# UMBRELLAS.

BY FANNIE ROPER FEUDGE.

UMBRELLAS, such a necessary convenience in our day, were, even in the beginning of the present century, but little used in England, or indeed in any part of Europe, unless by invalids or very fine ladies. And they did not carry an umbrella in the street as we do; but one was kept hanging in the hall of stylish mansions, and held by a servant over visitors as they passed to and from their carriages. It was deemed very effeminate in a man or boy to shirk a wetting; and so it was no wonder that an old soldier like Lord Cornwallis should have had his ire aroused by the offer of an umbrella. He had been dining with a friend, and when about to enter his carriage to return home, stopped a few moments to converse with his host. As it was raining in torrents, a servant in attendance attempted to hold the house umbrella over his Lordship's head; but the old soldier exclaimed, wrathfully:

"Take that thing away! Do you suppose I am a sugar doll, to melt in a shower? or do you take me for a woman, who is afraid of her fine head-gear? I have not been all these years fighting my country's battles, to be frightened now at cold water. A shower of rain is no worse than powder and ball, and I never shirked them."

Then, baring his head to the pelting rain, the nobleman walked deliberately to his carriage.

The gallant old Duke of Wellington, the hero of Waterloo and so many other battles, had the same opinion of umbrellas. During the Spanish war, in an action near Bayonne, in 1813, the Grenadiers, under Colonel Tyngling, occupied an unfinished redoubt near the high road. Lord Wellington, mounted on his veteran charger, rode past the redoubt, scanning with critical eye the disposition of the troops, and evidently as unmindful of the heavy rain that was pelting him over the head and shoulders as he was of powder and ball when facing an enemy whom he always meant, and rarely failed, to subdue. You may imagine, then, the indignation of the sturdy old chieftain at seeing the officers of a certain regiment protecting themselves, even under fire, from the torrents of rain, by huddling together under umbrellas. This was more than the equanimity of the "Iron Duke" could endure, and he instantly, after reaching his quarters, dispatched Lord Hill with the message: "Lord Wellington does not approve of the use of umbrellas by *soldiers*, and especially *under fire*, nor can he permit gentlemen's sons to make themselves ridiculous in the eyes of the army."

An old English record states that as early as the middle of the eighteenth century some enterprising genius introduced umbrellas at Oxford and Cambridge, letting them out, like sedan-chairs, to the students at so much per hour, thus enabling poor young men to pass from building to building to their lectures without being drenched by rain. But people no more thought of taking an umbrella about the streets of a town or city, than of taking a bed to sleep in, or a stove to warm themselves by, as they went about their regular business.

The first person who ventured on such an innovation was Jonas Hanway—the same benevolent old gentleman to whose exertions England owes the foundation of its "Marine Society," and to whose memory there is a monument in Westminster Abbey. Mr. Hanway had traveled in China and other parts of the East, where umbrellas were in general use, and having brought one over with him, as a sort of curiosity, he at length determined to avail himself of its protective benefits, and so one day ventured on the streets of London, holding "the queer-looking apparatus" over his head, during a heavy rain. Perhaps, if he had known what a shower of ridicule, and even abuse, he was provoking, he would rather have faced the rain. For groups of men hustled him on the side-walks, and called him mad; women, from windows and doors, clapped their hands and laughed; and boys in crowds ran after him, hissing, hooting, and even pelting him with stones. But they soon grew tired of such shameful sport, and took it quite as a matter of course, as Mr. Hanway, day after day, walked the streets, umbrella in hand, whether in rain or sunshine. Occasionally he invited a friend to share his comfortable shelter, and all agreed in pronouncing it very pleasant; but so afraid were they of ridicule, that it was more than three years after Mr. Hanway's first experiment before another man in London found courage to own or carry an umbrella. Jonas Hanway died in 1776, and for the last thirty years of his life he carried an umbrella whenever either sun or rain rendered one desirable; yet the present century had passed more than its first decade before the use of umbrellas became general.

All over the East the umbrella has been used from remote ages, though at first mainly as an

emblem of royalty. But for centuries past these useful appendages have afforded shelter to all classes from the fierce storms and burning sunshine of those fervid climes. In form and size the ordinary umbrella is nearly like our own, but the material is silk, or paper beautifully painted or glazed, and thus rendered perfectly water-proof. Though not very durable, these umbrellas are light and pretty, and so very cheap—about twenty cents each—that one does not mind their wearing out occasionally. They have been made and used in China, in just the same style, for fifteen centuries, and in the neighboring countries for perhaps nearly as long a time.

THE FIRST UMBRELLA IN THE STREETS OF LONDON.

The *state* umbrella is quite a different affair—much larger and of the richest materials. It is

placed over the royal couches, thrones, and chairs quite as generally as carried in the open air. They are borne by high officers over the king and other members of the royal family wherever they go, and "umbrella holders" are recognized members of the royal household both in Burmah and Siam. One of the numerous titles of His Majesty of Siam is "Lord of the White Elephant and Supreme Owner of the Umbrella"—that is, of the umbrella of state, which it would be high treason to raise over any head but that of the king. It is of crimson or purple silk, very richly embroidered in precious stones, lined usually with white satin, inwrought with silver flowers and seed pearls in exquisite clusters, and trimmed with heavy gold fringe and costly lace. Sometimes, on great occasions, umbrellas are carried in tiers of two, three, and five, one above the other, diminishing in size toward the top, and forming a perfect pyramid; while from the rim of each umbrella depend scores of tiny gold or silver bells, which, moved by the passing breeze, make sweet music, that floats upon the air like the sounds of an Æolian harp. In Burmah the king's umbrella is white, and that of the court red while in the royal city, but elsewhere they carry gold or gilded ones; and always over the dead bodies of the nobility are placed gold umbrellas, usually the gift of the sovereign. Both in Burmah and Siam there are many state umbrellas, all of precisely the same pattern, and one or more is carried over the king's head on all occasions, whether sitting or reclining, riding or walking, at home or abroad.

The Emperor of China, who never does anything in moderation, has *twenty-four* umbrellas carried before him whenever he goes out hunting—perhaps as a protective against wild beasts. But then, as he has an equal or larger number to herald his coming on other occasions, we may conclude it is only a love of displaying his wealth or grandeur—rather an absurd display it would seem to us. The heir to the crown has ten umbrellas, and other princes and nobles five, three, two, and one respectively, according to their rank. So one may usually read the rank of a noble he sees approaching by the number and style of his umbrellas, as he discovers the rank of a mandarin, or civil officer, by the color of his buttons.

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# THE WISHING-STONE, AND HOW IT WAS LOST.

BY EMILY HUNTINGTON MILLER.

IT was so long ago that nobody is alive who remembers anything about it. There was an old woman, a hundred years old. Her grandmother told her the story, and she wrote it down with a heron's feather—a great white heron that flew over between dawn and daylight, and was only a gray speck against the gray sky. The grandmother was a witch, and understood what the birds said, and that is how she came to hear the sparrows at Lilbury Abbey say to each other it was a good thing the wishing-stone was lost, since so much trouble came of it. This is the true story of how it happened: the brown sparrow told it to the stone man on the monument, while his mate brooded her eggs. The stone man held the nest in the hollow of his hand, and stood quite still, night and day, not to disturb it.

"They are sweeter than the sweetest, the roses that grow in the garden, and all the blossoms have tongues of gold. When the wind blows over them they ring together, and the music is rare as the Christmas chimes up in the steeple."

"I have heard it," said the mate, ruffling her throat.

"There is a fountain. The water goes up, up, high as the lark goes, and when it comes down it is all pearls, and rubies, and bits of rainbows. It sings, too, and no one can guess what the music is like."

"I have heard it," said the mate, her wings trembling with ecstasy.

"The road to the mountain passes through the garden, and the gates are always open, because the Princess will have it so. One is called Morning Gate, and that is where the people enter. They go on by the rose-walk until they come to the