

THE ODD MAN OUT.

I can't get no job;
Tain't no good to try,
There's too many in the world;
An' there ain't enough die;
There's too big a crowd
For a man to wedge in.
I can't find no job,
An' I shan't try ag'in;
You can't get a job
In the kentry or town.
There's too many folks in the world,
An' there ain't enough jobs to go roun'.

W'en the worl' wuz cut out,
Twasn't cut out too small;
Twasn't made big enough
For its purpose at all.
The crowd is jammed in,
In a terrible cram;
Best thing you can do
Is git out er the jam.
So I've crawled from the crowd,
An' I've jest settled down.
There's too many folks in the worl',
An' there ain't enough jobs to go roun'.

My talents is large,
But they've no room to grow;
The worl' is too small,
And they don't git no show.
"An'," sez I to myself,
"You, Sempronious Lang,
Clear out er this mob,
An' git out er this gang;
For the mob 'll jest crowd,
An' jest trample ye down.
There's too many folks in the worl',
An' there ain't enough jobs to go roun'.

An' it don't do no good,
An' I ain't gon' to look,
For all places is filled,
An' the jobs is all took.
The worl' it wuz built
On a too narrer plan;
So I'm a shut out,
An' a left-over man.
So what is the good
For to rush up an' down?
There's too many folks in the worl',
An' there ain't enough jobs to go roun'.

There wuz jest one job left
In Bill Green's cotton mill;
All the one I could find
In the hull worl' to fill.
But I've such a big heart,
This one job of my life,
I'll jest give it up,
Gen'rous like, to my wife;
An' there ain't no more jobs,
So I've jest settled down.
There's too many folks in the worl',
An' there ain't enough jobs to go roun'.

Tasmanian Mail.

AN ASSISTED ELOPEMENT.

(From the King.)

"I say, Hetherbridge, do you think I could earn my own living?"

"Great Scott, no," I replied. Then I added to soften matters: "There's so much competition nowadays. Everybody wants to live."

"Well, I've got to do it," said George, sadly.

"Things have been going on badly?" I inquired.

"They've gone. And there's the mater, you know."

I puffed at my cigar in silence.

"It's come so suddenly," continued George, "I must do something. The mater can't manage on a little."

"You must marry," I said, with decision.

"I hate that idea," said George, petulantly.

"But for the sake of the mater?"

"That's just it. I want to get work of some kind, which would mean—well, just rubbing along. She want's me to marry old Hepburn's daughter, whom I've never seen. He's a neighbor of ours, with a lot of money made out of cheap boots, or something."

"Where is the lady?"

"On the continent, undergoing a social sandpapering! She'll be home in a few days now. The old man is awfully keen on it, I believe."

"It seems all right," I observed cautiously.

"It's beastly," said George.

"Any prior attachment?"

George blushed. (He is quite young.)

"Well, a chap can't"—he began. Then he stopped and left me uncertain as to the limitations of a chap.

"And the other lady?" I inquired, taking certain facts for granted.

"How could I ask her now?"

"But you propose to ask Miss Hepburn."

"That's different. It would be an arranged thing, you see. Old Hepburn has great ideas for his daughter—and, of course, we know a lot of people and go everywhere."

George sighed deeply, and, taking a pipe from his pocket, began to puff it with tobacco. The pipe was aggressively new and cheap. I watched him sorrowfully. Then I leaned forward and touched the atrocity.

"Is it as bad as that?" I inquired.

"I can't afford cigars."

I took out my case.

"If an old friend might"—

"Thanks, no; you see, I can't return the compliment. Beside, I must get used to this kind of thing."

For a little time we smoked in silence.

Then George said:

"What do you advise, Hetherbridge? Do you think that I could get into a bank?"

"A hundred a year?" I exclaimed.

George shivered.

"Or take a shop?" he said, with the air of a man nerved to some desperate deed.

I put my hand on his arm.

"Much better take Miss Hepburn," I said.

"It would be awful."

"Not a bit. You couldn't get the other one, anyhow—'not into the shop," I said, following George's wandering thoughts.

"Then what shall I do?"

I attempted to put the case judicially.

"On the one hand are work and penury;

on the other hand wealth and—"

"Miss Hepburn. There's a lot on my hands just now," said George, wearily. "What would your—your people say about it?" Your sister would despise and hate me, I know."

Now, I had my doubts as to whether my sister would ever despise or hate Master George. But I contented myself with remarking airily:

"Oh, girls are so silly about these things." George rose and began to walk up and down like a caged lion.

"I can't do it. I won't! She would hate me!"

"The other one?" I inquired.

"Yes."

I left my seat and joined him, drawing his arm through mine.

"That would surely be the best," I said.

"Now, you asked me for my advice. I say marry Miss Hepburn. You're a drone in the hive; that's the fault of your early training. You'll make her a good husband, I know, and she'll be happy. The matter will be comfortable, and you'll settle down and enjoy life, with plenty of money to grease the wheels."

George did not reply, but walked moodily at my side.

"Think it over," I continued. "I must hurry away now, as I want to catch a train home this afternoon. Come, don't look so mournful; surely I drew a paradise."

But George refused to be comforted.

"You left out Eve," he said bitterly.

The world looked very beautiful that afternoon as I walked from the little country station, bright with flowers, to the old house perched on the white chalk cliffs, where my ancestors had dwelt for many centuries. I have always supposed that they came over with the Conqueror, and, being tired with the voyage, built a house where they landed and stopped there. It would be just like a Hetherbridge—to be tired. I came over the vast expanse of green by the path which cut it with a thin, white line, through the old grey gates and into the garden. There I found my sister, Isabel. She was looking out over the sea, her book lying unnoticed in her lap, and made a pretty picture in a frame of green. I found myself wondering what Miss Hepburn was like and my pity for George increased.

Rousing her from her reverie, I proceeded to tell my news.

"I saw George this morning," I said.

"Is it as bad as—as—you thought?" asked Isabel, anxiously.

"Worse; they have lost almost everything."

Isabel said nothing.

"There is only one course open," I continued. "George must marry."

"Marry! Whom?"

"There is a lady in the case already, a certain Miss Hepburn."

"Oh!" said Isabel coldly.

"There is also another lady," I added.

"Who's that?" asked Isabel, turning quickly toward me.

I mentioned no name,

"Then he is going to marry that girl just for her money."

"It is a useful thing to have in the house."

"I called it shameful—disgraceful. I'll never speak to him again."

Isabel left me, very angry, and I sat in her chair, gazing out at the blue sea glistening in the sunshine, thinking how contrary things were. For I have a great affection for George. Presently I felt two arms slip around my neck and heard a voice behind me.

"You're sure he said there was another—someone else?" it said.

"Why, certainly," said I. "He's awfully upset; doesn't care a bit for the Hepburn girl; only he thinks it is the right thing to do."

"You're an old dear," said the voice. And then I felt a kiss on my forehead, and the voice came no more.

Now, I wonder why Isabel called me "an old dear."

A few days after came a letter from George announcing his engagement to Miss Hepburn, and inclosing her photograph. Isabel and I regarded the letter together.

"He can't care for a girl like that," said Isabel, whom I strongly suspected of having lately indulged in tears. Somehow the photograph seemed to cheer her a little."

"She is not handsome, certainly," I conceded. "She may be very nice, however."

"But spectacles—and that hideous hair. And then look at her dress!"

"He will marry her, now they are engaged. George is not the kind of man to consider a promise can be broken without very weighty reasons."

"Jack—do something—anything to break it off."

"Why?"

Isabel rested her head on my shoulder and sobbed out:

"Because I love him! And I am so helpless! I didn't think I cared, until—until this came."

Then suddenly she lifted her head.

"Jack, am I the 'other one' George mentioned?"

"How should I know?"

"But you do."

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"Well—well—I shouldn't wonder."

"Then why didn't he ask me, instead of that ugly, spectacled thing?"

"I think there were many reasons. In one case he gives social position for money. The whole affair is a business transaction. With you it is different; he does not know you care for him (you are a little contrary at times, sister mine), and if you did, he is too honorable to drag you to poverty."

"But my money—"

"He does not know of its existence. And he has to think of his mother."

Isabel made a most unkind remark about George's mother and tore herself away from me.

As the summer days slipped away I became very anxious about my sister. Her high spirits vanished, and she spent most of her time sitting idly on the cliff, gazing with sad eyes over the sea. She implored me to have no visitors, and I was at my wit's end to know how to rouse her and bring back the old merry laugh and a saucy speech.

Then came another letter from George, giving an early date for the marriage. I broke the news to Isabel.

"A nasty pill is best swallowed quickly," I remarked.

"And you must take honey afterward to get rid of the taste," she replied, bitterly, and went out of the house again to her seat overlooking the sea. She sat there nearly the whole day now, and the roses in her cheeks faded and her eyes grew sad. I cursed George, for I loved my sister dearly. About a week before the wedding, at my mother's invitation, George and his fiancée came to visit us. They were to stay one night and return to town early the following morning. Isabel refused to meet them and fled to a neighboring aunt.

The moon was shining brilliantly as George and I walked along the Cliff, smoking a last cigar before going to bed. It was the hour when men wax confidential, and George told me all his sorrows.

"Why are you marrying so soon?" I inquired.

"Old Hepburn insists on it. It appears that Mary got flirting with some foreign chap abroad, a music master, and the old man wants her married and safe from him. It's a queer case. The fellow is hanging about London, and Mary has been kept almost a prisoner in the house. She's out on bail now, and I'm surety for—what's that, Hetherbridge?"

George caught my arm and pointed along the cliff. I looked and the moonlight showed me two figures, a man and a woman, walking quickly away from us.

"They came from the house," said George, excitedly.

"One of the servants and her lover," I said. "It's rather late, but this moon gets into their heads."

"It's—it's Mary," gasped George.

"Eloping with the music master?" I inquired.

"Most likely. Did you ever know such luck?" exclaimed George.

Then he extended his arms dramatically, making a strange figure, silhouetted against the sky, and cried:

"Oh, my darling! my darling! Go away from me! Go! Hullo! they've gone."

They had vanished as though the earth had swallowed them.

"They've gone down the tunnel to the beach," I explained.

George began to run.

"You won't stop them," I cried.

"I'm going to see where they go and help," he replied, over his shoulder.

Together we scrambled down the steep incline, in such complete darkness that I could scarcely see my companion. Only occasionally I heard his voice. The ground was rough and he was wearing thin slippers. Once on the sands we saw our fugitives again. The man was launching a small boat. We saw Mary assisted in, but before her companion could follow, George (who is slimmer than I) was by his side. The man turned, and the moonlight gleamed on a revolver. I ran panting over the wet sands. There was a French oath—a scream from the boat—and then the quiet tones of George's voice:

"Put down that pistol. Get in, man," I heard him say.

The man stood irresolute.

"You shall not take her back," he cried.

"Great Scott. Not for the world!" said George. "I'm here to help."

Then, suddenly, he seized the hand that held the pistol, jerked it upward, and, with a dexterous push, tumbled the man backward into the boat, his legs hanging feebly over the gunwale. Before he could rise, George himself, with a mighty effort, had sent his fiancée and her abductor out on to the sea. Willing hands make light work.

We stood on the beach in silence, watching the man get out a pair of sculls and pull towards a large yawl that lay motionless a little way from the shore. They had almost reached it before George spoke.

"She's gone of her own free will—see!" he cried, pointing to the retreating boat. "I would have kept my word, but—well, this settles matters. Hetherbridge, old chap, I feel like a man who has just escaped hanging."

And certainly, on our way home, George behaved like one. He seemed to forget everything, even "the mater," in the thought of his release. We prescribed whiskey for ourselves on arriving and then went to bed and dreamed mad dreams. At least I did. Assisting at an elopement, and especially after supper, and when there is any running to be done, does not suit my constitution.

Next morning we were both up betimes and walked to the scene of the adventure.

"Well," said I, as we stood at the mouth of the tunnel, breathing the fresh, salt breeze, "what are you going to do now?"

"Work," said George.

"We come back to the point from which we started, then?"

"Thank Heaven, yes," replied George, fervently. "I am going up to London this morning to find something to do. I've got several good friends there who will help me."

I made no further attempt to combat that resolution, and at noon we set out for the station.

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"It's good-bye to all this kind of thing," said George, as we walked down the avenue to the lodge gates, "old wine, old houses, old trees, the grandeur of the 'immortal elms'—the grace of life—all gone. Now for the stuffy little house, surrounded by squalling children, washing and the smell of neighboring dinners. Poor old mater!"

George sighed deeply and we walked on in silence.

Suddenly I felt George's hand close on my arm, and he stopped. If there had been a lion in the path he could not have appeared more disconcerted. As it happened, however, it was only my sister Isabel, who was standing by the great grey gate, a dainty figure in her clinging white dress.

"You'll excuse me, Hetherbridge; I don't want to be rude, but if we could get out another way—"

"Rubbish!" I said firmly, and led him down to the gates.

Presently Isabel saw us, and from her movements I fancied she would have run away, too, if there had been an opportunity; but it was fated otherwise.

"I was afraid I should miss you," said she, when we met. "I thought you were leaving by the early train. But where is Miss Hepburn?"

"I'm going to the station now. Mary has gone already," said George.

"Gone!" exclaimed Isabel.

"I think I will take a walk," said I.

"But my train!" said George.

"There will be plenty more. You can't go today now," I replied, and walked away.

I did not consider my presence was desired. They stood together in silence looking after me.

Returning a couple of hours later I met Isabel.

"George is not going until tomorrow," she said.

"Oh!" I remarked.

"I have proposed to him, Jack," said she, looking on the ground.

I whistled.

"And he has accepted," she continued.

"A most improper proceeding," I remarked severely.

"It was the only way."

Isabel looked up at me. Was it the roses come back or only a transitory blush?

"So you are about to contract a mesalliance," I said.

"Yes, please," replied Isabel, dropping a courtesy.

Then she put her arms round my neck and whispered in my ear, "I am so happy, Jack."

"Does he know about the money?"

"Not a word. That is a surprise for our wedding day. He is going to work, and the mater will stop with us, and he is the very best and dearest fellow that ever lived, Jack."

"I think you are right," said I.

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"Clubs you mean."

"No, I refer to the two men she was with."

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