

followed his elder sister into the hall below.

Mr. Kidd then went on to say that he would freely acknowledge that he had kissed Miss Annabel Weldon—one of the guests—behind the screen in the drawing-room, but added that he did so only under pressure, as that young lady had put things in such a light that he absolutely could not refuse. He was about to add some more interesting details of a like nature, but a shriek of indignant denial from the last accused lady interrupted him, and the party outside his door broke up in great confusion and fled precipitately.

Next morning Mr. Kidd left for London by the early train, to arrange for the mummies and jesters, Mr. Crudeley again thanking him for taking so much trouble. And Mr. Kidd smiled beautifully, and accepted the responsibility. He was the kind of youth who would have accepted the command of the Channel Fleet had it been offered him.

On Christmas Eve, Mr. Crudeley went about the house "like a paper man in a gale of wind," almost insisting on his guests being merry—or at least on their trying to look so. And just before dinner was announced that night a hammering and shouting of raucous voices outside the hall door announced the arrival of the villagers—they had all come—hauling the Yule log.

"Rather an inconvenient time they've chosen," muttered the host. "However, it can't be helped. Jameson" (to the butler), throw open the portals," he concluded with a magnificent air. And "Crudeley of Tooting" thrust his right hand into the bosom of his dress waistcoat, and tried to look as nearly like the picture of Cawthorpe of Cawthorpe as he could in the circumstances.

The butler, with an air of resigned disapproval, opened the door, and it rushed a disorderly crowd of "the great unwashed." The huge log was dragged across the polished oak flooring, leaving a track of wet mud wherever it went. It was then lifted and hurled on to the open fireplace, where, being green, it

raised a thick and acrid smoke, which quickly filled the hall.

"My friends," began Mr. Crudeley, blinking his smarting eyes and coughing the smoke out of his throat, "this voluntary act of—(cough)—of yours, in rendering homage to the—(cough)—Lord of the Man—(cough)—Manor, touches me very deeply indeed—(cough). The act, though simple in itself, is illustrative of a—(cough, cough, cough)—illustrative of a now long-forgotten time when—"

"Beg pardon, gov'nor," interposed the blacksmith, "but the other night, w'en you arst us to bring this 'ere long in, you was sayin' somethin' about that wassa ale o' yours. Me an' my pals 'ere is rather in a 'urry, as we're a-goin' to draw the prizes for the 'Pig and Compasses' annual goose club at nine punctual-to-night. S'pose you was to order up the drinks fust, and then work off the rest o' the cackle afterward? 'Ow would that suit yer?"

And an approving murmur from the rest of the "simple peasants" gave no option to Mr. Crudeley. He abruptly abandoned the rest of his speech, and ordered in the "wassail bowl."

It was not until nearly nine o'clock that the last of the revellers—the rum punch being by that time exhausted—was got rid of. By then the dinner was completely spoiled, and the cook determined to give warning on the morrow.

That evening the young people got up some charades which were mildly effective, and an impromptu dance which was a genuine success. But they steadfastly declined to perpetrate a "Sir Roger de Coverley," and Mr. Crudeley betook himself off to bed in a huff. Charades and waltzing were far too modern to please the ex-solicitor's mediæval tastes.

On Boxing Night, the servants' hall was fixed to begin at nine o'clock. Dinner was therefore hurried through, and all the men put into a bad temper because there was no time for a cigar after the meal. In his capacity as M.C., Mr. Theophilus Kidd contrived to "let in" the master of the house for the duty of opening the ball with the nineteen-stone cook, in lieu of the pretty parlour-maid he had already fixed his eye upon. The young Oxonian then excused himself from taking any further part in the dance, on the ground that he had to superintend the arrangements for the mummies, jesters, and minstrels, who had arrived from town, and were to make their appearance and entertain the guests assembled at a later period of the evening.

The butler—much against his will—found himself dancing with the mistress of Cawthorpe Castle, and replying to that lady's jerky and inconsequent questions with stereotyped phrases of the "Yes, ma'am," "No, ma'am," "I'm sure I couldn't say, ma'am," order. He and the servants at large disapproved of the ball. They had been practically commanded to "revel," and reveling to order is an extremely difficult thing to do.

The young men and maidens of the house-party voted the whole thing an unutterable bore. Papa Crudeley's overpowering insistence on "merry-making" acted as an effectual wet blanket on the proceedings throughout; and not even the laughter excited by that gentleman's gyrations in the "Sir Roger de Coverley" could quite serve to dispel the gloom and want of "go" which hung about the affair.

The assemblage at the castle was re-infused later in the evening, by about a score of the neighbouring gentry—chiefly attracted by the rumour that Mr. Crudeley was making extraordinary efforts to revive the ancient glories of Christmas. And they looked forward to the advent of the mummies and jesters with a mild curiosity, and an idea that they might derive some historical instruction from the rendering of old English madrigals and glees.

At half-past ten precisely a halt was called in the dancing—which had been going very flatly from the beginning—and the whole company was marshalled into the banqueting hall, at the farther end of which a small stage had been erected. Across this were closely drawn curtains. The audience gradually seated themselves on the rows of chairs placed in front of the stage; all was expectation and suspense, for this was to be the crowning scene in the Old English merry—or "merric," as Mr. Crudeley insisted upon writing it—making. The first Cawthorpe of Cawthorpe had surely never been so intensely mediæval as was Crudeley of Tooting.

And then, with a sudden and strangely

familiar chord, struck upon stringed instruments, the curtains were suddenly drawn aside, revealing the stage and its contents. And, to use a Parliamentary phrase, "the Contents had it." For, on chairs, in the style known so well to the days of our childhood, sat a troupe of beach sitters!

Mr. Crudeley rubbed his eyes and stared hard to assure himself that he was not dreaming. Mummies? Jestors? Minstrels? Well, minstrels certainly, but of the sort always associated with the name of Christy. He looked again. No, it was no dream. There were the burnt cork artists, sure enough—striped walters, banjo, tambourine and bones. Oh, it was all too horrible! The whole audience was convulsed with laughter as Crudeley of Tooting staggered to his feet and fled from the room.

As may well be imagined, all inquiries for Mr. Theophilus Kidd proved unavailing. Without waiting to witness the result of his cruel practical joke, that astute youth had taken the precaution of leaving for town early in the evening—"Cassell's Magazine."

Clarke's World-Famed Blood Mixture.—"The most searching Blood Cleanser that science and medical skill have brought to light." Sufferers from Scrofula, Scurvy, Eczema, Bad Legs, Skin and Blood Diseases, Pimples, and Sores of any kind are solicited to give it a trial to test its value. Thousands of wonderful cures have been effected by it. Sold everywhere. Beware of worthless imitations and substitutes.

Perspiration and Dust,
no disagreeable, yet so common is hot weather, can easily be removed by using

CALVERT'S

CARBOLIC

Toilet Soap.

A pleasantly perfumed pure antiseptic soap which can be used for all toilet purposes and as a preventive of contagion. It contains 10% Crystal Carbolic, and so has a healthy action on the skin and assists to improve the complexion.

Calvert's Shampoo Soap
cleanses the hair, leaving it delightfully soft and glossy, and removes dandruff. It is a species of soft soap of special purity for toilet use, and delicately perfumed.

F. C. CALVERT & Co., Manchester, ENGLAND.

THE TONIC THAT BUILDS IS

Wilton's Bovo-Ferrum

Composed of Beef Peptonoids and Soluble Iron.

The bracing effect is immediately felt by man or woman, boy or girl when needing a tonic.

A PERFECT CURE FOR ANAEMIA

Sold by all Chemists, price 2/6
Sent Post Free by Proprietor

G. W. WILTON,
3 CUBA STREET, WELLINGTON

"SYDAL" (Wilton's Hand Emollient), 1/6 per Jar, also post free, if difficult to obtain locally.

ROWLAND'S

MACASSAR OIL

FOR THE HAIR

UNSURPASSED. UNEQUALLED.

Use it for your own and your Children's Hair and you will find it Preserves, Nourishes, Restores and Enriches it more effectually than anything else. Golden Colour for Fair or Grey Hair. Sold by Steves and Chemists. Ask for Rowland's Macassar Oil of 67, Hatton Garden, London.

BOVRIL

IS ALL FOOD.

Bovril cheers and invigorates. It supplies energy to resist disease.

Icilma



Icilma Fluor Cream owes its unique qualities to the marvellous tonic, cleansing, healing, and softening virtues contained in Icilma Natural Water.

Icilma Fluor Cream suppresses the use of powder, and is the only cream that helps to prevent the growth of superfluous hair.

Icilma Fluor Cream contains no grease nor metallic salts, but makes the skin soft, fresh, and transparent, so that the blue veins show clear in a rose pearl setting.

Icilma Fluor Cream is invaluable for faded complexions, cold winds, chaps, sunburn, blotches, roughness, redness, and mo-quito or gnat bites. Acts immediately. Deliciously scented.

Do not forget that Icilma Natural Water is a necessity in every home, and that Icilma Soap is a revelation of what a complexion and Medicinal Soap can be.

Of all good Chemists and Stores.

ICILMA CO., Ltd., London, ENGLAND.

CUPID CAN SLEEP NOW

THE BEST NATURAL APERIENT WATER.

Hunyadi János

For GOUT and RHEUMATISM.

Professor Zimmermann, Basle, Professor of Internal Medicine at the University—
"Hunyadi János has invariably shown itself an effectual and reliable Aperient, which I recommend to the exclusion of all others. Never gives rise to undesirable symptoms even if used continuously for years."

AVERAGE DOSE.—A wineglassful before breakfast, either pure or diluted with a similar quantity of hot or cold water.

CAUTION.—Note the name "Hunyadi János," the signature of the Proprietor, ANDRÁS SÁKSENYI, and the Medallion, on the Red Centre Part of the Label.