believed that Simon's old, crooked fingers could handle a knife so cleverly. In no time the pattern on the old shoe had been copied exactly on the new one. When Crispin had stitched the blue cut-work border on both, and Simon had rubbed the new leather on some old scraps and cleaned the old a bit, the two little shoes looked like twins.

"Is there a boy here named Crispin Eyre?" inquired a man's voice from the doorway. Almost at the same time came the sweet lilting speech of a little girl, "Oh, father, that is the boy who was so kind to me!"

Crispin and old Simon stood up and bowed, for the man who spoke was a dignified person in the furred cloak and cap of a well-to-do merchant. The little girl held fast to her father's hand and gazed into the shop with bright interest. "Look at the shoes, father, aren't they pretty?"

The merchant balanced the little shoes in his broad hand. "Which did you lose, Genevieve, child?"

"I—I don't know, father," the child said, pursing her soft lips. "Cannot you tell?"

"By my faith," said the merchant thoughtfully, "if a London shoemaker's boy does work like this I doubt Edrupt may be right when he says our ten fingers are as good as any. This shoe is one of a pair from Cordova. Who's your father, lad?"

"My father is Thomas Eyre, so please you, master," said the boy proudly, "and I am Crispin."

"A good craft and a good name and a good workman," said the merchant, and dropped a coin into the litter of leather scraps. It was the full price of a new pair of shoes.

Crispin certainly could not have dreamed that his kindness to little Genevieve Gay would be the occasion of new streets in London, but it happened so. Master Gay, the merchant, came later to talk with Thomas Eyre about the shoe trade. Then, instead of sending a cargo of Irish hides

abroad he gave Eyre the choice of them. Other shoemakers took the rest, the shoe trade of London grew, and so did the tanneries. The tanners presently needed more room by running water, and sought new quarters outside London Wall. The business of London kept on growing until the Leatherworkers' Guild had presently to send abroad for their own raw material. England became more and more a manufacturing country and less a farming country. In one or another trade almost every farming product was of use. Hides were made into leather, beef went to the cook-shops; horn was made into drinking-cups and lantern-lights, bones were ground or burnt for various purposes, tallow made candles. What the farmer had been used to do for himself on his farm, the Guilds began to do in companies, and their farm was England.

## CONCEALED WEAPONS

The tiniest weed that blooms in fallow groundArms all its children for the battle-field.Its myriad warriors weapon'd cap-a-pieSwarm forth upon the land. The bursting podsTheir elfin shrapnel scatter far and wide.Aerial scouts on downy pinions flit,And awns prick lancet-wise, and clutching bursGrapple the fleeces of the wandering sheep,Invade the farm-lands and possess the soil.

The curse of Eden falling on the flowersDrove them to self-defense and made the worldOne vast weed-garden. Yea, more dreadful still,Buried within the heart of many a plantLie deadly drops of poisonous essences,Nightshade and spearwort, aconite and poppy,That slay more swift and sure than tempered steel.

The least of little folk, or soon or late,May by such hidden terrors rule the great.The least of little folk, unseen, unknown,May find that saving strength is theirs alone.

## XII

## THE LOZENGES OF GIOVANNI

RANULPH the troubadour was riding along a lonely moorland trail, singing softly to himself. In so poor a neighborhood there was little fear of robbers, and the Barbary horse which he had under him could outrun most other horses. The light-stepping hoofs made little noise upon the springy turf, and as the song ended he heard some one sobbing behind a group of stunted bushes. He halted and listened. The sound ceased.

"Ho there, little one—what is the trouble?"

He spoke in Saxon, the language of the country folk, but at the first words a figure sprang up and dodged from shrub to rock like a scared leveret. He called again quickly in French:

"Hola! little friend, wait a moment!"

There was no answer. Somehow he did not like to leave the mystery unsolved. There must be a child in trouble, but what child could there be in this wild place, and neither Norman nor Saxon? It was not far enough to the West to be Welsh borderland, and it was too far south to be near either Scotland or the Danelaw. He spoke in Provençal, and the fugitive halted at the sound of the soft southern o's and a's; then he spoke again in the Lombard dialect of Milan. A boy ventured out of the thicket and stood staring at him. Ranulph flung himself off his horse and held out his hand.

"Come here, little comrade, and tell me who you are, and why you are all alone here."

The boy's dark eyes grew wider in his elvish face and his hands opened and shut nervously as he answered in Italian:

"I am no one, and I have no home. Take me not to prison."

"There is no thought of a prison, my lad, but I cannot wait here. Come, ride with me, and I will take you to a kind woman who will take care of you."

The boy hesitated, but at last loneliness conquered timidity and distrust, and he came. The troubadour swung him up to the front of the saddle and they rode on through the gathering dusk. Forgetting his terror as he heard

the familiar sound of his native tongue, the boy told his story readily enough. His name was Giovanni Bergamotto, but he had been born in Milan, in the year that Barbarossa crossed the Alps. The first thing that he could really remember was his mother crying over her father and two brothers, who had been killed in the siege. He remembered many days when there was nothing to eat in the house. When Milan was taken he was old enough to walk at his mother's side as the people were driven out and the city destroyed so that no one should ever live there again. His father had been killed when the Emperor hung a siege-tower all over with hostages and captives to be shot at by their own people within the walls. He remembered his grandfather lifting him up to see when the Carocchio was brought out, and the great crucifix above the globe was lowered to do homage to the Emperor. He remembered seeing the Imperial banner unfurled from the top of the Cathedral. These things, his grandfather told him, no Milanese should ever forget.

He and his mother had wandered about from one city to another until his mother died, two or three years later. He had worked for a pastry cook who beat him and starved him. At last he had run away and stolen his passage on a ship bound for England. They had beaten him when they found him, but kept him to help the cook. When he landed at a southern port on the English coast, he had found himself in a land of cold mist, where no sun shone, no fruit grew, and no one knew his language. He had turned at first naturally to the towns, for he was a city boy and craved the companionship of the crowd. But when he said that he was a Lombard they seemed to be angry. Perhaps there was some dreadful mistake, and he was in a land where the Ghibellines, the friends of the Emperor, were the rulers.

When at last he faltered out this question his new friend gave a compassionate little laugh and patted his shoulder reassuringly.

"No, little one, there is no fear of that. This is England, and the English King rules all the people. We have neither Guelf nor Ghibelline. A red rose here—is just a rose," he added as he saw Giovanni's questioning look at the crimson rose in his cap. Red roses were the flower of the Guelf party in

North-Italian cities, as the white rose was the badge of the Ghibellines who favored the Imperial party; and the cities were divided between the two and fiercely partisan.

"The Lombards in London," Ranulph went on, "are often money-lenders, and this the people hate. That is why thy black hair and eyes and thy Lombard tongue made them suspect thee, little comrade."

Giovanni gave a long sigh of relief and fell silent, and when he was lifted off the horse at the door of Dame Lavender he had to be shaken awake to eat his supper. Then he was put to bed in a corner of the attic under the thatched roof, and the fragrance of well-known herbs and flowers came stealing into his dreams on the silent wind of the night.

Language is not needed when a boy finds himself in the home of a born mother. All the same, Giovanni felt still more as if he must have waked up in heaven when he found sitting by the hearth a kind, grave old man who was himself an Italian, and to whom the tragedy of the downfall of Milan was known. Tomaso the physician told Dame Lavender all about it while Giovanni was helping Mary sort herbs in the still-room. Mary had learned a little of the physician's language and knew what he liked, and partly by signs, partly in hobbling Italian, they arrived at a plan for making a vegetable soup and cooking a chicken for dinner in a way that Giovanni knew. As the fragrance of the simmering broth came in at the door Tomaso sniffed it, smiled and went to see what the little waif was about. Standing in the doorway he watched Giovanni slicing garlic and nodded to himself. Men had died of a swift dagger-thrust in a bye-street of Lombardy because they cut an onion or ate an orange in the enemy's fashion. By such small signs were Guelf and Ghibelline known.

"My boy," said the old physician, when dinner was over and Giovanni, pleased beyond measure at the compliments paid his cooking, was awaiting further orders, "do you know that Milan is going to be rebuilt?"

The Milanese boy's pinched white face lighted with incredulous rapture. "Rebuilt?" he stammered.

“Some day,” said Tomaso. “The people of four Lombard cities met in secret and made that vow not three years after the Emperor gained his victory. They have built a city at the joining of two rivers, and called it Alexandria after the Pope whom he drove out of Rome. He still has his own governors in the cities that he conquered, but the League is gaining every month. Milan will be once more the Queen of the Midland—perhaps before very long. But it is a secret.”

“They may kill me,” Giovanni stammered, “but I will not tell. I will never tell.”

Tomaso smiled. “I knew that, my son,” he said. “That is why I spoke of this to you. You may talk freely to me or to Ranulph the troubadour, but to no one else unless we give you leave. You must be patient, wise and industrious, and fit yourself to be a true citizen of the Commune. For the present, you must be a good subject of the English King, and learn the language.”

Giovanni hid the precious secret in his heart during the months that followed, and learned both English and French with a rapidity that astonished Dame Lavender. He had a wisdom in herbs and flowers, too, that was almost uncanny. In the kitchen-gardens of the great houses where he had been a scullion, there were many plants used for perfumes, flavorings or coloring fluids, which were quite unknown to the English cook. He was useful to Dame Lavender both in the garden and the still-room. He knew how to make variousdelicious cakes as well, and how to combine spices and honey and syrups most cunningly, for he had seen pastry-cooks and confectioners preparing state banquets, and he never forgot anything he had seen.

The castle which crowned the hill in the midst of the small town where Dame Lavender lived had lately been set in order for the use of a very great lady—a lady not young, but accustomed to luxury and good living—and all the resources of Dame Lavender’s garden had been taxed to provide perfumes, ointments and fresh rose-leaves, for the linen-presses and to be strewn about the floors. Mary and her mother had all that they could do in serving Queen Eleanor.

The Queen was not always easy to please. In her youth she had traveled with Crusaders and known the strange cities of the East; she had escaped once from a castle by night, in a boat, to free herself from a too-persistent suitor. She was not one of the meek ladies who spent their days in needlework, and as for spinning and weaving, she had asked scornfully if they would have her weave herself a hair shirt like a hermit. Mary Lavender was not, of course, a maid of honor, but she found that the Queen seemed rather to like having her about.

"I wish I had your secret, Marie of the Flowers," said graceful Philippa, one weary day. "Tell me what you do, that our Lady the Queen likes so well."

Mary smiled in her frank, fearless way. "It may be," she answered, "that it is the fragrance of the flowers. She desires now to embroider red roses for a cushion, and I have to ask Master Tomaso how to dye the thread."

The embroidering of red roses became popular at once, but soon there was a new trouble. The Queen began to find fault with her food.

"This cook flavors all his dishes alike," she said pettishly. "He thinks that colored toys of pastry and isinglass feed a man's stomach. When the King comes here—although he never knows what is set before him, that is true,—I would like well to have a fit meal for his gentlemen. Tell this Beppo that if he cannot cook plain toothsome dishes I will send for a farmer's wench from Longley Farm."

This was the first that had been heard of the King's intended visit, and great was the excitement in the kitchen. Ranulph dismounted at the door of Dame Lavender's cottage and asked for Giovanni. Beppo the cook had been calling for more help, and the local labor market furnished nothing that suited him. Would Giovanni come? He would do anything for Ranulph and for Mary.

"That is settled, then," laughed Ranulph. "I shall not have to scour the country for a scullion with hands about him instead of hoofs or horns."

In his fourteen years of poverty the little Italian had learned to hold his tongue and keep his eyes open. Beppo was glad enough to have a helper who did not have to be told anything twice, and in the hurry-scurry of the

preparations Giovanni made himself useful beyond belief. The cakes, however, did not suit the Queen. Mary came looking for Giovanni in the kitchen-garden.

"Vanni," she said, "will you make some of your lozenges for the banquet? Beppo says you may. I think that perhaps his cakes are not simple enough, and I know that the King likes plain fare."

Giovanni turned rather white. "Very well, Mistress Mary," he answered.

Giovanni's lozenges were not candies, although they were diamond-shaped like the lozenges that are named after them. They were cakes made after the recipe still used in some Italian bakeries. He pounded six ounces of almonds; then he weighed eight eggs and put enough pounded sugar in the opposite scale to balance them; then he took out the eggs and weighed an equal amount of flour, and of butter. He melted the butter in a little silver saucepan. The eggs were not beaten, because egg-beaters had not been invented; they were strained through a sieve from a height into a bowl, and thus mixed with air. Two of the eggs were added to the pounded almonds, and then the whole was mixed with a wooden spoon in a wooden bowl. The paste was spread on a thin copper plate and baked in an oven built into the stone wall and heated by a fireplace underneath. While still warm the cake was cut into diamond-shaped pieces, called lozenges after the carved stone memorial tablets in cathedrals. The Queen approved them, and said that she would have those cakes and none other for the banquet, but with a little more spice. Beppo, who had paid the sweetmeats a grudging compliment, produced some ground spice from his private stores and told Giovanni to use that.

"Vanni," said Mary laughing as she passed through the kitchen on the morning of the great day, "do you always scour your dishes as carefully as this?" The boy looked up from the copper plate which he was polishing. Mary thought he looked rather somber for a cook who had just been promoted to the office of baker to the King.

"Things cannot be too clean," he said briefly. "Mistress Mary, will you ask Master Tomaso for some of the spice that he gave to your mother, for me?"

Mary's blue eyes opened. Surely a court cook like Beppo ought to have all the spice needed for a simple cake like this. However, she brought Giovanni a packet of the fragrant stuff an hour later, and found Beppo fuming because the work was delayed. The basket of selected eggs had been broken, the melted butter had been spilled, and the cakes were not yet ready for the oven. Giovanni silently and deftly finished beating his pastry, added the spice, rolled out the dough, began the baking. When the cakes came out of the oven, done to a turn, and with a most alluring smell, he stood over them as they cooled and packed them carefully with his own hands into a basket. Mary Lavender came through the kitchen just as the last layer was put in.

"Those are beautiful cakes, Vanni," she said kindly. "I am sure they are fit for the King. Did you use the spice I gave you?"

Giovanni's heart gave a thump. He had not reckoned on the fact that simple Mary had grown up where there was no need of hiding a plain truth, and now Beppo would know. The cook turned on him.

"What? What?" he cried. "You did not use my spices? You take them and do not use them?"

Mary began to feel frightened. The cook's black eyes were flashing and his mustache bristling with excitement, until he looked like the cross cat on the border of the Queen's book of fables. But Giovanni was standing his ground.

"I used good spice," he said firmly. "Try and see."

He held out one of the cakes to Beppo, who dashed it furiously to the ground.

"Where are my spices?" he shrieked. "You meant to steal them?" He dashed at the lad and seized him as if to search for the spices. Giovanni shook in his grasp like a rat in the jaws of a terrier, but he did not cringe.

"I sent that packet of spice to Master Tomaso an hour ago," he gasped defiantly, "asking him if it was wholesome to use in the kitchen—and here he is now."

At sight of the old physician standing calm as a judge in the doorway, Beppo bolted through the other door, seized a horse that stood in the courtyard and was gone before the astonished servants got their breath.

"What is all this?" inquired Tomaso. "I came to warn that man that the packet of spice which you sent is poison. Where did you get it?"

"The cook bought it of a peddler and gave it to Vanni," answered Mary, scared but truthful. "You all heard him say that he did," she added to the bystanders. "He told Vanni to use it in these cakes, but Vanni used the spice you gave us."

"I have seen that peddler before," gasped Giovanni. "He tried to bribe me to take the Queen a letter and a packet, and I would not. I put some of the spice in honey, and the flies that ate of it died. Then I sent it to you."

"It was a subtle device," said Tomaso slowly. "The spice would disguise the flavor. Every one knew that Giovanni was to make the cakes, and that the Queen will not come to the banquet. When it is served do you send each sauce to me for testing. We will have no poison in the King's dish."

The plot, as Tomaso guessed, had not been born of the jealousy of a cook, but of subtler brains beyond the seas. The Queen might well have been held responsible if the poison had worked. But when she heard of it she wept.

"I have not been loyal," she flung out, in tearful defiance, "but I would not have done that—never that!"

## A SONG OF BIRDS AND BEASTS

I gaed awa' to Holyrood and there I built a kirk,And a' the birds of a' the air they helpit me to work.The whaup wi' her lang bill she dug up the stane,The dove wi' her short bill she brought it hame,The pyet was a wily bird and raised up the wa',The corby was a silly bird and she gar'd it fa',And bye cam' auld Tod Lowrie and skelpit them a'!

I gaed and I gaed and I cam' to London town,And a' the beasts of a' the earth were met to pull it down.The cock wi' his loud voice he raised a fearfu' din,The dragon he was dumb, but he creepit slyly in,The ramping

tramping unicorn he clattered at the wa',The bear he growled and grumbled and scrabbled wi' his claw,Till bye cam' auld Tod Lowrie and dang them a'!

The leopard and the wolf they were fechtin' tooth and nail,The bear wad be a lion but he couldna raise a tail,The geese they heard the brattle and yammered loud and lang,The corby flyin' owre them he made his ain sang.The lion chased the unicorn by holt and by glen,Tod Lowrie met the hounds and he bade them come ben—But the auld red rascal had twa holes tae his den!

The wolf lap in the fold and made havoc wi' the flock,The corby cleaned the banes in his howf on the rock,The weasel sacked the warren but he couldna grow fat,The cattie met a pullet and they never found that.They made a wicker boothie and they tethered there a goose,And owre the wee bit lintel they hung a braided noose,—But auld Tod Lowrie he sat in his ain hoose!

NOTE: There is a pun in the third verse, as "tail" is an old word for a retinue or following. Albert the Bear was margrave of Brandenburg, the leopard was the emblem of Anjou, and the wolf in medieval fables stands for the feudal baron. The unicorn was the legendary beast of Scotland, and the dragon that of Wales. The cock stands for France. Henry II. is satirized as the bold and cunning fox, Tod Lowrie. The allusion to the trap in the last three lines is to the offer of the throne of the Holy Roman Empire to the English monarch, during a time of general international hostility and disorder.

## XIII

## A DYKE IN THE DANELAW

FARMER APPLEBY was in what he called a fidget. He did not look nervous, and was not. But the word, along with several others he sometimes used, had come down to him from Scandinavian forefathers. The very name with its ending "by" showed that his farm was a part of the Danelaw.

Along the coast, and in the part of England fronting the North Sea, Danish invaders had imposed their own laws and customs on the country, and were strong enough to hold their own even in the face of a Saxon King. It was only a few years since the Danegeld, the tax collected from all England to ward off the raids of Danish sea-rovers, had been abolished. But Ralph Appleby was as good an Englishman as any.

Little by little the Danelaw was yielding to the common law of England, but that did not worry an Appleby. He did not trouble the law courts, nor did they molest him. The cause of his fidget was a certain law of nature by which water seeks the shortest way down. One side of his farm lay along the river. Like most of the Danish, Norse, Icelandic or Swedish colonists, his long-ago ancestor had settled on a little river in a marsh. First he made camp on an island; then he built a house on the higher bank. Then the channel on the near side of the island filled up, and he planted the rich soil that the river had brought with orchards, and pastured fat cattle in the meadows. Three hundred years later the Applebys owned one of the most prosperous farms in the neighborhood.

Now and then, however, the river remembered that it had a claim on that land. The soil, all bound and matted with tough tree-roots and quitch-grass, could not be washed away, but the waters took their toll in produce. The year before the orchards had been flooded and two-thirds of the crop floated off. A day or two later, when the flood subsided, the apples were left to fatten Farmer Kettering's hogs, rooting about on the next farm. Hob Kettering's stubborn little Saxon face was all a-grin when he met Barty Appleby and told of it. It speaks well for the friendship of the two boys that there was not a fight on the spot.

That was not all. The stone dyke between the river and the lowlands had been undermined by the tearing current, and must be rebuilt, and there were no stone-masons in the neighborhood. Each farmer did his own repairing as well as he could. The houses were of timber, plaster, some brick and a little rude masonry. There were not enough good masons in the country to supply the demand, and even in building castles and cathedrals the stone was sometimes brought, ready cut, from France. In some parts of England the people used stone from old Roman walls, or built on old foundations, but in Roman times this farm had been under water in the marsh. The building of Lincoln Cathedral meant a procession of stone-barges going up the river loaded with stone for the walls, quarried in Portland or in France. When landed it was carried up the steep hill to the site of the building, beyond reach of floods that might sap foundations. It was slow work building cathedrals in marsh lands.

The farmer was out in his boat now, poling up and down along the face of the crumbling wall, trying to figure on the amount of stone that would be needed. He never picked a stone out of his fields that was not thrown on a heap for possible wall-building, but most of them were small. It would take several loads to replace what the river had stolen—and then the whole thing might sink into the mud in a year or two.

"Hech, master!" said a voice overhead. "Are ye wantin' a stone-mason just now?"

Ralph Appleby looked up. On the little bridge, peering down, was a freckled, high-cheek-boned man with eyes as blue as his own, and with a staff in one big, hard-muscled hand. He wore a rough, shabby cloak of ancient fashion and had a bundle on his shoulder.

"I should say I be," said the surprised farmer. "Be you wanting the job?"

The stranger was evidently a Scot, from his speech, and Scots were not popular in England then. Still, if he could build a wall he was worth day's wages. "What's yer name?" Appleby added.

"Just David," was the answer. "I'm frae Dunedin. There's muckle stone work there."

“I make my guess they’ve better stuff for building than that pile o’ pebbles,” muttered the farmer, leaping ashore and kicking with his foot the heap of stone on the bank. “I’ve built that wall over again three times, now.”

The newcomer grinned, not doubtfully but confidently, as if he knew exactly what the trouble was. “We’ll mend all that,” he said, striding down to peer along the water-course. The wriggling stream looked harmless enough now.

“You’ve been in England some time?” queried Appleby.

“Aye,” said David. “I learned my trade overseas and then I came to the Minster, but I didna stay long. Me and the master mason couldna make our ideas fit.”

Barty, sorting over the stones, gazed awestruck at the stranger. Such independence was unheard-of.

“What seemed to be the hitch?” asked the farmer coolly.

“He was too fond o’ making rubble serve for buildin’ stone,” said David. “Then he’d face it with Portland ashlars to deceive the passer-by.”

“Ye’ll have no cause to worry over that here,” said Ralph Appleby dryly. “I’m not using ashlars or whatever ye call them, in my orchard wall. Good masonry will do.”

“Ashlar means a building stone cut and dressed,” explained David. “I went along that wall of yours before you came. If you make a culvert up stream with a stone-arched bridge in place of the ford yonder, ye’ll divert the course of the waters from your land.”

“If I put a bridge over the Wash, I could make a weir to catch salmon,” said the startled farmer. “I’ve no cut stone for arches.”

“We’ll use good mortar and plenty of it, that’s all,” said David. “I’ll show ye.”

The things that David accomplished with rubble, or miscellaneous scrap-stone, seemed like magic to Barty. He trotted about at the heels of the mason, got very tired and delightfully dirty, asked numberless questions,

which were always answered, and considered David the most interesting man he had ever met. David solved the building-stone problem by concocting mortar after a recipe of his own and using plenty of it between selected stones. Sometimes there seemed to be almost as much mortar as there was stone, but the wedge-shaped pieces were so fitted that the greater the pressure on the arch the firmer it would be. Laborers were set to work digging a channel to let the stream through this gully under the arches, and it seemed glad to go.

"When I'm a man, David," announced Barty, lying over the bridge-rail on his stomach and looking down at the waters that tore through the new channel, "I shall be a mason just like you. The river can't get our apples now, can it?"

David grinned. "Water never runs up hill," he said. "And it will run down hill if it takes a thousand years. You learn that first, if you want to be a mason, lad."

"But everybody knows that," Barty protested.

"Two and two mak' four, but if you and me had twa aipples each, and I ate one o' mine, and pit the ither with yours to mak' fower and you didna find it out it wad be a sign ye didna know numbers," retorted David, growing more and more Scotch as he explained. "And when I see a mason lay twa-three stones to twa-three mair and fill in the core wi' rubble I ken he doesna reckon on the water seeping in."

"But you've put rubble in those arches, David," said Barty, using his eyes to help his argument.

"Spandrel, spandrel, ye loon," grunted David. "Ye'll no learn to be a mason if ye canna mind the names o' things. The space between the arch and the beam's filled wi' rubble and good mortar, but the weight doesna rest on that—it's mostly on the arches where we used the best of our stanes. And there's no great travel ower the brig forbye. It's different with a cathedral like yon. Ye canna build siccan a mighty wall wi' mortar alone. The water's aye searchin' for a place to enter. When the rocks freeze under the foundations they crumble where the water turns to ice i' the seams. When

the rains come the water'll creep in if we dinna make a place for it to rin awa' doon the wa'. That's why we carve the little drip-channels longways of the arches, ye see. A wall's no better than the weakest stane in it, lad, and when you've built her you guard her day and night, summer and winter, frost, fire and flood, if you want her to last. And a Minster like York or Lincoln—the sound o' the hammer about her walls winna cease till Judgment Day."

Barty looked rather solemnly at the little, solid, stone-arched bridge, and the stone-walled culvert. While it was a-building David had explained that if the stream overflowed here it would be over the reedy meadows near the river, which would be none the worse for a soaking. The orchards and farm lands were safe. The work that they had done seemed to link itself in the boy's mind to cathedral towers and fortress-castles and the dykes of Flanders of which David had told.

The loose stone from the ruined wall was used to finish a wall in a new place, across the corner of the land by which the river still flowed. This would make a wharf for the boats.

"This mortar o' yours might ha' balked the Flood o' Noah, belike," said Farmer Appleby, when they were mixing the last lot.

"I wasna there, and I canna say," said David. "But there's a way to lay the stones that's worth knowing for a job like this. Let's see if ye ken your lesson, young chap."

David's amusement at Barty's intense interest in the work had changed to genuine liking. The boy showed a judgment in what he did, which pleased the mason. He had always built walls and dams with the stones he gathered when his father set him at work. His favorite playground was the stone-heap. Now he laid selected stones so deftly and skillfully that the tiny wall he was raising was almost as firm as if mortar had been used.

"You lay the stones in layers or courses," he explained, "the stretcher stones go lengthwise of the wall and the head-stones with the end on the face of the wall, and you lay first one and then the other, 'cordin' as you want them. When the big stones and the little ones are fitted so that the top

of the layer is pretty level it's coursed rubble, and that's better than just building anyhow."

"What wey is it better?" interposed David.

Barty pondered. "It looks better anyhow. And then, if you want to put cut stone, or beams, on top, you're all ready. Besides, it takes some practice to lay a wall that way, and you might as well be practicing all you can."

The two men chuckled. A part of this, of course, Farmer Appleby already knew, but he had never explained to Barty.

The boy went on. "The stones ought to be fitted so that the face of the wall is laid to a true line. If you slope it a little it's stronger, because that makes it wider at the bottom. But if you slope it too much the water won't run off and the snow will lie. If you've got any big stones put them where they will do the most good, 'cause you want the wall to be strong everywhere. A bigger stone that is pretty square, like this, can be a bond stone, and if you use one here and there it holds the wall together. David says the English gener'lly build a stone wall with a row of headers and then a row of stretchers, but in Flanders they lay a header and then a stretcher in every row."

"How many loads of stone will it take for this wall?" asked David. Barty hesitated, measured with his eye, and then made a guess. "How much mortar?" He guessed again. The estimate was so near Farmer Appleby's own figures that he was betrayed into a whistle of surprise.

"He's gey canny for a lad," said David, grinning. "He's near as wise as me. We've been at that game for a month."

"Never lat on, but aye lat owre,Twa and twa they aye mak' fowre."

Barty quoted a rhyme from David.

"I reckon you've earned over and above your pay," said Farmer Appleby. He foresaw the usefulness of all this lore when Barty was a little older. The boy could direct a gang of heavy-handed laborers nearly as well as he could.

“Any mason that’s worth his salt will dae that,” said David, unconcernedly.

Barty was experimenting with his stone-laying when a hunting-party of strangers came down the bridle-path from the fens, where they had been hawking for a day. The fame of the Appleby culvert had spread through the country, and people often came to look at it, so that no one was surprised. The leader of the group was a middle-aged stout man, with close-clipped reddish hair, a full curly beard and a masterful way of speaking; he had a bow in his hand, and paced to and fro restlessly even when he was talking.

“Who taught you to build walls, my boy?” asked a young man with bright dark eyes and a citole over his shoulder.

“David,” said Barty. “He’s a Scot. When he was in France they called him David Saumond because of his leaping. He can dance fine.”

“And who taught David?” inquired the stranger.

“The birds,” Barty answered with a grin. “There’s a song.”

“Let’s have it,” laughed the minstrel, and Barty sang.

“I gaed awa’ to Holyrood, and there I bug a kirk,And a’ the birds o’ a’ the air they helpit me to work.The whaup wi’ her lang bill she pried out the stane,The dove wi’ her short bill she brought them hame,The pyet was a wily bird and bug up the wa’,The corby was a silly bird and pu’d it down ava,And then cam’ auld Tod Lowrie and skelpit them a’.”

“What’s all that, Ranulph?” queried the masterful man, pausing in his walk. Ranulph translated, with a mischievous twinkle in his eye, for there was more in the song than Barty knew. Each of the birds stood for one or another of the Scotch lords who had figured in the recent trouble between William of Scotland and the English King, and Tod Lowrie is the popular Scotch name for the red fox. It is not every king who cares to hear himself called a fox to his face, even if he behaves like one. David and Farmer Appleby, coming through the orchard, were rather aghast.

As they came to a halt, and made proper obeisance to their superiors, the King addressed David in Norman such as the common folk used.

"So you hold it folly to pull down a wall? There's not one stone left on another in Milan since Frederick Barbarossa took the city."

"Ou ay," said David coolly. "If he had to build it up again he'd no be so blate, I'm thinkin'."

The King laughed and so did the others. "I wish I had had you seven years ago," he said, "when we dyked the Loire. There were thirty miles of river bank at Angers, flooded season after season, when a well-built river wall would have saved the ruin. A man that can handle rubble in a marsh like this ought to be doing something better."

"I learned my trade on that dyke," said David. "They Norman priors havena all learned theirs yet. I was at the Minster yonder, and if I'd built my piers like they said, the water would ha' creepit under in ten years' time."

"And in ten years, that Prior hopes to be Archbishop without doubt," said the King with a shrug. "Was that all?"

"Nay," said David. "Their ashlars are set up for vanity and to be seen o' men. Ye must have regard to the disposition of the building-stone when ye build for good an' all. It doesna like to be stood up just anyhow. Let it lie as it lay in the quarry, and it's content."

Barty was watching the group, his blue eyes blazing and the apple-red color flushing his round cheeks. The King was talking to David as if he were pleased, and David, though properly respectful, was not in the least afraid. The Plantagenets were a race of building Kings. They all knew a master mason when they saw him.

"So you changed the ancient course of the flood into that culvert, did you?" the King inquired, with a glance at the new channel.

"Aye," said David. "No man can rule the watters of the heavens, and it's better to dyke a flood than to dam it, if ye can." The King, with a short

laugh, borrowed tablet and ink-horn from his scribe and made a note or two.

"When I find a Scotch mason with an English apprentice building Norman arches in the Danelaw," said Henry, "it is time to set him building for England. I hear that William, whom they call the Englishman, is at work in Canterbury. When you want work you may give him this, and by the sight of God have a care that there is peace among the building-stones."

David must have done so, for on one of the stones in a world-famed cathedral may be seen the mason's mark of David le Saumond and the fish which is his token.

## LONDON BRIDGE (1066)

It was almost an hundred years ago,When Ethelred was King. This town of LondonWas held by Danes. Olaf the King of NorwayCame with his host to fight for EthelredAnd with his galleys rowed beneath the bridge,Lashed cables round the piers, and caught the tideThat lent the strength of Ocean to their strengthRowing down-stream. Ah, how the strong oars beatThe waters into foam—and how the DanesAbove upon the bridge fought furiouslyWith stones and arrows—but the bridge went down—The bridge went down. So Ethelred was King.And now the bridge has been built up again.'Tis not a thing of timbers, or hewn stone;It is a weaving of men's hopes and dreamsFrom shore to shore. It is a thing alive.The men of Surrey and the men of Kent,The men of Sussex and Northumberland,The shepherds of the downs, the Wealden forges,Fishermen, packmen, bargemen, masons, allThe traffickers of England, made our bridge.It is a thing enchanted by the thoughtsOf all our people.

## XIV

## AT BARTLEMY FAIR

THE farmer's life is a very varied one, as any one who ever lived on a farm is aware. In some seasons the work is so pressing that the people hardly stop to eat or sleep. At other times Nature herself takes a hand, and the farmer has a chance to mend walls, make and repair harness, clear woodland and do some hedging and ditching while the land is getting ready for the next harvest. This at any rate was the way in medieval England, and the latter part of August between haying and harvest was a holiday time.

Barty Appleby liked Saint Bartholomew's Day, the twenty-fourth of August, best of all the holidays of the year. It was the feast of his name-saint, when a cake was baked especially for him. Yule-tide was a merry season, but to have a holiday of one's very own was even pleasanter.

On the day that he was twelve years old Barty was to have a treat which all the boys envied him. He was to go to Bartlemy Fair at Smithfield by London. David Saumond, the stone-mason who had built their orchard-wall, was going beyond London to Canterbury to work at the cathedral. Farmer Appleby had a sister living in London, whom he had not seen for many years, and by this and by that he decided to go with David as far as London Bridge.

The Fairs held on one and another holiday during the year were great markets for Old England. Nearly all of them were called after some Saint. It might be because the saint was a patron of the guild or industry which made the fair prosperous; Saint Blaize was the patron of the wool-combers, Saint Eloy of the goldsmiths, and so on. It was often simply a means of making known the date. People might not know when the twenty-ninth of September came, if they could not read; but they were very likely to know how long it was to Saint Michael's Day, or Michaelmas, because the quarter's rent was due at that time. June 24, the Feast of Saint John the Baptist, was Midsummer Quarter Day, and in every month there were several saints' days which one or another person in any neighborhood had good cause for remembering.

St. Bartholomew's Fair at London was one of the greatest of all, and its name came about in an interesting way. Barty knew the story by heart. The founder was Rahere, the jester of Henry I. While on pilgrimage to Rome he had fallen ill in a little town outside the city, and being near death had prayed to Saint Bartholomew, who was said to have been a physician, for help. The saint, so the legend goes, appeared to him in a vision and told him to found a church and a hospital. He was to have no misgiving, but go forward with the work and the way would be made clear. Coming back to England he told the story to the King, who gave him land in a waste marshy place called Smoothfield, outside London, where the wall turned inward in a great angle. He got the foundations laid by gathering beggars, children and half-witted wanderers about him and making a jest of the hard work. The fields were like the kind of place where a circus-tent is pitched now. Horses and cattle were brought there to market, as it was convenient both to the roads outside and the gates of the city. The church walls rose little by little, as the King and others became interested in the work, and in course of time Rahere gathered a company of Augustines there and became prior of the monastery. The hospital built and tended by these monks was the first in London. In 1133 Rahere persuaded the King to give him a charter for a three days' Fair of Saint Bartholomew in the last week of August, and tradition says that he used sometimes to go out and entertain the crowds with jests and songs. Rahere's Norman arches are still to be seen in Saint Bartholomew's Church in London, close by the street that is called the Cloth Fair.

The Fair grew and prospered, for it had everything in its favor. It came at a time of year when traveling was good, it was near the horse-market, which every farmer would want to visit, it was near London on the other hand, so that merchants English and foreign could come out to sell their goods, and it had close by the church and the hospital, which received tolls, or a percentage as it would be called to-day, on the profits.

Barty had heard of the Fair ever since he could remember, for almost every year some one in the neighborhood went. Very early in the morning the little party set forth, and Barty kissed his mother and the younger ones

good-by, feeling very important. He rode behind David, and two serving men came with them to take care of the horses and luggage. Farmer Appleby was taking two fine young horses to market, and some apples and other oddments to his sister Olive.

They trotted along the narrow lane at a brisk pace and presently reached the high road. After that there was much to see. All sorts of folk were wending to the Fair.

The fairs, all over England, were the goal of foreign traders and small merchants of every kind, who could not afford to set up shop in a town. In many cases the tolls of the Fair went to the King, to some Abbey, or to one of the Guilds. The law frequently obliged the merchants in the neighboring town or city to close their shops while the Fair lasted. The townsfolk made holiday, or profited from the more substantial customers who came early and stayed late with friends.

Barty heard his father and David discussing these and other laws as they rode. For David, as a stranger in the country, all such matters were of interest, although a member of the Masons' Guild could travel almost anywhere in the days of constant building. No stranger might remain in London more than one night. The first night he stayed in any man's house he might be regarded as a stranger, but if he stayed a second night he was considered the guest of the house-holder, and after that he was to be held a member of the household, for whom his host was responsible. Wandering tradesmen would have had a hard time of it without the Fairs. On a pinch, a traveling merchant who sold goods at a fair could sleep in his booth or in the open air.

The law did not affect the Appleby party. Barty's Aunt Olive was married to Swan Petersen, a whitesmith or worker in tin, and she lived outside the wall, close to the church of Saint Clement of the Danes. When they reached London they would lodge under her roof.

They stayed at an inn the first night on the road, and slept on the floor wrapped in their good woolen cloaks, for the place was crowded. During the hour after supper Barty, perched on a barrel in the court-yard, saw

jongleurs and dancers, with bells on head and neck and heels, capering in the flare of the torches. He heard a minstrel sing a long ballad telling the story of Havelok the Dane, which his mother had told him. His father and David gave each a penny to these entertainers, and Barty felt as content as any boy would, on the way to London with money in his pocket for fairings.

Toward the end of the next day the crowd was so dense that they had to ride at a snail's pace in dust and turmoil, and Barty grew so tired that he nearly tumbled off. David, with a chuckle, lifted the boy around in front of him, and when they reached London after the closing of the gates, and turned to the right toward the little village founded by the Danes, they had to shake Barty awake at Swan Petersen's door.

Aunt Olive, a trim, fresh-faced, flaxen-haired woman, laughed heartily as the sleepy boy stumbled in.

"How late you are, brother!" she said. "And this is David Saumond, by whom you sent a message last year. Well, it is good to see you. And how are they all at home?"

Barty was awake next morning almost as soon as the pigeons were, and peering out of the window he saw David, already out and surveying the street. The boy tumbled into his clothes and down the stairs, and went with David to look about while Farmer Appleby and his sister told the news and unpacked the good things from the country.

The Fleet River was crowded with ships of the lesser sort, and the Thames itself was more than twice as broad as it is to-day. Barty wanted to see London Bridge at once, but that was some distance away, and so was London Tower. The tangle of little lanes around the Convent Garden was full of braying donkeys, bawling drivers, cackling poultry and confusion. In Fair-time there was a general briskening of all trade for miles around. At Charing village David hailed a boatman, and all among the swans and other water-fowl, the barges and sailing craft, they went down to London Bridge.

Barty had asked any number of questions about this bridge when David returned from London the previous year, but as often happens, the picture he had formed in his mind was not at all like the real thing. It was a wooden bridge, but the beginnings of stone piers could be seen.

"They've put Peter de Colechurch at that job," said David. "He has a vision of a brig o' stanes, and swears it shall come true."

"Do you think it will?" asked Barty soberly. The vast river as he looked to right and left seemed a mighty creature for one man to yoke.

"Not in his time, happen, but some day it will," David answered as they shot under the middle arch. "And yon's the Tower!"

Barty felt as if he had seen enough for the day already as he gazed up at the great square keep among the lesser buildings, jutting out into the river as if to challenge all comers. However, there was never a boy who could not go on sight-seeing forever. By the time they had returned to Fleet Street he had tucked away the Tower and London Bridge in his mind and was ready for the Fair.

The Fair was a city of booths, of tents, of sheds and of awnings. Bunyan described the like in Vanity Fair. Cloth-sellers from Cambrai, Paris, Ypres, Arras and other towns where weavers dwelt, had a street to themselves, and so did the jewelers. The jewelry was made more for show than worth, and there were gay cords for lacing bodices or shoes, and necklaces that were called "tawdrey chains" from the fair of St. Etheldreda or Saint Audrey, where they were first sold. There were glass beads and perfume-bottles from Venice; there were linens of Damietta, brocaded stuff from Damascus, veils and scarfs from Moussoul—or so they were said to be. Shoes of Cordovan leather were there also, spices, and sweetmeats, herbs and cakes.

Old-fashioned people call machine-sawed wooden borders on porches "gingerbread work." The gingerbread sold by old Goody Raby looked very much like them. She had gingerbread horses, and men, and peacocks, and monkeys, gingerbread churches and gingerbread castles, gingerbread kings and queens and saints and dragons and elephants, although the elephant

looked rather queer. They were made of a spicy yellow-brown dough rolled into thin sheets, cut into shapes, baked hard and then gilded here and there. The king's crown, the peacock's head and neck, the castle on the elephant's back, were gilded. Barty bought a horse for himself and a small menagerie of animals for the younger children at home.

A boy not much older than himself was selling perfume in a tiny corner. It struck Barty that here might be something that his mother would like, and he pulled at Aunt Olive's sleeve and asked her what she thought. She agreed with him, and they spent some pleasant minutes choosing little balls of perfumed wax, which could be carried in a box or bag, or laid away in chests. There was something wholesome and refreshing about the scent, and Barty could not make up his mind what flower it was like. The boy said that several kinds were used in the making of each perfume, and that he had helped in the work. He said that his name was "Vanni," which Barty thought a very queer one, but this name, it appeared, was the same as John in his country. Barty himself would be called there Bartolomeo.

Vanni seemed to be known to many of the people at the fair. A tall, brown young fellow with a demure dark-eyed girl on his arm stopped and asked him how trade was, and so did a young man in foreign dress who spoke to him in his own language. This young man was presently addressed as "Matteo," by a gayly clad troubadour, and Barty, with a jump, recognized the young man who had been with the King when he came to look at their dyke. One of the reasons why almost everybody came to Bartlemy Fair was that almost everybody did. It was a place where people who seldom crossed each other's path were likely to meet.

"Has Vanni caught anything yet?" the troubadour asked in that language which Barty did not know.

"Not yet," the other answered, "but he will. Set a weasel to catch a rat." And the two laughed and parted.

But it was Barty who really caught the rat they were talking about. A man with a performing bear had stopped just there and a crowd had gathered about him. Barty had seen that bear the night before, and he could not see

over the heads of the men, in any case. A stout elderly merchant trying to make his way through the narrow lanes, fumed and fretted and became wedged in. Barty saw a thin, shabby-faced fellow duck under a big drover's arm, cut a long slit in the stout man's purse that hung at his belt, and slip through the crowd. Just then some one raised a cry that the bear was loose, and everything was confusion. Barty's wit and boldness blocked the thief's game. He tripped the man up with David's staff, and with a flying jump, landed on his shoulders. It was a risky thing to do, for the man had a knife and could use it, but Barty was the best wrestler in his village, and a minute later David had nabbed the rascal and recovered the plunder.

"Thank ye, my lad, thank ye," said the merchant, and hurried away. The boy Vanni swept all his goods into a basket and after one look at the thief was off like a shot. Presently up came two or three men in the livery of the King's officers.

Meanwhile Farmer Appleby and his sister came up, having seen the affair from a little distance.

"My faith," said Aunt Olive indignantly, "he might have spared a penny or two for your trouble. That was Gamelyn Bouverel, one of the richest goldsmiths in Chepe."

"I don't care," laughed Barty, "it was good sport."

But that was not to be the end of it. They were on their way to the roast-pig booth where cooked meat could be had hot from the fire, when a young Londoner came toward them.

"You are the lad who saved my uncle's purse for him," he said in a relieved tone. "I thought I had lost you in the crowd. Here is a fairing for you," and he slipped a silver groat into Barty's hand.

"Now, that is more like a Christian," observed Aunt Olive. But Barty was meditating about something, and he was rather silent all through dinner. Besides the hot roast, they bought bread, and Barty had his new "Bartlemy knife" with which to cut his slice of the roast. A costard-monger sold them apples, and the seeds were carefully saved for planting at home. Then they must all see a show, and they crowded into a tent and saw a play acted by

wooden marionettes in a toy theater, like a Punch and Judy. In the Cloth Fair the farmer bought fine Flemish cloth for the mother, dyed a beautiful blue, and red cloth for a cloak for Hilda. While Aunt Olive was helping to choose this Barty slipped across the way and looked for Vanni. He had heard Vanni tell the men that the thief's name was Conrad Waibling. Rascals were a new thing in Barty's experience. There was nobody in the village at home who would deliberately hem in a man by a crowd and then rob him. Barty was sure that the man with the performing bear was in it as well.

"Vanni," he said, "you know that thief that they caught?"

Vanni nodded.

"Do you think that the man with the dancing bear was a friend of his?"

"I know he was," said Vanni grimly. "He escaped."

Barty hesitated. "What do you think they will do to the one that they caught?"

"He will be punished," answered Vanni coolly. "He is a poisoner. He has sold poisoned spices—for pay. I think he failed, and did not poison anybody, so that he has had to get his living where he could. He is finished now—ended—no more."

Barty felt rather cold. Vanni was so matter-of-fact about it. The Italian boy saw the look on his face.

"There is nothing," he added, "so bad as betraying your salt—you understand—to live in a man's house and kill him secretly—to give him food which is death. There are places where no man can trust his neighbor. You do not know what they are like. Your father is his own man."

Barty felt that he had seen a great deal in the world since he left the farm in the Danelaw. He was glad to go with his father and Aunt Olive and David into the stately quiet church. The Prior of the monastery—Rahere had long been dead—was a famous preacher, Aunt Olive said, and often preached sermons in rhyme. They went through the long airy quiet rooms of the hospital where the monks were tending sick men, or helping them out into

the sun. As they came out, past the box for offerings, and each gave something, Barty left there his silver groat.

“I’d rather Saint Bartlemy had it,” he said.

## MIDSUMMER DAY IN ENGLAND

A thousand years ago this England drewInto her magic circle Robin, Puck,Friar Rush, the Jester—all the wizard crewThat foot it through the mazes for good luck.Flyting and frisking through the Sussex lanesThey watched the Roman legions come and go,And the tall ships that once were kingly Spain’sDriven like drifting snow.

Midsummer Day in England! Faery bellsBlue as the skies—and wheat-fields poppy-sown.Queen Mab’s own roses—hawthorn-scented dells,And marshes where the bittern broods alone.Bees of this garden, over Salisbury PlainThe circling airships drone!

## XV

## EDWITHA'S LITTLE BOWL

UNDER a hawthorn bush, near a white road leading up a hill, in sight of a thatch-roofed farmhouse, two little girls were playing house. Their names were Edwitha and Audrey, and they were cousins. Audrey's father lived in the farmhouse and kept sheep on the Downs, and Edwitha had also lived there nearly all her life. Her father had been lost at sea, and her mother had brought her back to the old home, and died not long after. The two girls had grown up like sisters, for the farmer was not a man who did things by halves, and when he adopted his brother's orphan child he made her his own.

The two children were almost exactly of a size, and within a year of the same age; and both had the milky skin and rose-pink cheeks which make English children look so like flowers. But Audrey's hair was yellow as ripe wheat, and Edwitha's was brown like an oak-leaf in autumn; Audrey's eyes were gray, and Edwitha's were dark and dreamy. They wore homespun linen gowns off the same web of watchet blue, and little clumsy leather shoes like sandals, made by the village shoemaker. This particular place was their favorite playhouse. There were two hollows, like dimples in the hill, and the bush bent over one like a roof, while the other had been roofed over by a neighbor-lad, Wilfrid. He had stuck saplings into the ground, bent the tops over and woven branches in and out to hold them. They took root and came out in fine leaf. Wilfrid had seen something like it in a garden, where a walk was roofed in this way and called a "pleached alley." It looked like a bird's nest built on the ground, but it was a very nice little bower.

At this particular hour they were making ready for a feast, setting out the eatables on all their best bits of crockery. Whatever was broken in the house was likely to come to them, and besides this, they found a good many pieces of pottery of different kinds on the farm. This had been, a thousand years before, a part of a Roman governor's country estate. When the men were plowing they often turned up scraps of bronze, tiles, or dishes that had been all that time buried in the earth.

Edwitha was especially fond of the tiles; and she had collected almost enough of them to make a little hearth. The one she intended for the middle had a picture in colors of a little brown rabbit sitting on the grass, nibbling a carrot, with a blue flower and a yellow one growing close by. It was almost whole—only one corner was broken.

Edwitha's dishes were nearly all of the old Roman ware. The fragments were deep red, and some had little black figures and decorations on them. No two fitted together, and there were no pieces large enough for her to make out what the dish had been like. She used to wonder what sort of people had used those dishes, and whether they lived very differently from the Sussex people who came after them. It seemed as if they must have. No dishes made nowadays had any such appearance.

Audrey did not care about such matters. She preferred a bowl and jug she had which came from the pottery, and were whole, and would hold milk and honey. When the two girls ate their dinner in their bower, as they sometimes did, they used little wooden bowls with horn spoons.

Wilfrid was the only person Edwitha knew, besides herself, who was at all interested in the unearthed pottery. He had brought her some of the best pieces she had, and had asked the priest at the village whether he knew who made such things. Father Cuthbert knew that there had been Romans in England, and he told Wilfrid some Roman history, but there was nothing in it about the way in which the Romans really lived.

The very road that ran past the bower had been made by the Romans. It gave its name to the farm—Borstall Farm. It was a track cut deep into the chalk of the hill, not more than ten feet wide, leading to the camp which had once been on the top of the Down. Nothing was there now but the sheep and the gorse and the short, sweet grass of the Downs. On a level terrace-like break in the hillside, overlooking the valley, a Roman villa had stood, a great house with white porticoes, marble columns, tiled floors and painted walls. Mosaic pictures of the gods had been a part of its decorations, and if any one had known it, those buried gods were under the hillside quite uninjured—so firm and strong was the Roman cement, and so thorough the work. Hundreds of guests and relatives and servants

had come and gone in the stately palace of the provincial Governor; the farm lands around it had been tilled by hundreds of peasants in its two hundred years of splendor. No wonder there were so many fragments! A great many dishes can be broken in two centuries.

Pincher, the old sheep-dog, had been invited to the feast in the bower, but when it was ready he was busy elsewhere. Edwitha went looking for him, and after she had called several times she heard his answering "Wuff! Wuff!" and caught sight of him down among the brambles at the boundary-line of the next farmstead. He came leaping toward her, and as she looked at the place where he had been, she saw that a piece of the bank had slid into a rabbit-burrow, and something red was sticking out of the earth. It was a little red bowl.

No such bowls are made in these days. They are never seen except on a shelf in some museum. Wise men have called them "Samian ware," because they have been found on the island of Samos, but as some of this ware has been found wherever the Romans went in Gaul or Britain, it would seem that they must have had some secret process in their potteries and made it out of ordinary clay.

The bowl was deep red, and beautifully smooth. Around it was a band of little dancing figures in jet black, so lifelike that it almost seemed as if such figures might come out of the copse and dance away down the hill. Edwitha took some leaves and rubbed off the clay that stuck to the bowl, and the cleaner she made it the prettier it was. Very carefully she carried it back to the bower to show Audrey.

Half way there, a dreadful thought came to her. What if Audrey should want the bowl? It was quite perfect—the only whole one they had found—and Audrey always liked things that were whole, not broken or nicked, better than any sort of imperfect ones. Certainly they could not both have it.

Edwitha came to a stop, and stood quite still, thinking about it. She knew a place, under the roots of an old tree, where she could keep the bowl, and go and look at it when she was alone, and no one would know that she had

it. If Audrey wanted the bowl, and took it, she might let it get broken, and then she would be willing that Edwitha should have it; but that would be worse than not having it at all. Edwitha felt as if she could not bear to have anything happen to the pretty thing. It already seemed like something alive—like a strange, mute person whom nobody understood but herself. She was the only person who really wanted it, and she knew that it wanted her.

But under these thoughts which pushed unbidden into Edwitha's mind was her own feeling that it was a meanness even to think them. She and Audrey had all their lives done things together, and Audrey always shared. She always played fair.

Edwitha took the bowl in both hands and walked straight and very fast up to the bower.

"Audrey," she said, holding out the bowl, "see what I found."

Audrey looked at it.

"That's like your other dishes, isn't it?" she commented. "Only it is whole. It is just the thing for the dewberries. They will be prettier than in the basket."

Edwitha set the bowl in the middle of the table and poured the shining dark fruit into it. It did look pretty, and it had a mat of green oak-leaves under it which made it prettier still. Audrey began sticking white blossoms round the edge to set off the red and green.

"I'm glad you found it," she added placidly; "you haven't one dish that is quite whole, and I have a blue one, and a white one, and a jug."

Edwitha touched the bowl caressingly with the tips of her fingers. "I will try to find another for you," she said.

"If you find any more," answered Audrey, pushing Pincher away from the dish of cold meat, "you can have them. I'd rather have our dishes in sets, I think."

Edwitha was poking about in the bank where she had found the bowl, late that afternoon, when Wilfrid came up the bank. There seemed to be no more dishes in sight.

"What have you found?" asked Wilfrid. He held it up in the sunlight, and drew a quick breath of delight. "How beautiful it is!" he exclaimed in a low voice.

Edwitha was silent. She was filled with a great happiness because she had the bowl.

"I wonder how it came to be here," mused Wilfrid, and fell to digging and prodding the earth.

"There isn't another in the hole," said Edwitha. "I've been here a long time."

"This is the only bit I ever saw that was found just here. But see here, Edwitha, this is clay. It is exactly like the clay they use at the pottery down by the ford, but finer—I think. I tell you—I believe there was a pottery here once."

He and Edwitha took the bowl and a few lumps of the clay, next morning, to the Master Potter beyond the village. Wilfrid had served his apprenticeship at this pottery and was now a journeyman. The clay proved to be finer and more workable than that near the pottery, and the deposit was close to the high road, so that donkeys and pack-horses could come up easily to be loaded with their earthen pots. It was even possible, so the Master Potter said, that it would make a better grade of ware than they had been able to make hitherto. Finally, and most important from the point of view of Wilfrid and Edwitha, it was on Wilfrid's own farm, he had his old mother to support, and this discovery might make it possible for him to have his own pottery and be a Master Potter.

Edwitha often wished that the bowl could speak, and tell her how it was made, and who drew the little dancing figures. In course of time Wilfrid tried some experiments with pottery, ornamenting it with figures in white clay on the colored ground, and searching continually for new and better methods of glazing, baking, and modeling his wares. At last, when the

years of his apprenticeship had all been served, and he knew everything that was taught in the old Sussex pottery by the ford, he came one spring twilight to the farmhouse and found Edwitha in the garden.

"It is no use," he said, half-laughing. "I shall never be content to settle down here until I have seen what they are doing in other lands. If there is anywhere a man who can make things like that bowl of yours, I must learn what he can teach me. It may be that the secret has been lost—if it has, I will come back and work here again. A man was never meant to do less than his best, Edwitha."

"I know," said Edwitha. "Those figures make me feel so too. They always did. I don't want to live anywhere but here—and now Audrey has gone away, uncle and aunt could never do without me—but I wish we could make beautiful things in England."

"Some of the clever ones are in England," Wilfrid answered. "They are doing good work in glass, I know, and in carven stone, and some other things, but that is mostly for the rich abbeys. I shall never be aught but a potter—but I will be as good a one as I can."

Therefore Wilfrid took scrip and staff and went on pilgrimage to France, and there he saw things which made him sure that men had not lost the love of beauty out of the world. But he could hear of no master potters who made anything like the deep red Roman ware. After a year of wandering he came back, full of new plans, and with many tales to tell; but he told Edwitha that in all his travels he had seen nothing which was better worth looking at than her little Roman bowl.

## SONG OF THE TAPESTRY WEAVERS

All among the furze-bush, round the crystal dewpond,Feed the silly sheep like a cloud upon the down.Come safely home to croft, bear fleeces white and soft,Then we'll send the wool-wains to fair London Town.

All in the dawnlight, white as a snowdriftLies the wool a-waiting the spindle and the wheel.Sing, wheel, right cheerily, while I pace merrily,—Knot by knot the thread runs on the busy reel.

All in the sunshine, gay as a garden,Lie the skeins for weaving, the blue and gold and red.Fly, shuttle, merrily, in and out cheerily,Making all the woof bright with a rainbow thread.

All in the noontide, wend we to market,—Hear the folk a-chaffering like jackdaws up and down.Master, give ear to me, here's cloth for you to see,Fit for a canopy in fair London Town.

All in the twilight sweet with the hearth-smoke,Homeward we go riding while the vesper bells ring.Southdown or Highland Scot, Fleming or Huguenot,Weaving our tapestries we shall serve our King!

## XVI

## LOOMS IN MINCHEN LANE

IT was in the early springtime, when lambs are frisking like rabbits upon the tender green grass, and all the land is like a tapestry of blue and white and gold and pink and green. Robert Edrupt, as he rode westward from London on his homeward way, felt that he had never loved his country quite so well as now. He had gone with a flock of English sheep to northern Spain, and come back in the same ship with the Spanish jennets which the captain took in exchange. On one of those graceful half-Arabian horses he was now riding, and on another, a little behind him, rode a swarthy, black-haired and black-eyed youngster in a sheepskin tunic, who looked about him as if all that he saw were strange.

In truth Cimarron, as they called him, was very like a wild sheep from his native Pyrenees, and Edrupt was wondering, with some amusement and a little apprehension, what his grandmother and Barbara would say. The boy had been his servant in a rather dangerous expedition through the mountains, and but for his watchfulness and courage the English wool-merchant might not have come back alive. Edrupt had been awakened between two and three in the morning and told that robbers were on their trail, and then, abandoning their animals, Cimarron had led him over a precipitous cliff and down into the next valley by a road which he and the wild creatures alone had traveled. When the horses were led on shipboard the boy had come with them, and London was no place to leave him after that.

They rode up the well-worn track into the yard of Longley Farm, and leaving the horses with his attendant, Edrupt went to find his family. Dame Lysbeth was seated in her chair by the window, spinning, and would have sent one of the maids to call the mistress of the house, but Edrupt shook his head. He said that he would go look for Barbara himself.

He found her kneeling on the turf tending a motherless lamb, and it was a good thing that the lamb had had nearly all it could drink already, for when Barbara looked up and saw who was coming the rest of the milk was

spilled. She looked down, laughing and blushing, presently, at the hem of her russet gown.

"Sheep take a deal o' mothering," she explained, "well-nigh as much as men. Come and see the new-born lambs, Robert, will 'ee?"

Robert stroked the head of the old sheep-dog that had come up for his share of petting. "Here is a black sheep for thee to mother, sweetheart," he said with a laugh. "He's of a breed that is new in these parts."

Barbara looked at the rough, unkempt young stranger, with surprise but no unkindness in her eyes. She was not easily upset, and however wild he looked, the new-comer had been brought by Robert, and that was all that concerned her. "Where did tha find him, and what's his name?" she inquired.

Edrupt laughed again, in proud satisfaction this time; he might have known that Barbara would behave just in that way. He explained, and Cimarron was forthwith shown a corner of a loft where he might sleep, and introduced to Don the collie as a shepherd in good standing. He and the sheep-dog seemed to understand each other almost at once, and though one was almost as silent as the other, they became excellent comrades.

Besides the sheep, Cimarron seemed interested in but one thing on the farm, and that was the old loom which had belonged to Dame Garland and still stood in the weaving-chamber, where he slept. Dame Lysbeth, rummaging there for some flax that she wanted, found the boy sitting on the bench with one bare foot on the treadle, studying the workings of the clumsy machine. It was a "high-warp" loom, in which the web is vertical, and in the loom-chamber where Barbara's maids spun and wove, Edrupt had set up a Flemish "low-warp" loom with all the latest fittings. Into that place the herd-boy had never ventured. But Dame Lysbeth saw with surprise that he seemed to understand this loom quite well. When he was asked, he said that he had seen weaving done on such a loom in his country.

"Robert will be surprised," said Barbara thoughtfully. "Who ever saw a lad like that who cared about weaving?"

But Edrupt was not as mystified as the women were. He thought it quite possible that the dark young stranger might have come of some Eastern race which had made weaving an art beyond anything the West could do. "I think," he said one morning, "that I will take him to London and let him try what he can do in Cornelys Bat's factory."

Cornelys Bat was a Flemish weaver who had come to London some months before and set up his looms in an old wool-storeroom outside London Wall. He was a very skillful workman, but Flanders had weavers enough to supply half Europe with clothing, and his own town of Arras was already known for its tapestries. The Lowlands were overcrowded, and there was not bread enough to go around. Edrupt, whom he had known for several years, helped him to settle himself in England, and he had met with almost immediate success. Now he had with him not only his old parents, a younger brother and sister and an aunt with her two children, but three neighbors who also found life hard in populous Flanders. He felt that he had done well in following Edrupt's advice, "When the wool won't come to you, go where the wool is." He was a square-built, placid, light-haired man with a stolid expression that sometimes misled people. When Edrupt came to him with a strange new apprentice, he readily consented to give the boy a chance. It was the only chance that there was, for the Weavers' Guild would not have had him.

After a while Cimarron, or Zamaroun as the other 'prentices called him, was promoted from porter to draw-boy, as the weaver's assistant was termed. This work did not need skill, exactly, but it did demand strength and close attention. The boy from the Pyrenees was as strong as a young ox, and he was never tired of watching the work and seeing exactly how it was done. His silent, quick strength suited Cornelys Bat. Weaving is work which needs the constant thought of the weaver, especially when the work is tapestry, and just at present the Flemings had secured an order for a set of tapestries for one of the King's country houses. Henry II. was so continually traveling that the King of France once petulantly observed that he must fly like a bird through the air to be in so many places during the year. He had a way of mixing sport with state affairs, and a week spent in

some palace like Woodstock or Clarendon might be divided evenly between his lawyers and his hunting-dogs. It is also said of him that he never forgot a face or a fact once brought to his notice. Perhaps he learned more on his hunting trips than any one imagined.

The tapestry weaving was far more complex and difficult than anything done by Barbara Edrupt's maids. The loom used by the Flemings was a "low-warp" loom, in which the web is horizontal. When the heavy timbers were set up they were mortised together, that is, a projection in one fitted into a hollow in another, dovetailing them together without nails. Wooden pegs fitted into holes, and thus the frame, in all its parts, could be taken to pieces and carried from place to place on pack-horses if necessary. An ordinary loom was about eight feet long and perhaps four feet wide, the web usually being not more than a yard wide, and more commonly twenty-three or four inches. Broadcloth was woven in those days, but not very commonly, for it needed a specially constructed loom and two weavers, one for each side, because of the width of the cloth. In tapestry weaving the picture was made in strips, as a rule, and sewed together.

The idea of tapestry weaving in the early part of the Middle Ages was to tell a story. Few colors were used, and instead of making one large picture, which would have been very difficult with the looms then in use, the tapestries were made in sets, in which a series of pictures from some legends or chronicle could be shown. When in place, they were wall-coverings hung loosely from great iron hooks over which rings were slipped, or hangings for state beds, or sometimes a strip of tapestry was hung above the carved choir-stalls of a church, horizontally, to add a touch of color to the gray walls. When a court moved, or there was a festival day in the church, these woven or embroidered hangings could be taken from one place to another. Many tapestries were embroidered by hand, which was easier for the ordinary woman than weaving a picture, but took far more time. Kings and noblemen who had money to spend on such things would order sets of tapestry woven by such skilled workmen as Cornelys Bat and his Flemings, or the monks of Saumur in France, or the weavers of Poitiers. In Sicily, these hangings were often made of silk, for silk was

already made there. Gold and silver thread was used sometimes, both in weaving and embroidery. Wool, however, was very satisfactory, not only because it was less costly than silk, but because it took dye well and made a web of rich soft colors. It was this which had drawn Robert Edrupt into Flanders to see what the weavers there were about, what sort of wool they used, and what the outlook was for their work. In Cornelys Bat he had found a man who could tell him very nearly all that there was to know about weaving.

Yet weaving is a craft of so many possibilities and complexities that a man may spend his whole life at it and still feel himself only a learner. The master weaver liked Cimarron because the boy never chattered, but kept his whole mind on his work. When Cornelys was revolving some new combination or design in his head, his drawboy was as silent as the weaver's beam, and the whirr and clack of the loom were the only sounds in the place.

The weaver at such a loom sat at one end on a little board, with the heavy roller or weaver's beam on which the warp, the lengthwise thread, was fastened in front of him. At the far end of the frame was another roller, the warp being stretched taut between the two. As the work progressed the web was rolled up gradually toward the weaver, and the pattern, if there was one, lay under the warp and was rolled up on a separate roller. Every skilled weaver had a number of simple patterns in his head, as a knitter has, but for a tapestry picture a pattern was drawn and colored on parchment ruled in squares, and a duplicate pattern made without the color, showing all the arrangement of the threads and used in "gating" as the arrangement of the warp in the beginning was called. Every weaver had his own way of gating, and his own little tricks of weaving. It was a craft that gave a chance for any amount of ingenuity.

In plain, "tabby" or "taffety" weaving, the weft or woof, the crosswise thread, went in and out exactly as in darning, and the two treadles underneath the web, worked by the feet, lifted alternately the odd threads and the even threads, the weaver tossing the shuttle from hand to hand between them. At each stroke of the shuttle the swinging beam, or batten,

beat up the weft to make a close, firm, even weave. The shuttle, made of boxwood and shaped like a little boat, held in its hollow the "quill" or bobbin carrying the weft. When all the "yarn," as thread for weaving was always called, was wound off, the weaver fastened on the end of the next thread with what is even now called a "weaver's knot." As the side of the web toward him was the wrong side of the cloth, no knot was allowed to show on the right side.

In brocaded, figured or tapestry weaving, leashes or loops called heddles were hung from above and lifted whatever part of the warp they were attached to. For example, three threads out of ten in the warp could be lifted by one group of heddles with one motion of the treadle, the heddles being grouped or "harnessed" to make this possible. It can be seen that in weaving by hand a tapestry with perhaps forty or fifty figures and animals, besides flowers and trees, the most convenient arrangement of the heddles called for brains as well as skill of hand in the weaver who did the work. The drawboy's work was to pull each set of cords in regular order forward and downward. These cords had to raise a weight of about thirty-six pounds, which the boy must hold for perhaps a third of a minute while the ground was woven. He was in a way a part of the machine, but a part which had a brain.

A ratchet on the roller which held the finished web kept it from slipping back and held the warp stretched firm at that end, and in some looms there was a ratchet on the other roller as well. But Cornelys Bat preferred weights at the far end of the warp. These allowed the warp to give a tiny bit at every blow of the batten and then drew it instantly taut, no matter how heavy the box was made. "This kindly giving," explained the weaver, "preventeth the breaking of the slender threads. No law may be kept too straitly and no thread drawn too strictly. That is a part of the craft."

Cornelys may have been thinking of something more than weaving when he made that observation. The quiet tapissiers of Arras had caused an uproar in the Guild of London Weavers. A few cool heads advised the others to live and let live. The Flemings would be good English folk in time, and whatever they knew would help the craft in the future. But

others, forgetting that they had refused to let their sons serve apprenticeship to Cornelys Bat when he came, railed at him for taking Flemings, Gascons, Florentines and even a vagabond from nobody knew where, into his employ.

"We will have no black sheep in our fold," vociferated the leader of this faction, a keen-faced, tow-headed man of middle age. "These foreigners will ruin the craft."

"Tut, tut," protested Martin Byram, "I have heard Master Cole of Reading say that thy grandfather, his 'prentice boy, was a Swabian, Simon. And he brought no craft to England."

There was a laugh, for everybody knew that the superior skill of the Flemings was one main cause of their success in the market. Some of the weavers even had the insight to see that so far from taking work away from any English weaver, they were thus far doing work which would have gone abroad to find them if they had not been here, and the gold paid them was kept and spent in London markets.

For all that, the feeling against the Flemings grew and spread, and might have broken out into open violence if they had not been working on the King's tapestries. Nobody felt like interfering with them until that job was done, for the King might ask questions, and not like the answers.

How much of all this Cornelys Bat knew, no one could tell. Cimarron watched him, but the broad, thoughtful face was placid as usual. One day, however, the dark young apprentice was set upon in the street, where he had gone on an errand, by a crowd of other lads who nearly tore the clothes off his back. They had not reckoned on effectual fighting strength in this foreign youth, and they found that even a black sheep can be dangerous on occasion. The threats which they muttered set the boy's mountain-bred senses on the alert, and he went back to the master weaver with the information that as soon as the King's tapestries were finished the looms and their shelter would be burned over their heads.

"I hid in the loft and heard," said Cimarron earnestly. "They are evil men here, master."

The Fleming frowned slightly and balanced the beam of his loom—he was about to begin the last panel—thoughtfully in his hand. "So it seems," he said. "Well, we will finish the tapestries as early as may be."

One of the weavers saw lights in the Flemish loom-rooms that night, and reported that the strangers were working by candle-light, contrary to the law of the Guild—to which they did not belong. But Cornelys Bat was gathering together the work already done, and he and Cimarron and two of the other men carried it before morning to the warehouse of Gilbert Gay, the merchant, where it would be safe. They also took there certain bales of fine wool, dyes, and some household goods, and all this was loaded the next day on a boat and sent up the Thames to a point above London, where Robert Edrupt's pack-horses took it to King's Barton.

"It is no use to try to fight the entire Guild," said Edrupt ruefully. "You had best come to our village and make your home there. When this has blown over you may come back to London."

"If I were alone I would not budge," said the Fleming with a sternness in his blue eyes. "But there are the old folk and the little ones. We have left our own land and come where the wool was; it is now time for the work to come to us."

"I will warrant you it will," said Master Gay. "But are you going to leave your looms for them to burn?"

"Not quite," said Cornelys Bat, grimly.

The mob came just after nightfall of the day after the women and children, with the rest of the household goods, had gone on their way to a new home. It was not a very well organized crowd, and was armed with clubs, pikes, and torches mainly. It found to its astonishment that the timbers of a loom, heavy and well seasoned, may make excellent weapons, and that the arm of a weaver is not feeble nor his spirit weak. It was no part of the plan of Cornelys Bat to leave the buildings of Master Gay undefended, and the determined, organized resistance of the Flemings repelled the attack. The next day it was found that the weavers had gone, and their quarters were occupied by some of Master Gay's men who were storing there a quantity

of this year's fleeces. Meanwhile the Flemings had settled in the little road that ran past the nunnery at King's Barton and was called Minchen Lane.

## THE WISHING CARPET

My rug lies under the candle-light,Flame-red, sea-blue, leaf-brown, gold-bright,Born of the shifting ancient sandOf a far-away desert land.

There in Haroun al Raschid's dayA carpet enchanted, their wise men say,Was woven for princes, in realms apart—And so is this rug of my heart!

Here is a leaf like the heart of a rose,And here the shift in the pattern showsHow another weft in the tireless loomSet the gold of the skies a-bloom.

Old songs, old legends and ancient wordsThey weave in the web as they pasture their herdsOn the barren slopes of a mountain heightIn the dusk of the lonely night.

Prayers and memories and wordless dreams,Changeful shadows and lancet gleams,—The Eden Tree in its folding wallKnows them and guards them all.

To Moussoul market the rug they broughtWith all its treasure of woven thought,And thus over half a world of seaCame the Wishing Rug to me.

## XVII

## THE HERBALIST'S BREW

THERE was thunder in the air, one summer day in King's Barton. Dame Lavender, putting her drying herbs under cover, wondered anxiously what Mary was doing. The moods of the royal lady in the castle depended very much on the weather, and both of late had been uncertain. Strong-willed, hot-tempered, ambitious and adventurous, this Queen had no traits that were suited to a quiet existence in the country. Yet she would have been about as safe a person to have at large as a wild-cat among harriers. Whoever had the worst of it, the fight would be sensational.

When made prisoner she was on the way to the court of France, in which her rebellious sons could always find aid. Aquitaine was all but in open revolt against the Norman interloper—it was only through her that Henry had held that province at all. Scotland was ready for trouble at any time; Ireland was in tumult; the Welsh were in a permanent state of revolt. But Norman though he was, the King had won his way among his English subjects. They never forgot that he was only half Norman after all. His Saxon blood, cold and stubborn, steadied his Norman daring, and he could be alternately bold and crafty.

Eleanor of Aquitaine was more an exile in her husband's own country than she would have been in France or Italy. His people might rebel against their King themselves, but they did not sympathize with her for doing it. They were as unfeeling as their gray, calm skies.

Instead of weeping and bemoaning herself she made life difficult for her household. Oddly enough the two English girls got on with her better than the rest. Mary's even, sunny temper was never ruffled, and Barbara's North-country disposition had an iron common-sense at the core. The gentle-born damsels of the court were too yielding.

When little hot flashes lightened among the far-off hills, and a distant rumble sounded occasionally, the Queen was pacing to and fro on the top of the great keep. It was not the safest place to be in case of a storm, for the castle was the highest building in the neighborhood. Philippa, working

sedately at a tapestry emblem of a tower in flames, looked up the stairway and shivered as if she were cold.

"Mary," she queried, as the still-room maid came through the bower, "where is Master Tomaso?"

"In his study, I think," Mary answered. "Shall I call him?"

"Nay—I thought——" Philippa left the sentence unfinished and folded her work; then she climbed the narrow stair. When the Queen turned and saw her she was standing with her slim hands resting on the battlement.

"What are you doing away from your tapestry-frame, wench?" demanded her mistress. "Are you spying on me again?"

"Your Grace," Philippa answered gently, "I could never spy on you—not even if my own father wished it. I—I was talking with Master Tomaso last night, and he said strange things about the stars. I would you could have heard him."

The Queen laughed scornfully. "As if it were not enough to be prisoned in four walls, the girl wants to believe herself the puppet of the heavens! Look you, silly pigeon, if there be a Plantagenet star you may well fear it, for brother hates brother and all hate their father—and belike will hate their children. Were you asking him the day of my death?"

"I was but asking what flowers belonged to the figures of the zodiac in my tapestry," answered Philippa. "He says that a man may rule the stars."

"I wish that a woman could," mocked the Queen. "How you silly creatures can go on, sticking the needle in and out, in and out, day after day, I cannot see. One would think that you were weavers of Fate. I had rather cast myself over the battlements than look forward to thirty years of stitchery!" She swept her trailing robes about her and vanished down the stairs. Philippa, following, saw with a certain relief that she turned toward the rooms occupied by old Tomaso. The physician was equal to most situations. Yet in the Queen's present mood anything might arouse her anger.

The study was of a quaint, bare simplicity in furnishing. It had a chair, a stool, a bench under the window, a table piled with leather-bound books, a large chest and a small one, an old worm-eaten oaken dresser with some flasks and dishes. A door led into the laboratory, and another into the cell where the philosopher slept. As the Queen entered he rose and with grave courtesy offered her his chair, which she did not take. She stood looking out across the quiet hills, and pressed one hand and then the other against her cheeks—then she turned, a dark figure against the stormy sky.

"They say that you know all medicine," she flung out at him. "Have you any physic for a wasted soul?" With a fierce gesture she pointed at the half-open door. "Why do you stay in this dull sodden England—you who are free?"

"There are times, your Grace," the physician replied tranquilly, "when I forget whether this is England or Venetia."

The Queen moved restlessly about the room, and stopped to look at an herbal. "Will you teach me the properties of plants?" she asked, as she turned the pages carelessly. "With Mary's help we might make here an herb-garden. It is well to know the noxious plants from the wholesome, lest—unintentionally—one should put the wrong flavor in a draught."

Tomaso had seen persons in this frame of mind before. He had taught many pupils the properties of plants, but he had his own ways of doing it. In his native city of Padua and elsewhere, there were chemists who owed their fame to the number of poisons they understood.

"I have some experiments in hand which may interest your Grace," he answered. "If you will come into my poor studio you shall see them." He led the way into the inner chamber where no one was ever allowed to come. The walls were lined with shelves on which stood jars, flasks, mortars and other utensils whose use the Queen could not guess. Tomaso did not warn her not to touch any flask. She handled, sniffed and all but tasted. She finally went so far as to pour a small quantity of an unsensational-looking fluid into a glass, and a drop fell on the edge of her mantle, in which it burned a clean hole.

Tomaso was pouring something into a bowl from a retort, and seemed not to have seen the action. Then he added a pinch of a colorless powder, and dipped a skein of silk into the bowl. It came out ruby-red. Another pinch of powder, another bath, and it was like a handful of iris petals. Other experiments gave emerald like rain-wet leaves in sunlight, gold like the pale outer petals of asphodels, ripe glowing orange, blue like the Mediterranean. Then suddenly the light in the stone-arched window was darkened and thunder crashed overhead. The little brazier in the far corner glowed like a red eye, and Tomaso had to light a horn lantern before the Queen could see her way out of the room.

"We shall have to wait, now, until after the storm," he said, as he led the way into the outer room. "I am making these experiments for the benefit of a company of weavers whom a young friend of mine has brought here. The young man—he is a wool-merchant—has an idea that we can weave tapestry here as well as they can in Damascus if we have the wherewithal, and I said that I would attend to the dyeing of the yarn."

The Queen gave a contemptuous little laugh and sank into the great chair. "These Saxons! I think they are born with paws instead of hands! They are good for nothing but to herd cattle and plow and reap. Do your stars tell you foolish tales like that, Master Tomaso?"

"I did not ask them," said the old man tranquilly. "I use my eyes when I can. The weavers are Flemish, and I see no cause why they should not weave as good cloth here as they did at home. They had English wool there, and they will have it here. There is a Spaniard among them, and I do not know what he will do when the chilly rains come, poor imp. He does not like anything in England, as it is."

"Poor imp!" the Queen repeated. "How do these weavers come here, so far from any town?"

"Well, they came like most folk, because they had to come," smiled the Paduan. "The English weavers are inclined to be jealous folk, and they took the view that these Flemings were foreigners and had no right within London Wall—or outside it either, for they were in a lane somewhere

about Mile End. Jealousy fed also on their success in their work—it was far superior to anything London looms can do. And certain dealers in fine cloth saw their profits threatened, and so did the Florentine importers. What with one thing and another Cornelys Bat and his people had to leave the city, or lose all that they possessed. The reasons were as mixed as the threads of a tapestry, but that is the way with life."

"And why are you wasting time on them?" the Queen demanded.

"My motives are also mixed," answered the old man. "Being myself an alien in a strange land, I had sympathy for them—especially Cimarron, the imp. Also it is interesting to work in a new field, and I have never done much with dyestuffs. I sometimes feel like a child gathering bright pebbles on the shore; each one seems brighter than the last. But really, I think I work because I dislike to spend my time in things which will not live after me. It seemed to me that if these Flemish weavers come here in colonies, teaching their art to such English as can learn, it will bring this land independence and wealth in years to come. There is plenty of pasturage for sheep, and wool needs much labor to make it fit for human use. Edrupt, the merchant—his wife is one of your women, by the way—says that this one craft of weaving will make cities stronger than anything else. And that will disturb some people."

The Queen's eyes flashed with wicked amusement. She had heard the King rail to his barons upon the impudence of London. She knew that those who invaded London privilege came poorly out of it.

"Barbara's husband," she said thoughtfully. "I did not know that he was a merchant—I thought he was one of these clod-hopping farmers."

Tomaso did not enlighten her. Curiosity is the mother of knowledge. He peered out at his fast-filling cisterns. "This rain-water," he observed, "will be excellent for my dyestuffs."

The Queen gave a little light laugh. "The heavens roar anathema maranatha," she cried, "and the philosopher says, 'I will fill my tubs.' You seem to be assured that the powers above are devoted to your service."

"It is as well," smiled the physician, "to have them to your aid if possible. Some men have a—positive genius—for being on the wrong side. The growth of a people is like the growth of a vine. It will not twine contrary to nature."

"But these are not your people," the Queen persisted. "No one will know who did the work you are doing."

"Cornelys Bat the tapissier told me," Tomaso answered, "that no one knows now who it was who set the foot at work by tipping the loom over, and separated the warp threads by two treadles. Yet that changed the whole rule of weaving."

"I have a mind to see this tapestry," announced Eleanor abruptly. "Tell your Cat, or Rat, or Bat, whatever his name is, to bring his looms here. If he works well we will have something for our walls besides this everlasting embroidery. I have watched Philippa working the histories of the saints this six months,—I believe she has all the eleven thousand virgins of Saint Ursula to march along the wall. I am ready to burn a candle to Saint Attila."

Tomaso's eyes twinkled. That friendly twinkle went far to unlock the Queen's confidence. "Here am I," she went on impetuously, "mewed up here like a clipped goose that hears the cry of the flock. If there is another Crusade I would joyfully set forth as a man-at-arms, but belike I shall never even hear of it. I warrant you Richard will lead a host to Jerusalem some day—and I shall not be there to see."

The Paduan lifted one long finger. "You fret because you are strong and see far. Your descendants may rule Europe. The Plantagenets are a building race. You can lay foundations for kings of the years to come. You have here the chance of knowing this people, whom none of your race did ever know truly. Your tiring women, the men who till these fields and live by their toil, the churchmen, the traders—knowing them you know the kingdom. Bend your wit and will to rule the stars, madam. Thus you bring wisdom out of ill-hap, and in that way only can a King be secure."

The Queen sat silent, chin in hand, her eyes searching the shadows of the room, for the storm had passed and twilight was falling. “Gramercy for your sermon, Master Tomaso,” she said at last, as she rose to leave the room. “Some day Henry will see that it was not I who taught the Plantagenets to quarrel. Send for your tapissiers to-morrow, and I will study weaving for a day.”

To the comfort of all, the Queen was in a gay humor that evening. The carved ivory chessmen were brought out, and as she watched Ranulph and Philippa in the mimic war-game Eleanor pondered over the recent betrothal of Princess Joan to the King of Sicily. “Women,” she muttered, “are only pawns on a man’s chessboard.”

“Aye,” laughed Ranulph, as his white knight retreated, “but your Grace may remember that the pawn when it comes to Queen may win the game.”

The bulky loom of Cornelys Bat was set up next morning in the old hall, and the Queen came down to watch the strange, complex, curious task. Then she would take the shuttle herself and try it, and to the surprise of every one, kept at the task until she might well have challenged a journeyman. While the threads interlaced and shifted in a rainbow maze her mind was traveling strange pathways. The shuttle, flung to and fro in deft strong skill, was not like the needle with its maddening stitch after stitch, and there was no petty chatter in the room. The Flemish weaver might be silent, but he was not stupid, and the drawboy, the dusky youth with the coarse black hair, was like a wild panther-cub. Such a blend as these weaving-folk, brought together by one aim, could teach the arbitrary barons their place. Normandy, Aquitaine, Anjou, Brittany,—England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales—what a web of Empire they would make! And if into the dull russet and gray of this England there came a vivid young life like her Richard’s—yellow hair, sea-blue eyes, gay daring, impulsivegallantry—and under all the stern fiber of the Norman—what kind of a tapestry would that be? Thus, as women have done through the centuries, Eleanor of Aquitaine let her mind play about her fingers.

After a while she left the work to the weavers and watched Mary Lavender making dyestuffs under Tomaso’s direction. It was fascinating to try for a

color and make it come to a shade. It was yet more so to make new combinations and see what happened. Red and green dulled each other. A touch of orange made scarlet more brilliant. Lavender might be deepened to royal violet or paled to the purple-gray of ashes. The yarns, as the skillful Flemings handled them, were better than any gold thread, and the gorgeous blossom-hues of the wools were like an Eastern carpet.

Presently the Queen began devising a set of hangings for a State bedchamber, the pictures to be scenes from the life of Charlemagne—the suggested comparison of this monarch with the King had its point. An Irish monk-bred lad with a knack at catching likenesses came by, and made the designs, under Queen Eleanor's direction; and during this undertaking she learned much concerning the state of Ireland. That ended and the weaving begun, she took to questioning Cimarron the drawboy.

"I suppose," she jibed, "men grow like that they live by, or you would never have been driven out of London like sheep. I may become lamblike myself some day."

Cimarron's white teeth gleamed. "I would not say that we went like sheep," he retorted, and he told the story of their going. "There were the old folk and the little ones, your Grace," he ended. "The master cares for his own people, and his work. He does not heed other folk's opinions."

The Queen laughed gleefully. "I wish I had been at that hunting—the wolves driven by their quarry. My faith, a weaver's beam is not such a bad weapon after all."

More than ten years after, when Richard I. was crowned King of England, one of his first acts was to make his mother regent in his absence. It was she who raised the money to outbid Philip of France when Cœur de Lion was to be ransomed. As one historian has said, she displayed qualities then and later, which prove that she spent her days in something besides needlework. She did not stay long at King's Barton, but one of Cornelys Bat's tapestries was always known as the Queen's Maze. In one way and another during the sixteen years of her captivity she learned nearly all that there was to know of the temper of the people and the nature of the land.

## THE MARIONETTES

After the council comes the feast—and thenJongleurs and minstrels, and the sudden songThat wakes the trumpets and the din of war,—But now the Cæsar's mood is for a jest.

Fellow—you juggler with the puppet-show,The Emperor permits you to come in.Ah, yes,—the five wise virgins—very fair.There certainly can be no harm in that.The bride, methinks, is somewhat like Matilda,Wife of Duke Henry whom they call the Lion.Aye, to be sure—the little hoods and cloaksAll tricked out with the arms of Saxony.This way—be brisk now—to the banquet-hall.

'Tis clever—here come bride and bride-maidensWith lights in silvern lanterns. Very good.Milan had puppet-shows, but none, I venture,So well set forth as this.… No Lombard here,He speaks pure French. Aha, the jester comes!A biting satire, yes, a merry jape,—The Bear that aped the Lion! A good song,'Twill please the Saxon, surely. Now, what next?Here come the foolish virgins all array'dIn mourning veils, with little lamps revers'd.The merchant will not sell them any oil,The jester mocks them and the monk rebukes them,—A shrewd morality. Aye,—loyalty,Truth, kindliness and mercy, and wise judgmentAre the five precious oils to light a throne.A pretty compliment, a well-turned phrase!Woe to the foolish Virgins of the LombardsIf we find lamps unlighted on our way!Then surely will the door of hope shut fastAnd in that outer darkness will be heardWeeping and howling.… So, is that the end?

Hark, fellow, you have pleased the Emperor,This ring's the token. Take a message nowThat may be spoken by your wooden King,—The master-mind regards all ChristendomAs but a puppet-show,—he pulls the strings,The others act and speak to suit his book,—Aye, truly, a most excellent puppet-show!

## XVIII

## THE HURER'S LODGERS

JOAN, the little daughter of the hurer, sat on a three-legged stool in the corner of her father's shop, nursing her baby. It was not much of a baby, being only a piece of wood with a knob on the end. But the shop was not much of a shop. Gilles the hurer was a cripple, and it was all that he could do to give Joan and her mother a roof over their heads. They had sometimes two meals a day; oftener one; occasionally none at all.

If he could have made hats and caps like those which he used to make when he was a tradesman in Milan, every sort of fine goods would have come into the shop. In processions and pageants, at banquets, weddings, betrothals, christenings, funerals, on every occasion in life, the people wore headgear which helped to make the picture. The fashion of a man's hat suited his position in life. Details and decorations varied more or less, but the styles very seldom did. Velvet and fur were allowed only to persons of a certain dignity; hats were made to show embroidery, which might be of gold thread and jeweled. Merchants wore a sort of hood with a long loose crown which could be used as a pocket. This protected the neck and ears on a journey, and had a lining of wool, fur, or lambskin. Court ladies wore hoods of velvet, silk or fine cloth for traveling. At any formal social affair a lady wore some ornamental head-dress with a veil which she could draw over her face. The wimple, usually worn by elderly women, was a scarf of fine linen thrown over the head, brought closely around the throat and chin, and held by a fillet. In later and more luxurious and splendid times, the cone-shaped and crescent-shaped head-dresses came in.

Hats were not common in the twelfth century. The hair fell in carefully arranged curls, long braids or loose tresses on the shoulders; the face was framed in delicate veils of silk or sendal, kept in place by a chaplet of flowers or a coronet of gold. Every maiden learned to weave garlands in set patterns, and could make a wreath in any one of several given styles, for her own hair or for decorating a building. Red, green and blue were the colors most often used in dress, and on any festival day the company presented a very gay appearance.

Gilles, however, was obliged to confine himself to the making of hures or rough woolen caps for common men. He had no apprentices, although his wife and daughter sometimes helped him. His shop was a corner of a very old building most of which had been burned in a great London fire. It was the oldest house in the street and was roofed with stone, which probably saved it. The ends of the beams in the wall fitted into sockets in other beams, and were set straight, crooked or diagonally without any apparent plan. Two or three hundred years before, when the house was built, the space between the timbers had been filled in with interlaced branches, over which mud was plastered on in thick coats. This made the kind of wall known as "wattle and daub." It was not very scientific in appearance, but it was weather-proof. As there was no fireplace or hearth, the family kept warm—when it could—by means of an iron brazier filled with coals. Cooking—when they had anything to cook—was done over the brazier in a chafing-dish, or in a tiny stone fireplace outside the rear wall, made of scattered stones by Joan's mother.

Gilles was a Norman, but he had been born in Sicily, which had been conquered by the Norman adventurer Guiscard long before. He had gone to Milan when a youth, and there he had met Joan's mother—and stayed. The luxury of Lombard cities made any man who could manufacture handsome clothing sure of a living. "Milaner and Mantua-Maker" on a sign above a shop centuries later meant a shop where one could find the latest fashions. Gilles was prosperous and happy, and his little girl was just learning to walk, when the siege of Milan put an end to everything. He came to London crippled from a wound and palsied from fever and set about finding work.

They might have starved if it had not been for a Florentine artist, Matteo, who was also a stranger in London, but had all that he could do. He lodged for a year in the solar chamber, as the room above the shop was called. Poor as their shelter was, it had this room to spare. Matteo paid his way in more than money; he improved the house. He understood plaster work, and covered the inner walls with a smooth creamy mixture which made a beautiful surface for pictures. On this fair and spotless plaster he made

studies of what he saw day by day, drawing, painting, painting out and making new studies as he certainly could not have done had he been lodged in a palace. All along two sides of the shop was a procession of dignitaries in the most gorgeous of holiday robes. In the chamber above were portraits of the King and Queen, the Bishop of London, Prior Hagno preaching to a crowd at Bartlemy Fair, some of the chief men of the government, and animals wild and tame. He told Joan stories about the paintings, and these walls were the only picture-books that she had.

Then they sheltered a smooth-spoken Italian called Giuseppe, who nearly got them into terrible trouble. He not only never paid a penny, but barely escaped the officers of the law, who asked a great many questions about him and how they came to harbor him. After that they made it a rule not to take any one in unless he was recommended by some one they knew. It was worse to go to prison than to be hungry.

One day, when Gilles had just been paid for some work done for Master Nicholas Gay, the rich merchant, a slender, dark-eyed youth with a workman's pack on his shoulder came and asked for a room. Hardly had Joan called her mother when the stranger reeled and fell unconscious on the floor of the shop. He did not know where he was or who he was for days. They remembered Giuseppe and were dubious, but they kept him and tended him until he was able to talk. His tools and his hands showed him to be a wood-carver, and his dress was foreign. His illness was something like what used to be called ship-fever, due to the hard conditions of long voyages, in wooden ships not too clean.

When their guest was able to talk he told them that he was Quentin, a wood-carver of Peronne. He had met Matteo in Messina and thus heard of this lodging. He had come to London to work at the oaken stalls of the Bishop of Ely's private chapel in Holborn. These stalls, or choir-seats, in a Gothic church were designed to suit the stately high-arched building. Their straight tall backs were carved in wood, and the arm-rests ended in an ornament called a finial. Often no two stalls were alike, and yet the different designs were shaped to fit the general style, so that the effect was uniform. The carving of one pair of arms might be couchant lions; on the

next, leopards; on the next, hounds, and so on. The seats were usually hinged and could be raised when not in use. The under side of the seat, which then formed part of all this elaborate show of decoration, was most often carved with grotesque little squat figures of any sort that occurred to the artist. Here Noah stuck his head out of a nutshell Ark; there a woman belabored her husband for breaking a jug; on the next stall might be three solemn monkeys making butter in a churn. Quentin's fancy was apt to run to little wood-goblins, mermaids, crowned lizards, fauns, and flying ships. He came from a country where the forests are full of fairy-tales.

Joan would be very sorry to have Quentin go away. She was thinking of this as she sat in the twilight nursing her wooden poppet. When he came in at last he had his tools with him, and a piece of fine hard wood about two feet long. Seating himself on a bench he lit the betty lamp on the wall, and laying out his knives and gouges he began to carve a face on the wood.

Joan could not imagine what he was making, and she watched intently. The face grew into that of a charming little lady, with eyes crinkled as if they laughed, and a dimple in her firm chin. The hair waved over the round head; the neck was as softly curved as a pigeon's. The gown met in a V shape at the throat, with a bead necklace carved above. There was a close-fitting bodice, with sleeves that came down over the wrists and wrinkled into folds, and a loose over-sleeve that came to the elbow. The skirt fell in straight folds and there was a little ornamental border in a daisy pattern around the hem. When the statuette was finished and set up, it was like a court lady made small by enchantment.

"There is a poppet for thee, small one," Quentin said smiling.

Joan's hands clasped tight and her eyes grew big and dark. "For me?" she cried.

"It is a poor return for the kindness that I have had in this house," answered Quentin brushing the chips into the brazier.

The poppet seemed to bring luck to the hurer's household. Through Gilles, Master Gay had heard of Quentin's work, and he ordered a coffret for his wife, and a settle. The arms of the settle were to be carved with little lady-

figures like Joan's, and Master Gay asked if they could not all be portraits of Princesses. Joan's own poppet was named Marguerite for the daughter of the French King, who had married the eldest son of Henry II. Quentin had copied the face from Matteo's sketch upon the wall, and in one room or the other were all the other members of the royal family. But as it would not be suitable to show Queens and Princesses upholding the arms of a chair in the house of a London merchant, Quentin suggested that they change the design, and use the leopards of Anjou for the arms, while the statuettes of the Princesses were ranged along the top of the high back. There could be five open-work arches with a figure in each, and plain linen-fold paneling below. Where the carving needed a flower or so he would put alternately the lilies of France and the sprig ofbroom which was the badge of the Plantagenets. Thus the piece of carving would commemorate the fact that the family of the King of England was related to nearly every royal house in Europe through marriage. It would be a picture-chronicle.

In the middle arch was Marguerite, who would be Queen of England some day if her husband lived. At her right hand was Constance of Brittany, wife of Geoffrey, who through her would inherit that province. The other figures were Eleanor, who was married to Alfonso, King of Castile; Matilda, who was the wife of Henry the Lion, Duke of Saxony, the most powerful vassal of the German Emperor; and Joan, the youngest, betrothed to William, called the Good, King of Sicily.

"There will be two more princesses some day," said Joan, cuddling Marguerite in her arms as she watched Quentin's deft strokes. "Prince Richard is not married yet, and neither is Prince John."

"The work cannot wait for that, little one," Quentin answered laughing. "Richard is only sixteen, and John still younger. Yet they do say that the King is planning an alliance with Princess Alois of France for Richard, and is in treaty with Hubert the Duke of Maurienne for his daughter to wed with John. I think, myself, that Richard will choose his own bride."

Joan said nothing, but in her own mind she thought it would be most unpleasant to be married off like that, by arrangements made years before.

“The marriage with Hubert’s daughter,” Quentin added half to himself, “would keep open the way into Italy if it were needed. It is a bad thing to have an enemy blocking your gate.”

Although her poppet was carved so that the small out-held hands and arms were clear of the body, and dresses could be fitted over them, Joan found that there were but few points or edges that were likely to be chipped off. The wood was well seasoned, and the carving followed the grain most cunningly. Neither dampness nor wood-boring insects could easily get into the channels where sap once ran. This was part of the wisdom of wood-carving.

When Joan grew too old to play with her poppet she sometimes carried her to some fine house to show a new fashion, or style of embroidery. Marguerite had a finer wardrobe than any modern doll, for the little hats, hoods and head-dresses had each a costume to go with it, and all were kept in a chest Quentin had made for her, with the arms of Milan on the lid. No exiled Milanese ever quite gave up the hope that some day the city would be rebuilt in all its splendor, and the foreign governors driven from Lombardy. Joan used to hear her father talking of it with their next lodger, Giovanni Bergamotto, who was a peddler at fairs. Gilles had had steady work for a long time, and was making not only the rough caps he used to make, now turned out by an apprentice, but fine hats and caps for the wealthy. A carved and gilded hat swung before the door, and Joan learned embroidery of every kind. She saw Quentin now and then, and one day he sent word to her, by the wool-merchant Robert Edrupt, that Queen Eleanor wished to see the newest court fashions, and that Joan might journey with Edrupt and his wife to the abbey where she was living. It was one of the best known houses in England, and the Abbess was of royal blood. It was not at all unusual for its guest-rooms to be occupied by Queens and Princesses.

Quentin had been sent there to do some work for the Abbey, and in that way the Queen, through Philippa, her maid of honor, had heard of Joan.

“I suppose it is a natural desire in a woman,” Master Edrupt said when they talked of the matter, “but somehow I would stake my head it is not the fashions she is after.”

Barbara his wife smiled but said nothing. She agreed.

When Joan had modestly shown her wares, and the little wooden court lady had smiled demurely through it all, the Queen dandled Marguerite on her knee and thoughtfully looked her over.

“The face is surely like the Princess of France,” she said. And Joan felt more than ever certain that there was a reason for this interest in poppets.

Later in the day she found out what it was. Quentin was carving other little lady-figures like those he had made years ago for Master Gay. He had also made the figures of a Bishop, a King, a Monk, and a Merchant; with a grotesque hump-backed hook-nosed Dwarf for the Jester. It looked as if a giant were about to play chess. Padraig, an Irish scribe who had made some designs for the Queen’s tapestry-workers, was using his best penmanship to copy certain letters on fine parchment. Giovanni, who had sprung up from somewhere, was making a harness-like contrivance of hempen cords, iron hooks and rods, and wooden pulleys. When finished it went into a small bag of tow-cloth; if stretched out it filled the end of a rough wooden frame. Joan began to suspect that the figures were for a puppet-show.

“It is time to explain,” Quentin said to the others. “We can trust Joan. She is as true as steel.”

Joan’s heart leaped with pride. If Milan had only honor left, her children would keep that.

“It is this, Joan,” Quentin went on kindly. “In time of war any messenger may be searched, and we do not know when war will come. King Henry desires above all things the peace of his realm. He will not openly take the side of the Lombard cities against Frederick Barbarossa—yet. But he will throw all his influence into the scale if he can. The Queen has hit upon a way by which letters can be sent safely to the courts of Brittany, France, Castile, Sicily, and even to Saxony, which is in Barbarossa’s own domains.

Giovanni will travel as a peddler, with the weaver-boy Cimarron as his servant or companion, as may seem best. He will have a pack full of such pretty toys as maidens love,—broidered veils, pomanders, perfumed gloves, girdles—nothing costly enough to tempt robbers—and these wooden poppets of ours. We cannot trust the tiring-women in times like these, but he may be able to give the letters into the hands of the Queens themselves. No one, surely, will suspect a poppet. These gowns and wimples will display the fashions, and I had another reason for telling you to bring them all. If he cannot get his chance as a peddler he can hang about the court with a puppet-show. Now, look here."

Quentin took the softly smiling poppet and began to twist her neck. When he had unscrewed the dainty little head a deep hole appeared in the middle of the figure. Into this Padraig fitted a roll of parchment, and over it a wooden peg.

"May she keep it?" Quentin asked gently. "There is need for haste, and I have not time to make another figure."

Joan swallowed hard. Marguerite had heard many secrets that no one else knew. "Aye," she said, "I will let her go."

Then each little figure in turn received its secret to keep, and Joan, Lady Philippa, and the other maids sewed furiously for a day and a half. Each Princess was gowned in robes woven with the arms of her kingdom. The other figures were suitably dressed. The weights which made the jester turn a somersault were gold inside a lead casing—Giovanni might need that. There were jewels hidden safely in his dagger-hilt and Cimarron's, but to all appearance they were two common chapmen. They were gone for a long time, but Marguerite— the only poppet to return—came back safely, and inside her discreet bosom were letters for the King. Cimarron brought her to the door of Gilles the hurer, and told Joan that Giovanni, after selling the puppet-show, had stayed in Alexandria to fight for Milan.

## ARMORER'S SONG

By the armorer's tower the fire burned brightIn the long black shadows of coming night.Quoth Franklin to Tomkyn, "Twenty to oneWe shall both be gone ere to-morrow's sun—Shoot a round for the love o' the game!"

By Ascalon towers the sun blazed redWhere one stood living and twenty were dead,—Quoth Roger to Raimond, "We be but few,Yet keener the triumph when steel rings true—Break a lance for the Faith and the Name!"

By London Tower the watch-fires glowedOn the troops that marched by the Roman Road.Quoth Drake to Howard, "Armadas be tall,Yet the proudest oak in a gale may fall,—Take a chance for Belphoebe's fame!

"They live in Valhalla who fought for their landWith dauntless heart and ungrudging hand,They went to the task with a laugh and a jest,—Peace to their souls, wherever they rest!And we of their blood, wherever we go,By the Carib Seas or the Greenland floe,With heart unwearied and hand unstayed,Must win or lose by the law they made,—Strike hard—for the love o' the game!"

## XIX

## DICKON AT THE FORGE

THE smithy was very small compared with a modern foundry. It was not large even for a country blacksmith's shop; the cottage close by was hardly bigger; yet that forge made iron-work which went all over England. It was on one of the Sussex roads leading into Lewes. Often a knight would stop to have something done to his own armor or his horse's gear, for the war-horse also wore armor,—on head and breast at least. Some of the work of old Adam Smith had gone as far as Jerusalem. Dickon felt occasionally that if he were a spear-head or a dagger, he would stand more chance of seeing the world than he did as the son of his father.

Adam was secretly proud of the lad who at thirteen could do nearly as much as he himself could. That was saying more than a little, for Adam Smith had the knack of making every blow count by putting it in exactly the right place. A man who can do that will double his strength.

Dickon had inherited the knack, but he had something else besides, of which his father knew nothing. He never did a piece of work that he did not try to make it look right. He could see that when the bar that latched a gate was of a certain length, not too small or too large, it pleased both eye and hand. He did not consider the hinges on the door better looking for being made into an elaborate pattern, unless the pattern was a good one. In short, Dickon had what is known as a sense of beauty. Some have it and some have not. Those who have can invent beautiful patterns, while those who have not can only copy,—and they do not always copy accurately.

It may seem strange to speak of beauty in the iron-work of a little country smithy, but nothing is more beautiful in its way than good iron-work. There are gates, hinges, locks, keys and other furnishings which are so well designed that one is never weary of studying them. Armor has been made beautiful in its time; so have swords, halberds, daggers, fire-baskets, and fire-dogs.

Because iron is so simple, and there is no chance of getting an effect by using color or gilding, the task of making it beautiful is unlike that of

painting a picture. The beauty of iron-work is the line, the curve, the proportion. If these are wrong one sees it at once; and the same is true when the work is right. Most of the work of Adam Smith, while strong and well wrought, was only by accident good to look at. Dickon was not allowed to do anything that his father did not oversee, and Adam Smith saw to it that no job left his shop which was not well done. Dickon had found out, little by little, that when a thing is strong enough for its use, with no unnecessary clumsiness, and the handles, catches and rivetings are where they ought to be for strength and convenience, it usually looks very well. That is to say, beautiful iron-work is useful and economical.

Dickon was hammering away, one golden autumn morning, on the latch for a gate. The cattle had broken into the Fore Acre again, and Adam, who had to go to Lewes on business, told Dickon to make that latch and do it properly, so that it would keep the gate shut. Old Wat had gone into the forest for some wood, for the great belt of woodland called the Weald was all around, and the oak from it served for fuel. Dickon had never seen a coal fire in his life. Forges like this were scattered all through the Weald, and what with the iron-workers and the ship-builders, and the people who wainscoted their houses with good Sussex oak, there is no Weald left nowadays. That part of the country keeps its name, and there are groves of oak here and there, but that is all.

Dickon could see from the door the acorns dropping from the great oak that sheltered the smithy and was so huge that a man could not circle it with his arms. He began to wonder if he could put some sort of ornamental work on that latch.

No one could have looked less like an artist than the big, muscular youth in his leathern apron, with his rough tow-head and square-chinned face; but inside his brain was a thought working itself out. He took an oak twig and laid it in this position and that, on the iron.

It is not very easy to work out a design in iron. The iron must be heated, and beaten or bent into shape while it is soft. There is no making a sketch and taking your time with the brushes. Dickon thought he would see if he could draw a pattern. He took a bit of coal and a wooden tile fallen from

the roof, and began to combine the lines of the gate-latch with those of the twig. He had not copied iron utensils and other patterns without knowing how to draw the lines of an oak leaf, but he found that somehow or other the leaf, as an ornament to the latch, did not look right. The cluster of acorns was better, but even that did not fit. Dickon's feeling, though he did not think it out, was that iron is strong, and an oak tree is one of the strongest of trees, and therefore the oak was suitable to decorate Sussex iron. He changed the lines, rubbing out one and then another, until he had got a set of curves and little nubbly knot-like ornaments which were not exactly like the oak twig, but suited the lines of the latch. The leaf-like side-pieces covered the parts of the latch where the fingers and thumb would rest in opening the gate, and the projecting handle might be made into something suggesting an acorn-cluster. He nodded thoughtfully.

"That's rather good," said a voice over his shoulder. "Where did you learn to draw?"

Dickon jumped; he had been so busy that he had not heard the sound of a horse's hoofs on the turf. The stranger who stood there, bridle over arm, was a rather slender man, five or six years older than Dickon, with deep-set hazel eyes, fair hair, and muddy boots that looked as if he had come a long journey.

"Nobody never taught me," said Dickon soberly. "I was trying to find out how to do it."

"You found out then. It is good—don't touch it. Is it for that gate-latch? Go on and finish the job; I won't hinder you. I'm a Sussex man, but I never came through the Weald this way. I lost my road, and they told me this would take me to Lewes. The nag and I shall both be the better for an hour's rest."

Dickon blew up the fire and went to work, with strong, deft strokes. He was not a shy lad, particularly when he was doing what he could do well. He was used to working with people watching him. Not seldom they were making themselves disagreeable because the work was not done more

quickly, but iron cannot be hurried. If a smith does not mean to spoil the temper of his work, he must keep his own temper well in hand.

The young man led his horse into the shade, and came to watch Dickon. As the leaf-curves began to stand out and the nubs of the acorn-cluster took shape he seemed more and more interested. Once he began to ask a question, but stopped himself, as if he knew that when a man has his whole mind on a task he cannot spare any part of it for talk. Dickon almost forgot that he was there. He was intent upon putting exactly the right hollows and veins in the leaf, and giving exactly the right twist to the handle.

At last it was done. Dickon straightened his back and looked at it, as the sunlight wavered upon it through the branches. The stranger clapped him on the shoulder.

"It is better than the sketch," he cried heartily. "It is good indeed. I have been in London, lad, in the Low Countries and in France, and I never saw a sweeter bit of work. How didst know the true line for that handle?"

"That's to make it open properly," Dickon explained, "fits the hand, like."

The other nodded approvingly. "I see. I learned that same lesson in my pottery. 'Wilfrid,' my old master used to tell me, 'never thee make too small an ear to thy jugs if thou lik'st the maids to love 'ee.' There's a knack, you see, in making a handle with a good grip to it, that will neither spill the milk nor hinder pouring. My wife she helped me there. She loves good work as well as I do."

Adam Smith, coming up the Lewes road next day, could not think what had happened when he saw Dickon in eager talk with a stranger. The boy had never been given to words. He was more taken aback when Master Wilfrid told him that his son had the making of a rare workman. He answered gruffly, stroking his big beard:

"Aye, the lad's well enow. Latch done, Dickon? Go and fit it to yon gate."

Wilfrid had come back to England full of new ideas, and ambitious above all for the honor of English craftsmen. When he found this youth working out, without any model at all, a thing so good as the oak-leaved gate-latch,

he was surer than ever that the land he loved could raise her own smiths. It was his ambition to make his own house beautiful within and without, as were some of the merchants' houses he had seen in cities. He further astonished the old smith by telling him that if Dickon would put some time on work along his own lines, he would pay him double or treble what he would earn at common labor.

"You see," explained the potter, as he showed the design he had drafted for a carved oaken chest, "there's much to be thought of in iron-work. You have to make it strong as well as handsome, and what's more, nine times out of ten you have to fit it to the work of some other man. It'd never do for the hinges and handles on this coffer to spoil the looks o' the carving, and that's to be done in London, d' ye see? Belike I'll have you make those first, Dickon, and let Quentin suit his pattern to yours. He can."

"How does he make his design?" queried Dickon. "Work it out as he goes along—like iron-work?"

"Not always," Wilfrid answered. "He's got a many patterns drawn out on parchment besides what he carries in his head. But they're only for show—to give an idea of the style. When he gets the size and shape and the wood he's to use settled, he changes the pattern according to his own judgment. If a wood-carver doesn't know his trade the design can be made by an artist, and all he need do is to follow it. But that's not my idea of good work. Unless you've made such a thing yourself you don't know how the lines are going to look. I'd never try to make a design for a fire-dog, and I doubt you'd make a poor job at shaping an earthen bowl. Then, if you want to suit yourself and your customer, you'll be changing your pattern with every job. The work ought to grow—like a plant."

"I know," Dickon commented. "You make an iron pot for a woman, and another for her neighbor, and ten to one the second must be a bit bigger or narrower or somehow different. You've got to go by your eye."

"They say," Wilfrid went on musingly, "that there's like to be mechanical ways to help the work—turn it out quicker—do the planing and gouging with some kind of engine and finish by hand. It seemed to me that would

take the life out o' the carving. I said so to Quentin, and he laughed. He said a man could use any tool to advantage if he had the head, but without thought you couldn't make a shovel go right. I reckon that's so."

Adam Smith nodded. "Half the smiths don't know the way to use a hammer," he said, "and well-nigh all the rest don't know what they're making. You stick to the old forge a while yet, lad. There's a bit to learn afore you'll be master o' the trade."

"Your father's right," Master Wilfrid admitted. "You'll not waste your time by learning all that he can teach you. As I was saying to you yesterday, you've been doing good plain work and learned judgment. You know how to bend a rod so that it'll be strong, and that will make it look strong. And I'll warrant when you come to make a grille for a pair of iron gates you'll know where to put your cross-bars."

For all that, Master Wilfrid did not mean to lose sight of Dickon. He knew how much a youth could learn by talking with men of other crafts, and he intended that Dickon should have his chance. He himself had lost no opportunity, while on his travels, of becoming acquainted with men who were doing good work in England, and now and then one of these men would turn off the main road to see him at his pottery or his home. When the time came to forge a pair of iron gates to the parish church, he saw to it that Dickon got the refusal of the work. With his favorite tools and his father's gruff "God speed ye, lad!" Dickon rode forth to his first work for himself, and it was done to the satisfaction of every one.

"I knew that Sussex brains could handle that job," Wilfrid exulted, as they looked at the finished task. In days when churches and cathedrals were open all day long, it was desirable to have some sort of open-work railing to keep stray beasts out of the chancel. In a more splendid building this railing might have been of silver, but the homely farmer-folk thought the iron of the Weald was good enough for them.

Up along the grassy track past the south door of the church rode a company of travelers, middle-class folk by their dress. As they came abreast of the gate the foremost called out, "Ho, Wilfrid, is there any tavern

hereabouts? We be lost sheep in the wilderness. The Abbey guest-house is already full and they will not take us in."

"Faith, it's good to see thee here, Robert Edrupt," the potter answered. "I could house three or four of you, but it's harvest time, that's a fact. No, there's no tavern in the village. You see, most of the folk that travel this way go to the Abbey for a lodging."

"We'll stick together, I reckon," answered Edrupt, "if you can give us some kind o' shelter, and the makings of a meal. A barn would serve."

"I'll do better than that," Wilfrid assured them. "I'll take ye to Cold Harbor. It's part of a Roman house that we uncovered near the pottery. The walls were used in the old farmer's time for a granary. It's weather-proof, and there's a stone hearth, and Dickon here will help swing a crane for the kettles. We've plenty stores if there's a cook among ye."

"We can make shift," laughed Edrupt. "I'll come to the house to-morrow and gossip a bit. Quentin here has your carved coffer for ye."

"And here's the lad that made the hinges and the handles," Wilfrid added, with a hand on the big youth's shoulder. "Sithee here, Dickon, you show them their way to their lodging, and I'll e'en ride home and tell Edwitha to spare some pots and kettles for the cooking."

Thus Dickon was shoved all in a moment, in the edge of an autumn evening, into the company of merchants and craftsmen such as he had never met. The North-countryman, Alan of York, was a glazier; David Saumond, a Scotch stone-mason coming up from Canterbury to do some work for an Abbey; Guy of Limoges was a goldsmith; Crispin Eyre, a shoemaker of London; there were two or three merchants, some weavers newly arrived from overseas, various servants and horse-boys, and two peddlers of dark foreign aspect. The talk was mostly in a mixture of French and English, but Dickon understood this better than he could speak it, and several of the men were as English as himself. In the merry company at supper he saw what Wilfrid had meant when he said that hand-skill without head-wisdom was walking blind-fold, and work done alone was limping labor. It was the England of the guilds breaking bread by that fire.

## THE WANDER-YEARS

Fair is the light on the castle wall—(Heigh-ho, for the road!)Merry the wassail in hearth-warm hall—(Blither the call of the road!)When the moonlight silvers the sleeping plain,And the wind is calling to heart and brain,And the blood beats quick and the soul is fain—Ah, follow the open road!

Low croons the mother while children sleep—(Heigh-ho, for the road!)And firelight shadows are warm and deep—(Dearer the call of the road!)Where the red fox runs and the merlin sings,And the hedge is alive with the whir of wings,And the wise earth whispers of nameless things—Ah, follow the open road!

Safe is the nook we have made our own—(Heigh-ho, for the road!)Dear the comrades our hearts have known—(Hark to the call of the road!)Trumpets are calling and torches flare,And a man must do, and a man must dare,—Whether to victory or despair,—Come, follow the open road!

## XX

## THE WINGS OF THE DRAGON

PADRAIG was having his first view of a foreign country. England, to be sure, was somewhat strange to a boy who had never before been outside Ireland. Brother Basil, who had taught him all that he knew of writing, reading, painting and other arts, had come to England on business for the Irish Abbeys and was going no further. Padraig felt that he wanted to see more of the world.

Perhaps the wise monk felt that unless his pupil had the chance now to wander and come back, he would run away and never return at all; at any rate he told the youth that this would be a good time to make the pilgrimage to Rome if he could. There was peace in Lombardy for the moment, and the Pope, driven out more than once by the warring Emperor of Germany, was now in the Vatican, again.

A fishing-boat, slipping over to Calais in the light of a windy dawn, carried one passenger, a red-headed boy in a hooded cloak of rough black frieze. Padraig's own feet bore him from town to town until now, in a French city, he stood in the doorway of a gray and stately church alive with pictures. On a scaffold slung up behind the altar a painter sat working on a new altar-piece.

This was something which Padraig had never seen. He had painted pictures himself on parchment, and drawn designs in color for the craftsmen, but a wall-painting so full of life and color that it looked like a live angel come down from the skies, he had never seen made by any man.

It was in three parts, filling three arches, the middle one larger than the others. In the center was the beautiful brooding Mother with the Child in her arms, and her dull red mantle seemed to lift and float like a sunset cloud. In the narrower spaces were figures of saints. One, already finished, was an old man in the dress of a hermit, with a hind; the graceful creature nestled its head against him. An arrow transfixed his knee, and Padraig knew that this was Saint Giles, patron saint of cripples. The last of the three, on which the artist was now working, was Saint Margaret and the

dragon. The dragon was writhing away, with a dreadful look of rage and fear, before the cross in the hands of the brave, beautiful young girl. The sun crept through a loophole window and made the pictures, at the end of the long vista of gray arches, as real as living beings.

Even at this distance, nevertheless, the trained eye of Padraig detected something the matter with that dragon. The artist painted, scraped out, scowled, pondered and finally flung down his brushes in impatient disgust. He moved away, his eyes still on the unfinished work, and backed directly into Padraig.

"What—oh, I did not know that there was any one here. Look at that dragon, did you ever see such a creature!"

"Softly, softly, Matteo," spoke a superior-looking man in the dress of a sub-prior, behind them. "What is wrong with the picture? It looks very well, to me. We must have it finished, you understand, before the feast of Saint Giles, in any case. You must remember, dear son, that these works are not for the purpose of delighting the eye. The figure of Our Lady would be more impressive if you were to add a gold border to the mantle, would it not?"

Padraig retreated. He was still grinning over the expression on the artist's face, when he took out a bit of crayon and at a safe distance made a sketch of the pompous church-man on a convenient stone. Having caught the likeness he took from his scrip a half-completed "Book of Legends," and in the wide-open mouth of a squirming dragon which formed the initial he drew the head and shoulders of the half-swallowed Sub-Prior.

Just as he sat back to survey the design, Matteo strode down the path and stopped with his hand on the gate.

"Did you see him?" the artist spluttered. "Did you hear him? Because he is the secretary of the Archbishop and keeps the pay-roll he thinks he can instruct me in my work! If I had to paint the things he describes I would whitewash every one of my pictures and spend the rest of my days in a scullery! There, at least, no fault would be found because the work was too well done!

"That monster will be the death of me yet. I know that Le Gargouille never looked like that. He was a great dragon, you know, who lived in the Seine and ravaged the country until he was destroyed by Saint Romaine. They do not infest our rivers any more—they have taken to the church. My faith, if I knew where to find one I would lead that stupid monk down there by the ear and show him what a dragon is like. I never saw a dragon—it is not my business to paint dragons—but I know that they ought to be slippery shining green like a frog, or a lizard—and I cannot get the color."

"Is this anything like?" asked Padraig, and he held up the book.

Padraig's mind worked by leaps, Brother Basil used to say, and it had made a jump while the artist was talking. The most that he had thought of, when he made the sketch in his book, was that the face of the Sub-Prior would be a good one to use some day for a certain kind of character; and then it had occurred to him to fancy the dragon showing his appreciation of the dignitary in a natural way. He had already done the dragon with the last of the green that he and Brother Basil brought from Ireland, before he came to France, and it was a clear transparent brilliant color that looked like a new-born water-plant leaf in the sun. He had watched lizards and frogs, in long dreamy afternoons by the fishing-pools, too many times not to remember.

The painter's mobile dark face changed to half a dozen expressions in a minute. He chuckled over the caricature; then he looked at the work more closely; then he fluttered over the other leaves of the book.

"Where did you get the color for this?" he queried.

"I made it," said Padraig.

"Can you make it again?"

Padraig hesitated. "Is there a forest near by?"

"Forest—no; but why? For the hunting of dragons?"

"N-no, b-but—" Padraig was apt to stammer when excited— "if I had balsam like ours I could make the green. We had none, and so we hunted until we found the right resin—Brother Basil and I."

“Basil Ossorin, an Irish monk from England?” asked Matteo quickly. “I met him ten years since when he was on his way to Byzantium. If he was your master you have had good teaching.”

Padraig nodded. Brother Basil was the man whom he best loved.

“There is no trouble about the balsam if you know it when you see it,” the artist went on. “I will take you to a place where anything may be bought—cobalt, lapis lazuli, cinnabar, orpiment, sandarac—and it is honestly sold.”

Padraig numbered the matters off on his fingers. “Copper,—and Venice turpentine,—and saffron, to make him yellow underneath like water-snakes in an old pond. His wings must be smooth—and green—bright, and mottled with rusty brown—the sun comes from behind, and he must look as if it were shining through the halo round the maiden’s head.”

“I wonder now about that balsam,” mused the painter.

Padraig drew an outline in the dust on the stone flags. “The tree is like this—the leaf and berry like this.”

Matteo laughed with pure satisfaction. “That is all right; the tree grows in the abbey gardens. Come, young imp with the crest of fire, come quickly, and we will have a glorious day.”

It is not certain who painted more of that dragon, the master or the journeyman. Padraig directed the making of the vivid gold-green as if he were the artist and the other the grinder of paints. Matteo dragged old Brother Joseph, the caretaker, from his work in the crypt to scrape the original dragon off the wall until only the outline of curling body and webbed wings remained. The design was all right, for that was Matteo’s especial skill. He could make a wall-painting as decorative and well-proportioned as the stiff symbolic figures, and yet make the picture natural.

There was a fearful moment when the paint was ready and they made the trial, for neither was sure that the pigment would look right on this new surface. But it gleamed a living green. Padraig brightened the scaled body with yellow where the light struck it. Matteo used his knowledge of armor to deepen the shadows with a cunning blend of blue and bronze that made

the scales look metallic. Each worked on a wing, spreading it with sure swift strokes across the base of the scene. Just as Padraig drew his brush for the last time along the bony framework of the clutching talons, the painter caught him by the arm and drew him back down the nave.

"Now look!" he said.

The dragon wallowed at the feet of Saint Margaret in furious, bewildered rage. Old Brother Joseph, coming out of the corner where he had been sitting half asleep, looked actually frightened at the creature. Matteo, well pleased, did not wait for the verdict of the monks, but took Padraig home to his lodgings in a narrow street of the town, and they sat up late that night in talk over many things.

The painter was a Florentine, and when at home he lived in a street even then called the Street of the Painters, in Florence. He had been in London years before, in Paris, in Rome, in Spain, in Sicily. Now he had commissions for the decorating of a palace in Rouen, and he took Padraig's breath away by suggesting that they work together.

"Some day," Matteo averred thoughtfully, "there will be cathedrals in Italy, France, Normandy, Aquitaine, England, greater than the world has seen. There will be cliffs and forests of stone-work—arches, towers, pinnacles, groined and vaulted roofs, hundreds of statues of the saints. Every inch of it will be made beautiful as the forest is—with vines and creeping mosses, blossoms and the little wood-folk that shelter among trees. There will be great windows of stained and painted glass. There will be altar-pieces like those that we only dream to-day. I tell you, Patricio mio, we are in the dawn of the millennium of the builders. What has been done already is nothing—nothing!"

Padraig found in the following months that a group of young Italians, Matteo and some of his friends, were working along a new line, with models and methods that accounted for the beauty of their achievements. The figures that they painted met with scant appreciation oftentimes, for many of the churchmen desired only symbolic figures of bright colors, with gilding to make them rich. Moreover, there was a very general disbelief in

the permanence of wall-painting. Walls were damp, and the only really satisfactory decoration thus far had been the costly and tedious mosaic. Made of thousands of tiny blocks of stone of various colors, the design of the mosaic had to be suited to the infinite network of little cracks and the knowledge of the worker. Kings and noblemen usually preferred tapestry which could be saved in case of disaster, and carried about, to costly wall-paintings which must remain where they were. Yet Padraig found Matteo's rich and graceful figures equal in their way to the stone sculptures of any French master, and said so.

"It is like this, comrade," the Florentine explained, slipping his arm across Padraig's shoulders as they strolled past the church of Saint Ouen. "A picture is a soul; its life on earth depends upon the body that it inhabits; and we have not yet found out how to make its body immortal. I do not believe that my paintings will live more than a few years. You see, a mural painting is not like your illuminations. You can keep a book safe in a chest. But a painting on plaster—or on a wooden panel—is besieged day and night by dampness, and dryness, and dust, and smoke, changes of heat and cold,—everything. The wall may crack. The roof may take fire,—especially when pigeons and sparrows nest in the beams. The mere action of the air on any painting must be proved by years. I got my lesson on that when I was not as old as you. I heard from an ancient monk of a marvelous Madonna, painted from a living model—a beautiful girl pointed out for years as the Madonna of San Raffaele. I tramped over the Apennines to see it. Patricio mio, the face was black! The artist had used oil with resin and wax, and the picture had turned as black as a Florentine lily! I never told the old man about it, and I praised the work to his heart's content; but to myself I said that I would dream no more of my own immortal fame. I dream only of the work of others."

"But suppose that a way could be found to make the colors lasting?" queried Padraig.

"Ah, that would be a real Paradise of Painters—until some one came along with a torch. I think, myself, that some day a drying medium will be found which will make it possible to paint in oils for all time to come. There is

painting on wood, and on dry plaster—and fresco, where you paint on the plaster while it is still damp. In fresco you must lay out only the work that can be finished that day. Me, I am content for the time to be a fresco painter."

"And if it is all to vanish in a few years, why do we paint?" mused Padraig with a swift melancholy in his voice.

Matteo's hand fell heavily upon his arm. "Because we must not lose our souls—that is why. The life of our work will last long enough to be seen and known by others. They will remember it, and do their work better. Thus it will go on, generation after generation, until painters come who can use all that we have learned since Rome fell, and cap it with new visions. Every generation has its dragon to dispose of. When I have tamed my dragon he will take me to the skies—maybe."

It was not long after this that Matteo, overhauling the flat leather-bound coffer in which he kept his belongings, dragged up from the bottom of the collection some parchments covered with miscellaneous sketches, mostly of heads and figures. He had received a message from a sharp-faced Italian peddler-boy that day, and had been looking rather grave. On the plaster of the wall, in the sunset light, he began to draw, roughing it out with quick sure strokes, a procession of men and horses with some massive wheeled vehicle in the center. Presently this was seen to be a staging like a van, drawn by six white oxen harnessed in scarlet. Upon it stood churchmen in robes of ceremony, grouped about a tall standard rising high above their heads—a globe surmounted by a crucifix. Padraig knew what this was. It was the Carocchio or sacred car bearing the standard of Milan—but Matteo was a Florentine.

"Patricio caro," said the artist turning to his young pupil, "to-morrow we shall have to part. I have told the Prince that you are quite capable of finishing his banquet-hall, and that I have other business. So I have, but not what he may think. I had word to-day that Barbarossa has crossed the Alps. This time it will be a fight to the end.

"You know, for we have talked often of it, that the League of the Lombard cities is the great hope of the Communes in Italy. Moreover, it is your fight as well as ours. If the Empire conquers it will stamp those Communes flat, and take good care that the cities make no headway toward further resistance. The next step—for Frederick has said that he is another Charlemagne—will be the conquest of France, and then he will try to hurl the whole force of his Empire against Henry Plantagenet, his only great rival. Myself, I doubt if he can do that. When men do not want to fight they seldom win battles.

"Now there are three hundred young men of the leading houses of Lombardy who have sworn to guard the Carocchio with their lives. The Archbishop and his priests will stand upon the car in the battle and administer the sacrament to the dying. If the Emperor takes it this time it will be after the death of every man of the 'juramento.' I am a Florentine, that is true, but I shall be a foot-soldier in that fight. If we live, we will have our cities free. If we die—it is for our own cities as well as theirs.

"This is what I want you to do, little brother. Ah, yes, to die is not always the most difficult thing! These are the names and many of the faces of the 'juramento.' Keep them, and to-morrow, when I am gone, copy this sketch of the Carocchio going into the battle. Then, if I never come back, there will still be some one to paint the picture. When you find a prince, or some wealthy merchant, who will let you paint the Carocchio on his wall, do it and keep alive the glory of Milan. You will find some Milanese who will welcome you, however the game goes. And the picture will be so good—your picture and mine—that men will see and remember it whether they know the story or not. If they copy it, although the faces may not be like, they will yet carry the meaning—the standard of the free city above the conflict. Your promise, Patricio mio—and then—addio!"

Padraig promised. The next day, when he came back to the little room at the end of the narrow stair, there was only the picture on the white sunlit wall.

## ST. ELOI'S BLESSING

Clovis the King, proud of his golden thrones,Granted our Saint broad lands, whereon he shouldBuild cloisters, work in gold and precious stonesAnd carve in silver as it might be wood,And for God's glory—and the King's fair name—Do miracles with metal and with flame.

So to the world's end, where long-hoarded pelfShone forth new-hallowed in the goldsmith's hand,Saint Eloi's craftsmen, as long since himself,Were honored where they went in every land,Yet still his heart was ever ours, and stayedHere in Limoges, the city that he made.

Then all one night he knelt for us in prayerAt the high altar, suing for this grace,—That his fine art, in his true people's care,Should ripen rich as in none other place,And if gold fail, beauty to our desireShould we create, out of the earth and fire.

All secret work of dainty orfrenyCouchet in jeweled paternes brightly quaint,Balass and emeraut, sapphire, all should beSet in the triptych of the pictured saint,Or with new dreams of unwrought beauty haunted,Blend in amail deep hues of light enchanted.

Then vanished all the vision—Saint EloiWith trembling saw it swallowed up in night.None may escape the laws of grief or joy,And when the day is done, then fails the light.Yet still he prayed—the dragon-darkness fled,And a new life dawned, risen from the dead.

Soft smoothness like a creamy petaled rose,Rich roundness like the sun-filled apricot,Gold garlands twisted by some wind that blowsFrom what strange land we craftsmen marvel not.And in this porcelain cup (he said) shall pourJoy of life, joy of craft, forevermore.

## XXI

## GOLD OF BYZANTIUM

GUY BOUVEREL was again in his own country, where he was called, according to the habit of the day, Guy of Limoges. He had spent nearly ten years working with Eloy, the master artist, in Limoges, and studying the art of enameling on copper, silver and gold. The new name was to him what a degree from some famous university is to the modern scientist. When a man was called Guy of Limoges, William of Sens, or Cornelys of Arras, it usually meant that he was a good example of whatever made the place mentioned famous. Guy Bouverel might be anybody. The name was known among the goldsmiths of Guthrum's Lane in London; that was all. But Guy of Limoges meant a reputation for enamel-work.

The matter on which he was meditating, however, as he left Cold Harbor and walked up toward the house of Wilfrid the potter, was clean outside his own craft. The King, being much pleased with certain work done at the Abbey for which Guy was bound, had questioned him about it, and ended by giving him a rather large order. Brother Basil, a wise monk from an Irish monastery, had come to England to gather artists and artisans, and was for the time at this Abbey in the north, directing and aiding some work for the Church. Several of the company that lay the night before at Cold Harbor were going there, and among them they would be able to do what the King required.

The dowry of Princess Joan was to include a table of gold twelve feet long, twenty-four gold cups and as many plates, and some other trifles. A part of this work would be done in Limoges; but the King seemed to think that the rest might be done in England quite as well. He had also ordered stained glass for a chapel, and some reliquaries, or cases for precious relics, and three illuminated missals. The Sicilian court was one of the most splendid in Europe. The King evidently meant his daughter's setting out to be nowise shabby.

A chest of gold was to be delivered by the Chancellor to Guy, and he was to accompany it, with its guard, to its destination. One of the King's accountants would be nominally in charge, but of course if anything

should happen to the chest, Guy would be in difficulties. There were ingots, or lumps, of gold, cast in molds for convenience in packing, and to be used in the goldsmith-work; but the greater part of the gold was coined bezants—coins worth about half a sovereign in modern money, and minted in Byzantium. This would pay for materials brought from almost every corner of the known world, and for the work of the skilled metal-worker, enamel-worker, glassmaker, and lumineur who would fill the order. Tomaso the physician had established himself in a half-ruined tower not far from the workshop on the Abbey lands, and would aid them in working out certain problems; and altogether, it was such a prospect as any man of Guy's age and ambition might find agreeable.

"Hola, lad!" called Ranulph the troubadour cheerily. "Have you the world on your shoulders, or only some new undertaking?"

Guy laughed, with a certain sense of relief. He had known Ranulph for some time, and it occurred to him that here he might safely find a listener.

"Do you know a certain clerk named Simon Gastard?" he asked.

"I have not that pleasure," laughed the troubadour. "Ought I to know him?"

"Not if you can help it," said Guy, "if he is the same Gastard whom I heard of in France five years ago. Didst ever hear of sweating gold?"

"It sounds like the tale of King Midas," Ranulph chuckled. "How, exactly, does it happen?"

"It does not happen," Guy answered, "except an itching palm be in the treasury. There was a clerk in Paris who took a cask full of gold pieces and sand, which being rolled about, gold more or less was ground off by the sand without great change in the look of the coin. Then, the coins being taken out in a sieve and the sand mixed with water, the gold dust sank to the bottom and was melted and sold, while the coins were paid on the nail. I had as lief get money by paring a cheese, but that's as you look at it. If I have to travel with this fellow I should like to know that there is nothing unusual about the chest our gold is in. I cannot keep awake all the time, and there is enough in that chest to make a dozen men rich. I knew a rascal

once who made a hole in the bottom of a chest, stole most of the coin, and then nailed the chest to the floor to hide its emptiness."

Ranulph laughed sympathetically. "You do see the wrong side of mankind when you have anything to do with treasure."

"Unless you know something of it," returned Guy grimly, "you won't be allowed to handle treasure more than once."

"True," admitted Ranulph. "Why not take turns watching the chest?"

"The others who are bound for the Abbey have gone on. I had to wait for the Chancellor, and then I saw Gastard."

"Ask the potter," said Ranulph at last. "He can be trusted, and he may know of some one who has a chest that will defy your clerk. I suppose you don't expect him to steal it, chest and all?"

"No; I have had dealings with the captain of the guard before. He is Sir Stephen Giffard, a West-country knight, and he will send men who can be trusted. The trouble is, you see, that I am not sure about Gastard. But he could not object to the secure packing of the gold."

By this time they had reached Wilfrid's house, and he was at home. When Guy unfolded his problem the potter looked thoughtful.

"I may have the very thing you want," he said. "Come here."

He led the way into a small room which he used as a study, and dragged into the middle of the floor a carved oaken chest bound with iron. There was just enough carved work on it to add to its look of strength. Two leopards' heads in wrought iron, with rings in their jaws, formed handles on the ends. The corners were shielded with rounded iron plates suggesting oak leaves. The ornamental wrought iron hinges, in an oak and acorn pattern, stretched more than half way across the lid and down the back. Iron bolts passing through staples held the lid, and acorn-headed nails studded it all over. In fact, the iron was so spread over it in one way and another that to break it up one would have needed a small saw to work in and out among the nails, or a stone-crusher. When the lid was thrown back, more iron appeared, a network of small rods bedded into the

inner surface of lid, bottom and sides. The staples holding the lock went clean through the front to the inside of the box.

"What a piece of cunning workmanship!" said Guy in admiration. "It is like some of the German work, and yet that never came over seas."

"No," said Wilfrid, "it was done here in the Sussex Weald. I had the idea of it when I came back from France, and young Dickon, whom you saw last night, made the iron-work. He began with the hinges and handles, and then Quentin of Peronne did the wood-work and brought the chest here, and Dickon fitted in these grilles yesterday."

"Will you sell it?" asked Guy. The other hesitated.

"I had meant to keep it to show the Abbey folk," he said. "I had thought it might get Dickon a job at some cathedral."

"We'll use it to pack some gold-work that's to go to the King," averred Guy promptly. "Will that content you?"

"It ought to," smiled Wilfrid, well satisfied, as he took the contents of the coffer out and shut down the lid.

"What's your price?" asked Guy.

Wilfrid hesitated again. It might have been thought that he was wondering how much he could possibly ask. But it was not that.

"I met you in London, Master Bouverel," he said finally, "and I understood you to be a worker in amail."

Amail was the common name for enamel. The corruption may have come from the fancied likeness of the work to the richly ornamented "mail," or from the fact that the enamel covered the gold as mail covers a man's body.

"Amail, gold and silver work, and jewelry," said Guy.

"Is it hard to learn?"

"That depends," returned the goldsmith. "I was brought up to the craft, and I've been at it ten year now in Limoges, but I'm a prentice lad beside the masters."

“Well, it’s like this,” said the potter slowly. “I saw amail in France and Limoges that fair made me silly. I know a bit of glass-work, and something of my own trade, but this was beyond me. I’ll never be aught but a potter, but if you can give me a piece o’ that I’ll give you the chest and what you like besides to make up the price.”

Guy smiled—he had never suspected that Wilfrid felt about the enameling as he himself did. “You shall have it and welcome,” he answered. “But why not come to the Abbey and learn to do the work yourself—if you can leave your own workshop? We can do with more men, and there might be things about the glazing and that which would be useful in your pottery.”

Wilfrid met the suggestion gladly. He could make arrangements to leave the pottery in the hands of his head man for a while; for all the work they did was common ware which a man could almost make in his sleep. If he could study some of the secrets of glazing and color work with Guy, he might come back with ideas worth the journey.

He did not tell Edwitha anything about the enamel-work. That was to be a surprise.

It was some time before they met again at the Abbey. The gold arrived safely in due season, and Simon Gastard bade it good-by, with very sour looks. It was placed in charge of Brother Basil and Tomaso, and Wilfrid, who had been a Master Potter, took his place as apprentice to a new craft. His experience as a potter helped him, however, for the processes were in some ways rather alike. At last he was ready to make the gift he intended for Edwitha.

Padraig, the young artist and scribe who was making most of their designs, drafted a pattern for the work, but Wilfrid shook his head.

“That is too fine,” he said. “Too many flowers and leaves—finikin work. Make it simpler. Every one of those lines means a separate gold thread. It will be all gold network and no flowers.”

“As you will,” Padraig answered. “It’s the man that’s to wear the cap that can say does it fit.” And he tried again.

Wilfrid himself modified the design in one or two details, for he had made pottery long enough to have ideas of his own. The enamel was to show dewberry blossoms and fruit, white and red, with green leaves, on a blue ground; the band of enamel around the gold cup was to be in little oblong sections divided by strips of ruby red. It was not like anything else they had made. It was as English as a hawthorn hedge.

Very thin and narrow strips of gold were softened in the fire until they could be bent, in and out, in a network corresponding to the outlines of the design. This was fastened to the groundwork with flour paste. Then it was heated until the gold soldered itself on. Powdered glass of the red chosen for the berries was taken up in a tiny spoon made of a quill, and ladled carefully into each minute compartment, and packed firmly down. Then it was put into a copper case with small holes in the top, smooth inside, and rough like a grater outside, to let out the hot air and keep out hot ashes. The case had a long handle, and coals were piled all around it in a wall. When it had been heated long enough to melt the glass it was taken out and set aside to cool. This took some hours. When it was cold the glass had melted and sunk into the compartment as dissolved sugar sinks in a glass. More glass was put in and packed down, and the process repeated. When no more could possibly be heaped on the jewel-like bit of ruby glass inside the tiny gold wall, the white blossoms, green leaves, blue ground, and strips of deeper red, were made in turn. Only one color was handled at a time. If the glass used in the separate layers was not quite the same shade, it gave a certain depth and changefulness of color. Overheating, haste or carelessness would ruin the whole. Only the patient, intent care of a worker who loved every step of the work would make the right Limoges enamel. This was one of the simpler processes which are still known.

The polishing was yet to be done. A goatskin was stretched smooth on a wooden table; the medallion was fixed in a piece of wax for a handle, and polished first on a smooth piece of bone and then on the goatskin. Each medallion was polished in turn until if half the work were wet and half dry the eye could detect no difference.

Alan brought his mother, Dame Cicely, to the glass-house while Wilfrid was still at work on the polishing, and after she had seen the great window they had made for the Abbey church at the King's order, she paused to look at the enamel.

"Tha'lt wear out thy ten finger-bones, lad," said she. "I'm pleased that my cheeses don't have to be rubbed i' that road. They say that women's work's never done, but good wheaten bread now—mix meal and leaven, and salt and water, and the batch'll rise itself."

"There's no place for a hasty man in the work of making amail, mother," drawled her son. "Nor in most other crafts, to my mind."

"My father told me once," quoth Wilfrid, smiling, "that no work is worth the doing for ourselves alone. We were making a wall round the sheepfold, and I, being but a lad, wondered at the tugging and bedding of great stones when half the size would ha' served. He wasn't a stout man neither—it was the spring before he died. He told me it was 'for the honor of the land.' I can see it all now—the silly sheep straying over the sweet spring turf, gray old Pincher guarding them, the old Roman wall that we could not ha' grubbed up if we would, and our wall joining it, to last after we were dead. That bit o' wall's been a monument to me all these years."

"You're not one to scamp work whatever you're at," Guy declared heartily, "but that cup's due to be finished by to-morrow."

When the wreath of blossoms was in place around the shallow golden bowl, the smaller garland around the base, and the stem was encircled with bands of ruby, azure and emerald, it was a chalice fit for the Queen of Fairyland if she were also a Sussex lass. Brother Basil, whose eye was never at fault, pronounced it perfect. It was not like anything else that they had made, but that, he said, was no matter.

"When Abbot Suger of St. Denys made his master-works," Guy observed as he put away his tools for the night, "he did not bring workmen from Byzantium; he taught Frenchmen to do their own work. And an Englishman is as good as a Frenchman any day."

## THE WATCHWORD

When from the lonely beacon heightThe leaping flame flared high,When bells rang out into the nightWhere ships at anchor lie,There orderly in all men's sight,With sword or pike in hand,Stood serf and craftsman, squire and knightFor the Honor of the Land.

When war had passed, and Peace at lastRuled over earth and sky,The bonds of ancient law held fast,—The faith which cannot die.Ah, call us aliens though you may—We hear and understand,The deathless watchword wakes to-day,—The Honor of the Land!

## XXII

## COCKATRICE EGGS

BROTHER BASIL and Tomaso of Padua sat in the glass-house crypt, with an oaken chest heavily bound with iron between them. It had been brought in, and the ropes about it loosened, by sweating varlets who looked with awe at the crucibles, retorts, mortars, braziers, furnaces, beakers and other paraphernalia of what they believed to be alchemy. They had not agreed about the contents of that coffer. Samkin held that it was too heavy to be anything but gold. Hob maintained that if these wise men could make gold there was no point in sending them a chest full. Tom Dowgate ended the argument by inquiring which of them had ever handled gold enough to judge its weight, and reminding them of the weight of a millstone when tugged up hill.

It was gold, however. When doors were bolted and windows shuttered the two philosophers remained silent for a few moments, Tomaso stroking his white beard, Brother Basil fingering his rosary. Then the Paduan reached forward and tilted back the lid. Under a layer of parchment, leather and tow scraps used for packing, the bezants lay snug and orderly beneath, shining significantly in the light of the bronze lamp. There was coin enough in that chest to turn the scale, perhaps, in the next war in Christendom,—so the Chancellor had said when he saw it go.

Brother Basil weighed one of the bright new-minted pieces on his finger-end, thoughtfully.

"I wonder what this bit of metal will do in England," he mused. "Strange—that a thing so easily destroyed should have such power over the hearts of men."

"It is like a Devil," said the unperturbed physician. "He does not come inside a man's heart unless he is invited. Gold as you will employ it means the upbuilding of those crafts that make men—not serfs. We shall make our treasure instead of hiring troopers to steal it, if your schools prosper."

Brother Basil sighed. "I hope so. It is hard to see pages of priceless wisdom, scribed and illumined by loving and patient labor, scattered to the winds in

the sack of a town. It made my soul ache to hear the monks of Ireland speak of the past. I believe that the King means to protect the Irish Abbeys, but this is a hard age for a peacemaker."

"The Plantagenets were never scantly supplied with brains," observed Tomaso dryly. "I think, myself, that the King will use the sword only to enforce the law, and that the robber barons are going to have a sad time of it henceforth. Perhaps Henry is more in tune with the age than you think. Frederick Barbarossa is coming to grips with the Lombard cities, and it will be mailed knight against Commune this time. Meanwhile, let us get to work."

The gold was unpacked and hidden safely in the hollow of the wall behind the turning stone. When the younger men arrived the chest was carried up the narrow stair and refilled with various precious or fragile things which it was well to have out of the way. The furnaces were set alight and the working day began.

A fairy spell seemed to possess the fires and the crucibles. Brother Basil, working at a medallion of enamel, gave a delighted exclamation as he held up the finished work. The red roses of Saint Dorothea were like elfin blossoms.

"The saint herself might have come from Alexandria to help us," he said.

Guy, who never spared trouble, had been finishing a chalice begun before his recent journey to the south. Even the critical eye of the Abbot found no flaw in its beauty. The little group of artists had worked free from the Oriental stiffness and unreality of their first models. Their designs were conventional, but the working out was like the quaintly formal primness of wild flowers in garlands. The traditional shape might be much the same, but there was a living freshness and grace, a richness of color and strength of line, which were an improvement on the model.

Alan, who seldom talked of an idea until he had tried it out, betook himself to a corner and began doing odd things with his blowpipe. The others went to work on a reliquary, and paid no attention to him until their work was well under way. Then there was a chorus of admiration. The sheet of glass

just ready for the annealing was of the true heavenly azure that Brother Basil had tried in vain to get.

"You kept the rule, I hope?" inquired the monk with some anxiety. "We cannot lose that glass now that we have it."

Alan shifted from one foot to the other. "It wasn't my rule,—that is, not all of it," he answered bluntly. "I read a part on this torn page here, and it seemed to me that I might work out the rest by this," he showed a chalked formula on the wall. "I tried it, and it came right."

Tomaso caught up the scrap of parchment. "What?" he said sharply. "Where did this come from?"

It was a piece that had been used for the packing of the gold. Parchment was not cheap, and all the bits had been swept into a basket. Although covered with writing, they could be scraped clean and used again. The Paduan bent over the rubbish and picked out fragment after fragment, comparing them with keen interest.

"No harm is done," he said as he met Alan's troubled gaze, "there may be something else worth keeping here. At any rate you shall make more blue glass. Keep the formula safe and secret."

There are days in all men's work which are remembered while memory endures—hours when the inspiration of a new thought is like a song of gladness, and the mind forgets the drag of past failure. The little group in the Abbey glass-house and the adjoining rooms where the goldsmiths worked, were possessed by this mood of delight. The chalice that Guy had finished, the deep azure glass and the reliquary represented more real achievement than they had to show for any day in the past six months. There was just the difference that separates the perfect from the not quite perfect. Their dreams were coming true.

The young men walked over the fields to supper at the Abbey farm, as usual, and Dame Cicely, as usual, stood in the door to greet them.

"How goes the work, lads?" she asked, and then caught Alan by the shoulder, crying, "No need to answer. I know by the face on thee. What hast been doing to make it shine so?"

“Only finished a piece o’ work, mother,” said Padraig with a grin. “It takes some men a long time to do that. If they would bide just this side of a masterpiece they’d save ’emselves trouble. But they will spend all their force on the last step.”

“Aye,” said Alan, “better leap clean over the Strid while you’re about it.”

And for once Padraig had no more to say.

Oddly enough Brother Basil also thought of the Strid that night—the deep and dangerous whirlpool in the grim North Country had haunted him ever since he saw it. He and Tomaso came back, after dark, to the crypt, and spread out the torn manuscripts by the light of two flambeaux in the wall. None of the pages were whole, and the script was in Latin, Arabic, Greek and Italian, and not all in the same handwriting. Both believed that in searching the heap for secrets of their arts they had stumbled on something dangerous.

“I believe I know where these came from,” Tomaso said, when they had patched together three or four pages. “They are part of the scripts of Archiater of Byzantium, who was taken for a wizard in Goslar ten years ago. I thought that all his books were burned. There was talk enough about it.”

“But what are these prescriptions?” asked the monk, puzzled.

“You would know by this time,” said the Paduan grimly, “if that flame-crested imp of yours, Padraig, had been the one to experiment. By following the directions on this bit of vellum he might have blown us all into the other world. Luckily only three of these formulæ are of that nature. The others are quite safe for your young disciples to play with. But these we will keep to ourselves.” He laid a stained brownish piece of sheepskin apart from the others and two smaller ones beside it. “These are directions for the manufacture of aqua regia, Spanish gold, and something which Archiater called Apples of Sodom. Of a certainty they are fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, those apples.”

Brother Basil had lost color. This really was a trifle too near necromancy to be pleasant. Spanish gold was a Saracen invention, said to be made of most

unholy materials, and he had heard of a wizard being carried bodily off on the wind after dealing in the others.

"We will carry on our experiments," Tomaso continued, "in the cellars of my tower, if you please. The young ones will be only too glad to be rid of us. If any one meddled here we should risk all we have done and the lives of our pupils. If we make any blunders working by ourselves—well—I sometimes think that I have lived a long time already."

The disciples were too well trained to ask any questions, but they were somewhat mystified by the proceedings which ensued. An underground chamber straitly walled in with masonry was fitted up, and the smells that clung to the garments of Brother Basil when he emerged were more like brimstone than anything else. Tomaso was never seen at all. Meanwhile the newly discovered formulæ for glass and enamel work had been turned over to the workers in the glass-house, with permission to buy whatever material was needed. Padraig and Guy went to London, and came back with precious packets of rare gums, dyes, minerals, oils and salts, not to be found or made at the Abbey.

Meanwhile the monk and the physician worked with absorbed intentness at their crucibles and stills. There was a slight explosion one evening, and a country lout of the neighborhood told of it. Next day a neighboring farmer ventured to ask Padraig what was going on in the ruined tower.

"Why," said Padraig soberly, "we are raising a brood of hobgoblins for the King. Did ye not know?"

The making of sulphuric acid, nitric acid and their compounds would have been risky business in any age, with the primitive apparatus that the two investigators had. They were furthermore made cautious by the fact that they did not know what might happen if they made the least error. It was midnight after a long and nerve-racking day when they became satisfied that they had the secrets of at least three perilous mixtures in the hollow of their hands.

"I think the King would give seven such chests as the one he sent, if he knew what we know," said Brother Basil musingly.

"He has the value of that chest already, in the rose window and the great window, the monstrance, the chalice and the cups," Tomaso answered, his sense of money values undimmed. "They are as good in their way as Limoges itself can do."

"I wish that we had tidings from London," said the monk thoughtfully. "If Lombardy loses in this war the Emperor will not stop there. He has said that he will obey no Pope on earth, only Saint Peter and the others in heaven. He is neither to hold nor to bind, that man."

"Henry does not want to fight—that is certain," said Tomaso. "He desires only to keep for his children what he has already—Anjou, Normandy, Aquitaine; and most of all England. It would take a greater than the Conqueror to rob the Plantagenets of this kingdom."

"What do you think will happen in Lombardy?" asked the other.

"The League of Lombard cities will fight to the death," said Tomaso quietly. "The Communes are fighting for their lives, and cornered wolves are fierce. Neither Sicily nor France is on Frederick's side, although they may be, if he wins. If he can get Henry the Lion of Saxony to fight under his banner, it may turn the scale."

"And Henry the Lion married our Henry's daughter Matilda," said Brother Basil. Tomaso nodded.

"Without Saxony," the Paduan added, "I know that not more than two thousand men will follow Barbarossa into Italy, and not more than half are mailed knights. The Lombard army is more or less light cavalry and infantry. Here in this cellar we have such weapons as no King has dreamed of—blazing leaping serpents, metal-devouring and poison-breathing spirits, pomegranates full of the seeds of destruction. These—in the hands of the Communes——"

"Would turn Christendom into the kingdom of Satan," said Brother Basil as the physician paused. "If we were to give the secret to Henry's clerks, or even if we ourselves handled the work in London Tower, how long would it be before treachery or thievery carried it overseas? Are we to spread ruin over the world?"

“I thought you would see it as I did,” said Tomaso smiling.

The ground vibrated to the tread of hoofs, and a horn sounded outside the window.

“That is Ranulph,” said Tomaso. “I thought he might come to-night. He will have news.”

As Ranulph came up the path, travel-dusty and weary, lights twinkled out in the Abbey and the Abbey Farm.

“The Emperor has lost,” said the troubadour. “There was a battle at Legnano, and the German knights scattered the Italian cavalry at the first onset, but when they met the infantry massed about the Carocchio they broke. The Emperor was wounded and fled. Without Henry of Saxony the battle was lost before it began. They say that there will be a treaty at Venice. The Communes have won.”

“Come here, my son,” said Tomaso, turning back into the tower. “We have found an armory of new and deadly weapons. You have heard of Archiater’s apples? We can make them. Shall we give the Plantagenets to eat of the Tree of Knowledge?”

Ranulph’s eyes darkened and narrowed. His quick mind leaped forward to the consequences of such a revelation.

“No,” he answered. “Too much evil ambition lives among Normans. It might be safe with the King—and maybe with Richard, for he loves chivalry and knightly honor—but John loves nothing but his own will. Let us have peace in Christendom while we can.”

“Shall we burn the parchment then?” asked Brother Basil.

“Nay—keep it in cipher. Let a few trusted men know the key.”

“We will trust our lads,” Brother Basil said. “Let us ask them.”

Alan and Padraig, Wilfrid, Guy, and David, came up the path. Brother Basil explained the discovery. They had already heard the news of the Lombard victory from Giovanni, who had ridden with the troubadour and stopped at the Abbey Farm.

“What shall we do with these mysteries?” Tomaso asked, holding out one of the deadly little grenades. “You must remember that some one else may find out the secret without our help. It is true that the man who did would risk being burned for a wizard in some places; still, there is little that men will not dare in the search for knowledge.”

“Let them find it out then,” spoke Padraig in sudden heat. “We have had enough of war in our time. Let us kill this cockatrice in the egg.”

“These would pay some debts,”—Alan’s hard young North-country face grew stern. He was thinking of tales which Angelo had told him in his boyhood.

“God can pay debts without money,” said Brother Basil gently.

“We are not ready,” Guy averred. “We need time to train men and to let the land breathe. After that it may be safe to use the secret—not now.”

“That cat’s best in a sack,” David commented shrewdly.

“Padraig is right,” said Wilfrid. “We have had enough of war in our time. We will keep this monster prisoned.”

They came to an agreement. Padraig was to make copies in cipher of the formulæ. After ten years, or on his deathbed should he die within that time, each might give the master-words and the rules to some comrade who could be trusted. They were all to swear never to use their knowledge for gain, or ambition, or vanity, but for the good of their craft, the glory of God and the honor of the land.

“Before we destroy that which we have made,” said Brother Basil, “we will show you in part what it can do.”

Metals dissolved like wet salt. Wood and leather were bitten through as by gnawing rats. A fire was kindled on the old tower, and a cone-like swarm of giant wasps of fire went spluttering and boiling up into the darkness. The apples of Sodom were planted under a troublesome ledge of rock, and reduced it to rubble.

“And there goes what would seat the King of England on the throne of the Cæsars,” quoth Tomaso. The last wavering flare was dying into the night,

and he stood with Ranulph and Padraig on the top of the tower, under the stars.

"He might have sat there before, if he had chosen," mused Ranulph. Padraig was silent. Matteo had fallen beside the Carocchio, and his heart was sad.

Tomaso laid a hand on Ranulph's shoulder.

"An empire is a forest of slow nurture, beloved of my soul," he said gently, "and it does—not—grow—by—conflagrations."