

within. The George Hotel at Yarmouth is an interesting old house of Henry VIII's time, with a noble staircase. Two coaches in the service of the hotel run several times a day across the island, only four miles, to Freshwater Bay, or Gate, as it is called, from two rocks, rudely resembling pillars, which stand in front of the bay, between which, so runs the legend, a gate was once suspended. At Freshwater village, just half way between the two seas, and where there is an excellent inn, you come in view of Faningford, the Poet Laureate's residence, and, I believe, property. You see the top of the house, as if in the midst of a wood, and just at the back there runs a line of lofty downs for some three miles, when they gradually subside and terminate in the Needles. When you approach the house, it is found not to be seated in the midst of a close wood, as it appeared at a distance, but with a spacious meadow in front, dotted, park-like, with trees. Here is a delightful contrast. Here is an abundance of woodland delights all around the house; but when he emerges from it, the poet finds himself at once amid all the wildness and freedom of the downs. On the top of these downs, which we hear is a favourite nightly walk, he commands both seas, the broad ocean and the narrow Solent. A more inspiring walk could nowhere be met. I could not help thinking of Keats's mention of Wordsworth's haunts:—

"Great spirits now on earth are sojourning;  
He of the cloud, the cataract, the lake,  
Who on Helvellyn's summit, wide awake,  
Catches his freshness from harchangels' wing."

And may not, I thought, his successor in the laureateship catch an equal freshness from the gales and airs that play over these downs, and from the glorious forms of earth and water around him? Freshwater Gate forms a chasm in the ridge of downs which, with this slight break of not more than a quarter of a mile, again arise, and with their graceful undulations extend to the southernmost point of the island, near St. Catherine's Lighthouse. The conformation of chalk downs is remarkably striking and harmonious. There is nothing harsh or abrupt about them, but soft yet spirited swellings, gracefully rounded forms, like the plumpness of a full-fed steed, with occasionally such sweet sinkings; but, whether swelling or sinking, the chalk downs are always preeminently graceful. For a glorious and inspiring walk, take that on the top of the downs, from Freshwater Gate to the Needles. However weary or languid you may have felt while walking in the lowlands, you no sooner mount on the downs than you feel an elastic vigour and freshness. The short green sward is the perfection of footing. Just half-way, or a mile and a half from either end, the downs swell up to their highest point, which is marked by a beacon.

The new lighthouse is built just at the end of the furthest rock: a much more comfortable berth, though cradled in the waters, than the apex of the hill above, which must have been a veritable temple of the winds. To be sure, the inmates were *not then imprisoned* as they are now, but had the ample range of the downs. Altogether, for sweep and variety of view, comprehending both seas; a

most romantic coast; Scratchell's Bay, with its snowy whiteness; Alum Bay, with its coloured cliffs, and a charming inland prospect both of downs and woodland; there is nothing at all equal to it in the Isle of Wight, albeit it is at present the most neglected corner; and, as such, I commend it to all tourists.

#### GOG AND MAGOG.

THE legendary history of these well-known London figures is carefully traced back by Mr. Fairholt, in a pleasant little book he has recently published,\* to a time when London, or the city that stood in its place, was known as New Troy, about the year 2885 B.C. The name of one of these giants has been split into two, and we now call one Gog and the other Magog. The names originally were Gogmagog and Corineus, the oldest figure being the former and the youngest the latter. The name is still preserved in its purity as a designation to the Gogmagog hills in Cambridgeshire.

The earliest description of these giants represents them as they now stand—Gogmagog (or Gog) attired in a half military, half druidical ancient Britanic dress, with a bow and arrows, and a warlike pole, from whose end dangles a chain and spiked globe, known as a "Morning Star;" and Corineus (or Magog) attired in a fancy Roman costume, with a battle-axe, spear, and shield. The supposition is, that the first figure represents the conquered hero or nation, and the second figure the conqueror.

It is curious, as showing the oriental origin of the names of these giants, to find that the books of the Arabians and Persians abound with extravagant fictions about Gog and Magog. These they call Jajiouge and Majiounge, and they call the land of Tartary by their names. The Caucasian wall, said to have been built by Alexander the Great, from the Caspian to the Black Sea, in order to cover the frontiers of his dominions, and to prevent the incursions of the Scythians, is called by the Orientals the wall of Gog and Magog.

When the old Lord Mayor's shows consisted of a series of pageants, the *œvic* giants were part of the great public display. On occasions of royal progresses through the city, they kept watch and ward at its gates. In 1415, when the victorious Henry V made his triumphant entry into London from Southwark, a male and female giant stood at the entrance of London Bridge; the male bearing an axe in his right hand, and in his left the keys of the city hanging to a staff. In 1432, when Henry VI entered London the same way, a mighty giant awaited him, as his champion, at the same place, with a drawn sword; and in 1554, when Philip and Mary made their public entry into London, two images representing two giants, the one named Corineus and the other Gogmagog, holding between them certain Latin verses, were exhibited on London Bridge.

The early figures of Gog and Magog, as they are now popularly called, were marched through the

\* Gog and Magog: The Giants in Guildhall, etc. By F. W. Fairholt, F.S.A. London: J. C. Hotten, 1860.

streets during the seventeenth century, in the van of the Lord Mayor's periodical pageants. At the conclusion of the show they were set up on their pedestals in Guildhall; where they were destroyed in the great fire of London, which gutted without demolishing the great city building. These figures were made of wicker-work and pasteboard, put together with great art and ingenuity for the period, and preyed upon very much by the rats. When the hall was repaired and re-beautified in 1669, the two figures now existing were erected by order, at the city charge, and paid for under the head of "extraordinary works." Their carver was one Richard Saunders, citizen and captain in the train-bands. The lofty stations awarded to these giants in the Guildhall were not in the present locality. They were originally placed on each side of the Council Chamber, and removed in 1815 to the west window, where they now stand. They are constructed of heavy wood, hollow within, and are upwards of fourteen feet in height. They were restored in 1837, since which time they have remained untouched. Long may they continue so; for though the city of to-day is not the city of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in metropolitan and social importance, its legends and its antiquities ought to be dear to all those who pride themselves upon being genuine cockneys in the school of Charles Lamb.

## OLD FABLES IN A NEW DRESS.

### THE TWO MICE.\*

A SLEEK-SKINNED mouse, who, where a mighty town  
Reared many a towering chimney-pot to heaven,  
Enjoyed the fare that luxury showers down,  
And all the bliss that to town mice is given,

Once (how long since I can't exactly say—  
It may be twenty years or half a dozen)  
Took it into his little head to pay  
A pleasure-visit to his country cousin.

Arrived, his kinsman—frugal mouse was he—  
Brought from his store the best that he was able—  
Nigh half his stock, beans, barley, succory—  
All that he thought most suitable for table.

The thrifty meal takes short time to prepare;  
Of simple food the rustic board is soon full;  
But the town mouse, unused to homely fare,  
Turns up his nose, and scarcely tastes a spoonful.

At length, the dinner o'er, "My friend," cries he,  
"Your rural life with all my heart I pity;  
But why starve on? just come to town with me,  
I'll show you what's worth eating in the city."

And then he tells full many a tempting tale,  
Of bounteous feast, and revelry, and riot:  
"Why waste your time in such a tightened pale?  
Life is but short; be merry, and enjoy it."

The rustic hears, and on his simple mind  
Each word persuasive makes impression stronger:  
That very eve he'll leave his home behind,  
And be a country mouse, and starve—no longer.

They sally forth 'neath shade of sheltering night:  
The rustic mouse at fancied terrors quivered,  
And shook in timid agonies of fright,  
Though but some aspen in the darkness shivered.

At length, the perils of their journey o'er,  
They reach unscathed and sound the sleeping city,

And gain the threshold of town-mouse's door  
Long ere the lark had sung his morning ditty.

They pass through many a room, before, behind,  
Here, there, in lower stories and in upper,  
Till in a vast saloon at last they find  
The glorious relics of a mighty supper

"Bravo!" cries town mouse, and with smiling face  
Seats his rude friend 'mid fowl, and soup, and fishes;  
Himself prepares, with all a mouse's grace,  
To do the honours of the ample dishes.

The feast is large and good: th' astonished friend  
Begins to think the city dainties charming,  
And town life quite a life he'd like to spend,  
When on his ear there falls a sound alarming.

The door wide opens: soon the city mouse  
Hides in a hole, and there securely lingers;  
The other scampers wildly from the house,  
And just escapes the early housemaid's fingers.

And as, he knows not how, he gains the air,  
A sigh of penitent contrition giving,  
He cries, "If this be your fine city fare,  
I very much prefer plain country living."

### MORAL.

Sigh not for the luxurious-gifts of heaven;  
You'd be no happier though your prayer were granted;  
For wishes gained, in six times out of seven,  
Bring with them something more than what was wanted.

M. W.

## THE WOLVES AND THE SHEEP.

BY ELLEN ROBERTS.\*

AN embassy was sent one day  
From wolves to sheep, as fables say,  
To beg hostilities might cease,  
And get a treaty signed for peace.  
"Why should we thus," say they, "through life  
Maintain this fierce and deadly strife?  
Those wicked dogs themischief make,  
And these disputes between us wake,  
Provoking us with bark and bite,  
Our angry passions to excite;  
If they were from the fold dismissed,  
No feuds between us would exist;  
The best of friends we should become,  
And social inmates of one home.  
The silly sheep the wolves obey,  
And send their faithful guards away.  
Deprived of their protecting shield,  
No weapons of their own to wield,  
Their cruel enemies grow bold,  
And leap at once into the fold,  
Where soon the sheep are all devoured,  
By strength and cunning overpowered.

### MORAL.

Our own condition here we read,  
For we are helpless sheep indeed;  
But oh, what guards we have around!  
How well secured our pasture ground!  
Not fair Hesperia's dragon-guard,  
Nor faithful watch-dog of the yard,  
So strictly could their treasure keep  
As our true Shepherd of the sheep.  
His loving hosts encamp about,  
To keep each fierce intruder out,  
Lest grievous wolves, rapacious, bold,  
Should enter in, nor spare the fold.  
Oh! happy they who prize His care,  
Of their own helplessness aware;  
Who yield their hearts to Heaven's control,  
His laws the safeguards of their soul.  
In vain would foes abuse their ear,  
Proclaim God cruel and severe,  
His rules too rigid and precise,  
His precepts harsh and over-nice;  
They cannot with His laws dispense,  
Or break these bonds of their defence;  
For as the watch-dogs guard the sheep,  
His little flock these statutes keep.

\* The general fable is imitated from Horace (Sat. ii. 6).

\* Author of "Heathen Fables in Christian Verse." London: Nisbet & Co.