

not be put under the head of useful or suitable for the garments of little children. The thin material splits and tears and roves, oh ! so dreadfully, and the delicate silks soil, oh ! so quickly. Turn them, and the spots soon reappear. Send them to the cleaner, and the three or four shillings demanded for each dress is money soon lost, for frocks which have been cleaned very soon lose their good looks again.

You will say that I have been very circumscribed in the choice of materials. So I have, and so I intended to be. I think that the variety for children should consist in colour and pattern and style, more than in variety of material.

But some mother may wish to remind me that there are cases, and these by no means rare, in which no choice of materials is allowed, for in these instances the frocks for the little ones have to be cut out of the skirts cast aside by the elder ones of the household.

Very well. Then if usefulness of material is out of the question, and if juvenility cannot be shown in the pattern, at least let simplicity and suitability mark the fashion in which the frocks shall be made.

Why spend so much time, or why pay for so much time being spent, upon the making of so many frills and flounces and furbelows? Why bestow so much trouble and expense in the sewing on of so many yards of velvet and gimp and lace?

This expenditure of time and money (often obtained with painful difficulty) is an error, methinks, in taste and an error in judgment. The epithets of daintily, prettily, and well dressed, when applied to children, should be bestowed not upon those whose garments exhibit costly material expensively and elaborately trimmed, but upon those who are dressed in a cleanly, tidy, and simple fashion, and whose clothes fit the little figures with nicety.

E. C.

### THE OLD COACHING-DAYS.



None, we fancy, would desire to return to the days of stage-coaching, yet it can hardly be denied that there was something to be said in favour of that method of travelling. Old men may still,

here and there, be heard replying, when their grandsons express wonder as to how in the world their forefathers put up with that slow style of locomotion, "Ah, well, my sons ! the gain isn't all on your side ; there was danger sometimes in travelling by coach, but nothing compared with a railway. You got upset in a coach and there you were. You get upset in a train and where are you?"

Dr. Johnson used to think that of all pleasures there was none greater than a journey on the top of a stage-coach, and under favourable conditions, when the weather was fine and the country traversed of some interest, it is not difficult to understand the doctor's preference. Now we travel at greater speed, with greater comfort, and we suspect, though at first sight it may not appear so, with greater safety. But all the various incidents that frequently enlivened the road in former times are gone. There was hardly a better way of seeing a country than from the top of a stage-

coach. The coachman was often a genial-tempered, shrewd fellow, fond of his joke and story, and the possessor of a great deal of information about the country through which his stage ran. He knew all the gentlemen's residences in the neighbourhood, their histories, and those of their possessors, and whatever gossip was connected with them ; and if you understood how to manage him, he was not slow to impart his knowledge. These qualities rendered a seat next the driver the most coveted place in the coach. But the tips which both the coachman and guard received, from passengers desirous of having good places retained for them, had the usual effect of sometimes spoiling these functionaries, causing them to be extortionate in their demands from their wealthier patrons, and somewhat cavalier in their demeanour towards those who were in humbler circumstances. We remember reading an admirable sketch of an imaginary drive on a stage-coach, in the opening pages of a recently-published novel. The guard was frequently a hearty, cheery fellow, who could enliven the way with an inspiring strain—"The Yellow-haired Ploughboy," or "Johnny at the Fair"—on the key-bugle, on which instrument he sometimes played with considerable skill. The guards of mail-coaches were provided with an instrument of somewhat shrill but not displeasing note, called—from the material of which it was made, and from its approaching a yard in length—the "yard of tin." Under the circumstances above hinted at, then, travel by stage-coach was neither unprofitable nor unattractive. But it had another and less cheerful aspect, and this, we fancy, was that which most frequently presented itself. Travelling by railway can occasionally, as most people know by experience, be comfortless enough, but it is rarely that it is attended by so much discomfort as a coach journey used frequently to be in the beginning of the present century. The youth of the present day who goes from London to visit his friends in Edinburgh in the space of ten hours, has no



conception of the hardships his grandfather sometimes went through in accomplishing the same distance, which in his time took, by post, never less than two days and two nights. When the "Regent" coach started on its journey of three or four hundred miles from the "George and Blue Boar," Holborn, at six o'clock in the morning, with the snow thick upon the ground, a bitter wind blowing, a hard frost, and the sky, save for the light of a few stars, pitch-dark, the prospect before the passengers, especially the outside ones, was not cheering. When it rained those outside fared still worse. They descended from the coach at nine o'clock stiff, aching, and chilled to the marrow.

A coachman of to-day has little notion of what a coach-load was in the old times. We may get some idea of what it was like from prints of the period, but not a complete one. First there were the passengers, four inside and twelve out, besides the coachman and guard. Both the front and the hind boot were filled with small packages; the roof was piled up so high as barely to admit of the coach's passing beneath the archway of the inn; trunks and carpet-bags, hampers, hat-boxes, and gun-cases—the whole luggage of the sixteen passengers heaped up and overhanging the sides of the vehicle. A tarpaulin was drawn over all, and securely fastened with a broad leather strap. Underneath the coach, a "cradle" was often swung, into which were placed any etceteras for which no room could be found elsewhere. In addition to all this, game-baskets, hares, and pheasants might frequently be seen hung from the lamp-irons. Thus loaded a stage-coach presented a really wonderful appearance, and the packing of one demanded no small skill and ingenuity. But the guards were men of marvellous resources, complete adepts in the art of storage. A loaded coach, as it appears in the old prints, has a decidedly top-heavy look, but a break-down, through overloading at least, was a rare occurrence on the road.

Eleven miles an hour was a not unfrequent rate of speed for a stage-coach, and this meant galloping for at any rate the greater part of the way. When two coaches were running in opposition on the same road, racing was a common thing. There was a good deal of excitement about it, in which no doubt the passengers, at least the male part of them, sometimes shared; but there must also have been some risk. To keep a coach loaded as we have described, and going ten or eleven miles an hour, right end uppermost, required very great skill and management. On such occasions there was little time for stopping by the way, for lunch or refreshment of any kind. The hungry passengers snatched up a glass of ale and a bit of bread-and-cheese from the tray of the barmaid who stood in readiness for the coach as it passed, but there was no thought of alighting. Often a coach pulled up at an inn, changed horses, and was off again without even the driver's descending from his seat. At night time, when the lamps were lit, the coachman might sometimes be heard saying to the guard—

"Now, Will, blessed if I don't see their lamps, and

they're a-coming along, I promise you; just put something over your boot-lamp, and I'll spring them a bit, when we get round the turn."

The order in regard to the boot-lamp needs a word of explanation. On fast coaches the guard usually kept a lamp attached to the hind boot, to enable him the more readily to get at any small parcels that might be required during the night. This had the disadvantage of apprising the coach in the rear of its rival's whereabouts, which it was an object with the leading coachman to conceal. Hence the utility of the guard's shrouding his light as much as possible.

Among coachmen who gained a notoriety in the beginning of the present century, none was more typical of his class than Tom Hennesy. For many years Tom drove the "Regent" coach between London and Stamford, and was generally admitted to be one of the cleverest whips on the road. He was a smart, active, cheery fellow, full of resources, and equal to all emergencies arising from his profession. Though a married man, and a faithful spouse withal, he was a great favourite with the fair sex, and the landladies had all a ready smile for his joke. Tom was fond of his joke. One cold day, as the coach was approaching Stevenage, on the Great North Road, Tom turned to the gentleman who was seated next to him, and said—

"Do you know the seven hills at Stevenage? Well, sir, the folks hereabouts do say that they are old tombs, or places to bury people in; but the curious thing about them is, that no one can tell which two of them are farthest apart. I'll just pull up, sir, as we pass, and I'll bet you a glass of anything hot, for it's precious cold, that you can't tell which two of them is farthest apart."

The passenger, being himself by no means overwarm, was not disinclined for Tom's proposal. He eyed the hills for a moment. There was very little perceptible difference in the distances between them, but he hazarded a guess.

"Well, coachman," he said, "I'll bet you a glass of brandy-and-water that those two"—pointing to two of the hills—"are the farthest apart."

"Then, sir," replied Tom, "you've lost your bet; those two may seem so, but the first and the last are the farthest apart, are they not, sir?"

The gentleman laughed heartily, and his bet to Tom was duly discharged at the next stage.

The landladies played no unimportant part in the days of stage-coaching. It made all the difference in the comfort of a journey, whether the hostess of the inn at which you alighted to pass the night, weary, hungry, and often wet and cold, understood her business or not. As a rule the landladies did know their business. They were active, bustling, hearty dames mostly, sometimes rather shrewd-tongued, but with an excellent comprehension of what was needful and proper for the comfort of their guests.

Mr. Reynardson was a famous whip in his day, was well known to all the coach-proprietors and coachmen in the neighbourhood in which he lived, and whenever he travelled by stage or mail it was a matter of course that he drove.



One of the most amusing incidents which his volume records happened to himself while driving the Holyhead mail. The coach stopped to take up a passenger at the "Penryn Arms." Mr. Reynardson read the name on the passenger's luggage—"Major Stock, — Regiment." He at once remembered the name as that of an old Eton chum, and when the stranger took his place on the box he recognised the face of a companion who had sat with him on the same form at school for four years. It was an exceedingly disagreeable night, wet and windy, and Mr. Reynardson was so completely enveloped in an old macintosh, such as coachmen wore in those days, that it was not wonderful that his old schoolfellow mistook him for the regular driver.

The two fell into conversation, and by-and-by the talk turned upon Windsor and Eton. The major spoke freely about his school-days, and after allowing him to go on for a time without interruption, Mr. Reynardson said—

"Well, sir, since you have been at Eton, perhaps you can tell me how it used to go; was it not something in this way: Lord Lincoln, Spottiswoode major, Colville minor, Reynardson major, Stock—"

"Good gracious!" interrupted the other, "were you at Eton?"

And then, looking at the pseudo-coachman more narrowly—

"Why, you must be Reynardson major!"

"Yes, sir," replied Mr. Reynardson, "it is the very man."

"Dear me!" went on the major, grasping his old chum by the hand, "I am very glad to meet you again; but how did you come to this?"

This was rather more than Mr. Reynardson had calculated on, but he resolved to keep up the joke a little longer.

"How did I come to this," he said. "Why, you see, we all have our ups and downs in life, and I suppose I have had mine. I have been a bit wildish, and have got rather down in the world, so I thought it would be better to get an honest livelihood than to steal, or do anything worse; and as I was always fond of a bit of driving, I have taken to this."

Major Stock expressed genuine regret and sympathy for his old schoolmate, and the two went on talking of bygone days for some time longer. At last, when Mr. Reynardson thought the joke had gone far enough, he confessed the real state of things, much to his companion's relief and pleasure.

Such are some of the incidents that gave variety to life on "the road" in the coaching days. All of them are of a kind that a new order of things must prevent from ever occurring again. They illustrate a bygone time, the memory even of which is fast fading. The taste for amateur stage-coach-driving has revived within the last year or two, but there can never be again any "road" in the old sense. There was probably more picturesqueness about the old method of travelling, for a stage-coach winding along a country road with its four gallant greys, and its red-coated guard with his musical bugle, harmonised better with the landscape than a puffing, smoking steam-engine, with its train of practical-looking cars. But what we have lost in picturesqueness we have undoubtedly gained in convenience, and most likely in every other respect.

R. RICHARDSON, B.A.

#### AFTER THE REFUSAL.

YOU think I am cruel? Indeed, sir,  
Then of naught can you fairly complain.  
You may thank your good luck that you're  
freed, sir,  
From a creature that loves to give pain.  
Men call us unkind and capricious  
When our choosing is cautious and slow;  
And now you would brand me as vicious  
Because I have firmly said, "No."  
You babble of rivals and treason;  
And clearly you can't understand  
That a woman may act for a reason  
Which is honest, and not underhand.

You say that my form is "seraphic,"  
That my eyes are "cærulean blue."  
If they are—and your language is graphic—  
If they are, they are too good for *you*!  
I care not for "exquisite tresses,"  
But with *them* I would rather not part  
To a lover who plainly possesses  
Neither youth, nor reason, nor heart!  
No, sir! You may buy with your acres  
Young Folly, or Prudence grown old;  
But I've long since apprised all match-  
makers  
That "*this* lot is *not* to be sold!"

E. C. LEFROY.

#### PRETTY MISS BELLEW.

A TALE OF HOME LIFE. By THEO. GIFT.

##### CHAPTER THE TENTH.

##### AT CARR COTTAGE.

FOR a moment Clive was utterly taken aback, and simply met Miss Bellew's gaze with one of stupefied wonder. Then, as he saw her lips blanch, and felt her hand tremble on his arm, he answered quickly—

"Done with him! M'Kenzie! What should I have done with him? Really"—with some natural indignation—"I don't understand you, Miss Bellew."

The tone was one of utter surprise, not unmingled with rebuke. It was rather hard on him, poor fellow, to be met, on coming to try his fate with the woman