

Travels and Adventures of Little Baron Trump and His Wonderful Dog Bulger

Ingersoll Lockwood



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CHAPTER I.



Short account of one of the little Baron's most celebrated ancestors, called "The Armless Knight." His wonderful strength and bravery. How he followed Cœur de Lion to the Orient. His brilliant exploits on the battle-field, under the walls of Joppa. His marriage in the presence of Saladin and Cœur de Lion.

I come from one of the most ancient and honorable families of North Germany—famous for its valor and love of adventure.

One of my ancestors, when just entering the twenties heard at his father's table one morning, that England's great King Cœur de Lion was about to lead an army against the infidels.

"Gracious parent," cried the young man starting up from his seat, his eyes on fire, his cheeks ablaze, "May I join the Crusaders and aid in the destruction of the enemies of our holy religion?" "Alas, poor boy!" replied his father, casting a pitying glance at the youth, who, through some strange freak of nature had been born armless, "thou wert not intended for terrible conflicts such as await our cousin Cœur de Lion. Thou lackest every means of wielding the battle sword, of couching the lance. 'Twould be murder to set thy defenceless body before the uplifted cimeter of the merciless Moslem! My dear son, banish such thoughts from thy mind and turn thee to poesy and philosophy, thou shalt add new lustre to our family name by thy learning." "Nay

gracious parent, hear me!" urged the youth with eloquent eye: "true, nature has denied me arms, but she has not been so cruel as might be supposed for, as compensation, she has given a giant's strength to my lower limbs. Dost not remember how last month, I slew a wild boar with one blow from the heel of my hunting-boot?" "I do," answered the grim old Baron with a smile, "but—" "Pardon my interruption noble father" came from the young man, "I shall go into battle doubly armed, for to each stirrup shall I affix a sword and woe betide the Mussulman who dares meet me on the battle-field."

"Go then my son!" cried the old Baron as the tears trickled down his battle-scarred cheeks, "go, join our royal cousin Cœur de Lion and if thou, armless, canst withstand the fury of the infidel, another glory will be added to the name of Trump, and in this ancestral hall shall hang a portrait of the 'Armless Knight,' upon which for all time the lovers of valiant deeds shall rest their wondering eyes."

The joy of my young ancestor knew no bounds.

Scarcely staying to make needful preparations for his journey, with a handful of trusty retainers, he rode from the castle yard amid the plaudits of thousands of fair women who had gathered from the neighboring city to wish God speed to the "Armless Knight."

'Twas not until the famous battle under the walls of Joppa that my ancestor had an opportunity to give an exhibition of his bravery, his extraordinary strength, and the resistless fury of his onslaughts.

Not one, not five, not ten common soldiers dared face the "Armless Knight."

Whole squadrons recoiled in terror before this mysterious avenger of the wrongs of Christendom, who, without hands, struck down the Moslem warriors, as the grain falls before the blast.

Again and again, Saladin sent the flower of his men against the "Armless Knight," whose strength and valor had already

made his name a terror to the superstitious soldiery. Little realizing the terrible fate awaiting him, the Moslem warrior would rush upon my ancestor with uplifted cimeter, when with one blow of his sword-armed stirrup the "Armless Knight" would cleave the breast of his foeman's horse, and then trample the infidel to death as he rolled upon the ground.

It was now high noon.

Upon an eminence, Saladin, watching the tide of battle, saw with anxious eye the appalling slaughter of the very flower of his army.

Already the name, rank, and nationality of my young ancestor had been made known to the Moslem leader.

"La, il la! Mahomed ul Becullah!" he cried, stroking his beard. "Blessed is the man who can call that Christian warrior his son! How many of the Prophet's children has he slain this day?"

"Six hundred and fifty-nine!" was the answer given.

"Six hundred and fifty-nine," echoed Saladin, "and it is but noonday!" When nightfall came the number had been increased to one thousand and seven.

Upon hearing of the terrible day's work of the "Armless Knight," Saladin's great heart bled, and yet he could not withhold his admiration for such wondrous skill and bravery.

"Go!" cried the magnanimous infidel Chieftain, "go, take from my household that beauteous slave Kohilât, her with orbs of lustrous black, the very blossom of grace and flower of queenly beauty. Lead her to the "Armless Knight," with royal greeting from Saladin; his valor makes him my brother, Giaour though he be! Away!"

When the beautiful Kohilât was led into the presence of my young ancestor, and the announcement made to him that Saladin had sent her as a present to him, the "Armless Knight," with royal greeting as a token of his respect for one so young, and yet so valiant, the first thought of the

Christian youth was to wave her indignantly from his presence.

At that moment, however, Kohilât raised her large and lustrous eyes, and fixed them full upon the young man's face.

It was more than human heart could stand.

Motioning her retinue to leave his tent, he advanced to her side, with respectful mien, and said:

“Kohilât, a strange fate has sent thee to me. The messenger of the great Saladin imparts to me knowledge of thy goodness, thy amiability, and thy gifted mind, which holds within its store most delightful imagery and useful knowledge as well. He informs me that thou standest in the direct line of descent from that famed princess of your land, Scheherezada, who for a thousand and one nights held the thoughts of the Sultan of the Indies so enthralled by the play of her brilliant fancy, as to turn him aside from his terrible project of vengeance. Dost think, Kohilât, that thou canst forget thy false god and love only the true one?”

“Ay, my lord,” murmured the gentle Kohilât, “if such be my lord's pleasure.”

A smile spread over the handsome face of my young ancestor. He would fain have met with more resistance in converting the fair infidel to the true faith, but though he searched that beautiful face long and closely for any sign of subtility, yet saw he none.

“’Tis well, Kohilât,” he continued, “and now answer me, and speak from thy heart. Art thou willing to become my wife, according to the rites of the Christian church and the laws of my native land?”

Again the beautiful Kohilât replied:

“Ay, my lord; if such be thy pleasure.”

The following day a truce was proclaimed, and in the presence of the two great leaders of the opposing armies, Cœur de Lion and Saladin, both surrounded by the most glorious retinue, my young ancestor and the princess

Kohilât were joined together as man and wife by the royal confessor, the “Armless Knight” towering above the surrounding multitude in his glittering coat of mail like a column of burnished silver. When he advanced to meet his dark-eyed bride, with the marriage ring held between his lips, a mighty shout went up from both armies.

Saladin stroked his beard. Cœur de Lion made the sign of the cross. In a short half hour the leaders had returned to their camps, and war had resumed its awful work of destruction.

To this union of my renowned ancestor, the “Armless Knight,” with the Moslem maid, I attribute my possession of an almost Oriental exuberance of fancy.

CHAPTER II.



The elder Baron uncertain as to the exact locality of my birth. Reasons why will be given later. My parents traveling in Africa at this time. The elder Baron's remarkable ascent of the Mountains of the Moon. Miraculous escape from the impenetrable fog. How accomplished. In the land of the Melodious Sneezers. All that happened there. How the King of the Melodious Sneezers conducted my parents in great honor to his palace, and how they were treated by him. While it lies within my power to gratify the curiosity of my readers as to what part of the world it was in which I first saw darkness—for I was born in the night—yet, as to the nature of the immediate spot on which I was born, unfortunately I am able to do more than repeat my father's words when questioned as to this point.

" My son, if I were on my death-bed I could only say that thou wert either born in the centre in a great lake, on an island, upon a peninsula or on the top of a very high mountain, as I have often explained to thee."

Let it suffice, then, gentle reader, for the present, for me to inform you that at the time of my birth, my parents were traveling in Africa; that my father had just successfully accomplished one of the most wonderful feats in mountain climbing, namely, the ascent of the loftiest peak of the Mountains of the Moon; that his guides had abandoned him upon his reaching a particularly dangerous spot in the ascent; but that he had pushed forward without them, and reached the summit after several days of terrible privation,

suffering both hunger and thirst,—it being a peculiarity of the atmosphere after passing a certain height that the muscles of the face and throat became paralyzed and the unfortunate traveler either perishes from hunger or thirst while in the very presence of delicious fruit and cool, limpid water.

Upon rejoining my mother, who had accompanied him as far up the mountain side as the best-trained and most surefooted mules could find a foot-hold, they proceeded to make their way, as they supposed, to the valley from which they had first set out.

An impenetrable fog now shut them in and they soon found themselves hopelessly and helplessly wandering about.

On the morning of the third day the fog had even increased in thickness, closing around them like a pall, almost shutting out the light of day.

While groping about my father had come into contact with the two beasts of burden which had served him in the easier parts of the ascent. They were quietly and unconcernedly browsing upon the sweet and tender shrubs which grew on the mountain side.

Suddenly an idea came to my father. It was born of that desperation which makes a man think long and hard before lying down to die.

It was thus he reasoned: If these animals are permitted to eat their fill whenever their appetites demand, they will be quite willing to stay where they are, especially when they find themselves surrounded by such excellent pastures, and, in addition thereto, quite relieved from all toil. Let them, however, feel the pangs of hunger, or better yet, starvation's tooth at their vitals and their thoughts will at once revert to their homes, their masters, their feeding-troughs and they will lose no time in setting out for the village where they belong. With the energy of despair, my father hurriedly bound a piece of canvass over their mouths so that they could neither graze nor drink and awaited the

results of his experiment, with bated breath, for the tears and groans of my poor mother, whose strength was fast ebbing away, smote him to the very soul.

After a few hours the animals rose to their feet and became very restive, and in another hour their hunger had so increased that they were making frantic efforts to feed, as my father could easily tell from the jerking of the line which he had been careful to attach to their headstalls.

After the fourth hour there was a long silence, during which the animals seemed to be deliberating as to what course they should pursue.

The fifth hour came.

My mother had sunk to rest, weak and weary, in my father's arms. Suddenly there was a tightening of the guiding lines. Gently my father aroused his sleeping mate, whispering a few words of comfort.

Again the lines tightened.

My parents were now on their feet, peering into the depths of the impenetrable fog which shrouded them about and made them even invisible to each other.

Hist! the animals move again! with a sudden impulse, as if their minds had at last solved the problem which had been bewildering them for several hours, the beasts, with violent snortings turned from the spot, pushing through the shrubbery and causing my parents to face quite about.

Evidently there was a complete accord between the conclusions reached by their intelligence or instinct, for not once did they pull apart or come to a halt, except when restrained by my father. And thus my dear parents were saved! All that day and part of the next did they pursue their dreary way. The fog at last lifted, and it was at once apparent to my father that, although the animals were guiding them towards human habitations, yet it was not the land he had quitted upon starting out upon the journey to the mountain peak. The path now became so plainly visible that my father removed the improvised muzzles from the

two animals and allowed them to satisfy their hunger, which they proceeded to do with the keenest relish. So worn out was my mother that she sank helpless to the ground. Refreshing her with a draught of spring-water and the juice of some wild grapes, my father hastily prepared a bed of soft foliage, upon which they were both glad to throw themselves after their long and weary tramp.

They had soon fallen into a deep and most delightful sleep. How long they lay on their leafy bed, wrapt in their refreshing slumber, they knew not.

It certainly was for many a long hour; for when they awoke, hunger was gnawing at their stomachs. Fain would they have at once proceeded to gather fruit, had not their ears been suddenly saluted with most extraordinary noises. They rubbed their eyes and looked about and at each other, deeming themselves the sport of some merry jack-a-dreamer.

But, no; they were wide awake and in full possession of their senses. Again the strange sounds are heard and this time they are nearer and clearer.

There is a rise and a fall, a swelling out and then a dying away.

The sounds are jerky and snappy like and there is a singular music in them.

Nearer and still nearer they come. Louder and still louder they grow. "Wild beasts?" whispered my mother half inquiringly.

"Nay!" falls from my father's lips. "Not unless human beings may be so wild as to merit the name of beasts."

"Hark again!" murmured my mother.

There was no mistaking the sounds any longer, for, like a chorus of many voices, shrill and piping, deep and grumbling, soft and musical, harsh and guttural, yet all in a sort of rude and wild harmony, mingling in one mighty strain, now low and scarcely audible and now breaking out with a fierce and seemingly threatening vigor, the singers,

chanters, howlers or what they might be, rushed into the valley below us in a wild and yet half regulated disorder. They were human beings in savage garb, with painted faces and clubs swung lightly across their shoulders. Whether pausing or advancing they still kept up their wild and mysterious chant, choppy, jerky and snappy for all the world like a thousand people who had just drawn plentifully from a thousand snuff boxes.

“ Save me, husband!” cried my mother with pallid face.

“We shall be put to some awful torture by these wild children of the forest.” A smile so gentle, and yet so calm, that it could not fail to be reassuring spread over my father’s features.

“ Never fear!” said he, “I know them, I’ve been seeking them! What has been denied many a traveler stronger and bolder than I, has been accorded to a member of the Trump family in the most miraculous manner. When we return to Europe every Monarch, every learned society, will hasten to bind a medal on my breast, for, dear wife, your husband is the first white man to enter the land of the—”

“ The—?” echoed my mother leaning forward and grasping her husband’s arm.

“ Melodious Sneezers!”

“ Melodious Sneezers?” repeated my mother with wide-opened eye, and amusement seated in every feature.

“ Melo—”

But she could get no further. To my father’s infinite amusement, she fell a-sneezing most violently. In such rapid succession did the sneezes flow that it sounded exactly like a diminutive engine under full headway.

At last the fit seemed to have passed. “Melo—” but in vain; she could not reach the second syllable.

And now, in his turn, my father started off, slow at first but going faster and faster.

Strange to say their sneezing soon began to catch the ways of the country and blended thoroughly, keeping time in

spite of their efforts to check it.

“ Know then, dear wife,” cried my father pantingly when his fit was over, “that those strange people stretched on the greensward below are the “Melodious Sneezers;” that they are not only perfectly harmless, but gentle, kind and peaceable to an astonishing degree. Fear them not! Their clubs are only for game.” “But why—?” asked my mother warily lest another fit should take her.

“ I understand thee,” was the reply. “Listen. Know, that in this valley and in the greater ones below, the air is always filled with myriads upon myriads of insects of infinitesimal size; only the strongest microscope can give proof to your sight of their actual existence. For countless generations, these peaceable barbarians here have been subjected to the tickling sensations which you and I have—”

Again my poor parent fell a-sneezing in regular and musical cadences, up and down, deep and shrill, now fast and faster, now slow and slower until silence reigned again.

“ Just experienced,” resumed my father, “until it has rendered the effort of sneezing quite as easy as breathing, and taking advantage of results which they soon discerned could not be avoided, these children of nature were not slow to lay aside their usual speech and literally talk by sneezes!”

“ With them, a sneeze is capable of so many intonations, so many inflections, that they find no difficulty in expressing all the necessary feelings and sensations,—at least necessary for them in their simple lives, as you shall see later on.”

Fain would my poor mother here express her passing wonder but she dare not open her mouth. “Come, dearest mate,” cried my father gayly. “Courage! Let us descend into this beautiful valley, for as yet we are only standing upon the borders of the “Land of the Melodious Sneezers” called in their soft and musical tongue Lâ-aah-chew-lâ.”

The pronunciation of this word again threw my poor

parents into a perfect whirlwind of sneezes; but nothing daunted, they advanced to meet the natives, who at first sight fell prostrate on their faces and for several moments kept up a low plaintive hum of sneezes, with their noses thrust into the grass.

By degrees however, my father succeeding in convincing them that he was quite as peaceably inclined as they were. Whereupon the Melodious Sneezers performed a most singular and withal pleasing dance of joy, their feet keeping perfect time with their chorus of sneezing.

As my father afterwards learned, the dance was to express their intense gratitude to the "white spirits" for not having eaten them alive.

The march homeward was now entered upon, my father walking hand in hand with the King Chew-chew-lô, and my mother escorted by a score or more of his wives, the favorite of the royal house being named Chew-lâ-â-â-â-â and each successive one according as she occupied a less lofty place in the King's affections having a shorter name until at last Chew-lâ signified little better than a mere serving maid.

My father found that the villages of the Melodious Sneezers, on account of the frequency and the violence of inundations from the network of rivers which completely shut in their land, consisted of houses or habitations built in the trees or upon lofty piles.

He and my mother were lodged in one of the most commodious of the royal dwellings and so many slaves and attendants were assigned to care for their wants that there was little or no room to move about.

To their great sorrow, my father proceeded to dismiss several hundred in order that he might get close enough to my mother to converse without holloaing and then sent word to King Chew-chew-lô that both he and my mother would need at least a week of perfect rest and quiet to regain their health and strength after their terrible

sufferings on the slopes of the Mountains of the Moon.

CHAPTER III.



My birth. The elder Baron reads my horoscope. Birth of Bulger. The elder Baron puts on mud-shoes and goes out for a walk. What he discovers. My wonderful precocity. My love for Bulger. My terrible fall into the lake of mud. How the Melodious Sneezers in their mud-shoes attempted to rescue me. Their failure. Bulger comes to their assistance. How I was dug out and restored to my mother. Remarkable effect of the warm mud on my head and brain. The Melodious Sneezers are afraid of me. My fondness for arithmetic and languages. Our farewell to the Melodious Sneezers, and return home. How I discharged my tutors, and how the elder Baron forced them to pay for the instruction I had given them.

BULGER WITH HIS MUD SHOES ON.

At this point my hand trembles and the ink flows unsteadily from my pen.

I am about to record certain events which, I feel assured the reader will agree with me in considering to be the most interesting of my strange and varied life. Possibly I should say interesting to me; for, gentle reader, one of these "certain events" above referred to is a no less important occurrence than my birth into this grand and beautiful world—a world which has proven to be full of wonderful things and of more wonderful beings, as you shall see as I go on with my story.

I was born in midsummer. It was the night season.

Ten thousand stars twinkled over the cradle of that wretched, little, helpless, lump of clay; but brighter than all, like a crimson torch flaming in the skies, Sirius, the dog star, shone down upon me!

My father looked up at the heavens and smiling, murmured: "Little stranger, thou shalt ever be a lover of dogs. Thy smile shall be joy to them, thy words music and in some four-footed beast of their race shalt thou find thy best, thy faithfulest, thy truest friend."

As if to set the very stamp of truth upon my father's words at that very instant a cry of a mother dog was heard in an adjoining room and one of the Royal household Chew-lâ-â came running into my presence with a basket of tiny puppies. My father laughingly seized the wicker cradle of this newly arrived family and holding it up to me, cried out: "Choose, little baron, choose thee a friend and companion." I put out my tiny baby hand and it rested upon one with a particularly large head. "Ha! ha!" laughed my father, "thou hast well chosen, little baron, for him thou hast chosen hath so much brain that his head doth fairly bulge with it."

And when my infant tongue came to wrestle with that word, it was twisted into "Bulger." And thus it was that Bulger and I started out on life's journey at almost the same moment! Upon the following day my father made discovery that the waters had begun to recede in the night, and as he looked down from our lofty dwelling, he saw that it now stood apparently in the centre of quite an extensive island. After breakfast, in accordance with the custom of the country, my father put on a pair of King Chew-chew-lô's wooden shoes which were worn by all of the Melodious Sneezers when attempting to move about on the surface of the soft mud occasioned by the inundation.

These wooden shoes are extremely light although quite as long and as broad as snow shoes. The soles being polished, the wearer is enabled to glide over the mud which, from

the nature of the soil is very oily, with the same rapidity as a runner upon snow shoes.

After an excursion of several hours up hill and down dale my father returned with this piece of strange intelligence, namely, that their habitation had undoubtedly, prior to the falling of the waters been situated in a lake; but that by degrees, as the waters had receded, an island had been formed, which somewhat later had been transformed into a peninsula, which in its turn by a still further sinking of the waters, had been changed into the crown of a mountain with gently sloping sides so that, as he reported to my mother, to his dying day it would be impossible for him to say whether his son had been born in a lake, on an island, upon a peninsula or on a mountain top, a fact which pained him extremely, for, like all the members of his family, he took the greatest pride in recording important events with scrupulous exactitude, even to the smallest detail.

Unlike most babes, who seem content to pass the first half year or so of their lives eating, sleeping and crying, I from the very outset displayed a most astonishing precocity.

When only a few weeks old, although I could not talk, yet I had learned to whistle for Bulger, whose development in mind and body seemed to keep even pace with mine and who passed most of his time looking up into my childish face with an expression which meant only too plainly:

“ Oh, I shall be so glad when that little tongue is unloosed so that you may call me Bulger and bid me do your will.”

Nor had he long to wait.

The one thing, which, at this early period of my life gave me most joy, was the sunlight.

Within doors, I was fretful, peevish, irritable, but once out in the open air, my whole nature changed. I drank in the soft, balmy atmosphere with a vigor and a satisfaction that delighted my father. My face brightened, my eyes traveled from valley to hill, from mountain-top to sky.

Into such an ecstasy of pleasure did this sight of the great world throw me, that my mother became anxious lest it presaged some great evil that was to happen unto me.

But the stately Baron only smiled. "Fear nothing, wife, it only means that within that little head dwells a most wonderfully active mind for a child of its months."

Whenever Bulger heard his little master crying out in joyful tones at sight of the beautiful world, he was sure to be seized with a fit of violent barking, during which he sprang around about me with the wildest and most extravagant manifestations of sympathy.

Without a doubt, there was a wonderful bond of affection between us.

To my mother's-I had almost said horror, I, one day while she was walking with me in her arms, upon the broad veranda, which encircled Chewchewlô's palaces, attempted to throw myself from her arms, crying out in German: Los! Los! (Let me go! Let me go!) I was but two months old and the loud and vigorous tone in which I pronounced this first word which I had spoken in my mother's tongue fairly startled her.

I had, up to that time, apparently been more interested in the soft and musical language of my royal nurse, Chewlâ, in which I could make myself understood very easily. About this time an accident happened to me which, although it did not bring about, it greatly hastened the release from parently restraint, so ardently desired, both by Bulger and by me, for from my very entrance into this world something told me that I should be a famous child, not a mere, precocious youth who is made use of by his parents at social gatherings to bore people already in poor spirits, by mounting upon chair or table and declaiming verses, parrotlike, with half a dozen woodeny, jerky gestures; but a genuine hero, a real traveler, not afraid to brave a tempest, face a wild beast or bully a barbarous people into doing as he wanted them to do.

It was my mother's custom in the cool of the day to sit with me on the broad veranda while she darned my father's stockings; for, although of gentle birth, she had been so accustomed when a girl to exercise German thrift in all things that now, even though she had become the wife of a real baron, she could not forego the pleasure of doing things in those good old ways.

And thus she saved my father many a pfennig which the good man bestowed upon the worthy poor and went down to the grave loaded with their blessings.

At such a time it was that a sudden fit of sneezing seized my mother and to her unspeakable horror she let me slip from her arms. Down, down I fell, striking in the soft mud and disappearing from sight.

The poor woman dropped to the floor like lead.

The stately baron rose to his feet and the color fled from his manly cheek.

But Chew-chew-lô, who fortunately was paying a visit to my father, only smiled.

"Unfeeling barbarian!" roared the great baron, "hast no respect for a father's tears, a mother's anguish? Out upon thee! Would to heaven I had never entered thy domain!" Chew-chew-lô spake not a word. Turning with imperious mien and right royal manner towards a crowd of retainers, he waved his hand.

Quicker than thought the band of Melodious Sneezers sprang to their wooden shoes.

Away, away, they darted like black bats on the wing.

The baron saw that in his terrible grief he had let his better judgment slip away, and with pallid face and bended head stood supporting the fainting form of his wife.

He felt, he knew, that his presence among the Melodious Sneezers at this moment would only disconcert them, impede their progress, and possibly so confuse them that all their efforts might be in vain. They, from their childhood, were so accustomed to wear those huge wooden shoes, to

move about on the surface of this treacherous mud, that if it were possible for human hands to restore his son to his arms, theirs would do it.

And so he spoke a few words of encouragement in my mother's ear, and continued to stand like a statue, with his gaze riveted upon the long files of Melodious Sneezers, as they wound around the crest of the mountain to gain the spot where, as they judged, I had disappeared.

Armed with their light, broad, wooden shovels, their dusky arms rose and fell with wonderful precision and regularity, keeping time with the musical notes of their sneezing; now soft and low, now breaking out into a wild and galloping measure.

Down! Down! Down!

THREE PORTRAITS SHOWING THE WONDERFUL GROWTH OF MY BRAIN.

And yet they delved in vain!

No sign of me was there to gladden the hearts of my poor, grief-stricken parents.

But hark!

What is that shrill cry?

It is not human!

No; for it is Bulger's bark, or rather it is Bulger's yelp.

He had been watching the band of Melodious Sneezers, as their white shovels rose and fell all in vain, with his head thrust through the railings of the veranda.

No one was there with mind and heart enough to catch the meaning of that poor yelp.

Chew-chew-lô saw that his men were standing, leaning on their shovels, with looks of doubt and hesitation in their eyes.

The King was silent.

It was the great baron who spoke:

" Oh, let them not give o'er! My life, my wealth, my all, are thine, good, kind Chew-Chew——"

A fit of sneezing cut short his appeal.

Again Bulger's cry was raised, and this time the King heeded it.

An attendant saw the royal nod, and hastening to bind broad wooden cups upon the dog's feet, he was turned loose upon the surface of the mud.

What is man, with his boasted intelligence?

They were ten paces or more distant from the point where I had disappeared.

Yelping, barking, and whining by turns, my dear Bulger hurried to the spot where his unerring scent told him that his beloved little master had gone down.

Again the band of Melodious Sneezers set to work with renewed vigor, their white shovels flashing with strange effect against the inky blackness of the mud.

Bulger encouraged them with loud and joyful barkings.

Suddenly a clear, ringing, melodious "chew" rent the air.

They had caught sight of me!

With rare foresight for one of my months, I had closed my nostrils with one hand before reaching the mud, and had thus saved my lungs from filling up.

But how useless would have been this precaution, had not my faithful Bulger come to my rescue!

His joy now knew no bounds.

I thought that I caught a glimpse of a smile on the old baron's tear-stained cheek, as his boy was borne to the veranda, more like an animated lump of earth than aught else, for the air had revived me. My eyes were not only wide open, but they were the only clean place on my whole body.

Utterly regardless of my filthy condition, my fond mother clasped me convulsively to her breast, and I verily believe that she would have pressed her lips upon my mud-covered head and face, had she not seen the baron's broad palm held in suspicious proximity, while her mother's heart was emptying itself out in words. A few basins of warm water, and I was myself again.

No, I was never myself again. My bath in the warm mud of Lâ-aah-chew-lâ effected a most remarkable change in me; it checked the growth of my body and turned all my strength upwards into my head and brain.

In one short month my head almost doubled in size.

My baby face and expression were gone!

And ere another moon had filled her horns I had grown to be a living wonder!

Not only was the size of my head something remarkable, but from my eyes beamed an astonishing intelligence.

The poor women of Lâ-aah-chew-lâ Land crouched in front of me as if I were a being from another world and then tapping their foreheads they approached my mother and whispered:

“ Most gracious Chew-lâ-â-â-â-â the Great Spirit has made a mistake and put two souls in there instead of one!”

And then they bent their graceful bodies till their foreheads touched my mother’s feet and withdrew, going out backwards like the best regulated court ladies, each leveling her finger at me and opening wide her eyes as she disappeared through the door.

The whole scene was so grotesque that I burst out into a shout of laughter.

Upon hearing which, the poor creatures tumbled headlong over each other in their mad efforts to get outside of the house, shrieking at the top of their voices:

“ Save us! save us! He will bewitch us!”

“ Little Baron!” said my father in a tone of mock anger, “you should not have frightened the ladies of King Chew-chew-lô’s Court!”

Chew-pâ! Chew-pâ! (Idiots! Idiots!) I replied, looking up from my slate upon which I was working out an example in arithmetic, for I was very fond of figures.

In fact, my father had already taught me addition by showing me how to trade off worthless glass beads for valuable ivory, and division, by taking away ninety cents

from every dollar I made. Long before I could read or write, I knew the letters of several languages by name, and could spell any word which had no silent letter in it. No one took more delight in my wonderful accomplishments than Bulger.

He seemed to know instinctively that his little master was no ordinary being and respected him accordingly. We now bade adieu to the Land of Lâ-aah-chew-lâ and the Melodious Sneezers.

King Chew-chew-lô with a mighty band of retainers accompanied us to his frontier, making the forests resound with their melodious chew-chew-a-ing. Standing on the old baron's shoulders, I waved them a last goodbye to which they answered with such a perfect whirlwind of Chew-chew-â's that Bulger fairly howled with delight.

Any special honor paid to his master was always a personal matter to him. The elder baron had intended to penetrate still further into the heart of Africa; but the fact is, that the continual growth of my mind was so wonderful that it engrossed his attention from morn till night. He endeavored to hide this from me; but all to no purpose.

Before I was two years old my brain had grown so heavy that my mother was obliged to sew pieces of lead in the soles of my shoes to keep me right end upwards, and yet, in spite of this precaution, I was often found standing upon my head working out difficult mathematical problems by making use of my toes, as the Chinese do their counting machines.

The first thing which my father did upon reaching home was to take me to a phrenologist in order to have a chart made of my head.

The examination lasted a month.

At length, upon the completion of the chart, it was found that I possessed thirty-two distinct bumps.

Well-developed ones, too!

It was, therefore, at once determined to engage thirty-two learned tutors, each tutor to have charge of a separate bump and to do his utmost to enlarge it even if it grew to be a horn.

My father was resolved to leave nothing undone in order to develop my mental powers to the utmost limit. I said nothing either for or against the scheme.

In one short year I had learned all that the thirty-two tutors could teach me, and, what is more, I had taught each one of them fifty things which he had not known before, and which I had learned while traveling in foreign lands with my parents.

One fine morning to the great surprise of my thirty-two tutors I discharged the whole of them.

The elder baron at my suggestion now sent a bill to each tutor for services rendered him by me.

Each tutor refused to pay.

The elder baron, at my suggestion, now caused legal process to be served upon each one of them.

The court upon hearing my testimony rendered an opinion which covered five thousand pages of legal cap paper and required a whole week to read, in which they held that each thing which I had taught to each one of my thirty-two tutors was so remarkably strange and peculiar that in the eye of the law it was worth at least one hundred dollars. That made the bill of each tutor amount to five thousand dollars, or one hundred and sixty thousand dollars in all.

The court then adjourned for a year, all three judges being so worn out mentally and physically as to need a twelve months' rest before taking up any other business.

THE THREE WEARY JUDGES AS THEY APPEARED AT THE CLOSE OF MY SUIT AGAINST MY TUTORS.

CHAPTER IV.



How the elder Baron lost flesh worrying about the investment of my money. Effect of his anxiety on the rest of the household. I take the matter in hand and devise ways to increase my fortune. I become extremely wealthy. When eight years of age I am seized with an uncontrollable desire to visit far-away lands, and begin to pack up. The elder Baron objects. How I set to work to get his consent. Wild doings of my playfellows. How we stormed the castle, broke up the hawking, ruined the fox hunt, summoned the ten doctors, and set fire to the neighboring fields. The elder Baron grows weary of my doings and consents to let me go. My delight and Bulger's joy.

The question which now occupied my father's mind to the exclusion of all other thoughts was how to invest this large sum of money, so that upon my attaining my twenty-first year I would be provided with a sufficiently large income to live as a baron should—particularly when he belonged to so famous a family as ours.

The fact of the matter is, my father permitted this question to prey upon his peace of mind to such an extent that he lost flesh perceptibly.

My mother, too, seeing his lamentable condition began to fret and worry to such a degree, that she likewise became greatly emaciated. With their loss of flesh naturally their appetites dwindled and little or no food was provided; or, anyway, no more than was just sufficient to satisfy Bulger's and my wants.

Whereupon the servants began to lose flesh, both the indoor and outdoor ones; and in their desperate attempt to keep body and soul together, the horses and cattle were fed upon short rations, and the consequence was, they, too, soon began to fall away.

So it grew to be quite a serious sight to see my poor father and mother reduced to mere skin and bones, driven about the country by mere shadows for coachman and footman, and drawn by four horses whose bones fairly rattled under their skins when they were coaxed or beaten into a lazy trot.

Bulger and I alone retained our plumpness and good spirits. At length I determined to interfere and put a speedy end to this deplorable state of affairs. I exacted from the elder baron a solemn promise that he would follow my directions to the letter and not raise any objections, no matter how wild or unreasonable they might appear to him, or to my mother.

Then bidding him to partake of some good, succulent food, retire early and get a nice long sleep, I saluted him respectfully and said:

“Baron, until to-morrow morning!”

I had scarcely finished my breakfast when my door opened and the elder baron walked into the room.

He looked much refreshed. The color had returned to his cheek, the gleam to his eye.

He was already a different man.

“Here, gracious Sir,” I began, handing him a parchment roll, “is a list of all the best known almanac makers in our land. Have interviews with them at once and purchase from them the right to furnish weather prognostications for the coming year!”

The elder baron began to expostulate. “Baron!” I remarked sternly, raising my hand, “a true Knight has but one word to give!”

He was silent and motioned me to continue.

I did so as follows:

“ Respected parent, when you have secured this right from each of them, return to me.”

In a few days my father had accomplished his mission.

He entered my room and put into my hands the needful concessions from every noted almanac maker in the land.

Again I bade him refresh himself thoroughly, get a good night’s rest and see me in the morning.

As Bulger and I were returning from breakfast the elder baron presented himself at the door of my apartments.

He looked strong and well. His face had filled out again and his step had recovered its old-time elasticity.

Again I placed a roll of parchment in his hands, and said to him:

“ Scatter the contents of that parchment evenly and plentifully throughout each almanac, on the pages devoted to the months of November, December, January, and February.”

He looked at me inquiringly, and his lips began to move.

“ Noble Sir!” said I, ere a sound had issued from his mouth, “in our family, knights have always been without fear and without reproach.” He bent his lofty form in silence and withdrew.

Possibly the reader may have a little curiosity to know the contents of the parchment roll which I placed in the hands of the elder baron on this occasion.

If brevity be the soul of wit, it was witty. If a fair round hand be the garb of truth, it was truthful. Be this as it may choose to be, the words which my pen had traced on that parchment roll, read as follows:

“ All signs point to an extremely cold Winter.” “Indications are that the coming Winter will be the severest for half a century.” “Forecasts all give the same answer—a Winter of exceptional length and bitter coldness.” “Most skilled prognosticators agree in predicting a degree of low temperature rarely reached in these latitudes.” “About this