

ROBERT BURNS.

The Khan in the Banner.

It's Burns' anniversary, or near it, I am told
A hundred weary years and long have o'er his
ashes rolled;
The man who taught the people how to smile and
how to weep
Is dead? I don't believe it—he's even not asleep.
Tonight outside my window where the wintry
blizzards blow,
He's singing—singing—singing—I can hear him in
the snow.
I fain would ask him in to sit beside my cheerful
fire.
My Pharisee gets angry—the proposal lights his
ire.
He says, "I would never, never do, what would
the people think,
It's rumored in society that Robert used to drink!"
Ah, friends, he's dead a hundred years, a long,
long time to dwell,
For wine and women and a song down deep in
muckle hell—
I grabbed the croaking Pharisee and kicked him
through the door,
His sanctimonious features may I see them never
more;
I have no fear for Robert Burns, a noble life was
his;
I want to spend Eternity where the splendid
Ploughman is—
No matter where that place may be—I'm very
little carin'.
E'en if it be the place where they'll roast me like
a herrin'
The Pharisees will not be there, he'd give the
rascals fits,
Wherever Robbie makes his home there are no
hypocrites.
Where'er the place may be I know the time is
never long.
There's pretty girls, a glass of wine and many a
noble song;
He's got a farm up somewhere outside the golden
toon,
Where he needna' plow the mousie out or plow
the daisy doon,
Where Moylee raises decent lambs that do her
teachin' proud,
Afar from Holy Willie and from Holy Willie's
crowd,
The angels ken him rightly, this tenant on their
farm,
For Rob's a man for a that, they ken he'll do no
harm,
Where'er the little home is built, where'er that
farm may be,
Oh, Robert Burns, I'd like to spend Eternity with
thee!

LITTLE FAIRY.

CHAPTER I.

"Why, where's Little Fairy?" "What has
become of Little Fairy?"

Such were the cries that were heard on all
sides, from both high and low, when at the
meet at Mr. Arkwright's Hounds at Dollman's
Heath on a certain December morning the
master was seen riding up without his child
companion at his side. He looked graver than
usual, as he exchanged his hack for his
hunter and greeted his friends, and the reason
quickly went round:

Little Fairy was ill.

And then a gloom seemed to fall over the
whole hunt, and really you would have
thought that Little Fairy was the daughter
or sister of each individual sportsman there
assembled.

And now, who was this Little Fairy that
everybody was in such distress about?

Well, she was the seven-year-old daughter
and only child of the master of the hounds.
When, some three years before, Mr. Ark-
wright—the Squire, as he was always called—
had the misfortune to lose his wife, on whom
he doted, he at once concentrated all his
affection on his little Dora.

A shy, reserved man at all times, even to
his intimates, he "unbent" in the presence
of his baby daughter, as he never conde-
scended to elsewhere.

Small Dora was indeed a comfort to him in
his affliction. The family doctor, a shrewd
old Scotchman, expressed his opinion, in-
deed, very freely, that had it not been for
the bright little lassie, as he called Dora, and
the hounds, he would not have given much
for the Squire's reason or his life either.
And he would add:

"The latter, sir, would na' have bin a par-
ticle o' use without the former, but the two
combined formed, you understand, a most
useful combeination—more useful, indeed,
than all the doctors' prescriptions put to-
gether."

And we have not the slightest doubt in
our mind that the worthy medico was per-
fectly right.

Well, time went on, and Mr. Arkwright
and his little daughter grew more insepar-
able than ever, and at last came the day—a
red letter day in both their calendars, you
may depend—when Miss Dora was to make
her first appearance in a hunting field. Then
it was that old Ralph Duckworth, of the Wild
Farm, when he beheld Dora cantering up to
the meet on her pony, arrayed in a scarlet
riding habit and velvet hunting cap, with her
golden tresses flying in the breeze, declared
that if ever he saw a fairy out of a "pictur
hook," that pretty dear was that article. And
as Ralph was reckoned an oracle in those
parts, Dora was known hereafter as "Little
Fairy." Even her father adopted the name.
And what a dear little fairy it was!

"How do, Tom?" was her greeting always
to the huntsman. "How do, dear hounds?"
to the pack.

She would then kiss her hand to the com-
pany generally, in response to their salutes,
like the miniature queen she was. And now
she was ill, poor Little Fairy.

Of all the members of Mr. Arkwright's
hunt present that day, none felt the absence
of Fairy so much as young George Clayton, a
dashing young sabreur in Her Majesty's
regiment of Lancers.

It was curious the attachment there was
between the two, notwithstanding their dis-

parity in years, and, when at home on leave,
no knight was ever more constant in his at-
tentions to his lady love than was dear
Daddy, as Fairy always called him, to his
child sweetheart.

Like her other slave, her father, George
never seemed to look upon her in any other
light but that of a grown-up young woman,
and treated her as such in the gravest pos-
sible manner, much to the amusement of the
lookers on.

Yes, George was very sad that day, you
may depend. It certainly seemed, too, as if
Fairy's enforced absence from the meet,
brought bad luck to the pack, for though
they drew covert after covert, the hounds
never found all the morning, and at one
o'clock Mr. Arkwright, as a rule loath to go
home, announced his intention of doing so.

"And you'll come with me, won't you,
George?" said he, looking wistfully at the
young soldier. "I know," and there was a
falter in his voice as he spoke, "she will be
glad to see you.

"Oh, come I will," replied George, and the
pair accordingly rode off.

The old Scotch doctor before mentioned
met them at the door as they rode up to the
house an hour afterwards.

"I'm glad to see ye both, and you especial-
ly," said he, glancing significantly at George.
"The pair little lassie's verra, verra ill, I fear
the worst," he whispered to George, touching
his arm as he spoke; "but it's joost possible
your prinsince may work wonders with the
little woman." And then they went up
stairs. Of course the servants were all in
tears, for they had quite made up their minds
that Miss Dora must die, "silly idjuts," said
Doctor Mackintosh contemptuously, as ac-
companied by Mr. Arkwright, he motioned
them to be silent, and entered the sick room.

Five minutes afterward the distracted
father, looking twenty years older than he
had in the morning, opened the door noise-
lessly and beckoned to his friend.

"She's asking for you, George," he whis-
pered.

"How do, dear Daddy," said poor Little
Fairy, as George sank on his knees by the
bed. "Tiss me, Daddy. I like you to tiss
me in your yed toot, you know I do. You
look so pretty in your yed toot."

And George clasped the tiny frame in his
arms, and the child's glorious golden hair
fell over her face as he kissed her passion-
ately over and over again.

The doctor at last touched him on the
shoulder, and he gently disengaged himself.
"I must go now, dear Fairy," whispered
he, trying hard to restrain the tears that
would somehow come.

"No, don't do, Daddy," remonstrated the
child. "I feel so tired, and I like peeping
on your yed toot."

Once more she nestled her head against
his breast, and appeared to be going to sleep.
Then suddenly she brightened up, and held
her small fingers up in her old imperious
way.

"Daddy, dear," she whispered.

"What, my darling?"

"I s'all be oor little 'ife some day, s'ant I,
dear Daddy?"

"Yes, dear little child."

"Dood-night, Daddy."

If this had been a play, at this period the
organ (which, of course, would have been
conveniently situated in the next room) would
have struck up a solemn air calculated to
give one the "creeps"; angels' voices
would have been heard in the distance; angels
would have been hovering round the ceiling;
the limelight would have been turned full on
the face of the sleeping child—or rather dead
child, for of course on the stage, they are
never by any chance allowed to recover—and
nothing would be heard but sobs and sniffs
from the dress and upper circles, the pit and
the gallery. (The stairs and private boxes
never give way to their feelings—it's either
not the correct thing, or else they haven't
got any.)

But this is only a commonplace story.
Therefore, possibly the reader will not be
surprised to hear that, thanks to the skill of
Doctor Mackintosh, Little Fairy—notwith-
standing that the domestics, headed by her
old nurse, one and all agreed amongst them-
selves that poor Dora was "Going 'ome,"
"poor lamb!" and I believe, fond as they
were of her, were rather disappointed that
she didn't—eventually battled successfully
with the fever, so successfully, indeed, that
she was able to write her dear Daddy a pretty
letter, wishing him good-bye and au revoir,
just before he sailed to join his regiment in
India.

CHAPTER II.

Ten Years After.—

Again a meet of Mr. Arkwright's hounds
at Dollman's Heath. The scene is not
changed in the least. Still the same disre-
putable-looking old beer house, kept by one
Jonathar Myles, still the same cluster of
tumble-down cottages, not forgetting the
usual accompaniment of slouching, poach-
ified-looking men, slatternly women, and
ragged children, who always turn out en
masse on these occasions. The old white
horse is there, too, dirtier than ever (no-
body ever yet saw a common without a dirty
old white horse browsing upon it), and the

usual donkey, and the ducks and fowls.

If the scene is not changed, though, the
actors are.

Who, for instance, is this who rides up all
smiles to the meet? Can this be our old
friend, Mr. Arkwright?

Yes, it is none other. But how altered.

He is greyer and stouter than of yore, but
his face has lost the pained expression it had
ten years ago, and he looks twice as young in
consequence.

And who is the lovely girl with the fair
hair, attired in the brown habit, who rides
by his side, sitting her brown hunter with
the ease that none but a perfect horse woman
could assume?

Can this be the little girl whom old Ralph
Duckworth of the Wild Farm, years ago
christened "The Little Fairy," grown into a
charming woman?

She does not say, "How do, dear hounds?"
to the pack, as in the old days, and she does
not kiss her hand as the old original Little
Fairy was wont to, in response to the saluta-
tions she received as she rode up; but it is
"Miss Fairy," as she is now called, for all
that.

And pray, who is the military-looking man,
faultlessly attired in pink, who accompanied
the M. F. H. and his fair daughter, and
whose bronzed face tells of service under
Eastern suns?

Surely this is not Little Fairy's devoted
slave and admirer, George Clayton, the old
original Daddy!

Indeed, it is though. Mayor Clayton now,
if you please, and apparently just as much a
slave as ever, judging at least by the way
Miss Arkworth ordered him about.

Hark at him, the sly fellow! As he gets
off his hack and proceeds to tighten his ladye
love's girths ere he gets upon his hunter, he
reminds her that the last time he came to a
meet at Dollman Heath they had a blank day.

"You were away, ill, Fairy, do you remem-
ber?"

"Was I, Daddy! Fancy now, you remem-
bering all that. Ten years ago, too. Why,
I should have thought you had forgotten it
long ago."

Forgotten it, indeed. You little hypocrite!
Had either of you forgotten it?

Well, if Mr. Arkwright's hounds had a
blank day on that occasion, it is very certain
they did not on this, for they had the run of
the season, the very fastest thing they had
so far since the first of November. Fifty-
five minutes as hard as ever they could go,
with only one check, and finishing up with a
kill in the open. They finished a long way
from home, and the December evening was
closing in, and the rooks and the woodpigeons
were thinking of going to bed, as Daddy and
Miss Arkwright on their tired steeds rode
slowly along towards home.

They were all by themselves, for somehow
or other they had managed to part company
in the most natural way possible with papa
and the hounds.

"What are you thinking of, Daddy?" in-
quired Fairy, after a long silence. "Is it any
use," continued she, laughingly, "my offering
you a penny for your thoughts, sir?"

"No; I'll tell you without that, Fairy,"
said Daddy. "I was just thinking of that
time, just ten years ago, when you were so
ill, and wer-werent expected to live, dear
Fairy. Do you remember?" His voice got
very low just now, and trembled somewhat.

"Yes, Daddy," said she, simply, looking
up into his face. "Oh, yes, I remember it
so well, and how you came to see me in your
red coat and were so kind to me and—" The
tears were in Fairy's eyes now. Daddy
finished the story for her, and somehow or
other, as he did so, his arm crept round her
waist and her head fell upon his scarlet
shoulder as naturally as possible. Oh, yes,
quite naturally. And this is what they said:

"Yes, dear Fairy, you are quite right. I
came to see you in my red coat; and you
nestled your head upon my breast, just as
you are doing now, Fairy; and you said to
me in your childish way, 'I shall be your
little wife some day, shan't I Daddy?' Fairy,
my own darling, will you be my little wife—
some day?"

And do you know Fairy never so much as
answered him, which was very unkind of her.
And then you know there is an old saying,
and very often a true one, viz., that "Silence
gives consent." And we may presume that
that is exactly what happened in this case,
for when Mr. Arkwright's hounds met two
days afterwards, everybody was apparently
speaking at once and on one topic. And that
everybody said:

"Heard the news about Major Clayton and
Miss Fairy?"

"No!"

"Why, they're engaged to be married to
be sure."

—Finch Mason.

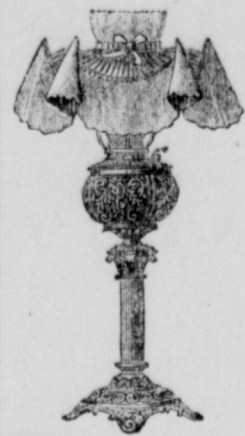
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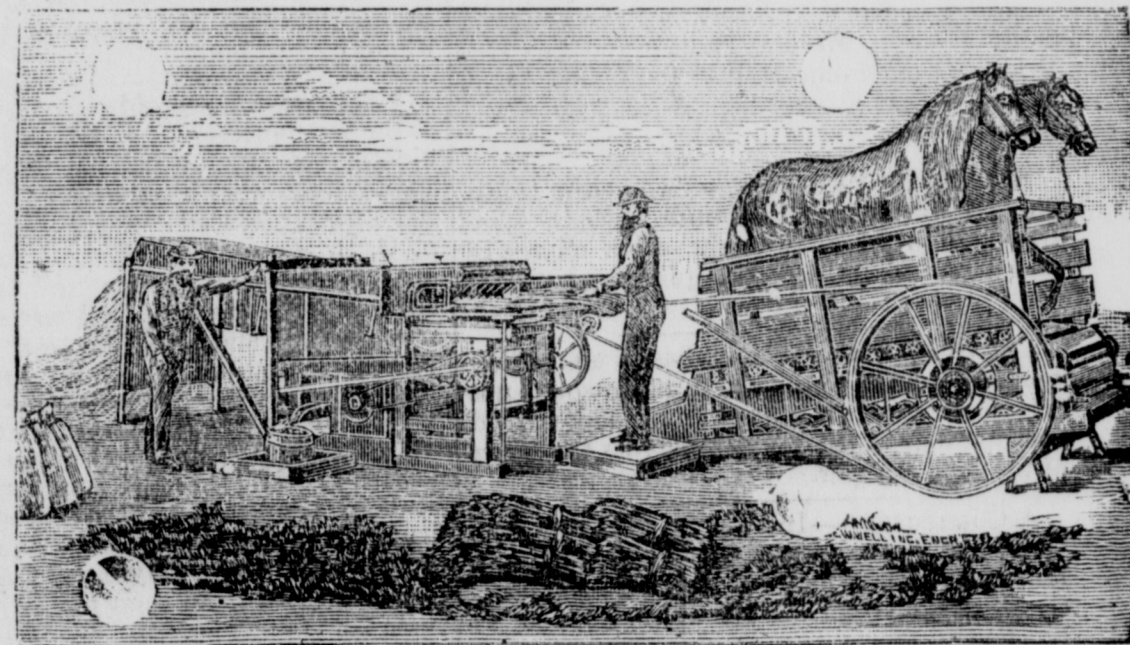
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