

THE LOST SON HOW HE CAME BACK

Dramatic Meeting of a Mother and Her Boy

A QUEER TRUE STORY

If we had to find the happiest woman in the world today we should not seek her at a ball given by an American millionaire, or even in the palace where they celebrate the wedding festivities of Belgium's princess and Italy's prince. We should go straight to a cottage in the French village of Givrehain.

The woman who would open the door is neither young nor handsome. A lifetime's toil has coarsened her hands and a lifetime's grief has lined her face. She wears cheap, sturdy working clothes. But if she were asked she would laugh all over her face and cry: "Yes, it is true; I am the happiest woman in the world."

The Footstep That Never Came

This is her strange true story, which has been setting all Paris talking.

Long ago, when she was the young mother of a three-year-old son, she had a quarrel with her husband. She went out on an errand, returning to find that father and son had gone.

She waited for them, fretting as the time for the child's meal went by; but the minutes and the hours and the days passed, and the footstep she was always expecting never came.

From that day onward she did not hear a word from her husband. The weeks turned into years, and she did not know whether her husband and her son were dead or alive.

Perhaps it was lucky for her that she was poor and was obliged to work; but, labour as she might, she could not make herself so weary and busy as to forget her little one.

The Stranger in the Café

One day she was so tired and lonely that she went into a café. She was an old woman now, but she had no grandchildren to care for, and she craved for human company. So into the humble café she went, to gossip with the neighbours, because she had no home.

Presently a stranger entered, a middle-aged man. The little village circle made him welcome and showed a friendly curiosity. He was a miner, the man said, working in a pit at Hensies. He was a foreigner, was he not, someone asked him?

Nearly a Pole, and nearly an American, he replied, and yet a native of this village.

He went on to say that his father had left the place in 1885, and taken him to America as a baby. Soon after their arrival the father had died, but a charitable Polish family had adopted him and brought him up to be a miner.

Breathless Listeners

Now that he was getting on for fifty he felt he wanted to see his native land and find some relatives.

Up sprang an old woman and poured out a string of questions. How breathlessly the little group listened to his answers! How the old woman's face sparkled and glowed as he gave names and dates! Then at last she was able to say: "I am your mother!"

She had lost a son of three and found one of 47. He who could never recall a mother's love found it stored up and waiting for him, like a fortune which had waited an heir to claim it for 44 years.

It is all so like a fairy story that we feel sure it will have a fairy-story ending, and they will both live happily ever after.

Lincolnshire's Oldest Lady

Mrs. Mary Ann Smith, aged 101, Lincolnshire's oldest lady, has 150 descendants.

IN TWO PLACES AT ONCE

The Wireless Miracle

Once upon a time Members of Parliament used to say (and no one denied it): "I cannot be in two places at once."

But nowadays more is expected of them than in the past, and one M.P. has nearly solved the problem of being in two places at the same time.

He had to make a speech in Glasgow and to vote in the House of Commons on the same evening. *He did both.*

Major Elliot, M.P. for the Kelvin-grove Division of Glasgow, arrived in that city to make his speech only to receive a telegram summoning him back to London to take part in the Coal Bill Debate. He was just in time to catch his train, and his agent received certain instructions on the way to the station.

That night the constituents assembled in the hall and heard their member's speech from a loudspeaker. He was talking to them from a telephone cabinet in the House of Commons.

What a miracle it would have seemed only a little while ago!

LONDON JACK

A Pension of Bones and Biscuits

A famous dog is going to retire. He is not Rin-tin-tin the film star, but London Jack, who has carried his collecting box up and down Waterloo Station for many years.

Rin-tin-tin has probably earned a fortune for his owner. London Jack has collected nearly £4000 for widows and orphans. He is ten years old now, and there are people who say that one year of a dog's life equals seven years of a human being's, so London Jack may be credited with the feelings of an old gentleman of seventy. A fireside would suit him better than a draughty railway station now. A few old friends would fluster him less than a crowd of inquisitive strangers. He is going blind, and that makes him feel a little nervous. If he could speak he would probably say: "It is time a younger fellow had a chance."

The railway people feel that he has earned a rest, and another dog is learning Jack's work.

Long may London Jack enjoy his pension of bones and biscuits! He has done more for poor and needy mortals than some men have done.

BOW BELLS WILL RING AGAIN

When Peter Puck heard that Bow Bells had not rung for three years he broke into verse. Bow Bells must ring again, he said.

The Court of Common Council has now voted a thousand guineas to set them chiming anew.

They will chime their message of Turn Again, Try Again, Hope Again, but they will not be the same bells that Dick Whittington heard, for these perished in the Great Fire which destroyed the dirty, picturesque, plague-stricken, wooden London of Charles the Second's day.

The five famous bells were replaced by one in 1669. However, Londoners grew ashamed of such parsimony, and gradually others were added till, in 1881, twelve bells filled the steeple with music. Our generation allowed the celebrated church to fall silent; she who had called London to work and rest and worship for centuries became mute before the roar of machinery. It is good to know that these justly famous bells will ring again.

Water for the Aeroplane

A remarkable patent has just been granted for a means of drawing water into an aeroplane while it is in flight.

C. L. N.

Recruits From the Dominions

The C.L.N. members now number, as we go to press, 8650. Among the first applications for membership in 1930 were fifteen from South Africa, one from Nigeria, and another from Accra on the Gold Coast.

Three children attending Queen's Hill School at Darjeeling, in the Himalayas, are also among the latest recruits. In sending their applications their mother writes:

"It has occurred to me that I might be able to stimulate interest in the League among the scholars of Queen's Hill School. You will probably be interested to hear that Q.H.S. is a little League of Nations itself. I often call it a study in international relations. It is an English school working for Cambridge examinations. It is under American management. Among the scholars are Danish, Swedish, Jewish, Greek, American, Tibetan, Nepali, Bengali, English, and Australian children, all living happily together."

Mrs. Swanwick's Greeting

Mrs. H. M. Swanwick, British Delegate to the Tenth Assembly of the League, sends the C.L.N. this greeting.

The League of Nations gives opportunity for two great things: for doing justice to each other and for carrying on all sorts of good Team work, instead of quarrelling and fighting, which are dull and stupid occupations for sensible people. Therefore we should all loyally serve the League. H. M. Swanwick

A Children's Hall

The Japanese League of Nations Association is cooperating with teachers in planning an International Children's Hall at Tokyo.

The hall is to have a lecture room, a gallery for exhibits from various countries, and reading rooms where Japanese boys and girls will be able to read books about other lands.

A Hymn of Youth for the C.L.N.

We are the host God has called for the morrow,
Thrilled by His joy as we step into line!
Ours be the hands that shall heal the world's sorrow!
Now and for ever, O Christ, we are Thine!
O'er the horizon, the Day that is dawning
Calls for the host with Love's banner unfurled:
Lead us, Messiah, to bring with the morning
Peace that prevails through Thy worshipping world!

Onward we come with a music entrancing!
Servants of God, of His glory we sing,
Steadily, steadily, ever advancing,
Christ our Commander, our Leader, and King!

This is the message we bear to the nations:
One Who has died for the sins of His race,
Lord of all worlds and of all adorations,
Holds for Love's splendour His Kingdom of Grace!
A. E. S.

How to Join the League

All letters should be addressed:

Children's League of Nations,

15, Grosvenor Crescent, London, S.W.1.

No letters should be sent to the C.N. office.

With each application for membership should be sent sixpence for the Badge.

Each letter should give your name and address, birthday and year, and the name of your school. A card and badge of membership will be sent to you.

There will be arrangements for meeting other members at parties, plays, pageants, lectures, film shows, and so on. There will be opportunities of making friends in your own neighbourhood and in other countries. There will be a Letter Exchange. There will be arrangements for visits to interesting places and scholarship tours to Geneva. And, most of all, there will be for all of us the great happiness of belonging to the first Children's League of Nations.

PRINCES AND RAGS

A Touch of the Past

FEUDALISM VANISHING IN THE GERMAN REPUBLIC

The German Parliament has severed a link with the hoary past. It has decreed that princes and princesses shall no longer have the right to the rags and bones of their neighbourhoods.

What have princes and princesses to do with rags and bones? it may well be asked. For ages they have been among the perquisites of Germany's old feudal families. Perhaps feudal is not quite the right word to use, although the right is an ancient one. It took its place beside true feudal dues, but is in fact younger than the feudal system.

In reality it dates back little more than a century, when the house of Rothschild advanced a sum of money to the Prince of Wied and took the payment for rags and bones collected in the debtor's State as security for the loan.

The rag and bone rights were bought from the Rothschilds by a Countess Reichenbach, and among the people from whom the right has now passed are the 34 descendants of the five daughters of that countess. No more will the profits arising from the collection and sale of rags and bones benefit that ancient family.

Tax Extorted From Jews

Other rights, truly feudal, have disappeared or are about to disappear from Germany. Certain powerful families benefited by a tax extorted from Jews for protection from persecution. Sums were paid to families for agreeing to abolish serfdom, and the State has had to buy out powerful families who exercised the right to claim a certain proportion of animals born and crops harvested on their estates.

It would be interesting to know the whole story of the survivals in Germany and other States in which feudalism has lingered on from those far-away days when peasants had to be abroad at night to beat the waters of the ponds to prevent the frogs from croaking and disturbing the rest of the lord and his lady; when farmers were not allowed to apply a fertiliser to their land lest it should impart a strong flavour to the flesh of the game reared on that land; when land must not be ploughed lest the game should be disturbed.

Such things have been in England and lasted for centuries.

VIRGIL IS TRUE

The foolish man laughs at legends. The wise man never does, because even the most fantastic legend has nearly always a basis of truth. It takes a wise man to uncover it.

Dr. Luigi Ugolini, head of the Italian Archaeological Mission in Albania, has made discoveries at Butrinto which convince him that the descriptions of the place in the Third Book of the Aeneid are no idle fancies.

Butrinto was in very truth a city of note. The Romans honoured and adorned it on account of its associations with their traditional origins, and we are beginning to believe that these traditions were founded on fact.

Dr. Ugolini has excavated a temple to Aesculapius and a splendid theatre of Greek origin, where men and women thrilled to poetry or laughed at comedians three centuries before Christ. The theatre was adorned with Greek and Roman statues, one of them so beautiful that it is ascribed to Praxiteles.

It is pleasant that this proof of Virgil's truthfulness should be discovered just before the celebration of his two thousandth year.