

THE PORTRAIT THAT CAME TO LIFE

His package under his arm, M. Bourdin walked out of the auction room. He was carrying home a picture which the auctioneer had passed around among the bidders. It was an engraving by a little known artist of the head of a pretty and very attractive young woman. The minimum bid was set at 100 francs.

"One hundred and ten!" cried M. Bourdin, in order to appear a connoisseur in such things.

He was astonished to hear the auctioneer say, "Sold!"

M. Bourdin stepped forward to settle. He said to himself: "After all, it is probably a great bargain."

When he got home he hung the portrait on the wall of his parlor. There was plenty of room for it, as the walls of the three rooms of his apartment were practically bare. M. Bourdin found that the engraving made an agreeable decoration and that it was a pleasure to look at it after his meals, when he sat in an easy chair and smoked a cigarette. Accustomed to a nap on such occasions, he always cast a last glance at the young woman before he closed his eyes and a first glance at her when he waked up. The presence of this unknown gave a sense of companionship to the old bachelor, without deranging his existence in any way. It often happened that M. Bourdin passed through the parlor when he could just as well have used the hall to go from his bedroom to his dining-room, solely to have the satisfaction of looking at the seductive portrait.

Having a rather timid character, M. Bourdin had never had any love adventures. He lived modestly on a small income, was taken care of by an old servant, seldom paid visits, and even more infrequently received visitors. One evening he ran across a flower vender as he was coming home and bought a pot of daisies, which he placed beneath the unknown woman's picture. One of his friends, the accountant Laborde, coming in to see him after dinner, noticed the portrait and the flowers.

"If that is the picture of one of your friends," he said with a wink, "I sincerely congratulate you."

M. Bourdin was dumbfounded and made no answer. In the course of his call Laborde renewed his allusions, embroidering them with some complaints about the secrecy of M. Bourdin's love affair.

"I do not ask you who this lady is," he added. "Undoubtedly she is a woman of the world. That is very fine. I must tell you that your life has always seemed to me a little mysterious. Now I understand."

The secret of M. Bourdin's life quickly circulated among his acquaintances. Gertrude, the old housekeeper, divided her glances between M. Bourdin and the portrait when she came into the parlor to wait on him.

"Could Monsieur," she said at last, "give me his friend's first name?"

M. Bourdin had smiled and answered at a venture:

"Agnes."

The following month he saw a big bunch of roses under the portrait.

"To-day is St. Agnes's Day," Gertrude explained.

One afternoon when he left his house M. Bourdin noticed Laborde, who was following him but trying to escape observation.

"Ah!" he said to himself, "Laborde wants to find out where I go to meet Agnes."

He hailed a taxi in order to mystify his friend. After a while, when certain of his relatives met him, they always asked discreetly:

"Are you still happy?"

"I am still happy," M. Bourdin answered.

He had thus from day to day become so habituated to seeing those about him consider the woman of the portrait a real person, whom he knew well, that he himself, at certain moments, no longer took account of the fiction which had entered into his life. A woman shared his existence. A woman whom his friends knew, of whom they spoke to him, whom they even called by her first name—and on account of whom they all envied him. Sometimes M. Bourdin was surprised to find himself hurrying home, as if a woman whom he loved were awaiting him. He was a little upset when he entered the parlor and Gertrude said to him with a most knowing smile:

"I see that Monsieur has been out walking to-day with his friend."

How agreeable it would have been to know so charming a woman and (who can tell?) to be loved by her.

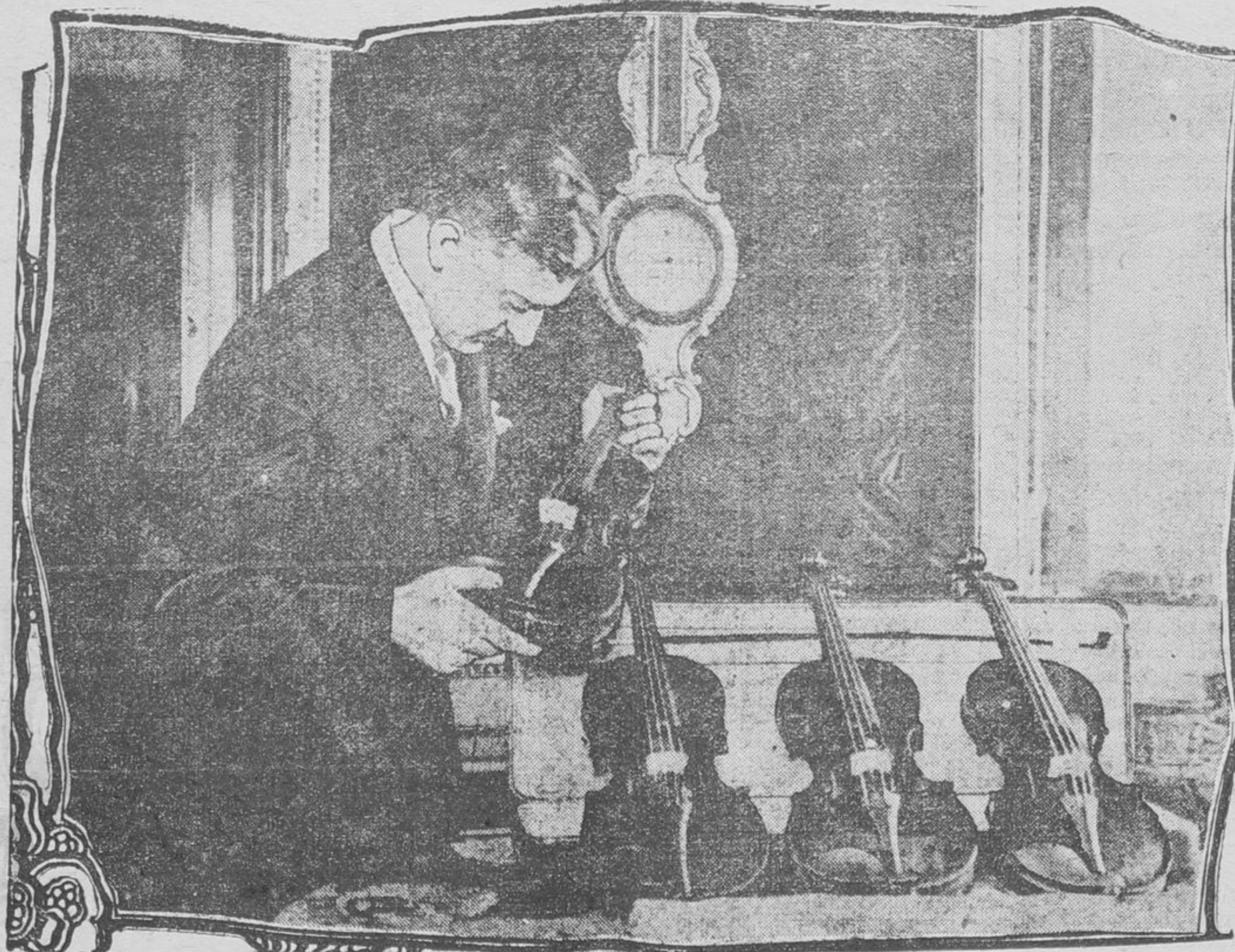
When winter came M. Bourdin decided to take a trip south for his health. He put in the newspapers an advertisement offering to sublet his apartment.

A few days later a woman appeared who wished to look at the apartment. She was small and old, with a slightly wrinkled face, but still rosy cheeks. She wore a violet silk dress and a velvet hat. As she was discussing terms with M. Bourdin she cried suddenly, pointing to the engraving:

"What! You have my portrait here?"

"Is that you?" exclaimed M. Bourdin.

"It was forty years ago," the little old woman explained, "that I posed for this picture. The painter was a fashionable artist of that period. He



Four Strads, one of which is called "The Swan" because it was made by the master in 1737, the year of his death when he was 93 years old, have been acquired by Rodman Wanamaker, New York storeman. Dr. Alexander Russell, concert director, is shown holding the precious instrument.

has been forgotten and I have grown old. I also had my hour of celebrity then. Did you know me at that time?"

"Yes," stammered M. Bourdin, pushed involuntarily in spite of himself toward the lie which had become a verity in his life. "And I can tell you that I always loved you."

"Is that possible?"

"I knew that you would come some day and I waited for you."

It really seemed to M. Bourdin that he was telling the truth, and he thought: Why should two persons who had been in love in their youth not finish their days together after growing old?

He took his visitor's hand and kissed it. With the dusk which softly penetrated the room in which they stood he felt himself penetrated by a hitherto unknown emotion.

"I have had but one love in my life," he said.

The Road to Truthfulness.

"Whatever else my child is, I want him to be truthful," is the earnest desire of every true mother. But do we do all that we can to make the road to truthfulness easy for him?

Very imaginative children are often condemned as untruthful. The cause for their remarkable "stories" can often be traced to exceedingly imaginative books and stories. This case is not hard to handle. Since their motive in telling it is to attract the attention of their elders it is usually best to ignore the episode altogether. Or, at its conclusion, "That's a make-believe story, isn't it?" spoken in a matter-of-fact way, usually disposes of it satisfactorily.

Stories about truthfulness are useful. The familiar old story of the boy who cried "Wolf, wolf!" when there was no wolf makes a deep impression on the childish mind. Other stories may be invented that show the advisability of having a reputation for honesty.

Sometimes we are tempted to "try" the children. "Did you come straight home from school, John?" when we know that the forbidden swimming hole proved irresistible. Is this just fair? Do we elders always tell the whole truth when "cornered?"

It seems like a good occasion to apply the Golden Rule. "My mother is easy to tell things to," one small boy boasted proudly. A fine recommendation, surely. If we say "Now, John, I want you to tell me why you did not come straight home from school as I told you and—I want you to tell me the truth!" we imply his untruthfulness and the chances are very good that John will live up to our implication. If we begin, "I know all about what you did, so it's no use your trying—" John either believes he is hopelessly trapped or he believes we are "bluffing." But if we say in a pleasant though unmistakably business-like way, "Now, John, how about being late from school this afternoon?" chances are nine in ten that John will tell the truth like a man.

Makes it easy for the little folks to tell the truth until they have acquired a habit of truthfulness and the problem of untruthfulness will seldom have to be solved.

Hold Your Own.

What is true at last will tell. Few at first will place thee well. Some too low would have thee shine, Some too high—no fault of thine.

Hold thine on, and work thy will! Year will graze the heel of year, But seldom comes the poet here, And the critics rarer still.

—Tennyson.

Tree Hospital in Paris.

Paris has a unique hospital, located on the banks of the Seine. Trees which grow weak along the boulevards are taken there to recover.

A Poem Worth Knowing.

"Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind."

It would be difficult to choose among the songs scattered through the plays of Shakespeare that which is the love-hat, but the following lyric takes a high place:

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude,
Heigh-ho! sing, heigh-ho! unto the
green holly;
Most friendship is feigning, most lov-
ing mere folly;
Then, heigh-ho, the holly!
This life is most jolly.

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
Thou dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot;
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remembered not,
Heigh-ho! sing, heigh-ho! unto the
green holly;
Most friendship is feigning, most lov-
ing mere folly;
Then, heigh-ho, the holly!
This life is most jolly.

Loves Its Murderer.

The Hindu religion, probably the oldest on earth, is quite quaint in many respects. One thing is drilled into the brains of the devotees, and that is that Man must always be so charitable as to love even his enemies, regardless of what they may do to him.

The ancient Hindu Bible, the Veda, says: "Even the tree does not withdraw its welcome shade from the wood cutter."

The Unicorn.

The "unicorn" mentioned in the Book of Job was probably the aurochs, a kind of wild cattle now extinct.

"Peace Hath Her Victories."

On the summit of a rocky pass in the Andes, looking out over the mountains on the boundary line between Chile and the Argentina, stands a colossal statue of the Christ. The left hand holds aloft a cross, the right hand is raised in blessing; and over the granite pedestal is engraved this inscription:

"These mountains will crumble into dust before Argentinians and Chileans will break the peace which, at the foot of the Redeemer, they have sworn to keep."

For many decades the people of Chile and the Argentina had been at war and in 1904 a fresh outbreak of hostilities seemed imminent.

Two bishops of the Roman Catholic Church determined to do their best to save their countries from the suffering and desolation of war and they appealed to our King Edward VII., often called "the Peacemaker," to act as an arbitrator between these two nations. His efforts were successful; the nations were reconciled; all the metal of their now useless cannons was cast into this great statue of Christ, the Prince of Peace.

Pigeon Identifies a Man.

A homing pigeon was the means of discovering the identity of a man found unconscious near Sheffield, England. On the back of his cycle was found a basket containing homing pigeons of which the police took charge. All the usual attempts to identify the man failed until the police liberated two of the pigeons with notes attached to their legs. Shortly afterward they received a message from one of the owners of the pigeons, giving a clue to the man's identity.

Clock Device Lights Stoves.

A new appliance for gas stoves and heaters is a clock device which automatically lights or extinguishes the burners at any specified time.

The Sailor's Signpost.

The mariner's compass seems to have been known to the Chinese from very early times. It is reported that in 2600 B.C. an action was fought in which the Emperor of China successfully navigated his fleet through a fog by the aid of an instrument which was probably a compass.

The early Greeks knew that a mineral called loadstones would attract iron. Iron rubbed with loadstone also became able to attract other pieces of iron. About the year 1450 an Italian, named Flavio Gioja, found that the magnetized iron, when suspended, pointed north and south. Using a circular card upon which the magnetized needle was fixed, Gioja made his compass by attaching the card to a cork placed in a basin of water. This arrangement was, however, soon improved upon.

The invention of the compass was of great importance since many voyages of discovery could now be undertaken with greater prospect of success. Thus, shortly afterwards, Columbus discovered America, and Vasco da Gama succeeded in sailing round the Cape of Good Hope, noting incidentally that the constellations appearing at night over the southern seas were different from those he had seen from Portugal.

Woods That Disagree.

When certain trees are converted into timber, they do not agree, if used together. On contact, decay sets in, though each kind of wood, on its own, is thoroughly durable as timber. Cypress, for example, is a very quarrelsome wood, disagreeing as it does with both walnut and cedar.

One Kind of Gentian Left.

Though the fringed gentian of the eastern United States has become rare and is threatened with extinction in many places, the fringed gentian of the western mountains is still exceedingly abundant.

Freezing Facts.

Because snow holds much carbonic acid, it is a valuable fertilizer. It is white because its crystals reflect the rays of light.

Ice contains an enormous amount of latent heat.

When eighteen cubic inches of water are frozen, they become twenty of ice. The frozen water expands because ice crystals do not fit so closely as water particles.

Snow is merely frozen air vapor, while hail is rain frozen during its fall to the earth.

In winter, a rise of the barometer betakens frost. During a frost, water contracts in volume until it falls to 40 degrees. Then it expands until it freezes.

Snow obstructs the passage of sound. Frost assists it.

In winter, river water is several degrees warmer than the air.

Solid ice is much lighter than its equivalent bulk of water.

Dark clothes, owing to their peculiar quality of gathering heat from the air, are the warmest for winter wear.

Below the surface of the ground is much warmer—even in the hardest frost—than on the top.

Cold weather is the best time to do mental work.

The absence of fogs during frost is because the vapor which ordinarily would have become fog is frozen on the ground, as hoar-frost, before it can rise.

Until ice is two inches thick, it is not really safe for walking upon, although at an inch and a half it will bear a fast skater whose weight, naturally, is never dead weight. Ice five inches thick will bear the weight of a motor-car, while at six inches it is safe for a crowd of people.

During the winter of twenty-three years ago, ice of twenty-five inches in thickness formed in many places in England.

Frosted Pane.

When I wakened, very early,
All my window pane was pearly,
With a sparkling little picture
Traced in lines of shining white,
Some magician with a gleaming,
Frosty brush, while I was dreaming,
Must have come and by the starlight
Worked
All through the night.

He had painted frosty people,
And a frosty church and steeple,
And a frosty bridge and river tumbling
Over frosty rocks,
Frosty mountain peaks that shimmered
And fine frosty ferns that shimmered,
And a frosty little pasture full of
Frosty little frocks.

It was all touched in so lightly,
And it glittered, oh, so whitely,
That I gazed and gazed in wonder
At the lovely painted pane;
Then the sun rose high and higher
With his wand of golden fire,
Till, alas, my picture vanished and I
Looked for it in vain!

About Violins.

Violins and bows come in different sizes, like shoes and suits of clothes; and it is very important for a child to have a violin and bow of the proper size. A violin which is too large, or a bow which is too long, results in the pupil acquiring all sorts of faults in position and movement.

Music stores usually keep in stock, quarter, half, three-quarters, seven-eighths and full size violins. The seven-eighths size is known as the "lady's violin." Such instruments are very close to full size and differ only slightly at first glance, but are made to accommodate women players who have short arms and fingers. In tone quality these slightly smaller instruments are quite equal to those of full size, if of good make.

Violins are sometimes made to order, somewhat smaller than quarter size, for very young children to begin practice upon; but such violins are more like toys than real fiddles. They can be played upon practically, however, and are sometimes used for humorous musical sketches in vaudeville performances.

Cinderella's Slipper.

The pantomime season never comes and goes without a presentation of the fairy story of Cinderella and the Glass Slipper. It is curious, however, that we owe this slipper of glass to a mistake made by the person who first translated this famous story from French into English.

In the seventeenth century fur was worn only by the grandest folk, and was as much a sign of distinction as the rarest jewels. Consequently, when Madame d'Aulnoy wrote that Cinderella's fairy-godmother bestowed upon the little down-trodden girl "pantoufles en vair," it was a pair of fur slippers that she gave. The English translator mixed up "vair" (fur) with "verre" (glass).

It was surely one of the happiest errors in literature, for the little glass slippers are to-day the most fascinating part of Cinderella's attire.

True to Form.

A farmer, well known for his tight-fisted qualities, had his arm badly injured in a corn shredder.

"Say, doc," he inquired of the physician who had been called to dress it, "will I have to lose the arm?"

"Yes, Dave," replied the doctor, "I'm afraid it will have to come off."

"Humph!" was the unemotional reply. "It'd been cheaper to let the shredder have it."

ADAMSON'S ADVENTURES

