

**FARROW
GEORGE
EDWARD**

THE WALLYPUG IN
LONDON

George Farrow

The Wallypug in London

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G. E. Farrow
The Wallypug in London

CHANT ROYAL

ADDRESSED TO

HER MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA

IN COMMEMORATION OF 22nd JUNE, 1897

Victoria! by grace of God our Queen,
To thee thy children truest homage pay.
Thy children! ay, for Mother thou hast been,
And by a mother's love thou holdest sway.
Thy greatest empire is thy Nation's heart,
And thou hast chosen this the better part.
Behold, an off'ring meet thy people bring;
Hark! to the mighty world-sound gathering
From shore to shore, and echoing o'er the sea,
Attend! ye Nations while our paeans ring —
Victoria's children sing her Jubilee.

The grandest sight the world hath ever seen
Thy kingdom offers. Clothed in fair array,
The Majesty of Love and Peace serene,
While hosts unnumbered loyalty display,
Striving to show, by every loving art,
The day for them can have no counterpart.
Lo! sixty years of joy and sorrowing
For Queen and People, either borrowing
From other sympathy, in woe or glee,
Hath knit their hearts to thine, wherefore they sing —
Victoria's children sing her Jubilee.

With royal dignity and gracious mien
Thine high position thou hast graced alway;
No cloud of discord e'er hath come between
Thy nation and thyself; the fierce white ray
That beats upon thy throne bids hence depart
The faintest slander calumny can dart.
Thy fame is dear alike to churl and king,

And highest honour lies in honouring
The Sovereign to whom we bend the knee;
“God save the Queen,” one strain unvarying —
Victoria’s children sing her Jubilee.

What prophet, or what seer, with vision keen,
Reading the message of a far-off day,
The wonders of thy reign could have foreseen,
Or known the story that shall last for aye?
A page that History shall set apart;
Peace and Prosperity in port and mart,
Honour abroad, and on resistless wing
A steady progress ever-conquering.
Thy glorious reign, our glorious theme shall be,
And gratitude in every heart upspring —
Victoria’s children sing her Jubilee.

Behold, ye tyrants, and a lesson glean
How subjects may be governed. Lo! the way
A Woman teaches who doth ne’er demean
Her office high. Hark! how her people pray
For blessings on the head that doth impart
So wise a rule. For them no wrongs do smart,
No cruelties oppress, no insults sting,
Nor does a despot hand exaction wring;
Though governed, Britain’s subjects still are free.
Gaze then – ye unwise rulers wondering —
Victoria’s children sing her Jubilee.

Envoy

Queen Mother, love of thee doth ever spring
Within thy children’s hearts, a priceless thing,
Nor pomp nor state that falleth unto thee
Can ever rival this grand carolling —
Victoria’s children sing her Jubilee.

G. E. Farrow

PREFACE

My dear little Friends,

You will no doubt be surprised to find this book commencing with a perfectly serious poem, and one which probably some of you will find a little difficulty in understanding. When you have grown older, however, and happen to look at this little book again, you will be glad to be reminded of the historic event which the poem commemorates. Now, about ourselves, when I asked in my last book, *The Missing Prince*, for letters from my little readers, I had no idea that I had so many young friends, and I can hardly tell you how delighted I have been at receiving such a number of kind letters from all parts of the world.

I do hope that I have answered everyone, but really there have been so many, and if by mistake any should have been overlooked, I hope my little correspondents will write again and give me an opportunity of repairing the omission.

Such charming little letters, and all, I am happy to find, really written by the children themselves, which makes them doubly valuable to me.

And how funny and amusing some of them were to be sure! And what capital stories some of you have told me about your pets.

Some pathetic incidents too; as, for instance, that of 'Shellyback,' the tortoise, whose little owner wrote a few months after her first letter to say that poor 'Shellyback' was dead.

I have been very happy to notice how fond you all seem of your pets, for I have always found that children who make friends with animals invariably have kind and good hearts. And the poor dumb creatures themselves are always so ready to respond to any little act of kindness, and are so grateful and affectionate, that I am sure it adds greatly to one's happiness in life to interest oneself in them.

One of my correspondents, aged eight, has embarrassed me very much indeed by suggesting that I should "wait for her till she grows up," as she should "so like to marry a gentleman who told stories." I hope she didn't mean that I did anything so disgraceful; and besides, as it would take nearly twenty-five years for her to catch up to me, she *might* change her mind in that time, and then what would become of me.

Some of my letters from abroad have been very interesting. One dear little girl at Darjeeling, in India, wrote a very nice descriptive letter, and concluded by asking me to write "something about the stars," and speaking of new stories brings me to another subject that I wish to talk to you about.

You know that I spoke in my last book about writing a school story, and one about animals. Well, when I found that so many of you wanted to hear "more about the Wallypug," I was obliged to put these two books aside in order to gratify your wishes. I hope that you will be as interested in hearing about his Majesty this time as you were last.

You will be sure to notice that the pictures are by another artist, but Mr. Harry Furniss has been away from England for some months, and so it has been impossible for him to illustrate this volume. Some other time, perhaps, Dorothy and he will give us more of their work; but in the meantime Mr. Alan Wright has been very interested in drawing pictures for this book, and I hope you will be pleased with his efforts.

Now, about writing to me next time. When I asked you to address me under care of my publishers, I did not realize that in the course of business I might find it necessary to change them sometimes, and so to avoid any possibility of confusion, will you please in future address all letters to

Mr. G. E. Farrow,
c/o Messrs. A. P. Watt & Son,
Hastings House,
Norfolk Street, Strand.

What am I to do with all the beautiful Christmas and New Year's cards which I have received? Will you be vexed if, after having enjoyed receiving them as I have done so much, I give them to the poor little children at the hospitals to make scrap books with? I happen to know how much they value and appreciate gifts of this kind, and by allowing me to bestow them in this way, your pretty presents will be giving a double happiness.

Well, I must conclude this rather long letter now, or I shall be accused of being tedious; but really it gives me almost as much pleasure to write to you, as it does to receive your letters. Good-bye. Don't forget that many of you have promised to write to me again, and that I am always more than glad to welcome any new friends.

Believe me, dear Children,
Yours affectionately,
G. E. FARROW

CHAPTER I

HIS MAJESTY AND SUITE ARRIVE

A most extraordinary thing has happened; the Wallypug has been to London! But there, I am forgetting that possibly you have never read *The Wallypug of Why*, in which case you will, of course, know nothing about his Majesty, and so I had better explain to you who, and what, he is.

To begin with, then, he is a kind of king of a place called Why, which adjoins the mysterious kingdom of Zum. I am afraid, though, that if you searched your atlases for a very long while you might not find either of these places, for the geographers are so undecided as to their exact position that they have not shown them on the maps at all. Some little friends of mine, named Girlie and Boy, have been there, however, and I can tell you, if you like, the way they went. This is the way to Why:

Just go to bed and shut your eyes
And count one hundred, one by one;
Perhaps you'll find to your surprise
That you're at Why when this is done.

I say *perhaps*, because this only happens when you have been particularly good all day, and *sometimes* boys and girls are not quite as good as they – but there, I won't say what I was going to, for I am quite sure that it would not apply to you. This is the way to Zum:

Not when the moon is at its full,
But just a tiny boat-shaped thing,
You *may* see Pierrot sitting there
And hear the little fellow sing.
If so, just call him, and he'll come
And carry you away to Zum.

There, now, I've told you the way to go to both places, so that, if you wish to, you can go there whenever you please.

I am telling you all this because one day in the spring Girlie and Boy, who live in another part of London, came to see me, and we had been talking about these things for about the hundredth time, I should think: for these children are never tired of telling me of all the strange things which happened to them when they journey to these wonderful places. In fact they were just arguing as to which was the most interesting place to go to, Why or Zum, when my housekeeper, Mrs. Putchy, came to the door with the unwelcome news that the carriage had come for my little friends, and that it was time to say good-bye. After they had gone I sat staring into the fire wondering where Why could be, and if there was really such a person as the Wallypug, when my little dog Dick, who had been lying on the rug before the fire, suddenly jumped up, and barking excitedly, ran to the other end of the study, where a picture, which I had bought the day before at an auction sale, stood leaning against the wall. Now this picture had been sold very cheap, because no one could tell at all what it was about, it was so old and dusty, and the colours were so dark and indistinct. I had bought it hoping that it might prove valuable, and there it stood till it could be sent to be cleaned and restored. Imagine my surprise then, when, on following Dick across the study, I discovered that the colours in the picture had all become bright, and were working one into the other in the most remarkable way, red running into green, and blue into yellow, while a little patch of black in the centre of the picture was whirling round and round in quite a distracting manner. What could it all mean? I stared and wondered, till,

out of the confusion, there gradually grew shapes which bore some resemblance to human beings, and, presently, I could recognize quite distinctly, first a young man in knee breeches, smiling in a particularly self-satisfied way, and escorting a large fish, who was walking upright, with slippers on his tail, and who wore a waistcoat and necktie. Then an amiable-looking old gentleman, carrying a wand, who was followed by a curious little person, wearing a crown and carrying an orb and sceptre. A particularly stiff and wooden-looking soldier stood at the back of this strange group. Judge of my amazement when, quite as a matter of course, the whole party deliberately stepped out of the picture into the room, and, before I could realize what had happened, the old gentleman with the wand came forward with a flourish and an elaborate bow, and announced:

“A-hem! his Majesty the Wallypug of Why and suite.”

I was so astonished that for the moment I could not think what to say, but at last I managed to stammer, as I made a low bow to the Wallypug:

“I am delighted to make your Majesty’s acquaintance.”

The Wallypug smiled very affably, and held out his hand.

“I have come up for the Jubilee, you know,” he said.

“We’ve come up, you mean to say, Wallypug,” corrected the old gentleman with the wand, frowning somewhat severely. “I am the Wallypug’s professional adviser,” he continued. “I am called the Doctor-in-Law – allow me to introduce the rest of our party. This,” he went on, bringing the young man with the self-satisfied smile forward, “is the Jubilee Rhymester from Zum; he hopes to become a minor poet in time. And this,” indicating the wooden-looking soldier, “is Sergeant One-and-Nine, also from Zum.” Here the Doctor-in-Law took me aside and whispered in my ear, “Slightly cracked, crossed in love; speaks very peculiarly; capital chap though.” Then crossing to where the Fish was standing, he said, “And this is A. Fish, Esq., the celebrated lecturer on the ‘Whichness of the What as compared with the Thatness of the Thus.’ He desired to accompany us here in order to find material for a new lecture which he is preparing upon the ‘Perhapness of the Improbable.’ He’s awfully clever,” he whispered impressively.

“I’m sure I’m delighted to see you all,” I said, shaking hands with each one till I came to the Fish, who held out a fin. “Er-er-how do you do?” I stammered, somewhat taken aback by this strange proceeding.

“Quide well with the eggscebtiod of a slide cold id by head,” said the Fish. “I’b subjeed to theeb, you doe. It’s beig id the water so butch, I fadcy,” and he *smiled*.

I don’t know if you have ever seen a fish smile, but if not I may tell you that it is a very curious sight.

“I suppose you can manage to put us up here for a month or two?” calmly suggested the Doctor-in-Law after a pause.

“Dear me,” I exclaimed in alarm, “I don’t think my housekeeper could possibly – ”

“Why not ask her?” suggested the Doctor-in-Law, touching the bell.

A moment or two afterwards a knock at the door announced that Mrs. Putchy was there.

“Oh, Mrs. Putchy,” I said, stepping just outside, “these gentlemen, er – that is to say, his Majesty the Wallypug of Why and suite, have honoured me with a visit, and I am anxious if possible to offer them such hospitality as my poor home affords. Do you think that we could manage anyhow to find room for them, for a few days at any rate?”

Now Mrs. Putchy is a very remarkable woman, and I have never known her to show the slightest surprise at anything, and, so far from seeming alarmed at the prospect of having to entertain such notable visitors, she seemed positively delighted.

“His Majesty of Why, sir? How charming! Of course we must do our best, and how fortunate that I put on my best gown to-day, isn’t it? Dear me, and shall I be presented to his Majesty?”

“Certainly, Mrs. Putchy, if you wish it,” I said. “In fact, if you will call General Mary Jane, I will introduce you both, as you represent my entire household.”

Mrs. Putchy disappeared, returning almost immediately, followed by the servant, General Mary Jane, with her mouth wide open, and accompanied by the cat, who rejoices in the extraordinary name of Mrs. Mehetable Murchison. These members of my household were duly presented to the Wallypug. Mrs. Putchy made her curtsy with great dignity, but General Mary Jane was so overcome at the thought of being presented to royalty that she fell flat on her hands and knees in her humility, while Mrs. Mehetable Murchison, realizing, no doubt, the truth of the old saying that “a cat may look at a king,” went up and sharpened her claws on the Wallypug’s legs in the most friendly manner possible.

It was when the cat caught sight of A. Fish, Esq., that she completely lost her presence of mind, and with arched back and bristling fur glared at him in amazement.

“Priddy pussy, cub alog thed,” said the Fish, stooping down and trying to stroke her with one of his fins; but Mrs. Mehetable Murchison, with a startled glance, tore out of the room, showing every sign of alarm.

“And she’s so fond of fish too, as a rule, ain’t she, mum?” remarked General Mary Jane, who had somewhat overcome the awe with which she had at first regarded the presence of royalty.

“Fod of fish?” repeated A. Fish, Esq., inquiringly. “What do you mead?”

“Why, you see, sir,” explained Mrs. Putchy, “we often have fish for dinner – er – that is to say – er – a-hem!”

The Fish was glaring at her in a horrified way, and Mrs. Putchy had become quite nervous.

“Let’s change the subject,” suggested the Doctor-in-Law, to our great relief. “The most important question for the moment is, where are we all going to sleep?”

This gave Mrs. Putchy an opportunity for exercising her wonderful ability for management, and after arranging for the Wallypug to have the spare bedroom, and the Doctor-in-Law to have my room, I was to have a bed made up in the study, while the Jubilee Rhymester was to sleep in the attic, One-and-Nine was to have a box under the stairs, and there only remained A. Fish, Esq., to dispose of.

“There is the bathroom, mum,” suggested General Mary Jane brilliantly; “we could put a lid on the bath and make up a bed there.”

“Bedder sdill, fill id with wadter, ad thed I could sleeb *in id*,” suggested the Fish.

“Oh yes, of course!” said Mrs. Putchy, “and now I must go and see about the supper.” And, with a low curtsy to the Wallypug, the admirable little woman hurried out, followed by General Mary Jane, who gave a nervous little bob when she reached the door.

They had scarcely disappeared before One-and-Nine came up to me and whispered:

“I am muchly impressionated by that lady with the most militaryish name who has just gone out. Can you kindly inform me is she detached?”

“Detached?” I inquired in bewilderment. “What ever do you mean?”

“If a person is not attached to anyone else, they are detached, I suppose, are they not?” said One-and-Nine rather impatiently.

“Well, if you put it that way, I suppose they are,” I replied, laughing. “You mean, has she a sweetheart? Well, really I don’t know. I have an idea though that Mrs. Putchy does not allow followers.”

“Then I shall considerize my prospectuousness with great hopefulness!” remarked the soldier with considerable dignity, walking back to the Wallypug’s chair.

“What does he say?” asked the Jubilee Rhymester. “He is a little bit cracked, you know. Could you make out what he was driving at?”

“Oh, yes, I could understand within a little what he meant,” I replied. “He seems to have fallen in love with General Mary Jane at first sight, from what I can gather.”

“Really! Dear me! He is always doing that sort of thing, do you know, and he generally asks me to write poems for him when he gets into that state. I have written as many as 137 odes in one month on his behalf.”

“Good gracious,” I replied, “and does he pay you well for them?”

“Pay me!” exclaimed the Jubilee Rhymester, staring at me in surprise. “Of course not. Do people ever get paid for writing poetry?”

“Why, yes, to be sure they do,” I answered.

“Well, I’ve never heard of such a thing in all my life,” said the Jubilee Rhymester; “I always thought that poets had to pay to have their verses used at all, and that that was why they were always so poor while they were alive. Of course I knew that people sometimes made a fuss about them after they were dead, but I have never heard of such a thing as a live poet being paid for his work.”

“Nonsense,” I replied; “I believe that quite a lot of money is sometimes paid by the magazines and other papers for poems and verses.”

“Well, I am delighted to hear it,” said the Jubilee Rhymester, “and I shall certainly start writing to-morrow. I have no doubt whatever that I shall make my fortune before I go back to Zum.”

Shortly after this Mrs. Putchy announced that supper was served, and a little later my guests retired to rest, being thoroughly tired out with their long journey. I sat up in my study a little while longer to smoke a pipe, but was just thinking of going to bed when there was a tap at the door and the Doctor-in-Law entered.

“I say, I thought I had better come and arrange with you about money matters,” he said; “I didn’t like to mention such things before the others. Now then,” he continued, “how much are you going to pay us for staying with you?”

“Pay *you!*” I gasped. “What on earth do you mean?”

“Well, you see, it will be a great thing for you to have such distinguished visitors, don’t you know, and you ought to be quite willing to pay liberally for the honour,” said the Doctor-in-Law, smiling amiably.

Now Girlie had told me what a greedy, avaricious person the Doctor-in-Law really was, despite his benevolent appearance, but this cool cheek almost took my breath away. I was determined, however, to let him see at once that I was not to be imposed upon, so I said as firmly as I could, “Now, look here, Mr. Doctor-in-Law, please understand once and for all, that as you were all so kind to my little friend Girlie when she was at Why, I am quite willing to entertain his Majesty the Wallypug, and the rest of you, to the very best of my ability, but as for paying you for being here, the idea is absurd – impossible!”

Just then a terrific hullabaloo in the passage caused us both to run to the door. We could hear that the noise proceeded from the bathroom, and, hurrying to the door, we found A. Fish, Esq., sitting up in the water shouting for help, while Mrs. Mehetable Murchison and a whole group of her feline friends were out on the tiles, glaring through the window.

“Dear be, dear be,” panted the Fish, when he saw us, “I’b so frighteded, just look at all those cats. I had beed to sleeb ad was just dreabig that sobeone was sayig, ‘Mrs. Behetable Burchison is *so* fod of fish, and we ofted have fish for didder,’ whed I woke ub and saw all those horrible cats lookig id ad the widdow; id quide gave be a turn. Do drive theb away please.”

We soon did this, and, pulling down the blinds, we left A. Fish, Esq., to his dreams and soon afterwards retired to rest ourselves.

CHAPTER II

THE NEXT DAY'S ADVENTURES

When I entered the breakfast room the next morning I found that the Wallypug and the Doctor-in-Law had been up for some time, and were both gazing out of the window with the greatest of interest.

"I hope your Majesty slept well," I remarked to the Wallypug as I approached them.

"Very well indeed, thank you," he replied smilingly. "The Doctor-in-Law and myself have just been saying that we are sure to have an enjoyable visit here. We have been greatly interested in the man-machines going past. We have never seen anything like them before."

"The man-machines!" I exclaimed, puzzled to know whatever he could mean.

"Yes, the men with wheels instead of legs, you know."

"Oh, you mean the bicyclists," I replied, laughing. "Have you really never seen any before?"

"No, indeed," replied his Majesty. "Are they born with wheels on, or do they grow afterwards?"

I laughed, and fortunately just then the youngster opposite, who always rides to school on his bicycle, came out of doors wheeling his machine, and I was able to explain to the Wallypug the principle upon which they worked.

"Dear me; the Doctor-in-Law told me that the machinery was part of the man, but now I see that it is separate. And he charged me sixpence for the information too," he complained, looking reproachfully at the Doctor-in-Law.

"Charged you sixpence!" I cried.

"Yes," replied the poor Wallypug. "He offered to tell me all about them for sixpence, and as I was really very curious to know I gave it to him, and then he informed me that they were a peculiar race of people who came from Coventry, and who were all born with wheels instead of legs."

"Take your old sixpence then, if you are going to make all that fuss about it," said the Doctor-in-Law, crossly, throwing the coin down on the table and walking out of the room in a huff. "I'm sure I did read somewhere that they came from Coventry," he added, popping his head in at the door and then slamming it violently after him.

The boy opposite was still riding up and down the road, and I made up my mind that although I had never spoken to him before, I would ask him to let the Wallypug examine his bicycle more closely.

"With pleasure," he replied, raising his hat politely to the Wallypug, when I had explained who he was; "and if his Majesty would like to try it he is quite welcome to do so."

The Doctor-in-Law's curiosity had so far overcome his ill-humour that, when he saw us talking to the boy, he came forward and offered to help the Wallypug to mount.

"I really don't think he had better," I said, "he might damage the machine."

"Oh no, he won't hurt it, I'm sure," said the boy generously; and so with our united assistance the Wallypug got on to the bicycle, and after a few preliminary wobbings started off in fine style. Faster and faster he went, clinging desperately to the handle-bars, till we, who were running beside him, could no longer keep pace with him.

"I can't stop," we heard him shout; and a moment later he charged straight at a large stone and half a brick which lay in the middle of the roadway.

Poor Wallypug! The sudden impact threw him right over the handle-bars, and he landed in a huddled heap on his hands and knees in the gutter. The machine flew in half, and the front portion careered madly away by itself till stopped by the kerb.

We hurried up to his Majesty to discover if he was much hurt, but, with the exception of a few scratches on his hands and knees and a thorough shaking, he seemed to have come off pretty well.

“I suppose we can’t stick it together again?” he inquired, gazing ruefully at the broken bicycle, and I was obliged to tell him that there was not much chance of our doing so. The boy to whom it belonged bravely made the best of the matter, especially when I told him that the next half-holiday he had I would take him to Holborn to choose another one in its place.

And when I discovered that he had a half-holiday that very afternoon, it was arranged that General Mary Jane should order a carriage at the livery stable, and that we should all drive to the city after luncheon.

The Wallypug, after a good wash and a hearty breakfast, went to his room to lie down for an hour or two to recover from the effects of his accident, and I was just answering my morning letters when there was a knock at the study door, and the Rhymester entered.

“I sat up most of the night writing poetry,” he remarked, “and I have just brought you one or two specimens. The first one is called ‘The Ode of a Toad.’ Perhaps I had better read it to you. My writing is rather peculiar,” and he began as follows:

THE ODE OF A TOAD

There was once an old toad who lived under a tree,
Hippety hop – Flippety flop,
And his head was as bald as bald could be,
He was deaf as a post and could hardly see,
But a giddy and frivolous toad was he,
With his hippety-hoppety-plop.

And he gambolled and danced on the village green,
Hippety hop – Flippety flop,
In a way that had never before been seen,
Tho’ he wasn’t so young as once he had been,
And the people all wondered whate’er he could mean,
With his hippety-hoppety-plop.

But the old chap kept bobbing about just the same,
Hippety hop – Flippety flop,
Till everyone thought he *must* make himself lame,
And not a soul ever could find out his aim,
In keeping up such a ridiculous game,
As his hippety-hoppety-plop.

Some said he was mad, tho’ as mild as a dove,
Hippety hop – Flippety flop,
And as the result of a push or a shove,
Was a little bit cracked in the storey above,
But I fancy myself the old boy was in love,
With his hippety-hoppety-plop.

“There! What do you think of it?” he asked when he had finished.

“Well, candidly, I’m afraid not very much,” I replied; “and what on earth do you call it an ode for?”

“Why, you see, ode went so well with the word toad. I was going to call it ‘Ode to a Toad,’ but it isn’t *to* a toad at all, though it’s about a toad. Ah! by the bye, I might call it ‘A Toad’s Ode,’ mightn’t I? I think that sounds very jolly.” He altered the title in pencil.

“I have another which I think you will say is very touching.” And after getting his handkerchief out in case he should be moved to tears, he began:

THE BALLADE OF A BUN

Don’t talk to me of “Sally Lunn,”
Or toasted tea-cake nice and hot,
I do not care for either one
A single solitary jot;
My heart is fixed and changeth not,
In all the world – whate’er I see,
And rich or poor – whate’er my lot —
Oh! penny bun, I love but thee.

For thy dear sake all cakes I shun
Smeared o’er with jam. No apricot
Or greengage tart my heart hath won;
Their sweetness doth but cloy and clot.
What marmalade in fancy pot
Or cream meringue, though fair it be,
Thine image e’er can mar or blot?
Oh! penny bun, I love but thee.

I vowed to cherish thee, or none
(Such love thy simple charms begot),
When first I saw thee, precious one;
And now to some sweet lonely spot,
Some shady dell or mossy grot,
Come let us hasten, you and me,
And I will eat you like a shot;
Oh! penny bun, I love but thee.

Envoy

Small boys or girls that homeward trot
From school in time for early tea,
This moral ne’er must be forgot:
“Love penny buns, and they’ll love thee.”

“Isn’t it affecting?” he inquired, wiping his eyes when he had finished.

“Well, perhaps I didn’t quite appreciate the pathos of it as I might have done,” I answered, trying hard not to laugh. “You see I was paying so much attention to the scansion. I find that you have altered the refrain in the Envoy. Surely that’s not correct, is it?”

“Oh, you are a great deal too particular,” remarked the Rhymester crossly. “Why, I should think from the Doctor-in-Law’s description of a critic that you must be one.”

“What did he say a critic was?” I asked.

“Why, he said a critic was a person who found fault with another, for not doing what he was unable to do himself. And he charged me fourpence three-farthings for the information, and as I only had fourpence halfpenny I have to pay him the odd farthing when I sell some of my poems. Can you tell me how I can set to work about it?”

“Well, I hardly know,” I replied, “unless you send them to the editors of the various magazines. They may take them, but you must not be disappointed if some of them are rejected. You see they cannot possibly print everything that is sent to them.”

There were several magazines in the study, and I suggested that the Rhymester should make a list of the addresses of the various editors, and he was busy about that till luncheon time.

At half-past two the carriage came to the door, and goodness only knows what General Mary Jane must have told the livery stable people about the Wallypug, for, evidently anxious to send an equipage worthy of royalty, they had painted an enormous monogram in gold on the sides of the carriage, while the coachman was resplendent in blue plush and gold lace, with silk stockings and a powdered wig.

The Wallypug was delighted when he saw this elaborate turn-out, and so were the others, for I overheard One-and-Nine murmuring something about “equipageous grandiosity,” as he climbed up to the seat beside the coachman. When the Wallypug, the Doctor-in-Law, A. Fish, Esq., and the Rhymester, were seated, there was no room left for the boy and myself, so we followed behind in a modest dog-cart, which was hurriedly procured from the livery stable. Many were the wondering glances bestowed upon the carriage, with its somewhat remarkable burden, as we drove along through Kensington to the Gardens. And everywhere our appearance was hailed with enthusiasm, people being evidently under the impression that the Wallypug was one of the royal guests invited to the Jubilee festivities. Who could he be? That was decidedly the question which everyone was asking, and I could not quite determine who was causing the greater sensation, the Wallypug or A. Fish, Esq. These two individuals, however, comported themselves with the calmest dignity, only the Doctor-in-Law seemed flurried by the attention which they attracted, and smiled and bowed right and left, whether the people took any notice of him or not.

As we approached Hyde-Park corner attention was diverted from the Wallypug’s carriage by the fact that *another* royal equipage had entered the Park gates; and as the Princess passed us, an amused glance and a whispered conversation with the other occupant of the carriage showed that the Wallypug’s extraordinary party had not escaped Her Royal Highness’s attention.

After going once round the Park we went out at the Marble Arch and along Oxford Street to Holborn, our progress through the crowded streets everywhere attracting the most excited interest. And when we stopped before one of the large bicycle *depôts* in Holborn the crowd around the carriage was so large that the policeman had quite a difficulty in preventing a block in the traffic. Our business was soon transacted, and, having secured an excellent machine for the boy in place of the one which his Majesty had damaged in the morning, we drove back to Kensington without further adventure.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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