



By FRANK RICHARDS

IT was in the Middle Ages, in the days of bards and sages,
Whom we read of in the pages of the chroniclers of old ;
In the time of war and wassail, in an ancient feudal castle,
Served by many a valiant vassal, dwelt a noble Baron bold !
And this Baron had a daughter, fair to see, and many sought her,
Knights and nobles came to court her, from the north, south, east, and west.

But among her many suitors, serenading tootle-tooters,
Young Sir Fatted de FitzBooters was the one she loved the best.

Now Sir Fatted was a chappy, might make any damsel happy,
But his heritage was scrappy, and his bank account was nil.
He could dance and caper lightly, he could give the glad-eye brightly,
He could serenade her nightly, but he couldn't pay a bill !
And her dad, with riches sated, would not see her humbly mated,
So she feared that she was fated all her days to mourn and mope.
So the sweet, romantic maiden had a soul with sorrow laden,
And indeed at times betrayed an inclination to elope.

When the subject once was mooted, the bold Baron fiercely booted
Young Sir Fatted till he scooted. So he seldom saw the maid.
But at midnight's solemn hour, he would stand beneath her tower,
And with lungs of wondrous power he would sing his serenade.
He would sing his faithful passion, in a wild romantic fashion,
With a voice like Bull of Bashan, to the maid above him far.
While the stars did shine and twinkle, or the rain-drops gently sprinkle,
To the tinkle-tinkle-tinkle of his second-hand guitar.

And at times, his love outpouring, while the Baron bold was snoring,
He would sing his song adoring and forget the flight of time.
In his ardour never heeding how the hours were fleetly speeding,
Most pathetically pleading in most melancholy rhyme.
Keeping on till early morning, e'en until the day was dawning,
While the beauteous maid was yawning as she listened high above ;
Till one morn, when day was breaking, the bold Baron, early waking,
Heard the din that he was making with his endless tale of love.

Heard him twanging, singing, sighing : " Love, the golden hours are flying,
And your lover true is dying for a tender clasp or kiss.
Oh, take pity on my plight, Love ! Fly, oh fly, with me to-night, Love !
All is ready for the flight, Love ! It's a chance you shouldn't miss !





True, too true, I have no gold, dear! But true love is wealth untold,
dear!

Hearts cannot be bought and sold, dear! Fly, oh fly, with me, I pray;
And in happiness most utter, we will live on bread-and-butter!
So, my darling ducky, flutter to these arms, and we'll away!"

It was certainly a pity that this sweet, love-laden ditty,
So pathetic and so pretty, did not make the Baron melt.
But he really seemed to hate it, it is painful to relate it,
But we cannot help but state it—it was wrath the Baron felt.
In his rage he stomped and spluttered, and some certain words he
uttered,

Which he scarcely should have muttered—they were hefty words and
strong,
And the Baron only stayed a tick to grasp his mace, and made a
Rush to catch the serenader in the middle of his song.

When Sir Fatted saw him coming, very quickly ceased he strumming,
Every thought of yum-yum-yumming disappearing from his mind.
Ceased he quick his song romantic, ceased he every love-lorn antic,
Fled he forth in hurry frantic, with the Baron close behind.
In his haste and hurry caring little whither he was tearing,
While the Baron, fiercely glaring, chased with arm upraised to whack,
Teeth that gritted, eyes that glinted, in red rage and wrath unstinted,
Breathing vengeance as he sprinted on the luckless lover's track.

Panting, gasping, springing, leaping, while the gentle maid was weeping,
And the Baron fierce was keeping close behind and seeing red,
Went the young unhappy lover, looking round in vain for cover,
Dodging under, round, and over, barely half-a-length ahead.
Twisting, turning, bounding, jumping—slipping, sliding, falling, bump-
ing—

Still behind him came the clumping of the Baron hot in chase;
While the dawn was gently beaming, and the lady fair was screaming,
And the perspiration streaming down Sir Fatted's flabby face.

"Arma," Virgil sang, in ages past, "virumque," in the pages
Of our school-books it engages our attention at the start.
"Crura," might have run his version, "puerumque"—not a worse 'un,
Had he seen that lad's exertion, as he legged it to depart.
"Oh, the fatal, fatal hour!" sobbed the maiden in the tower,
And her tears fell in a shower, as her brow she wildly smote.
"Oh, my hat! My only bonnet! This just puts the lid upon it!"
Gasped the youth, in consternation, as he reached the castle moat!

Just before him muddy water—just behind him, instant slaughter!
Pausing there he nearly caught a swipe the Baron handed out.
At the moat's edge wildly stopping, on his knees in terror dropping,
He expected instant chopping from the Baron bold and stout.
But he need not so have worried, for the Baron, flushed and flurried,
Rushed so headlong and so hurried, that he fairly looped the loop.
Stumbling headlong o'er the lover, the pursuer hurtled over,
And before he could recover he was fairly in the soup.

Deep into the water sinking, while Sir Fatted stuck there blinking,
Unintentionally drinking half-a-gallon of the moat,
The stout Baron went right under, through the water cleft asunder,
Which was really not a wonder—he was far too stout to float!
From the bank Sir Fatted peering, horrid gasps and gurgles hearing,
Saw the Baron disappearing in the water far from sweet.
But a few short moments later, like an active alligator,
The fair lady's angry pater struggled snorting to his feet.

By that castle tall and stately there had been no rainfall lately,
Which diminished rather greatly the supply of water, so
There was much more mud than water, and the Baron, breathing
slaughter,



Stood a third—at least a quarter—of his height above the flow.
Red with rage, and rather redder after that unlooked-for header,
In a gasping voice he said a word or two we shan't repeat.
Drenched and dripping, but still ramping, through the mud he started
tramping,
Plunging, snorting, striding, stamping hard to disengage his feet.

But the mud was thick, as stated, and the Baron, heavy-weighted,
With his armour thickly-plated, deeper sunk and deeper yet,
First his tootsies, then his knees in mud beneath the moat were squeezin',
A position far from pleasin' as his chin the water met.
And the more he squirmed and struggled, deeper still his tootsies snug-
gled,
And he gurgled and he guggled, with the water round his neck.
He was stuck there, as if planted. "By my halidom!" he panted.
"Wish I'd had this moat decanted! Lend a hand, you pie-faced
geck!"

Smiled the youth, no more in terror, "You are bunkered, and no error!
Keep your wool on, sir, and peradventure I will help you land!
Yonder, sir, is that fair donna, and you know I dote upon her.
Noble sir, I have the honour to demand your daughter's hand!"
"Grooch! Gug! Gug! Gug!" gasped the other. "Will you stand
and see me smother?"
"One good turn deserves another!" said Sir Fatted, with a bow.
"Think no more of wrath and slaughter, let me wed your beauteous
daughter,
And I'll yank you from the water! Take my tip, and do it now!"

The bold Baron tried to shake a fist and say "Go to Jamaica!"
But he gasped and gurgled "Take her!" as he felt the water mount,
"Take her, bother you, and keep her!" For his feet were sinking
deeper,
He could neither crawl nor creep a step, and had to take the count.
"Sir, I thank you!" said Sir Fatted, leaning over as he chatted,
Grasping hair all wet and matted, and beginning hard to tug.
"Sir, your moat is thick and whiffy, thicker far than Thames or Liffey,
But I'll do it in a jiffy!" Said the Baron, "Grooch! Gug! Gug!"

It was really time for action, for in scarce another fraction
Of a minute the extraction would have hardly been in time,
With the water at his throttle, having swallowed quite a pottle,
Like a cork drawn from a bottle came the Baron from the slime.
On the grassy margin sprawling, when Sir Fatted finished hauling,
In a sticky state appalling, shaking mud off in a shower,
Lay the Baron, fuming, fretting, while Sir Fatted, him forgetting,
Went off gaily pirouetting to the lady in the tower.

"Oh, my dearest and my fairest! Oh, my richest and my rarest!
Wed me if for me thou carest!" sang Sir Fatted in his joy,
"For the Baron has relented, and has happily consented
That our wedding be cemented!" Said the lady fair, "Oh, boy!"
"Oh, my dainty darling ducky, it has all turned out quite lucky,
Though your pater looks so mucky!" sang Sir Fatted in his glee.
"Ain't I glad he heard me singing, and came after me a-springing!
Wedding bells will soon be ringing for my lady-love and me!"

And the bells of that gay wedding could be heard from Rye to Reading,
As the brave Sir Fatted led in that fair lady bright and gay,
Vassals cheering, jesters wheezing, everybody pleased and pleasing,
Though the Baron bold was sneezing as he gave the bride away!
Everyone the youth congratrated, and his back they gaily patted,
And the face of young Sir Fatted shone just like the summer sun.
All was merry joy and laughter, ringing loud from roof and rafter;
They lived happy ever after—and so now our tale is done.



ST. JIM'S DOWN THE AGES!



DOCTOR STERNE
1637-1652.



ST. JAMES'S COLLEGE
— 1715. —



A WRESTLING BOUT.
A POPULAR SPORT
IN GEORGIAN DAYS
AT ST. JIM'S.



THOMAS MERRY
1850

BREAKING UP FOR THE HOLIDAYS, 1807



THE JAPE OF ST. JIM'S. KING MAL VISITS THE SCHOOL.



THE GREAT FIRE AT ST. JIM'S.

The Editor insisted that the Holiday Annual artist should include in his set of drawings a page of thumbnail pictures showing outstanding events in the history of St. Jim's. The result compares very favourably with the earlier full-page drawings of Rookwood and Greyfriars.