

NOT AS I WILL.

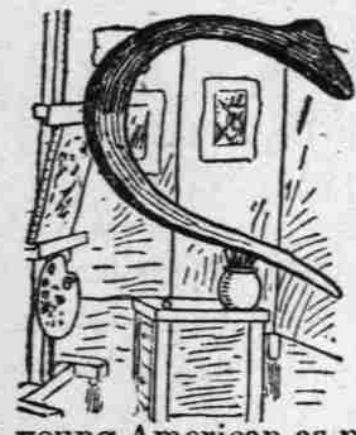
Blindfolded and alone I stand, With unknown thresholds on each hand, The darkness deepens as I grope, Afraid to fear, afraid to hope; Yet this one thing I learn to know Each day more surely as I go, That doors are opened, ways are made, Burdens are lifted or are laid, By some great law unseen and still, Unfathomed purpose to fulfill, "Not as I will."

Blindfolded and alone I wait; Loss seems too bitter, gain too late; Too heavy burdens in the load, And too few helpers on the road; And joy is weak and grief is strong, And years and days so long, so long! Yet this one thing I learn to know Each day more surely as I go, That I am glad the good and ill By changeless law are ordered still— "Not as I will."

"Not as I will"—the sound grows sweet Each time my lips the words repeat. "Not as I will!" The darkness feels More safe than light when this thought steals Like whispered voice to calm and bless All unrest and all loneliness. "Not as I will," because the One Who loved us first and best has gone Before us on the road, and still For us must all his love fulfill, "Not as I will."

—Helen Hunt Jackson.

Mystery of Cecil Dacre.



CECIL DACRE was an artist. He was desperately poor, undeniably good looking, and he stood six feet in his stockings. Young Dacre was an Englishman, and he lived with another artist, a young American as poor as himself, just behind the Church of San Martino, in one of the oldest houses of old Naples. So poor were they that they could hardly ever afford a model, so they used to take it in turns to sit to each other. Cecil Dacre and his friend Orlando P. Jones were both rival artists, but Dacre had an additional talent—he was a *farceur* of the first water. He hadn't been six months in Naples before he attended before the committee of Monte di Misericordia and suggested that they should pay his debts. "I am poor," he said, "I am persevering, and I am deeply in debt—so deeply that I can get no more credit. Pay my debts, give me a little cash to go on with, and you, gentlemen, will be doing your duty. That is your *raison d'être*."

But the committee laughed and bowed Mr. Dacre out, declining to accede to this very modest proposition. On another occasion Dacre, becoming indignant at the pertinacious way in which his movements were watched by one of his neighbors, who was accustomed to stare at him from his balcony opposite, drove up to his door late one evening in a street cab. The cabman got down from his box, and a female figure wrapped in a cloak was carried carefully into the house by the artist and the cabman; the two men reappeared in the street, the artist mysteriously placed his fingers to his lips, paid the cab-driver, and the man drove off. The little drama was well lighted by the solitary gas lamp that stood in front of the artist's lodgings. The inquisitive neighbor was at his post and carefully noted all the details of the mysterious affair.

At noon the next day four officers, accompanied by the neighbor, presented themselves at Dacre's room door and knocked loudly for admission in the name of the law. Only at the third and very imperative summons was the door opened by Orlando P. Jones. The supposed criminal was discovered seated at his little table, on which lay a blood-stained dagger; his face was buried in his hands.

"Signor Dacre," said the chief of police, "I call upon you to surrender, and I demand to search your apartments. This gentleman," said he, pointing to the informer, "detected you last night conveying the body of a dead or insensible female into this house."

"The informer, being an Italian, immediately struck an attitude. "I yield," said Dacre in a broken voice; the proofs of my crime you will find in the next room."

Two of the agents advanced and seized the supposed murderer by the arms.

"I should recognize her at once," cried the informer. "The poor creature wore a dress of bright blue color; I saw the edge of it from under the cloak in which she was enveloped."

The bedroom door was flung open by the leader of the little party. In the center of the room was a lay figure in a bright blue dress; it was standing on its head.

The police instantly released their prisoner. "Let this be a lesson to you, sir," said Dacre to his too curious victim in a voice of thunder, "when you dare to intrude upon the privacy of gentlemen and men of honor."

And then Messrs. Dacre and Jones executed a very ferocious pas de triomphe.

A less sublime but equally ridiculous joke was perpetrated by Dacre upon an unfortunate old lady who had the misfortune to dwell upon the second floor of the great house of which the comrades occupied the sky parlors.

She was a devotee, her one harmless amusement being the keeping of two immense gold fish in a big glass globe on her balcony. With diabolical

ingenuity Dacre, by means of a piece of string, a bent pin and a small piece of meat, angled for the two finny monsters who formed the joy of the old lady's life, caught them, fried them in egg and bread crumbs, and then restored them to their once happy and transparent home.

In the Cafe Verdi, Cecil Dacre once calmly declared, after a rather hilarious breakfast, that he would cause twenty innocent citizens of Naples to be arrested within the hour. The Cafe Verdi is, as we know, situated in the Piazza del Martiri. Dacre went out and purchased a large ball of string; he made a loop in



the end of it, and then he took a mean advantage of the urbane politeness of the Italians. Producing a huge notebook, he courteously raised his hat to the first respectable bystander.

"Signor," said he, "will you greatly oblige me by holding this piece of string while I take a few measurements? Thank you so much." And then with strides he commenced to pace the piazza. Of course a little crowd collected at once. Dacre selected another victim with the same result.

"Keep it quite taut, if you please," and he bowed politely. Within five minutes thirty individuals were holding the tightly stretched string, an immense crowd had assembled, Dacre had finished his paces, his string and the careful notes he had appeared to be making.

"Be patient, gentlemen," he said, "I shall not detain you long." Then he disappeared, only to re-enter the Cafe Verdi by the back door to watch the result. He had chosen his time with considerable ingenuity, for he knew that the police patrol always arrived on the Piazza del Martiri punctually at noon. It wanted two minutes of the hour. Just at that time the peace of Naples was much disturbed by political demonstrations, which were severely put down by the authorities. The hour struck. Twenty policemen, headed by a sergeant, appeared upon the scene; of course they proceeded at once to arrest the thirty mysterious conspirators who were still innocently engaged in holding Dacre's string, Dacre and his friends watching the whole scene from the windows of the Cafe Verdi with delighted merriment.

But the master stroke of Dacre's ingenuity was the artfully arranged plan by which he obtained feloniously a sum of five pounds five sterling from Mr. Donald MacTaggart, of Leith. MacTaggart was an ambitious young fellow of small talent, who had recently arrived in Naples to study art.

MacTaggart was well-to-do, excessively stingy, preternaturally ugly and preposterously short. He was one of the "unco guid;" he wouldn't foregather with the other students, his ways were not their ways, and young Mr. MacTaggart, of Leith, was shunned when he was not made a butt of.

MacTaggart had one grievance against Providence upon which he constantly harped, it was his want of stature. It was this weakness of the young Scotchman's that the wily Cecil Dacre determined to take advantage of, and at the same time gratify his taste for practical joking. Cecil Dacre was in the want of £5 very badly indeed. He was always in want of £5, but the want at this particular time was more than usually urgent. One day the three young men met by accident in the Cafe Verdi.

"That American doctor's a wonderful fellow," said Dacre, in a loud voice to his friend, Orlando P. Jones. "I wonder whether he is a humbug?"

Now MacTaggart was sitting at the table consuming a dish of macaroni with great gusto. "No, I don't think he's a humbug," said Jones; "they say he really does possess the secret of permanently diminishing or increasing the stature at will. I've noticed people who have been to him two or three times, and there was always an extraordinary difference in their height. It's very marvellous."

MacTaggart, who had drunk in the conversation with greedy ear, now joined in with manifest interest. The two young fellows gave him a host of circumstantial details. "You ought to try him, MacTaggart, at any rate," said the crafty Dacre.

"Any change in your appearance, my Caledonian Apollo, would be a benefit."

"I am thinking it would be very expensive, and I object to extravagance on principle," said the Scotchman.

"Well, you could beat him down; now, at all events you could try," said Dacre.

"Without a doot. I'll sleep on it," said MacTaggart, and he paid for his breakfast and departed.

It took the Scotchman a whole week to make up his frugal mind, and then he screwed up his courage to the sticking point and informed Dacre that he should visit the American physician the next day.

"D'ye ken where he lives, Mr. Dacre?"

"Well, he lives in the same house as I do, on the first floor. He's a benevo-

lent old boy; you're sure to like him. Jones here knows him very well; the Yankees are almost as clannish as the Scotch, you know. You are sure to find him there at 3," and they parted.

No sooner had the unfortunate MacTaggart turned the corner than Cecil Dacre triumphantly executed a cellar flap breakdown, to the astonishment of the little crowd of Neapolitan bystanders; then he bowed to his little audience, kissed his fingers to them, and started off as fast as his legs would carry him to his lodgings. The next day Cecil Dacre obtained the loan of his landlord's first floor for the day, and then he began to busy himself in a very extraordinary manner. He secured the services of the porter's wife and daughter, the black-eyed Pippa; they dusted, they arranged, and rearranged the big dismal reception room on the first floor. Dacre rushed out and borrowed a screen and purchased a small bottle of turpentine; and then, in the bathroom, which opened from a little passage which was built in the corner where he laid the screen, he laid out at least half a dozen towels. Then he ran over to the costumer's across the street and came back with a fur robe *de chambre*, a long gray beard, and a close cap of black velvet, and a pair of big green spectacles exactly similar to those worn by the celebrated Dr. Faust in the first act of Gounod's opera. Pippa, her mother, and Dacre worked with a will, and the two women, with many gestures of astonishment from Pippa herself, took their departure, promising that everything should be ready punctually at 3. Dacre ran up to the rooms of the medical student on the third floor and borrowed several of his largest and most professional looking books, which he placed in a row upon the writing table. Two gruesome looking anatomical preparations in spirit he also obtained from the Italian Bob Sawyer; with these and a human skull, procured from the same source, he decorated the mantel piece. Then he put on the dressing gown, the long gray beard, the velvet cap and the spectacles, and he looked a very tremendous specimen of a quack doctor. When the travestiment was complete, he went to the window and waited patiently for young Mr. MacTaggart. He was not kept long in suspense. The great bell of San Giovanni struck three, and punctual to the hour MacTaggart appeared on the other side of the street.

In the meantime Orlando P. Jones on his part had not been idle, for he called upon at least a dozen of MacTaggart's friends and acquaintances, had a short interview with each, and he took his leave with each of the people he had so honored with a visit, laid his forefinger to the side of his nose and appeared considerably amused.

As has been said, the bell of San Giovanni struck three. A rather timid knock sounded upon the outer door of the first floor where Dacre was lying in wait. Dacre allowed it to be repeated, then he flung the door open suddenly. There stood MacTaggart.

"Have I the honor of addressing the newly-arrived American physician?" he said.

"Enter, my young friend," said he of the gray beard and green spectacles, in a loud but drawing voice. "Take a seat, inquiring stranger," he continued, "and let me hear in what way I can be of use to you. You see before you," he added, "the celebrated old Dr. Jacob Townsend, a physician of world-wide celebrity—a man, sir," he went on, "who has devoted a long life, prolonged by his own skill far beyond the ordinary human span, to the amelioration of the condition of the human race."

"I'm afraid I have come to you on a fool's errand," said the patient uneasily. "No man who consults me," said the doctor, "is guilty of an unwise act. I read your thoughts, young man," he continued severely; "my eagle eye detects the working of your puny brain. You are discontented with your stature. Say, is it not so?"

The patient nodded.

"Are you ready to submit to the treatment, young man? Have you every confidence in me?"

"I've every confidence, doctor," replied MacTaggart uneasily, "but I heard that your fees were high, and I thought, perhaps, as I'm only an art student, you might consent to make a little reduction."

"Young man," said the physician in an indignant tone, "do not trifle. The paltry honorarium I exact is but to cover the cost of the balsamic drugs used in the treatment of such cases; they have been procured from the deserts of Central Asia, after the expenditure of much time, blood and treasure, but be assured, young man, that the trifle wrung from your parsimonious clutch will be immediately distributed by me to the deserving poor."

"And you won't take any less?" said MacTaggart, as he stretched out his reluctant hand and deposited five guineas upon the physician's table. "Is the process very painful, doctor?" he said.

"There are two means of achieving the object," said the physician, who took no notice of the fee. "The one is purely mechanical; it is gradual extension; considerable physical pain has naturally to be endured. The other course, which is equally efficacious and quite painless, is by means of a medicated bath, but no more than four inches increase in height can be obtained."

"I shall be perfectly satisfied, doctor, with four inches."

"Very good, young man, very good. You know your own business best. Retire behind that screen, divest yourself of your apparel; in a few moments all will be prepared. So powerful are the effects of the drugs, your clothing, were it exposed to the potent vapors, would be utterly destroyed. Strip, young man," said the doctor emphatically, and he pointed to the screen.

Mr. MacTaggart retired behind the screen, and did as he was bid, and the venerable benefactor of the human race disappeared into the bathroom. The

first thing that Dacre did was to empty his bottle of turpentine into the bath, and then he turned on the hot water till the bath was nearly full.

"Are you prepared, young man?" he cried in a loud voice, as he re-entered the reception room.

"I'm quite ready, sir," said Mr. MacTaggart, from behind the screen. "I can smell the potent odors of the drugs, even here."

"Don't trifle, boy," cried the American physician; "take your watch with you, and proceed to the bath. You will find it very hot, and the odor of the Eastern balsams is pungent; but do not let that deter you; enter it as speedily as possible, for the hotter the bath the more rapid is the osseous change. Remain extended in that bath and perfectly still, and every five minutes by your watch, and not more frequently on any account, let your head disappear beneath the balsamic film with which the surface of the water is covered. Do not speak, and breathe only through your nose. I will warn you when the process is complete."

Mr. MacTaggart entered the bathroom, with watch in hand. The odor of the Oriental balsams made him sneeze violently, the water was evidently very hot, and was covered by a thick oleaginous film. But Mr. MacTaggart had paid his five guineas, and he was determined to have his money's worth. After a little time he entered the bath.

Every five minutes his head disappeared beneath the steaming, oily surface.

In the meantime Cecil Dacre was not idle. He rang the bell; Pippa and her mother appeared; the one carried a little charcoal brazier and a flat-iron, the other a very small work-bag and a big pair of scissors. They laughed immoderately as they set to work upon the clothes of the young Scotchman. Three inches were cut off from the trousers' legs, the sleeves of the coat and of the shirt; Pippa's mother worked with a will with her needles to refashion the extremities of the garments, and as she finished each, Pippa herself carefully pressed the newly made seams with the hot flat-iron. Then the physician dismissed his two assistants, flung open the bathroom door and addressed the bather.

"Come forth, young man," he said. "You entered that bath a miserable and puny specimen of humanity; you will leave it in all human probability, a well-grown youth, of prepossessing appearance."

Mr. MacTaggart did as he was bid. He dried himself to the best of his ability, but the balmy odors of the balsams of the East still clung to his hair. No sooner was he dressed and had emerged from behind the screen than the mock doctor addressed him.

"Young man," said he, and his voice was apparently momentarily choked by emotion, "behold the result of the wondrous bath of Bokhara. There is a considerable change, I think," he said solemnly.

Mr. MacTaggart had evidently grown out of his clothes; his arms and legs protruded in a portentous manner.

"Don't thank me," continued the American physician hurriedly; "don't thank me, but hasten home to bed to sleep of the effects of my potent medications."

Mr. MacTaggart bowed as gracefully as he could, and left the premises.

The very first person he met in the street was his acquaintance, Orlando P. Jones. MacTaggart's appearance was sufficiently striking. His ordinary straight red hair was curly and extremely odoriferous from the effects of the turpentine. His face and hands were the color of a boiled lobster, and his eyes were bloodshot from the same cause.

"Goodness me," said Jones, "I shouldn't have known you. What have you been doing to yourself?"

"Don't ask me," said MacTaggart; "my happiness is too great for words," and his scarlet face was illuminated by a smile of celestial beatitude.

Before he reached his own house he had at least met twenty of his acquaintances. Each one interviewed him with a similar result.

But the cup of happiness was rudely dashed from his lips when his extremely

plain and elderly sister, Miss Flora MacTaggart, on her arrival, addressed him in these indignant words: "Eh! Donald, man, is it you ye are! or simply fatuous? that ye have been making a Merry Andrew of yerself by cutting doan yer claithes."

In vain the brother explained his visit to the doctor.

Then the secret came out, and Mr. MacTaggart and his sister left Naples for Rome within the twenty-four hours. —Belgravia.

"Oh, I'm so glad!" exclaimed Miss Gushington, looking up from the paper; "they are going to appropriate, oh, ever so much money on coast defenses. You remember the last time we went tobogganing I tore my costume into ribbons by running off the slide." —Boston Transcript.



Trapped by the Old Lady.

"Mr. Kiljordan," said the matronly lady, as she swept with composed dignity into the parlor where the young man sat waiting, "I'm sorry to say that Irene is confined to her room by a slight indisposition and cannot come down this evening."

And she sat down and looked at the youth steadily but not unkindly. In the presence of this elderly lady, the mother of his Irene, Bardolph Kiljordan was conscious that he loomed up at a disadvantage. He was oppressed by a sense of immaturity, obtrusive feet and unmanageable hands, and yet his whole being was pervaded with a yearning anxiety to please.

"I trust," said he, huskily, "that it is nothing serious."

"You are kind," replied the lady. "By the way, Mr. Kiljordan, pardon me for asking the question, but are you skilful at removing a mote from the eye?"

With rapidly-rising courage and a heart-throb of exultation at the possibility that the indisposition of the lovely Irene was one that he might have the happiness of removing, he exclaimed: "Without presumption, Mrs. Pinhook, I may say that I am. I have had a great deal of practice at little jobs of that kind and am nearly always successful. Of late I have tried the new way of doing it and have found it to work perfectly. If a cinder or other small particle has lodged in one eye I rub the other one, and it always brings it out. If Miss Irene—"

"Thank you, Mr. Kiljordan. For the last day or two I have been troubled with a speck of some kind in my left eye. If not too much trouble to you I will ask you to see if you can get it out."

And for the next half hour the hapless young man rubbed that old lady's off eye and groaned inwardly in wretchedness of spirit. —Chicago Tribune.

Effectively Made Up.

I heard a good story the other day of a member of the Societe de Precieuse Ridelou, which, during the season, gives fortnightly receptions, upon which occasions some sparkling little play for the entertainment of the friends of the club is given. Upon one occasion the play selected numbered among the dramatic personae a maid of all work of the style of the little Marchioness. This role was assumed by a young lady who lives in a handsome house in a fashionable quarter of the city, and who had extended invitations to a number of her friends for a terrapin supper after the play. The curtain having fallen upon the closing scene the young lady, without waiting to change her attire, jumped into the carriage and drove rapidly home, leaving the guests to follow more leisurely with her mother.

Arriving at her own door, unmindful of the fact that she was still attired as the theatrical maid of all work, in tatters and smudges, she hastily entered the dining room, to see that every preparation for the supper, which had been given in charge of a fashionable caterer, was complete. Hearing the door open the headwaiter turned and for a moment, stood aghast at the apparition which greeted him, then with a decided manner he advanced, reopened the door, and catching the young lady by the arm summarily ejected her from the apartment with the injunction, forcibly uttered, that she at once return to the kitchen, and under no circumstances again dare to put in appearance.

Valued at a High Figure.

The Portland Oregonian says.—A middle-aged lady, a new-comer, called at a real estate agency to inquire about some land. She was somewhat of an equestrienne, which the agent soon learned, and he tried to effect a sale in this direction. After the usual questions about the gentle proclivities of the animal for sale, the agent relapsed into deep thought for a moment, as if considering some political issue, and finally said in a generous breath: "Madame, if you are injured in any way by that animal I will pay you one—yes, I will guarantee to pay you \$1,000," and then he marked the figures down in big black letters. "Only a thousand, sir?" exclaimed the lady. "I don't consider myself a Venus, nor one of the Muses, but I really think I am worth more than \$1,000. In war times some slaves sold for \$2,000, you know. Now, considering that it is leap year, couldn't you guarantee to pay a l-e-e-t-l-e more?"

The Boy.

Papa had visitors and sent the 3-year-old to bed. The child disapproved of this and had no hesitancy in showing it. When he went up stairs he left the parlor door open. Papa prides himself on his method of disciplining children, and called him down again.

"I just want to show you how I manage a boy," he said turning to his visitors. "There's nothing like going the right way about it to make a boy mind." Slowly and sulkily the boy came down.

"What are doors made for, sir?" demanded papa sternly.

The child looked at him, at the visitors, at the door, and said: "To open, o' course." —Philadelphia Call.

The "lifts" of the Hotel Metropole, London, are worked by water from the mains of one of the hydraulic power companies, of which a number are established in England. By them water under pressure is carried beneath the streets and delivered to consumers at fixed rates. After doing the work required of it the water is returned to the central stations of the companies, there to be used over again.