For the Boys and Girls

THE MAGICIAN OF MALMAISON

It was at the time when the artillery lieutenant, Napoleon Bonaparte, of Ajacio, having attained the position of First Consul of the French Republic, had wedded Josephine, widow of General Viscount Alexandre de Beauharnais, was residing at her favorite villa, Malmaison, not far from Paris.

It was here that Josephine sat one evening quite alone, at supper, when, as the dessert was brought in, a man was announced who declined to give his name. Notwithstanding this, she permitted him to enter.

A man of about fifty years of age stood before her and begged the privilege of entertaining her with some amusing and wholly original exhibitions of legerdemain.

Without consent, the stranger drew forward a table, placed it close before her, spread a white cover upon it, and produced from his pocket three goblets.

At first the juggler's movements and manoeuvres were only such as are common to the art, but soon he became more difficult and interesting. Two balls which he threw from the cup into his left hand increased in a few moments to an almost countless number, allowing them to roll and clash upon the table, he blew upon them. They ran hewildringly in and out, forming various figures, and then vanished suddenly before the eyes of the spectator.

Drawing forth now a small ebony wand, he struck three times the centre cup of the three standing inverted before him, remarking as he did so:

"Madame, I regret that your supper is finished; I would have provided your table with the fish of all seas, from the North Sea to the Mediterranean. However, you will perhaps permit me to add to this aquarium here in the window some of these small, elegant silver fish found in the land where, for the happiness of France, madame, herself was born."

Josephine gazed with ever-increasing interest upon the achievements of the man whose skill amazed and enchanted her.

"What will madame now have?" asked the magician, to whom all nature seemed obedient. "Do you desire one of these goblets full of perfect, faultless diamonds, or a nightingale, or an owl, a bright-colored butterfly, a lizard or a cluster of fragrant hyacinths? You have only to command—I can produce all."

Josephine's astonishment could not but increase with the ever-bolder words of this enigmatical, incomprehensible being; but with her simple tastes she asked neither diamonds nor the flute of the May-singing nightingale, but merely a rose.

The magician raised the cup before touched by the magic wand, swung it once in the air, then breathing upon it, tossed upon the table toward the lady a magnificent, just-blossoming rose.

She seized it with new wonderment, hastily inhaled its delicious fragrance, then suddenly exclaimed indignantly:

"But, mon Dieu! what do I see? You have cut the fairest rose in all my greenhouse. I had intended presenting this rose to-morrow to my husband!"

"Madame, you are mistaken," replied the conjuror, smiling. "This rose is not from your green-house; it was mine alone till I had the honor of presenting it to you—the wife of the First Consul."

But Josephine was not convinced, and sent immediately to her gardener, while the stranger placidly continued his operations.

Upon examination, the rose intended for the Consul stood undisturbed in its place in the hot house.

The information being at once returned to Josephine, credulous and superstitious like most Creoles, she now utterly abandoned herself to astonishment. The more enthusiastically she gave vent to her wonder, the more inexhaustible appeared the resources of the singular man.

Now a flock of birds flew from his coat pocket and pecked the crumbs from her evening meal on the table; now seizing a glass of water and whirling it round as though to scatter its contents in every direction, poured out upon Josephine a thick shower of flowers.

At last she drew forth a silken purse, from which she would have rewarded the juggler with gold, but observing this, he threw himself at her feet, exclaiming:

"Not with gold, madame, would I have you reward me for the simple pleasure which I hope amused you!"

"What, then, do you desire?" she asked, surprised.

The man quickly gathered together the disordered flowers lying around, put them into a basket, which he covered with a napkin, and shook it several times. When he again removed the cloth, the basket was filled with the most inviting rosy-cheeked apples.

He presented them to Josephine, without touching them, and asked that she would accept one.

Bewildered afresh, scarcely trusting her own senses, she seized an apple, and expecting some new surprise, cut it in two with a knife. Within she found a closely-folded fine paper—a petition to Bonaparte.

"Madame!" cried the magician, "before you stands an unhappy man. My name is George Marec. Becoming entangled with the affairs of the kingdom I took part in the struggle against the Republic. I fought in La Vende under an ensign no longer that of my country. When our party succumbed, I found myself compelled to flee and live in foreign lands. Driven thus from my country, my name was stricken from the roll of citizens, and placed upon the emigrant list. One word from you, madame, can restore me to my country and my people."

While Marec spoke these words, Josephine had been carefully examining with fingers and eyes the pieces of apple that lay on the plate before her, but was unable to discover any disturbance of the peel.

"With what joy will I aid you, Monsieur Marec," said she, after hearing his speech. "This very evening, I will endeavor to lay your petition before my husband, and be assured I will spare neither words, trouble, nor sacrifice to insure its success."

The magician gathered up his cups, took the table upon his arm and, bowing profoundly, disappeared with hasty steps.

Scarcely had he withdrawn when Josephine hurriedly rang her bell, which was answered by the chamberlain.

"Go out quickly that man who has just left the room to leave the house," said she. "I wish the Consul to know he is here, give him a room and offer him every comfort."

Her command was at once obeyed.

It seemed as if fortune favored that evening that under the pressure of business, Bonaparte was unable to reach Malmaison until late in the night, and it was therefore impossible for his wife to present Marec to him.

At six o'clock on the following morning, he had breakfasted and was in the dining-hall, while the coach was waiting to convey him to his office in the palace-court without.

Josephine entered as he was on the point of leaving.

"Good-morrow, my dear!" he said, pleasantly. "I was so hurried and worried yesterday that I could not find time to see you and it will be much the same to-day. At present, France is a tangled ball, and needs a steady hand to unravel it. Nevertheless, I will yet accomplish the difficult task. You must pardon me, therefore, if for a time I see but little of you. How did you amuse yourself yesterday? Who visited you?"

"I was most excellently entertained," answered she; "and when we dine together to-day you shall enjoy a pleasant surprise—a surprise such as never was. But that reminds me. Pray now let my name to be removed from the emigrant list."

With these words, she presented the magician's petition to her husband.

"What, a Chouan!" (During the French Revolution, the Royalists on the Loire, in Bretagne, and La Vendee were called "Chouans.") cried the Consul, with a darkening countenance, when he had glanced over the page. "One of the fanatical followers of Charette and Laroche-Jaquelein! Yes, yes—Marec, Marec! He has come from England, and landed secretly upon our coast, some infamous plan doubtless, to accomplish. My police has already written to me. I shall have this artful fellow carefully watched after. And how do you know this? Where have you seen him? How came these lines in your hand?"

At this violence of her husband, Josephine began to weep.

"Do not weep, child!" said Napoleon, soothingly. "Tell me how this man came to you with his petition. You kindness has been imposed upon. The traitors imagine that any request coming through you could not be refused. If it were so, they would carry out their nefarious tricks before my very eyes in Paris. No, no, Fouche was right when he said, 'These men must first be changed for the better.' I do not know the man in the case," replied Josephine. "Burn the paper, and do not excite yourself further. We will not speak of the matter again."

"Yes, we will," said the Consul; "But only tell me this—how come this petition into your hands?"

"As by a miracle," replied Josephine.

She eagerly related what had occurred the previous day.

"I commend this trickster to you, and they will—"

"Oh, Bonaparte!" interrupted Josephine, "I pray you do not betray one in my house. Honor hospitality, at least.

"Is it possible he is still here with you, Malmaison?" cried her husband.

"Yes," she murmured, anxiously, dreading a violent outburst of rage; but he only answered quietly:

"For now he will soon find him, wherever he may be."

Josephine was in despair. She sent immediately for her guest, Marec, but he was not to be found in his room. The grounds about Malmaison were subjected to diligent search, but in vain. That she might save him, Josephine was determined to provide him with the means of escape, if he would only come in time.

Already noon was near at hand, and with uneasy steps she paced up and down the room, fearing Bonaparte might arrive at any moment and encounter the magician.

Her anxiety increased with each second. At last the folding door flew open, and Marec appeared, with all his apparatus of the previous day.

"Fly, sir—fly at once!" cried Josephine, meeting him. "Here is money, but hasten, or you are lost."

Marec remained standing, and looked quietly at her. After a short pause, he said, with a smile of conviction:

"Madame, they have mistaken me for another person. If I may remain with you a moment, I will doubtless be a witness to the explanation that awaits you."

Scarcely had he spoken, when again the door opened, and a courier from Paris entered the room, presenting a paper to the wife of the Consul.

Hastily she broke the seal, and as she read even the first lines a visible expression of satisfaction overspread her face.

When she read to the end, she gave a sigh of relief, and, smiling, extended the document to Marec. He read:

"Madame: I have just delivered to the First Consul proof to the effect that this man, who has the honor to appear before you is not the murderer of French soldiers, and neither deserves the rigor of the law. He whom you desire to assist is an honorable man, who took part in the expedition to Amberon, and has fought bravely, but emigrated after the defeat of the Royalists. He has not been in England, but Germany. The name of the other Marec is not George, but Ives, and he still remains in England, where his steps are carefully watched. I am glad to inform you that your protege's name has been removed from the emigrant list. With profoundest veneration,

"Paris. FOUCHE."

"I was aware of all this, this forenoon, madame," said Marec. "I also knew that courier, bearing this information, was on the way here. Perhaps I have proven to the Minister of Police that I am capable of rendering him useful service. But now, to you, madame, my warmest thanks, for you have restored to me my country and my people!"

He threw himself at her feet, while tears of gratitude checked the utterance of further words.

A few days later George Marec was made a member of the secret police, and for the remainder of the consulate, and as late as the empire rendered highly important service.

On Sunday Morning.

I love to go to church
On Sunday morning!
The folk I meet
Are all dressed up so nice.
Even their faces look ironed out
(To me it seems they must have prayed—
"Lord, take our cares away
Just for to-day!")

And O, I like to watch
The children!
They are like flowers gay,
Though 'tis Sunday
They find it hard to walk
Decorously.

Even the lawns and streets
And houses
Wear a festive air.
('Tis most befitting so!)

The spires of the churches
Gleam and glow,
O how the bells call out—
"Little folk, big folk,
Rich folk, poor folk,
Sad folk, glad folk,
Won't you come to church?"

I can't resist the invitation,
So I go to church
And to my soul there comes
A benediction.

And now you know
Just why I love to go to church
On Sunday morning.

—Ella H. Eckel.

Not Always Dangerous.

"I consider these motor cars dangerous things."

"Well, that depends."

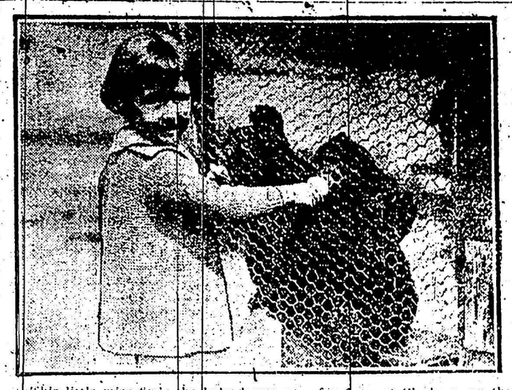
"Depends on what?"

"Whether they have drivers in 'em or not."

Some Wind.

Scout—"Does it blow much around these parts?"

Native—"I have seen it blow so hard that it blew an iron pipe inside out and blew a crooked road straight."



This little miss finds the baby bears, at a fox farm at Clarkson, on the Toronto-Hamilton highway, have a decided liking for ice cream

Everyday Nobility.

"The way I figure it, Uncle Turner, the greater part of my life has been lost," said Bob Hampton reflectively.

"What's happened to give you such a sudden grudge against yourself, Bob?" inquired old Turner Gill.

"A quotation that I read: 'Count that day lost whose low descending sun views from thy hand no noble action done,' or something like that. As I look back over my life I cannot recall a single thing that is entitled to be called a noble act."

"What is a noble act, Bob?"

"Why I—I don't know. Something big and fine, I suppose; saving a life, thwarting the schemes of a villain, endowing a college or a hospital—something like that."

"Um. Try to give your employer an honest day's work for his money, do you, Bob?"

"Oh, yes."

"Pay your bills when they're due?"

"Of course."

"Try to do the right thing by your children in the way of food, education, moral training, and so forth?"

"Certainly."

"Remember to praise your wife's cooking occasionally—tell her what a good wife she is and give meaning to your words by acting accordingly?"

"Yes."

"Ever lend a hand to help a fellow traveler up a grade that's a little too stiff for his motor?"

"Sometimes."

"Dig up a dollar or two now and then to help the charitable organizations?"

"I never turn down such an appeal."

"Well, Bob, I shouldn't worry much about those noble actions if I were you. A rainbow is a beautiful sight, but a sky that is all rainbows would be ridiculous. A world that is populated altogether with heroes and geniuses without any insignificant plodders like you and me to keep the wool chopped and such things would be very unsatisfactory place. The man who follows the path of duty as God gives him to see it keeps his hands clean, his head clear, his heart warm and his soul in tune with his Maker has not lived in vain."

Prehistoric Skull Found Near Lake Galilee.

Excavations have been completed at the cave near Lake Galilee wherein a skull approximating that of the Neanderthal type in Europe was recently discovered. A number of other bones have ben found. Some of them are human, and may belong to the skeleton whereof the skull is a part. Others are remains of extinct animals.

The Mousterian character of the deposits is confirmed by comparison with earlier types. Two sections in the cave, showing prehistoric stratifications, are being left visible especially in view of the proposed international congress next spring.

The Taungs skull recently discovered in Africa by Prof. Dart is not that missing link between ape and man, in the opinion of Sir Arthur Keith, the well-known anthropologist. Writing in the current issue of Nature, he describes the claim that the skull is the missing link as preposterous, and declares it to be that of a young anthropoid ape in the fourth year of its growth. It shows so many points of affinity with the African gorilla and chimpanzee, he says, that there cannot be a moment's hesitation in placing the skull in this group.

The Glory of Trees.

But the glory of trees is more than their gifts;
'Tis a beautiful wonder of life that lifts,
From a wrinkled seed in an earth-bound clod,
A column, an arch in the temple of God.
A pillar of power, a dome of delight,
A shrine of song, and a joy of sight!

—Henry Van Dyke.

London's smallest church, St. Etheldreda within Bishopsgate, dates back to before the Fire of London, and so cannot be demolished.

STORIES OF WELL-KNOWN PEOPLE

H.R.H. "Shining Sun."

However democratic a Prince may feel, there are times when he is forced upon his pedestal. Recently, at Umtata, the leading chief of the Pondo, Fingo, and Tembu tribes thus addressed the Prince of Wales:

"Great Chief, you are our earthly god. Our life will be happy after we have seen your Royal Highness. We are exceedingly thankful to see him in this manner—to see our father. There is not a single one who feels bad in his heart, now we see you, because our god has descended from heaven and is now on earth."

Amid tumultuous cheering which greeted this pronouncement, the chief concluded, "Sun, shine on us, oh, Sun!"

Henceforth, the Prince was known as Langa Llyakanya, or "Shining Sun."

Prince Henry on Babies.

The other evening at a dinner at the Guildhall, Prince Henry amused his audience by describing his recent visit to the Infants' Hospital.

"I learned a good deal about babies of which I was ignorant before," he said. "For one thing, I never realized that their feeding was so complicated. I thought one gave them an occasional bottle, and the chief object was to stop them from howling!"

That is, possibly, the chief masculine object, but, happily for the babies, there are feminine folk with other less selfish notions.

Very Much Spotted.

That famous sportswoman, the Duchess of Somerset, who in company with her husband has shot big game in various parts of the world, dearly loves a good story, especially if it has a sporting flavor.

One of her favorites concerns a go-as-you-please race between a stout gentleman and a leopard.

Two dusky natives watched the race with obvious interest.

"Can you spot the winner?" asked one of them excitedly.

"The winner is spotted," replied the other.

It Sounded Too Fanciful.

A quaint story concerning George Bernard Shaw was told by a friend of his.

The famous playwright was describing to some children, in their mother's presence, how it happened that a certain pet cat became its mistress' "door porter," or, in other words, the weight that one places against a door to keep it open.

"The lady's hobby," said G.B.S., "was plaster modeling. One day she left a dish containing liquid plaster on her table, and returned to find her cat lapping up the last of what it no doubt regarded as a new kind of milk. Later, while the cat sat by the fire, the plaster, as plaster will, set. Thereafter the lady, combining economy with affection, employed her petrified pet to keep open the door on warm summer days."

At this point the mother interrupted. "Mr. Shaw," she said gravely, "I believe you are telling those children fibs."

Rose or Nose?

In reporting a flower show a newspaper used an "n" for an "r" with the following result:

"As Mr. Smith mounted the stage all eyes were fixed on the large red nose he displayed. Only years of patient cultivation could have produced an object of such brilliance."

As It May Happen.

To show little Johnny that he could not add feet and yards together without changing the yards to feet, she asked him the question: "If I add five cats to ten dogs, what will I get?" To which Johnny answered, "One h—l of a fight."

A STRANGE TALE OF THE SEA
THE SHIP THAT VANISHED

BY ELLIOTT O'DONNELL

What happened to H.M.S. Atalanta, one of Britain's old "wooden walls," which sailed from the Bermudas homeward bound—and simply disappeared? In spite of one of the most thorough sea searches in history, no trace of the ill-fated vessel was ever found.

Probably no disappearance at sea in modern times caused such a great sensation as that of H.M.S. Atalanta.

The affair has a personal interest for me because my family were intimately acquainted with one of the officers of the ill fated ship. He came to see us shortly before sailing on what proved to be his last voyage, and, though a child in the nursery at the time, I distinctly recollect seeing him.

An Omen of Evil.

The Atalanta was a three-masted wooden sailing ship, technically rated a sailing frigate, of 1,468 tons displacement a mere baby as compared with the majority of ocean going vessels today. She was a sister ship of the Eurydice, whose appalling end a few years before, was regarded by many sailors as of singular ill omen for the Atalanta. It was, and I dare say it still is, a popular belief among seamen that if one sister ship perished the other would follow suit. Both ships were originally intended as active units in our naval fighting forces, and for that purpose carried guns, the complement of the Atalanta being twenty-six. After some years of service, however, they were both converted into training ships for young R. N. seamen. So far, the resemblance between the two ships was pretty close, but there were also distinct differences.

For instance, the Eurydice was a "bad sailor," usually beaten in a gale by other frigates of the same class through her inability to carry sail. The Atalanta was deemed of great stability, until her return from the West Indies, before her last tragic one.

Masts That Were Too High.

Her officers then complained that she was over-masted. The admiralty, on hearing what they had to say, at once communicated with the experts at Portsmouth, who, after a lengthy and presumably thorough examination, reported that while in their opinion it was not necessary to reduce the height of the masts, as her officers suggested, it would be advisable to make certain alterations in her gear.

This they did, apparently to the satisfaction of the Admiralty, though not altogether to the satisfaction of the Atalanta's officers.

On November 7th, 1879, the Atalanta left Portsmouth for the West Indies. Her captain, Francis Stirling, was a sailor of great experience, who had seen service in the Crimean, Chinese, and Malay Wars. His officers were also highly qualified and experienced men. The crew, who numbered three hundred, came mostly from Portsmouth and Devonport.

"Combing" the Atlantic.

The ship reached the Bermudas safely, and the general impression received in the Islands was that she had proved tolerably satisfactory at sea, and that there had been contentment and harmony on board. Captain Stirling wrote, home saying he might be expected at Spithead the first week in March.

That was the last letter his wife ever had from him.

On January 31st, 1880, the Atalanta raised her anchor and left the Bermudas homeward bound.

She was never seen again. When the time fixed for her arrival in port came and she did not put in an appearance some anxiety was felt, as the weather at sea had been distinctly unfavorable. One ship, at least, had been reported, and such a strong wind.

Still, the Admiralty's opinion of the Atalanta was so good that no great alarm was felt for some time, it being possible that she was detained in some remote port. As the days passed, however, and no tidings came, alarm grew and gave place to something akin to panic.

A search began—the like of which was probably never known, and most certainly has never been since. The Atlantic was swept by warships, all on the lookout for the Atalanta, and there were few ports, even for any reason to regarding her, which she did not enter and leave without leaving a report of the fate of the gunboat Avon. At Portsmouth, for instance, that old city had the Atalanta in her dockyard, without leaving a trace as to the fate of the gunboat Avon, which had left Portsmouth a few years before, was regarded by many sailors as of singular ill omen for the Atalanta. It was, and I dare say it still is, a popular belief among seamen that if one sister ship perished the other would follow suit. Both ships were originally intended as active units in our naval fighting forces, and for that purpose carried guns, the complement of the Atalanta being twenty-six. After some years of service, however, they were both converted into training ships for young R. N. seamen. So far, the resemblance between the two ships was pretty close, but there were also distinct differences.

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