

VISIONS.

Visions come and go again,  
Leaving in their airy train  
Just a rhythm, soft and low,  
Of their movement to and fro—  
Something like an old refrain.

"The way with summer rains  
The way with joy and pain  
The way with all we ken  
Of the lives of mortal men;  
Just to come, then go again,  
—W. N. Roundy in Harper's Weekly.

THE ROBBER.

[The author of this story, Guy de Maupassant, has recently become insane.]

"When I tell you, you will not believe me."

"Never mind; tell us, all the same."  
"Willingly, but I feel the necessity of first declaring that my story is true in every particular, improbable as it seems. Artists alone will not be surprised, particularly those who lived in that period when the spirit of fun and frolic pervaded artist life, even in the most serious circumstances."

This conversation took place in the salle-a-manger of the Hotel de Barbizon among a lot of students.

The old artist who had just spoken placed himself astride his chair and continued:

Well, we had dined that evening with Sorieul. Poor fellow, he is now dead! There were only three of us—Sorieul, Le Poittevin and myself. Sorieul was the wildest of us all, and to say we had dined at his house signifies—we were all drunk. Le Poittevin alone retained his senses—a little cloudy, it is true—still he knew what he was doing. Ah! we were young in those days.

Lying on the carpet in a little room adjoining the atelier, we discussed in the most extravagant manner all kinds of improbable things.

Sorieul, flat on his back, his feet perched on the back of a chair, talked about battles and the uniforms worn during the empire. Suddenly getting up, he went to a large wardrobe and took down a complete suit of hussar uniform, dressed himself in it, then tried to persuade Le Poittevin to costume himself as a grenadier. When he resisted we seized him, undressed him, and forced him into an immense uniform which completely swallowed him up.

I disguised myself as a cuirassier, and Sorieul made us execute some very complicated maneuvers.

Then he exclaimed, "As we are now soldiers, we must drink like soldiers!"

A punch was lighted, swallowed; again and again the flames rose up from the bowl of rum. We sang the old songs which the troopers of the Grand Army sang in ancient times.

Suddenly Le Poittevin, who in spite of all this was still master of himself, made us a sign to be silent; after listening a moment, he said, in a low voice, "I am sure I hear some one walking in the atelier!"

Sorieul got up as well as he could, and cried out, "A robber! what luck!" and began to troll the "Marseillaise." "To arms, to arms, ye brave!"

We dashed to a panoply of arms and equipped ourselves according to our uniforms. I had a kind of musket, with a saber. Le Poittevin a gigantic gun with a bayonet. Sorieul, not finding what he wanted, seized a horse pistol, which he stuck in his belt, and a boarding ax, which he wildly brandished. Then cautiously opening the door of the atelier, the army entered the suspected territory.

When we were in the midst of this vast room, encumbered with easels, pictures and strange, unexpected objects of furniture, Sorieul called a halt and said: "I constitute myself general. Let us hold a council of war. You cuirassiers, go and cut off the retreat of the enemy, that is, 'Lock the door!' You grenadiers will be my escort."

I executed the commanded movement, then joined the troop that formed the reconnoitering party.

I was searching behind a great screen, a lighted candle in my hand, when a furious noise burst forth. I darted out to find Le Poittevin had stuck his bayonet into the breast of a lay figure, and Sorieul was trying to cut off the head with his ax.

The mistake being recognized the general commanded, "Be more prudent!" and again we commenced operations.

For twenty minutes at least we ransacked every corner and crevice of the atelier without success. At last Le Poittevin thought of opening a large closet. It was dark and deep. I thrust in my arm, holding the light, but quickly recoiled; a man—a living, breathing man—was there looking at me!

I immediately shut the door and secured it by two turns of the key; then we held a new council of war.

Opinions were very much divided. Sorieul wanted to smoke out the robber. Le Poittevin to take him by famine; I proposed to blow him up with powder.

The advice of Le Poittevin prevailed. While he mounted guard with his gigantic gun we ran off for the remainder of the punch and our pipes; when we installed ourselves before the locked door and drank to the health of the prisoner.

At the end of half an hour Sorieul said: "All the same, I would like to see him nearer! Suppose we take him by force!" I cried "Bravo!" Each one dashed to his arms, the closet door was opened, Sorieul cocking his pistol—which was not loaded—was the first to rush in, we followed, howling and yelling. It was an awful scrimmage in the dark, and after five minutes of frightful struggling

we brought out an old, dirty, ragged looking beggar with long white hair.

We bound him hand and foot and proceeded to question him. He would not answer a word.

Then Sorieul, full of dignified drunkenness, said, "We must try this man, and pass sentence upon him." I was so drunk the proposition seemed perfectly natural to me. Le Poittevin was charged with the defense, and I to sustain the accusation. He was condemned to death; only one dissenting voice, that of his defender. We were going to execute the sentence, when a serious scruple came to Sorieul. He said: "This man ought not to die without the consolation of religion. Some one must go for a priest."

I objected—said it was too late. Then Sorieul proposed that I should fill that office, and I exhorted the criminal to unburden his sins into my bosom.

The poor old wretch had been rolling his frightened eyes for about five minutes, no doubt wondering what kind of madmen he had fallen into the hands of. You will laugh when I tell you Sorieul forced him down upon his knees, saying, "Confess to this gentleman, for thy last hour has come!"

Horribly frightened, the old scoundrel began to cry "Help! help!" with such strength and vigor we were forced to gag him for fear he would arouse the neighbors. Then he rolled over the floor, turning, twisting, upsetting the easels, pictures, canvases, until Sorieul got out of patience and angrily exclaimed, "Come, let us finish him!" with that he put his pistol to the head of the miserable wretch and pulled the trigger.

Carried away by his example, I fired in my turn. My musket was an old flintlock, and sent forth a tiny spark to my great surprise.

Then Le Poittevin said in grave tones, "Have we the right to kill this man?"

Sorieul in great astonishment cried out, "Certainly, when we have condemned him to death!"

"But," continued Le Poittevin, "they don't shoot civilians. They are always hanged. We must take this one to the police station."

This argument appeared conclusive. We picked up the old fellow—he would not walk a step—bound him securely to a plank taken from the model table, and carried him, Le Poittevin at the head, I at the foot, while Sorieul, armed to the teeth, closed the line of march.

When we reached the station house, the sentinel arrested us. The chief of police was sent for. He knew us well, nearly every day witnessing some of our jokes, pranks and unbecoming capers. He refused to receive our prisoner.

Sorieul insisted: then the officer severely invited us to return home and make no more noise.

The troop again took up the line of march and returned to the atelier.

"What are we going to do with this old robber?" I asked.

Le Poittevin, touched with tender pity, declared he looked terribly exhausted. Truly the old fellow had an agonizing appearance, gagged, tied hand and foot and securely bound to his plank.

I was taken in my turn with violent pity. I took off his gag and said, "Well, my poor old man, how do you feel now?" He groaned, "In the name of God, I've had enough!"

Then Sorieul became affectionately paternal. He untied him, placed him in an armchair, fondled him, called him "thee" and "thou." And to comfort him we all three ran off to make him a fresh punch. The old scamp, tranquilly seated in his armchair, coolly regarded us.

When the punch was ready we touched glasses with him, "wishing him long life and prosperity."

Our prisoner drank as much as a regiment, and when daylight appeared he got up and said, "I am sorry to leave you, gentlemen, but I must go."

We were desolate, heartbroken, begged him to stay, but he would remain no longer. Then we followed him to the door, shook hands with him, Sorieul lighted him through the vestibule and called out: "Take care, my old friend, there's a bad step there. Don't fall!"

A hearty laugh followed this ridiculous story of the old artist, who got up, lighted his pipe and standing in front of us added:

"The dullest part of my story, gentlemen, is this: Every word of it is true!"—Translated from the French of Guy de Maupassant by M. E. B. for Romance.

The Fall of the Rupee.

The following story is sent to me in illustration of the fluctuations of the rupee. A gentleman went to a presidency agent and obtained circular notes for a certain sum. The rate quoted was 1s. 8½d. He drove a few minutes later to another agent on similar business, and here the rate given him by the clerk was 1s. 8½d. He mentioned that he had just got 1s. 8½d. at another office. Upon this the clerk went into an inner room and on returning stated that he had made a mistake; that a telegram announcing the alteration of the rate had come without his knowledge. The odd farthing made a difference in the customer's favor of 2½s.—London Truth.

An Imperfect Creation.

Adelaide, aged 4, sat on the floor playing with her doll and asking her mother various questions about God and what he had made. After several fruitless efforts to make her doll stand, she was heard to exclaim, "Well, while he was about it he might as well have made the doll so she could stand up!"—New York Advertiser.

THE GAMINS OF ROME.

THEY ARE A SOURCE OF DELIGHT AND TORTURE TO TRAVELERS.

Clever Little Urchins Who Grow Up From Early Childhood Homeless and Without Restraint—They Have Many Ways of Earning a Living.

"Street gamins in Rome," the reader may think, "are probably not very different from street gamins elsewhere—curious, independent and a nuisance generally."

They certainly are endowed with those qualities most generously, nor are they all as handsome and interesting as the familiar "Roman Boy," with large, dreamy eyes, long, black locks, and the stereotyped high pointed hat, which may beset in oil, aqua-telle or copper in the windows of almost every art dealer.

Early in the morning these little fellows begin their day's work. The first thing to be done is usually to secure breakfast in some way from one of the numerous herdsmen who daily bring their goats to the city and milk them in the street, one by one, as they find customers on their route. When the herdsmen for a few moments leaves his flock to deliver milk and solicit new orders, the watchful, half naked boys will dart out from a corner or alley, squat down and suck the fresh, warm milk from the full udder. When the indignant rustic appears with his long staff to punish the juvenile marauders, they are off and vanish as quickly as they appeared.

Strengthened by their primitive meal, they now begin the more legitimate part of their day's work. The newspapers are brought out and sold under deafening yelling. Other youthful street hawkers appear with a variety of wares, such as pins, toothpicks, pictures of saints, busts of Victor Emmanuel and Umberto, lottery tickets, etc. Some of the most enterprising make rhymes on the list of their wares and sing the same lustily to some popular opera melody.

With an experienced eye they spot every foreigner who comes within sight, and know to perfection how to take advantage of his peculiarities. When I one day during my stay in Rome got into a dispute with a cabman because he, in addition to the regular fare, demanded brona manzia—a tip—a little fellow six or seven years old came up and said in a paternal, assuring tone:

"Sixty centime is enough, sir. The rascal is very impudent; don't you give him any more."

In the same breath he asked me for a soldo for the service rendered. I handed him a coin, laughing at his grand airs, and he received it with a condescending gesture as he patronizingly said:

"Gracie, signor! a revider." (I will see you later, as we would say.) Then he hastily made his departure, for the driver reached for his whip and was going to pay him for his untimely meddling. I had walked only a short distance when another boy was at my side.

"Si, signor, you are quite right; this is the road to St. Pietro and the Vatican—give me a soldo!"

What a logical argument! I drove him off of course. But a few minutes later a third one bounded forward.

"Your boots, sir, your boots!" I am not so extravagant as some of the native Romans, who have their boots polished several times in a day, and I tried to ignore him. Then he appealed to my self respect.

"But, my lord, such boots!" he exclaimed reprovingly, as he trotted along by my side. "Oh, Dio mio! what nasty boots! Oh, Santo Madre di Dio! what boots! I really pity you, sir. Indeed, such boots! In fact I am sorry for you!"

All this was uttered in a tone of the most profound moral conviction, the most disinterested fellow feeling of regret and sympathy, as if I were a friend whom he had met on a forlidden way. But when also this appeal failed he dropped behind a few steps and changed his tactics to a very noisy persecution:

"Just look at that American! One can always tell an American by his dirty boots."

That was too much for me. I concluded to let the little imp shine my boots rather than see the entire American people expelled from the family of well polished nations.

These children, bold and full of vulgar bombast as they are, must not be judged too harshly. It must be remembered that most of them are orphans. They have to make their own living, and therefore often spend their childhood in the streets, where they make their way as best they may. Then, too, a little friendly encouragement changes them into the most amiable and obliging little beings. A couple of soldo or a cigarette makes them the most painstaking guides and trusty messengers.

Where do all these homeless boys sleep? There are plenty of quarters for the night in Rome. Among the pillars surrounding the ancient buildings, the church portals, the recesses about the chapels, the niches of the numberless saluts—all these are excellent lodging places. Only the Coliseum with its eighty portals makes an exception, for one of them is the guardhouse of the police, and in Rome, as elsewhere, a natural instinct forbids the street strata to mingle too freely with even the humblest of city officials. After the day's battle some of these homeless boys will lie down and sleep in the doorway of the nearest house, and it is not an uncommon thing, when one comes home late, to stumble over a pair of small brown legs, whose owner mechanically reaches out with his little hand and in a sleepy voice says, "Un soldo, signor!"

Thus passes day after day for the street boys in the Eternal City. They grow up in a constant fight for existence. The street is their home and their school. They go through life with an imperturbable sang froid that is simply enviable. They know of no other burden than the care for the necessities of the moment, and among them a cigar or a cigarette is the most precious. Then they become young men well equipped with practical knowledge of the world and with health. They are qualified with almost everything except to sit still and be idle. Excellent servants, good soldiers and hard working men generally grow out of these street boys. As a matter of course, also dead beats and criminals.—New York Tribune.

DISCOVERER OF THE STEAM ENGINE.

Solomon Caus Was shut Up in a Madhouse Because of a Great Idea.

There lived in Normandy, where he was born in 1770, a man named Solomon Caus. He was an engineer and architect, and had held several important positions. He wrote a great many scientific works and papers, of which, however, no one took much notice during his life, and finally was seized with an idea which made his friends and relatives fear that he was mad. After pestering the king and the cardinal at Paris, he was ordered to be taken to Bicetre—the madhouse—and there shut up. This was done. They had just one way with mad people in those days. They shut them in iron cages and fed them through the bars like wild beasts. They did this to Solomon Caus.

For a long time he stood behind those bars all day and called to those who would listen, and to them repeated the story he had told the cardinal. He became the jest of the place. Some of them even gave him writing materials, and then amid the misery of his surroundings he wrote down his ideas and amused his jailers so much the more. However, it could not be long before such a life, such surroundings, would shatter any brain. In time Solomon Caus was as mad as every one believed him.

It was in 1824 that an English nobleman, Lord Worcester, went to Paris and visited Bicetre. As he was passing through the great court accompanied by the keeper a hideous face with matted beard and hair appeared at the grating, and a voice shrieked wildly: "Stop! stop! I am not mad, I am shut up here most unjustly. I have made an invention which would enrich a country that adopted it." "What does he speak of?" the marquis asked his guide. "Oh, that is his madness," said the guide, laughing. "That is a man called Solomon Caus; he is from Normandy. He believes that by the use of the steam of boiling water he can make ships go over the ocean and carriages travel by land—in fact, do all sorts of wonderful things. He has even written a book about it, which I can show you." Lord Worcester asked for the book, glanced over it, and desired to be conducted to the cell of the writer. When he returned he had been weeping. "The poor man is certainly mad now," he said, "but when you imprisoned him he was the greatest genius of the age. He has certainly made a very great discovery."

After this Lord Worcester made many efforts to procure the liberation of the man, who doubtless would have been restored to reason by freedom and ordinary surroundings, but in vain; the cardinal was against him, and his English friends began to fancy that he himself had lost his senses, for one wrote to another: "My lord is remarkable for never being satisfied with any explanations which are given him, but always wanting to know for himself, although he seems to pierce to the very center of a speaker's thoughts with his big blue eyes that never leave theirs. At a visit to Bicetre he thought he had discovered a genius in a madman who declares he would travel the world over with a kettle of boiling water. He desired to carry him away to London that he might listen to his extravagancies from morning till night, and would, I think, if the maniac had not been actually raving and chained to the wall."

Thus in Bicetre died the man to whom, after his works were published, many people gave the credit of being the discoverer of steam power, and it is said that from the manuscript written in his prison Lord Worcester gathered the idea of a machine spoken of as a "water commanding engine," which he afterward invented. Historians have denied that Caus died in prison, but there exists a letter written by Marlon de Lorme, who was with Lord Worcester at the time of his interview with Caus, which establishes the fact beyond doubt.—London Invention.

Animal Expression.

If animals are able to express every idea they have, why not allow them a language? To be sure, a very undeveloped language, yet relatively no farther from civilization than that of Peshabah, which in European ears sounds like animal screams and yells. Bechstein has noted that the chaffinch expresses a joyous emotion by a single sharp "Pink," and anger by "Pink—flink—flink!" sorrow and sympathy by "Trif—trif—trif." Houzeau has found that the common hen has at least 10 distinct sounds, well understood by the chickens. Renger observed that the longtailed cebus of South America expressed astonishment by a sound between whistling and screeching, impatience by repeating "Hui hui!" and that he had a peculiar scream for pain or fear.

Darwin thought he observed 10 distinct sounds in the same ape, all of which called forth corresponding states of mind in other apes. Brekin says the same. However, why quote the learned? We have all in everyday life observed something similar. Dr. Garner's experiments in the simian language are also known.—Copenhagen Family Journal.

Protective Color.

We have a green snake (Dryophis fulgida) which, when hunting for green frogs and lizards, winds in and out among "the flexuous stems of creeping plants, and so closely resembles them in color as to almost defy detection even by the keenest eyes." Close at hand among the bushes may be a huge grasshopper, whose broad fore wings when closed are of the exact color of the leaf on which he rests, so that his disguise is perfect and he chirps on in safety. Yet, if the lizard, instead of haunting the green, leafy thicket, be of that species found crawling over the walls of buildings in the city, he puts on a totally different appearance from that of his own kindred in the forest, or even in the interior of houses, being of the exact hue of the ruined stone and mud walls on which he is found, while the house lizard is speckled and of an ashy gray tint like the ceiling on which he rests, and for clinging to which his feet are specially adapted.—Nineteenth Century.

The Bank Is Solvent.

Owing to financial uncertainty, a St. Louis family drew \$1,735 from a bank, all the money it possessed, and placed it in the back part of a cooking stove, where thieves would not be likely to search. A young girl, forgetting about the money, lighted a fire in the stove, and now the family has nothing. The bank is still paying dollar for dollar.—Union Herald.

A Disagreement.

Outside a one man band was awakening the echoes by a strenuous and sustained effort.

Inside there was scarcely less harmony. His bosom was heaving tumultuously while the wife of his bosom had thrown herself upon the sofa in an attitude of deep dejection.

"Why?"  
She was tearfully reproachful in tone.—"do you always disagree with me?" He looked pained.

"My love," he protested in evident distress, "when have I disagreed with you?"  
"Why, this very minute I asked you if you didn't think the lady in the next house was really a better cook than I am, and you said yes."

She wept so softly that the one man band made the evidences of her grief inaudible.—Detroit Tribune.

A Compliment.



First Girl—What are you sketching?  
Second Girl—A man.  
First Girl—You must have a good memory.—Truth.

All About a Telegram.

Bingo—Has a telegram come for me?  
Mrs. Bingo—Have you been expecting one?

Bingo—Oh, no, of course not. (Sarcasmically.) You don't suppose I would ask you that question if I expected one, do you?

Mrs. Bingo (sweetly)—You might, dear. What would you say, now, if I should say that a telegram has come for you?

Bingo—Aha! I knew it. I've been expecting that telegram all the afternoon. (Impatiently.) Where is it?

Mrs. Bingo—I'll get it. But, dear, I thought it best to open it. You didn't mind, did you, dearest?

Bingo—Certainly not. It's only a matter of business. From Jack Enslow, ain't it?

Mrs. Bingo—Yes, dear.

Bingo—Important meeting tonight. Says I must be there, doesn't he?

Mrs. Bingo—Yes, dear.

Bingo (rubbing his hands)—I knew it. Well, I'll have to rush right off after dinner. Sorry for you, my dear, but you know business must be attended to.

Mrs. Bingo—Oh, that's all right, darling. But don't you want to see the message?

Bingo—Why should I? You opened it, read it like the good wife that you are, and I guess that I can trust you. Jack wants me (delightedly), that's all, and I must go.

Mrs. Bingo—But there was one thing more he said, my pet.

Bingo (suspiciously)—Oh, there was? Well, what was it?

Mrs. Bingo (all smiles)—He says he's got front row seats, as now, in Harper's Bazaar.

Following Up the Fads.

Sharp Dry Goods Merchant—What you at now?

Bookkeeper—Making out Mr. Bullion's bill.

"All right. Charge him an extra \$100 for sundries."

"Hada'n't I better put in the items?"

"There are no items. They weren't bought."

"My goodness! He'll say we're swindlers."

"No, he won't. He won't say a word."

"Why not?"

"Well, you see, kleptomania is very fashionable now, and he'll think his wife has got it."—New York Weekly.

Lovely.

Oscar Wilde was introduced at a recent garden party in London to Mrs. Osgood of Knebworth House. In the course of a few minutes' talk it was divulged that the lady was on the eve of departing for America.

"Going to America?" said Oscar. "Death me! What for, now?" "To see my husband," was the reply. Oscar stared sleepily at her in astonishment. Dropping languidly into a chair, he said, "Going all the way to America to see your own" (with the accent on the own) "husband? Death me! What a lovely idea!"—Recorder.

How Gardening Pays.

Questioner—I hear you've been raising your own vegetables this summer. Now, tell me, old fellow, does gardening pay?

Answer—Certainly it does.

Questioner—Don't say! Well, you're the first man that I know of whose experiments in that direction have resulted as you say.

Answer—Well, I know whereof I speak, for my checkbook abundantly proves that it paid my gardener.—Boston Courier.

An Eye For an Eye.

First Oculist—I had the most interesting case yesterday that I ever had the pleasure of attending to.

Second Oculist—What was that?

First Oculist—A young lady called who, instead of a common pupil, has a college student in her eye.—Truth.

All Heroes.

"You made a mistake in calling that drama of yours a play with a hero."

"Why? It hasn't any heroes."

"It's chock full of them. Every man who braves an audience in a play like that is a hero."—Harper's Bazaar.

Explained.

Duke de Veragua—Zat is very strange. Ze bar in ze river and ze bar on shore have ze same name.

Mr. Hoffman Howen—That's because water is scarce in both places.—Texas Siftings.

A Long Headed Lover.

Friend—I can't help wondering why a man on your small salary should give his affianced a cluster diamond engagement ring.

Mr. Smartchapp—That's so she won't slip it off and leave it up stairs when the other fellows call.—Good News.