IN CHILDHOOD.

At midnight in a wintry land
I wakened from sweetest dreams,
And found the little giant roses filled
With the fair moon's dark silver.

They lay like lilies on my bed,
And all the vale below—
For I was in a convent high—
Bloomed lilies mid the snow.

And all the slender trees about
Their silv'ry branches tossed
Of peaceful, silent houses, hung,
With fringes of the frost.

And down the star-gemmed sky I saw
The enchanting angels come,
Bearing aloft fair lily sprays
Unto this mountain home.

They wound about the frowning cliffs
And down dark pine trees wide,
Then brighter merged into the light
The patient moonbeams made.

Again I slept, nor waked till dawn
Had kissed the chastened hills,
And sweetly stole the silver tones
Of bells that called to prayer.

Then in the chapel, all aglow,
I saw the lilies stand
By angels decked at midnight—
Sweet waking dream of mine.

—Catholic Youth.

THE FLYING SCUD.

To many persons there are few sensations more pleasant than that of rapid motion. As Arthur Granard belonged emphatically to that class of travelers, he invariably made a point of using the celebrated express train popularly known as the Flying Scud whenever business or pleasure caused him to journey away from the quiet little town of Blandcombe in which he lived.

In this preference he was not alone, or the Flying Scud was perhaps more used by first-class passengers—"express" fares notwithstanding—than any other train on that line; in fact, there were not a few residents in every county through which she ran who would almost as soon have thought of posting to London by road as of traveling in any other train than the Scud. There was no other train like it, either on that line or any other—at least such was the popular belief. Naturally the officials were very proud of this, their premier train, and made no small fuss over it and all connected with it. Indeed, it seemed to be religiously felt by every one, high and low, that, although the carriages might be exactly similar to those of every other express, and the engine in no respect different, yet for the fastest train the world could show, it was only proper to have people near zeal than usual in performing even the commonest of their duties.

On one hot day in July—after joining the Scud at Winkfield, where she had arrived some twenty minutes late—Arthur Granard was sitting lazily back in a first-class compartment, dreamily conjuring from his fellow passengers with others of pleasant memory, not much to the advantage of those present, for on this occasion the other occupants of the carriage seemed to him oppressively dull and commonplace.

A young man of dejected appearance and fast asleep was huddled up in the corner on the opposite seat, his back to the engine; a schoolboy sat on Granard's right greedily devouring a "Midshipman Easy," and a snoring Frenchman was stretched at lustily on his left; while the remaining places on the opposite seat were occupied by a newly-married couple, the most hopeless of companions. At least Granard concluded that such were their condition, for they both looked lapped and happy, and seldom exchanged remarks, yet both seemed ready to attend lovingly to anything the other might say; but the impetuous light of wooing and being wooed was no longer in their eyes, so what could they be but a couple who had just passed through the perilous days of interdependence peculiar to a honeymoon?

The man was a tame-looking creature, without a single strong feature in his face, unless a thin sprinkling of light whiskers—of the hue vulgarly dubbed "ginger"—could be so described.

The wife was better. She was a pretty little woman of a plump homely type, dressed in a costume which seemed a little too smart, though her general appearance was not altogether unpleasing.

But conversation was clearly out of the question with any of them, and Granard soon laid back in his seat with a yawn, and presently gave himself up to enjoying to the full what seemed to him the best pace he had ever known in the train travel at. He was just about to set himself to ascertain the speed by counting the quarter-mile posts which the glare of the midday sun was suddenly exchanged for darkness as the flying Scud dashed into Dorton tunnel.

"Dorton already! didn't think we'd got so far," he said to himself. "I haven't noticed the down fast pass us yet. She must be pretty late, too."

It was usual for the Scud to pass an express as speedily as herself before reaching Dorton, and Granard never failed to notice with interest the rapid swishing sound produced as they flashed past each other.

When the daylight burst in on him again, as the train rushed madly out into open ground, he gathered up his newspaper, and was settling down to its contents, when suddenly a violent shock, a crashing, grinding, shivering shock, sharply roused him from drowsiness to painful intentness. The sudden concussion and the continued violent motion set him literally dancing on his seat.

He knew well enough what the cause was. He was railway engineer by profession, and derailments on the temporary tramways used in railway making were sufficiently frequent to have made him thoroughly familiar with the kind of shock caused by an engine or truck leaving the track. In an instant he grasped the fact that some part of the train had left the rails, and, conscious of the speed at which they were moving, he knew that a terrible crash was imminent and inevitable.

Shouting to his fellow passengers, "Hold on, everybody, one!" he quickly gripped the arm-rest on his left with all his strength, stiffened himself in his place by placing his feet firmly against the opposite seat, threw his right arm across his chest, elbow outward, to protect his face as far as possible from injury in the coming smash. He had not prepared himself an instant too soon! At that moment a huge portmanteau came crashing against the door-frame, and a splash of other luggage seemed to fly past the window, followed by a cloud of dust and coal; then a brief gust of hot steam burst through the window, covering them all for a moment as if in a black cloud. The Frenchman yelled out a fearful oath, the bride uttered a piercing shriek, and the schoolboy screamed and frantically clutched Granard round the body.

Scarcely had the stream covered them when the carriage received a tremendous blow on the flight, which turned it sharply over on its side. A yard or two farther—with the carriage being dragged unwillingly along in this position—all was over; the train's great mom-entum was used up, and one of the world's most famous expresses, which ten seconds before had been plunging along full of grace and power, at the rate of "a mile a minute," was hissing and stilled—a center of death, suffering and ruin.

Granard had wedged himself so tightly into his seat that when the carriage was overturned he was not displaced, the somnolent youth opposite was thrown sideways, falling directly upon Arthur Granard's right elbow, thereby receiving a most pointed rebuke for his ill judged behaviour, for, with sleep and mad with fright, this worthy grabbed Granard by the throat and shouted "Murder! murder!" in the wildest manner, at the same time doing his utmost to strangle his antagonist. Now, Granard was not particularly pugnacious or prone to take offence, but just then he felt in no humour for being throttled, and accordingly resented the liberty. Being of considerable strength and stature, and in first-rate condition, thawing the day before on a two-mile sculling race at Henley, on the regatta, for which he had been in training some six weeks or more, he was soon able to free himself from his fellow-passenger's close embrace by gripping his arms just above the elbows and crunching the muscles there until the blood ran from his nails. Then stepping across the carriage and standing each foot on an arm-rest, he thrust him bodily through the open window, now above them. On being shown the door in this fashion, a new idea seem to seize on the ejected one, for he scrambled out and flung himself down to the ground as if a thousand mischiefs were behind him. Had he broken his neck in his haste an enlightened jury would probably have awarded him heavy damages for injuries received in the force Brighton—Arthur Granard, stepping down between his legs to see how the others were faring, Granard noticed that the Frenchman had slipped out, while the poor little bride was huddled up in the corner, with her hubberly husband sprawling helplessly upon her, apparently too unnerved to make any effort to get out. To see him so filled Granard with indignant pity, and made no small fuss over it and all connected with it. Indeed, it seemed to be religiously felt by every one, high and low, that, although the carriages might be exactly similar to those of every other express, and the engine in no respect different, yet for the fastest train the world could show, it was only proper to have people near zeal than usual in performing even the commonest of their duties.

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