

ONE VIEW OF LONDON.

COVENT GARDEN AT 3 O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING.

The Streets by Gaslight—Flower Girls and their Lives of Romance and Poverty—the Fruit Dealer's Story—There is Fashion Even in the Juicy Fruits Sold to the Rich.

The only way to see Covent Gardens is to stay up all night. At 3 o'clock in the morning you come out of your club and stroll through the Strand. London is sleeping.

At the corner of Bedford street there is a hot coffee stand; a man in a white apron gives you the sole of the morning as you pass. You look back, for a bearded woman is dancing drunkenly in the red glare of his light, her time for taunts and kisses is almost over. Poor wretch! She dances madly in her red stockings; her ruffled and bloated face is curled with a foolish grin. But the drunken mirth goes out of her as a great country wagon lurches by, piled high with cabbages, driven by a brown teamster, who drowns with his head on his chest. A hint of the Surrey fields, of youth and home, of the wreckage women make in London; she turns away without laughter and slouches out of sight.

You and I follow the wain to Covent Garden. The world is all awake now. Wagons loaded twelve feet high, with piles of vegetables and baskets of fruit come in from Middlesex villages, Kentish farms and Surrey market gardens. These great wains creep in through the gray streets of sleeping London. They bring the food for 5,000,000 people. As you turn under the arcades of the Tav-



"THE LUSTY FARMER AND THE FAMISHED WRETCH."

stock Hotel you meet the van of the great vagabond army of London—those who never sleep o' nights. Men and women, boys and girls; they lie there on the gray pavements slinging each other among their filthy rags. Hundreds of them; if I said a thousand, there would be no exaggeration. The wails and wreckage of London life; the gentlemen blackguards, and the broken costermongers, women who have not even womanhood to sell, foregather here in the hope of making a few pence by carrying cabbages. It is a contrast. On the one hand these lusty, rosy farmers in their smocks; on the other these famished wretches, bred in the streets of great London town.

And day is whitening in the east. Oh, it touches gently the rough facades of this antique London; it flutters into the wilderness of barren streets.

The first who come are the snug and prosperous West End tradesmen, who get the best of the market. They pass through the long aisles, from booth to booth, from agent to agent, bartering and chaffering. All things, from nuts to ricks of hay; from turnips to jargonal pears. Everything that blows and grows in the four quarters of the earth is poured into Covent Garden at dawn. But after all, one does not care much for the rack of green things; the prettiest sight is the flower market. You skirt the old Hummums Hotel; loved of Dickens and Sala, and there fishes on you a welter of floral gold, purple, silver, pink and corn-flower blue. The fragrant beauties of all the world lie here in open baskets: the Cora Pearls and Manon Lescauts of the land of flowers. Thousands of bunches of Neapolitan violets from France; narcissi from the Sicily islands; sweet-smelling bouvardias and yellow daffodils; here the tulips flame, putting to shame the white, men-like azuleas—the tulips are of the Scarlet Sisterhood. There are roses from the sunny uplands of France and lilies of the valley from the Channel Islands.

Over all the electric lights glare peevishly.

Into this department of Covent Garden there comes an entirely different lot of people, from that rancorous crowd which chaffers about the cabbage wagons. It is here you see the flower-girls of London. Were I not writing this story—were you and I sitting down in easy chairs and chatting it over our pipes—I fancy I could tell you something about London flower-girls. Even as it is.

There is one old woman at Piccadilly Circus, where the Chelsea bus starts in front of the A.B.C. shop. She has been



MODERN ON HIS LOAD OF CABBAGES.

there for years—ten years, at least. Times and London lags have warped her into a brown caricature of womanhood. She might have stepped out of a Hogarth print—one of those faded prints that you and I buy instead of buying our wives new bonnets. One night I bought a gardenia from her; it was waxy and jellid.

"Don't be rough with her," she said. "She was not always a gardenia-rod."

outplay Bernhardt in 'La Tosca,' or be burned at the stake like Mrs. Ronsby in Tom Taylor's 'Joan of Arc'—a man who was a devil and a devil ruined her life—gently with her—no little gardenias will ever cluster about her knees."

That woman was a well-known actress in her day, and the story of the flower was her own story. Would you expect to pick up a tragedy like this in front of an A. B. C. shop in Piccadilly?

Or this:

There is a tall, blonde girl—who has beautiful yellowish hair and a magnificent, white, hide—who sells flowers in



FRUITERER TO HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN.

Flower street. I used to meet her near St. Bride's; or she would come into the Mirror or the Cheshire Cheese or the R. Inlay. Even when I was hard up myself I never failed to buy a flower. Somehow, or other I liked her yellow hair. The night President Carnot was shot I was in Fleet street; it had gone 4 o'clock when I came down from my rickshack little office. At the foot of the stairs my flower-girl stood. She stopped me and I saw her face was blubbered with tears.

"Will you come with me, will you help me?" she asked. "I am glad now that I did not answer with a jest of the sort men use; I went with her. We walked side by side out to Clerkenwell—through Smithfield Market, you know, and on to a little street off the Goswell road. A black and slummy neighborhood it was; I followed her up three pairs of stairs into a shabby room. She led me to the bed and turned down the sheet.

A little dead baby lay there. I have seen many strange things in my life, but nothing ever gripped me by the heart-strings as that scene did—it was merely a dead baby and a London flower-girl sobbing in a garret. Tush! only fools think of these things and—

Other London flower-girls are different. In fact, as a usual thing they come out of the wild east of London and wear long feathers on their hats and, after they have sold out o' nights, dance madly on a winkle-barrows. She is usually married or mated, and of her good looks the less said the better. This should be the mind you of Mr. William Schwenk Gilbert and the chorus girl who was playing in one of the operas at the Savoy. The other girls had insulted her and she came up to him sobbing: "M—M—Mister G—Gilbert, they say I'm no better than I sh—should be."

"Never mind, my dear," said Mr. Gilbert, "you are."

So is the London flower-girl. Every one who knows his London knows the "little nipper," perched on the barrow and his "donkey," they are seen to better advantage in Covent Garden than in the Mile End road.

Are you tired of strolling about listening to my gossip? Then suppose we go and talk to a man of intelligence. He has mutton-chop whiskers and fills a



THE FLOWER GIRLS.

larger waistcoat than you or I will ever achieve. He is the largest fruiterer in Covent Garden, and he serves the Royal family.

"This box is going to the Queen this morning. Look," says he, "all sorts of stone fruit except plums. Her Majesty does not like plums. Pears? Yes—these are for her. Her Majesty is fond of peaches but nectarines are her favorite fruit. The Prince of Wales likes the old-fashioned Ribston, especially after breakfast. He used to have a weakness for Kentish cobs; in winter we used to charge him five shillings a pound, but he seldom touches them now. The Princess of Wales and her daughters are fond of fruit, all of them are great fruit eaters. The Princess favorite is Jersey grapes."

"What are the rare fruits, the odd ones?"

"The common fruits," said Her Majesty's fruiterer. "Many a Duchess has occupied your seat with a carpet under her feet, eating strawberries at a guinea a pound."

When he said this I was confused. Really, I did not know whether to ask him to bring on his boasted Dutchness or his guinea strawberries. I said nothing. "Money was plentiful in those days," he said. "Princes were good and reductions never hunted at. It was a holiday for us when the old families began to decay." Upon my word, I think Her Majesty's fruiterer talks a deal better than I do. But I want to tell you one thing about Covent Garden. The whole spot is owned by the Duke of Bedford; even the Queen's fruiterer is only a weekly tenant so, whenever the old duke gets hard up—and he plays the races—he raises the rent all around and everyone groans and pays up. He won't sell and he won't grant a lease; but one good thing about him is that he stands by his old tenants. The business runs in families. One has been there ever since the market was opened, and another over a hundred years.

TWO HUMAN WONDERS

SOMETHING OF THE CAREERS OF BARTIE MILLS AND LIZZIE TRANKS.

A Man in Years, But Still a Child in Size and Mental Characteristics—Bar-num's Little Fairy Queen, Now a Woman of 60 All Her Money Gone and Dependent on the City for Food.

Among the many remarkable characters in the big institution at Blockley, where the city's poor and unfortunate are sheltered, are the two persons who form the subject of the illustration accompanying this article. Bartie Mills, the child man, and Lizzie Tranks, the dwarf.

Bartie Mills is a wonderful case of arrested development and has long survived the limit of age placed on such cases, being now in his 37th year, and with an apparent prospect of long life yet before him, is probably one of the happiest and most contented inmates of the whole institution.

Bartie is in charge of an attendant named John Bell, who ever since he took charge of his little patient, eight years ago, has devoted to him the most unselfish and scrupulous care. He has looked after this little man, or child, as almost his own, and exercised toward him a devotion that would be expected only of a woman. Every want and every possible desire that Bartie in any way expresses it is John's sole aim and object to satisfy, and he always accomplishes that end with pride and pleasure.

Bartie Mills was born in Kingsessing, near Darby, on the 23rd of February, 1857. His parents were ordinary sized people, and his brothers and sisters to-day, who reside in the neighborhood of Fifty-fifth street and Woodland avenue, are such also. In his early life there were no signs of Bartie becoming either a burden to his family or a medical wonder by lack of development.

Until he reached his fourth year there was no sign that the little fellow was anything beyond the ordinary or lacked anything of physical energy. Here, however, development stopped. Years rolled on and Bartie remained a child, but retained his good health and appetite. His legs refused to do a much more service when he reached his eighteenth year and he had to resort to a wheel chair. He never, however, got beyond the stage of playing with his little childish toys and picture books, and at man's age of 21 years he resorted to his play things and toys just as he did when he was 4 and just as he does to-day in his 37th year. This is, indeed, his one



LIZZIE TRANKS. Age 60. BARTIE MILLS. Age 37.

source of delight in his otherwise secluded life at Blockley. For hours he will look at his pictures and eagerly accept more of the same simple sort when opportunity offers for him to get them. His toys—boats and balls and soldiers, his little horn and squeaking animals—lie behind him either on his wheeling chair or bed, and when the hours drag heavily he amuses himself with these.

Bartie is always kept scrupulously clean, and indeed feels miserable should anything be put upon him soiled or lacking in neatness. In a long white slip, like that of a 2-year-old baby, with short stockings and shoes and a child's watch hung over his neck, Bartie takes his usual rounds daily under John's protective care. He has an excellent appetite, sleeps well, and is always awake with the first of Blockley's early risers. During the past eight years he has not had twenty-four hours' illness. He can express himself so as to be understood, but only those who are constantly near him can make out what his speech conveys.

Lizzie Tranks, the other wonder, is one of the neatest of little women, and is now in her 60th year. Lizzie was probably the first woman dwarf that the famous Barnum ever had under his care. She traveled with his shows, for many years under the title of the Fairy Queen Titania. In her travels she appeared before the crowned heads of Europe, and was regarded by them to be a little wonder, being of the most pleasing womanly proportions, which she retains in a great measure; good manners and conversational powers, and a desire to entertain. She was an excellent dancer, and sang, and during her little performances never failed to draw forth enthusiastic applause.

Lizzie's parents, who lived in an up-town suburb of this city, but who are dead, reaped a big income from the little woman's travels. This, however, they spent lavishly, and when the time came that Lizzie ceased to appear in public the parents came down to want and the little woman in her declining days was ushered into the almshouse.

To-day she has the same refined manners which helped make her a public favorite and, although her silvery voice is cracked by age and she has lost the power to fit like a little latterly before the public, yet she is cheerfully resigned to her changed lot and is a prime favorite with Mrs. Dilke, the nation of the woman's department at Blockley, and never fails to show her appreciation of the love that this good woman bestows upon her.—Philadelphia Times

Mustard and Cress. "Are you certain that you love me?" "I am." "But are you sure that you are certain?"—New York Press. Hicks—The letter S, being a double curve is the line of beauty. Wicks—Especially when it has a vertical line down the center; this way: S.—Boston Transcript. "He used to be a line-man, now he is in the office of the telephone company." "I see, now he's a post-graduate."—Boston Transcript. Probably there is nothing colder in this cold world than the oil-cloth upon which you tread with bare feet in the dead waste and middle of the night.—Boston Transcript.

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Brought Home from Work during the day and have a doctor called in, but did not get any permanent relief from any source until, upon recommendation of a friend, I purchased a bottle of Hood's Sarsaparilla, which made me feel better at once. I have continued its use, having taken three bottles, and

I Feel Like a New Man. I have a good appetite, feel as strong as ever I did, and enjoy perfect rest at night. I have much pleasure in recommending Hood's Sarsaparilla." CHARLES STEELE, with Eric Preserving Co., St. Catherine's, Ontario.

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HOOD'S Sarsaparilla CURES

half the bottle the headache had ceased and the blotches had all left my face. I have never felt better than I do now, and I think Hood's Sarsaparilla the best blood purifier on the market and readily recommend it to anyone in need of the same." MISS LOUISE LONG, Kelly's Commercial House, Cal-de-Sac Street, Quebec, P. Q.

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