

Sandalphon.

BY H. W. BONGFELLOW

Have you read in the Talmud of old,
In the Legends the Rabins have told,
Of the limitless realms of the air—
Have you read it—the marvelous story
Of Sandalphon, the angel of glory,
Sandalphon, the angel of Prayer?

How erect, at the outermost gates
Of the City Leselial, he waits,
With his feet on his ladder of light,
That crowded with angels unnumbered,
By Jacob was seen, as he slumbered
Alone in the desert at night?

The angels of Wind and Fire
Chant only one hymn, and expire
With a song's irresistible stress;
Expire in the rapture and wonder,
As harp strings are broken assunder
By music they rob to express.

But serene with the rapturous throng,
Unmoved by the rush of the song,
With eyes unimpassioned and slow,
Among the dead angels, the deathless
Sandalphon stands listening breathless
To sounds that ascend from below.

From the spirits on earth that adore,
From the souls of that entreat and implore,
In the fervor and passion of prayer;
From the hearts that are broken with losses,
And weary with dragging the crosses
Too heavy for mortals to bear.

And he gathers the prayers as he stands,
And they change into flowers in his hands,
Into garlands of purple and red;
And beneath the great arch of the portal,
Through the streets of the City Immortal,
Is wafted the fragrance they shed.

It is but a legend I know—
A fable, a phantom, a show,
Of the ancient Rabbinical lore;
Yet the old medieval tradition,
The beautiful strange superstition,
But haunts me and holds me the more.

When I look from my window at night,
And the welkin above is all white,
All throbbing and panting with stars,
Among them majestic is standing,
Sandalphon, the angel, expanding
His pinions in nebulous bars.

And the legend, I feel, is a part
Of the hunger and thirst of the heart,
The frenzy and fire of the brain,
That grasps of the foliage forbidden,
The golden pomegranates of Eden,
To quiet its fever and pain.

HALF AN HOUR OF AGONY.

MR. THUMBLEDIRK'S TERRIBLE PREDICAMENT.

Yesterday afternoon Mr. Jasper Thumbledirk, who is forty three years old and unmarried, dashed into our sanctum and evolved a remark, the intensity of which fairly made our blood curdle. And when he completed the remark, which was neither very long nor remarkably complicated, he picked up a dictionary, hurled it at the proof reader with great asperity, and before that good natured and greatly abused angel of the editorial staff could recover from his emotion and get his umbrella Mr. Thumbledirk was gone. He dashed out of the door, missed the stairway and stepped down the elevator, falling a distance of three stories, but he was too mad and excited to get hurt, and we heard him rousing down the alley, yelling and swearing till he was out of sight and hearing. As he is usually a very severe man, of habitual reserve, very particular and guarded in his language, we were amazed not only at his words but for his excited manner afforded not the slightest explanation. During the day, however, we became possessed of certain facts which may give the reader some clew to the causes of this worthy and respectable citizen's violent and disrespectful manner and language. It appears that about two o'clock in the afternoon, Mr. Thumbledirk dropped in at the Union depot to ask some questions relative to the arrival and departure of trains, and while passing through the ladies' waiting room, he was accosted by a lady acquaintance who was going east on the T. P. & W. at half-past two. She wished to go up town to make some little purchases, but didn't want to take her baby out in the rain. Would Mr. Thumbledirk please hold it for her until she came back? She wouldn't be gone more than five minutes, and little Ernest was just as good as an angel, and besides, he was sound asleep.

Mr. Thumbledirk, with a strange flutter of his feelings, lied, and said he would only be too delighted. Then he took the baby, and the ticket agent, who has two, knew by the manner in which the man took the baby and looked anxiously from one end of it to the other to see which end the head was on, that he had never handled a human baby before in all his life and promptly closed his window to shut out the trouble that he knew was on the eve of an eruption.

Mr. Thumbledirk is a very tall, dignified man. He was rather annoyed as the mother disappeared through the door to observe that all the women in the waiting-room were intently regarding him with various expressions, curiosity predominating. He sat down and bent his arms at the elbows until they resembled in shape two letters V's, with baby lying neck and heels in the angle at the elbows, and he looked, and he felt that he looked, like the hideous pictures of Moloch in the old Sunday-school book.

Thumbledirk felt keenly that he was an object of curiosity and illy repressed mirth to the women around him. Now a dignified man does not enjoy being a laughing stock for any body, and it is especially humiliating for him to feel that he appears ridiculous in the eyes of women. This feeling is intensified when the man is a bachelor, and knows he is a little awkward and ill at ease in the presence of women, anyhow. So, as he gazed upon the face of the quiet, sleeping infant, he made an insane effort to appear perfectly easy, and to create the impression that he was an old married man, and the father of twenty-six children, he disengaged one arm, and chucked the baby under the chin. About such a chuck

that you always feel like giving a boy with a "putty blower" or a "pea shooter."

It knocked the little rose-bud of a mouth shut so quick and close the baby couldn't catch its breath for three minutes, and Mr. Thumbledirk thought with a strange, terrible sinking of the heart, that it was just possible he might have overdone the thing. A short young woman in a kilt skirt and a pretty face, sitting directly opposite him, said, "Oh!" in a mild kind of a shriek, and then giggled; a tall thin woman in a black bombazine dress and a gray shawl, and an angular woman in a calico dress and a sun-bonnet, gasped, "why?" in a startled duet, a fat woman with a small heard of children and a market basket, shouted, "Well!" and then immediately clapped her plump hands over her mouth as though the exclamation had been started from her, and a tall raw-boned woman who wore horned pectacles and talked bass, said, "The poor lamb!" in such sepulchral tones that everybody else laughed, and Mr. Thumbledirk, who didn't just exactly know whether she meant him or the baby, blushed scarlet and felt his face grow so hot that he smelt his hair. And his soul was filled with such gloomy forebodings that all the future looked dark to him.

The baby opened its blue eyes wider than any man who never owned a baby would have believed it possible, and stared at Mr. Thumbledirk with an expression of alarm, and a general lack of confidence that boded a distressing want of harmony in all further proceedings. Mr. Thumbledirk viewing these signs of carelessness with inward alarm, conceived the happy idea that the baby needed a change of position. So he stood it upon its feet.

It is unnecessary to tell any mother of a family that by the execution of this apparently very simple movement, the unhappy man had every thread of that baby's clothes under its arms and around its neck in an instant. A general out suppressed giggle went around the room.

Mr. Thumbledirk blushed, redder and hotter than ever, and the astonished baby, after one horrified look at its strange guardian, whimpered uneasily.

Mr. Thumbledirk, not daring to risk the sound of his voice, would have nudged the baby up and down, but its little legs bent themselves into such appalling crescents the first time he let the cherub's weight upon them, that the wretched man knew in his heart of hearts that he had forever and eternally most hopelessly "bowed" them, and felt that he could never again look a bow-legged man in the face without a spasm of remorse.

As for meeting the father of this beautiful boy, whose life he had blighted with a pair of crooked legs—never, he would face death itself first. And in coming years whenever he met this boy waddling to school on a pair of legs like ice-tongs, he would gaze upon them as his own guilty work, and would tremble lest the wrath of the avenging gods should fall upon him.

Alarmed at the gloomy shadows which these distressing thoughts cast over Mr. Thumbledirk's face the baby drew itself up into a knot and wailed. Mr. Thumbledirk balanced it carefully on his hands and dandled it, for all the world as he would "bett" a watermelon. Instantly the baby straightened itself out with such alarming celerity that the tortured dry nurse caught it by the heels just in time to save it from falling to the floor.

"He'll kill that child yet," said the gloomy woman who talked bass, and Mr. Thumbledirk felt the blood curdle in cold waves in his veins. By this time the baby was screaming like a calliope, and the noise added inexpressibly to Mr. Thumbledirk's confusion and distress. He would have trotted the baby on his knee, but the attempt occasioned too much comment. The fat woman with the market basket said:

"Oh-h, the little dear!"

And the short, pretty woman snapped her eyes and said:

"Oh-h-h! how cruel!"

And the woman in the black bombazine, and the woman in the sun bonnet said:

"Oh-h-h! just look at him!"

And the woman who talked bass said, in her most sepulchral and penetrating accents:

"The man's a fool."

And the baby itself, utterly ignoring the fact that Mr. Thumbledirk was laboring in its own interests, threw all the obstructions it could in the way of further proceedings by alternately straightening itself out into an abnormal condition of such appalling rigidity, that Mr. Thumbledirk was obliged to hold its head tightly in one hand and its heels in the other, and then suddenly doubling itself up into so small a knot that the poor man had to hold his two hands close together, like a bowl, and hold the baby as he would a pint of sand, and these transitions from one extreme to the other, were made with such startling rapidity and appalling suddenness, that Mr. Thumbledirk had to be constantly on the alert, and his arms ached so, and he exhibited such signs of fatigue and distress that the depot policeman looked in to say to him that if he was tired out, he would send in a section hand or the steam eloveld to give him a spell.

It seemed to Mr. Thumbledirk that he never heard so much noise come from so small a baby in his life. The more he turned it around and tossed it about the more its cloak and dress, and skirts and things became entangled around its neck, and now and then a mass of drapery would get on the baby's face and stifle its cries for a second, but the noise would come out stronger than ever when the tossing little hands would tear away the obstruction. And the louder the baby screamed the faster the vigorous fat legs flew kicking in every direction, like crazy fly-wheels with the rim off. Sometimes Mr. Thumbledirk made as high as a as a hundred and eighty grabs a minute

at those legs and never touched one of them. He was hot, blind and wild with terror and confusion. Once he tried to sing to the baby, but when he quavered out a "Hootchy, pootchy, pudden' and pie," the women laughed, all but the gloomy one who talked bass—she sniffed, and he stopped. He gave the baby his pearl-handled knife, and the innocent threw it into the stove. He gave it his gold watch, and it dashed it on the floor. He gave it his emerald scarf-pin, and the baby put it into its mouth.

The pretty woman screamed.

The sad woman in the bombazine shrieked.

The angular woman in the sun-bonnet yelled, "Oh, mercy on us!"

The fat woman with the market-basket called wildly for a doctor.

The gloomy woman who talked bass shouted hoarsely:

"He's killed it!"

And Mr. Thumbledirk hooked his finger into that child's mouth and choked it until its face was purple and black, trying to find that pin. And Mr. Thumbledirk couldn't hear even the chattering women. It beat the air with its clenched fists, and thrashed and kicked with its fat bare legs, and wailed and howled and choked and screamed and doubled up and straightened out until Mr. Thumbledirk, steeling his nerves to the awful effort, clasped the screaming baby in his arms and rose to his feet.

He was going to go out and throw himself and the baby under the first train that came along.

The baby's mother sprang out through the door like an angel of mercy.

She took the baby in her arms and with one slight motion of her hand, had its raiment straightened out so exquisitely smooth there wasn't a wrinkle in it.

The baby lay in her arms as placid, quiet, flexible, graceful and contented as a dream of Paradise.

The mother thanked Mr. Thumbledirk for the agony and torture he had endured so patiently for her. This was the way she thanked him. She did not look at him. She looked straight out of the window with a stony glare, and said in ones that made the thermometer shiver:

"Mr. Thumbledirk isn't a very good nurse, is he, baby?"

All the women smiled, except the gloomy woman who talked bass. She nodded approvingly.

The baby looked up into Mr. Thumbledirk's face and laughed aloud.

What Mr. Thumbledirk said when he dashed in at the sanctum last evening was this:

"By the avenging daughters of Night, the everlasting, snake-haired Erynnes, the terror-haunted shades never know the horrors that haunt the soul of a single man that tries to take care of some other fool's howling, squalling squirming baby!"

Saint Helena in 1877.

BY AN ENGLISH TRAVELER.

"See the land there, sir—about a point on the port bow? That's St. Helena, sir, that is." Of course I didn't see the land, but experience had taught me that I might have confidence in the marvelous power of a sailor to make out the dark streak on the horizon, and I went down to break fast in a confident hope of seeing the island on my return to the deck. Nor was I disappointed, for on coming up soon after nine o'clock, the island was plainly visible as a line of cloud upon the water. Four hours of steady sailing with the reliable southeast trades brought the good ship along side of the precipitous rock rising so strangely in mid-ocean, which has so absorbing an interest in the history of the world.

The only landing-place at St. Helena is Jamestown, the capital and only town of the island, nestled down in a ravine, with sheer cliffs running on either side. Off Jamestown, therefore, we dropped anchor, and at once the health-officer was alongside and satisfied himself as to the propriety of our landing. On his leaving, we were surrounded by boats innumerable, some of them anxious to take passengers ashore, others bringing women with necklaces and ornaments of native work to sell. A great number of washer-women came too, with letters of recommendation from former customers. I have known instances where these letters would not have been so readily presented had the laundress been able to read English. One such letter ran—"Never had my things so badly washed in my life." Another—"The woman only expects you to pay half what she asks."

Taking one of the many boats that were fighting for precedence at the foot of the gangway a few vigorous strokes from the swarthy oarsmen brought us to the stone steps of the landing place and we were in St. Helena. Our first greeting was from a small boy, vigorously ringing a bell, and now came forward and gave the bell into our hands. Examining it, we found pasted upon it an announcement that, by special request, "The School for Scandal" would be performed that evening at the Old Rock Theatre. Here indeed was a surprise. Upon this island, the whole population of which would hardly fill the theatre in Drury Lane or in Covent Garden, was a theatre, and in that theatre was to be acted no less distinguished a comedy than the master piece of Sheridan. We naturally thought with some fear and trembling of what the result might be in the hands of the St. Helena stock company, but nevertheless mentally determined to see for ourselves.

Following the quay for about one hundred yards, we came to the gates of the town. The inhabitants seem hardly alive to the fact that their illustrious prisoner is no longer with them, and accordingly the gates are closed every night at half-past nine o'clock, and no one can leave the town after that time without an order from the governor.

Passing through the gates we enter the

main street, of Jamestown. The town indeed, consists of one main street, which follows the winding of the valley. On the right, immediately on entering the town, is Ladder Hill, on the top of which are barracks, and which you ascend by a terribly long flight of steps. On the left is the garden attached to the governor's town house, which is open to the public; and adjoining the garden is the site of the house, recently destroyed by fire, in which Napoleon passed his first night in St. Helena, and where the Duke of Wellington, when Sir Arthur Wellesley, also passed a night on his return from India.

The island is very barren of vegetation, and the fruits produced are not many. Dates, bananas, grapes, mangoes, guavas, and figs are perhaps the most abundant. Meat is very scarce and dear, the inhabitants relying a good deal on Australia for the supply. When an ox is killed, the joints go to a few favored residents and to the barracks. We were to have brought a bullock for them from the Cape, but the animal unfortunately broke its neck coming on board.

In the evening we set out for the Old Rock Theatre, the ladies walking down in evening dress, without any need for shawls or hoods, although, as we were in the month of June, it was the middle of the St. Helena winter. The room dignified by the title of the Old Rock Theatre is reached by a very shaky flight of steps, dimly lighted by an ancient lantern. The stage, a very diminutive one, is at one end of the room, and raised about a foot from the floor. The band, by a wise arrangement, plays in the yard. We found the room well filled, and learnt that the comedy was to be played by ladies and gentlemen from the principal families in St. Helena, with reinforcements from the garrison stationed there.

Of the performance, suffice it say that it equally surprised and pleased us, though had the ghost of Sheridan been present, it must have been greatly puzzled when two of his characters sat down to examine an album of photographs.

The following day we devoted to the object of our stay upon the island—a visit to Longwood. To the stranger, anxious to visit Longwood from Jamestown, there are three courses open. He may drive, or rather, he may ride, in which case he will be accompanied by a small boy, who fearlessly holds on to the animal's tail; or, thirdly, if he is energetic enough he may walk. The distance is probably not more than three or four miles, but the road is a continual ascent, and the walk is fatiguing to any but the robust. The horses of the island are a rather sorry crew, and some have a vicious habit of pounding the rider's legs against the wall of rock that skirts the road. So we decided for the pony-carriage, and, in a leisurely way, started on our journey. When the winding road has brought you about half way to the summit of the cliff, you see, on the right, "The Briers," a substantial-looking house, with a pavilion adjoining it, which was placed at Napoleon's service by its owner whilst the furnishing of the house at Longwood was being completed. Leaving on the left the footpath leading to Napoleon's grave, you reach a little colony of houses, amongst them "Rose and Crown hotel," a primitive little establishment at which prudence suggests your ordering some lunch, which may await you on your return.

This accomplished, another mile of level road brings you to the gate of Longwood. However thorough a Briton you may be, I think the feeling on seeing the desolate little one-storied house must be, "What a terrible place for a man who had lived the active, restless life of the fallen Emperor!" High up on a barren cliff, bleak and unsheltered with watch-house and signal-stations on every point of vantage, with a regiment encamped upon the adjacent plain a cordon of sentries round the house, he may well have felt that he was needlessly reminded that he was a prisoner, and have instituted imaginary comparisons between his condition there and the way he would have been treated had he surrendered himself to the Emperor Alexander of Russia, or the Emperor Francis II. of Austria.

Old Longwood and Napoleon's grave were bought by the French in 1858, the house having then been allowed to fall into a very dilapidated state. The buildings were repaired, and each room was repapered with paper of the pattern used when Napoleon was in residence there. The French government, with characteristic good taste, forbid the attendants to receive any gratuity from visitors to the house or the grave, the one condition being that you shall inscribe your name in the visitors' book. Perhaps at some far-distant date, a Frenchman will be able to visit the tombs of Wellington and Nelson in our metropolitan Cathedral without being pestered for sixpence at every turn.

The first rooms you enter (they are all miserably small and low) is the drawing-room, in which are placed the French and British flags. From it you pass into the room in which Napoleon died. Where the head of the bed stood is now a fine marble bust of the Emperor, surrounded by a wooden railing; with these exceptions, the rooms are destitute of any furniture. You pass from the dining-room, in which Napoleon dined, to his bedroom, bath-room, library, and billiard-room.

Useful and Suggestive.

The following useful and suggestive brevities are from the pen of the agricultural editor of the Iowa State Register:

Never keep horses shod when working on the farm.

No farmer can afford to be without a good garden.

In farming, many things can be sown broadcast, but not money.

Corn is the poor man's crop, taking so little for seed, for tilling or for harvesting

Sheep will convert more worthless weeds into money than any other animal or agency.

It is a glorious provision that extravagance does not pay in any business, and especially so in farming.

Working in the garden is just as good exercise as base ball, and for more useful and instructing.

Clover is a peculiar plant. It improves and fertilizes the soil, while nearly all other plants act the reverse.

Too much eating and too little sleeping are the great curses to American health and happiness.

Who Did It.

Who tracked the mud across the floor—
And through the hall, and up the stair?
And left it clinging to the chair?
Whose finger prints deface the door?

Whose crumbs beneath the table lie?
Who smeared the butter on the cloth?
Who spilled the gravy, slopped the broth,
And dropped a pickle in the pie?

Who pulled the curtain with a jerk?
And left it hanging all askew,
And broke the cord?—'twas nearly new,
I wonder if 'twas mother's work.

Whose knife is this, with handle stained
And open blade with rust so marked?
'Twas found this morning in the yard
Upon the grass—last night it rained.

Just now I slipped and nearly fell—
A marble rolled a rod or more,
And then I crushed an apple core—
Whose was it, mother? Can you tell?

Face downward on the slab, a book
Lies open leaves dog-eared and thumbed;
And near, a handkerchief, be-rumpled
And stiff with taffy—only look!

Upon the door-knob hangs a hat—
'Tis passing strang it hangs at all;
And in the corner is a ball,
And on the sofa rests a bat.

I missed the hammer, yesterday;
The hatchet vanished long ago;
All winter underneath the snow,
Behind the house the shovel lay.

Are these bewitched? Do genii hide
Within my closets and my drawers?
And skulk behind the chamber doors,
And through the darkened attic glide?

I often go from room to room,
And sweep the floating cobwebs down,
And wonder when the spiders brown
Departed with their dainty loom.

But then—who knows?—those films so fine
May once have lain upon my shelf
Beneath the little bowl of delf;
'Twas there I used to keep my twine.

The tiny tacks I lost last spring—
A paper full, with polished heads,
As black as jet and round as beads,
But dead as a mummied king.

What do you think they did to-day?
My sugar-bucket sides they stormed,
And in the sugar fairly swarmed,
Who turned tacks into ants, tell me, pray?

The elves are in the house, is clear;
I'd like to catch that one who took
The clothes-brush down from off the hook,
And left it on the etagere.

Who was it, little Johnny Bell?
Why do you stand so shamefaced there,
And blush from chin to forehead fair?
I think you know the culprit well.

western Hurricanes.

The frequency with which reports come of disastrous hurricanes in the West, like that which proved so destructive in the town of Richmond, O., suggests the propriety of choosing nearer home the scenes to be depicted in the geographies, in which the effects of fierce gales are shown. These pictures are commonly of West Indian landscapes, but there is reason to believe that destructive hurricanes are as common in some parts of our own country as in the border lands of the tropics. The West, from central Indiana to the great Rocky Mountain chain, is in effect one vast wind-swept plain, broken here and there to the eye, but in the main nearly as level as the sea. The wind sweeps over it without let or hindrance, acquiring tremendous force and velocity, and when sudden changes of temperature and of barometric pressure occur in any part of the vast area of the plain, the rush of wind is irresistible. The writer of this paragraph has seen the sudden bursting of these western storms on more than one occasion, and certainly only personal acquaintance with them can give one an adequate notion of their character.

A cloud shows itself sharply outlined against the sky, just above the horizon, usually when there are no other clouds to be seen. As it rises a strong sea-green tint mingles with its blackness. A few minutes suffice for its passage from horizon to horizon, amid the profound stillness of the atmosphere. Then come little whirling gusts, striking suddenly and suddenly ceasing their fitful disturbance. Then in the midst of the stillness the storm strikes straight out from the shoulder. Its onset resembles nothing so much as the sudden resistless blow of a pugilist delivered without warning. It hits the earth, and the earth trembles. Houses, trees, fences go down before it—not blown over, but knocked down. They do not sway and totter, but fall prostrate at once to be whirled forward like leaves. They have been hit suddenly as by a solid bolt, not blown upon by an increasing wind. They have been crushed by a hurricane, not toppled over by a gale. There is a great darkness, too, over all the landscape whatever the time of day may be, and its blackness adds to the terror of the destruction which it conceals. One sees nothing but the shrieking of the gale. He is alone with the giant forces of nature, and is utterly at their mercy.

The hurricane lasts only a few minutes ending as suddenly as it began, but when the sun appears again it is to shine upon a landscape so changed by the malignant forces that have been playing upon it that one may scarcely know whether he is still living or has passed into the land of shadows.

Although Belgium has only an area of 11,373 square miles, she has a population of 5,336,634; whereas Greece, with an area of 19,941 miles, has a population of only 1,457,864.