

one of the Greenwood brothers; it appeared in a weekly magazine called *The Welcome Guest*; and though Toddlekins was much too young to understand it, she would run about with a bound volume of the magazine, a big book that she could scarcely carry, and ask for "Wappits, you're wanted," as she called the story, after her favourite illustration.

But "little Toddlekins" vanishes, like the fairy her old friend George Cruikshank declared she was; a thin, pale child takes her place. The baby has grown into a sturdy boy, he and the pale child trudge to school together to Hart Street, Bloomsbury. My father had moved to Southampton Street, Bloomsbury; he had been looking for a house in that neighbourhood for some time, but could not get one to his liking. No. 3 was very large, having fifteen rooms; the ground floor, too, was a lawyer's offices, and let to a solicitor named Romew, which soon became "Romeo," and gave rise to endless jokes amongst the actors and authors who visited us.

It was in Southampton Street that the Burtons first came to see us. I can see Mrs. Burton now, a stylishly dressed woman—my childish ideal of a princess—talking, talking, talking to a beautiful, but silent companion, while a small girl, nursing a large wax doll, stares with solemn dark eyes at the picture they make.

I was so delicate in those days that I was almost always at home from school, and my mother scarcely let me out of her sight. It seemed to me that this

beautiful woman came and talked for whole days at a time, and it was all about "Dear Richard and the Government." Mrs. (afterwards Lady) Burton was of medium height, dark haired, bright complexioned, and very animated in her manner. My mother was a good listener; she was repose personified; only now and then she smiled or put in a word; but Mrs. Burton's stream of eloquence never seemed to be exhausted. I was intensely interested, at times worked up into an excited state. Once I crept out of my corner, and, with my doll clasped in my arms, came and stood in front of the lady and stared in her face. Mrs. Burton never saw me, but my mother told me to leave the room, and I silently obeyed, and toiled up the stairs to my grandmother's bedroom, where I myself slept; and sitting on my own little bed, I sat the doll up in front of me (she was a beautiful wax creature with long, curly hair, and wax arms and legs) and went over most of the argument about Richard and the Government, imitating Mrs. Burton's animated manner; but Richard was a fairy prince and Government an ogre.

Captain Burton was, I believe, in Africa when his wife came to ask my father to take up the cudgels in his defence, and to pour all her troubles into my mother's ears. Of all that was said, I can only remember one remarkable sentence, and that I afterwards found in one of Mrs. Burton's letters to my

father ; so, as we all do on occasions, she repeated herself. I can hear her now saying :

“ Yes, they are making a complete Aunt Sally of the poor fellow, and he can't stand up for himself. You and Mr. Friswell will say he deserves it for his polygamous opinions ; but he married only *one* wife, and he is a *domestic* man at home, and a *homesick* man away. Poor dear Richard ! ”

She waved her hand energetically, and her eyes flashed ; I was very sympathetic, and felt as if I could kill Government ; my hands clenched, my cheeks burned, and my eyes were glowing ; it was then that my mother saw me and told me to run away.

I was naturally very anxious to see “ Richard,” as I always called Captain Burton to myself ; in fact, I do not think I realised that he was a mere man, and the husband of Mrs. Burton—he was some one infinitely greater.

When I did see him I was terribly disappointed and rather alarmed. He was not a fairy prince, but a bold bandit ; such a great, strong man could not want any one's help, I thought, in my ignorance. His loud voice, and rather sneering manner, as though he believed in nothing in heaven or earth, and above all the long sabre cut across his face, made him look so fierce that he might well strike terror into the heart of a small girl. My mother says he was fond of talking about spiritualism, and of saying he believed in some of the wonderful stories he told on that

subject ; but he said so in such a cynical manner she never believed him ; he was also fond of telling the most vivid, wonderful, and often horrible stories, which she put down as travellers' tales. Of the Indian snake charmers, and conjurors, he had endless tales, one being that "he had seen them call down fire from heaven." He laughed at all religions, and to such an extent that my mother would never allow any discussion on the subject when he came. We were all charmed with Lady Burton.

Two or three doctors coming to the conclusion (and unanimously) that I could not live in London, I was sent to school at Watford. My schoolmistresses were three maiden ladies, family connections of ours, and sisters to George Dawson, the popular Nonconformist minister and lecturer. The school was a pretty, old-fashioned, rose-covered cottage, surrounded by a large garden, and standing just outside the gates of Cassiobury Park. Here the Misses Dawson taught the young idea how to shoot—but it was in a very prim and old-fashioned manner.

On my going back to school after the first term a rather amusing incident occurred, which, as it throws some light on the curious old-fashioned prejudices of the time, I make no excuse for telling. My mother had seen me off at Euston, putting me in charge of the guard ; besides my beloved doll, I had a copy of *Diamonds and Spades*, which my mother had bought me at the station bookstall. *Diamonds and*