

TWO CAPITALS : *EDINBURGH AND CARDIFF

Scotland and Wales are both part of Great Britain. But they are separate countries, with their own *individual character. The Scots are serious, practical, hard-working and *anxious for material success. The Welsh are *imaginative, talkative and lively. Many Scots come to England to seek success; the Welsh have a greater tendency to remain in Wales, apart from the English. Both the Scots and the Welsh like to regard the English as inferior beings. The Welsh language (a form of *Celtic) is spoken by about 30 % of the population of two and a half millions. Less than 100,000 of the five million Scots speak *Gaelic.

Edinburgh, the Scottish capital, has been called 'the Athens of the North'. It is better-planned than most cities in Britain, and its long vistas reveal many noble and historic buildings. The Castle, built on a steep rocky hill, dominates the city. Here James I of England, son of Mary, Queen of Scots, was born in 1566. Near the Castle lies the Old Town, with its *cathedral and fifteenth-century buildings. The *memorial to the novelist Sir *Walter Scott, and the famous shopping street, Princes Street, can be seen on the right of the photograph. Princes Street divides the Old Town from the New Town, which was built in the *neo-classical style of the eighteenth-century.

Edinburgh is a city of government, of learning and of the arts. With its population of 467,000, it is much smaller than *Glasgow (population, more than a million), which is a centre of shipbuilding and industry.

Cardiff, the capital of Wales, lies on the *Bristol Channel, and is one of the world's busiest coal ports. Ships carry from its docks great quantities of coal from the mines of South Wales. The city itself is well-planned, with broad streets. Its chief pride is its fine Civic Centre, which includes the City Hall, the Law Courts, the National *Museum and the University. The City Hall can be seen in the photograph opposite.

Questions :

1. Say what you know about the Scottish and Welsh characters.—2. Which languages are spoken in Scotland and Wales?—3. Where is the Old Town of Edinburgh?—4. Where is the New Town?—5. Describe Princes Street.—6. Compare Edinburgh and Glasgow.—7. What is Cardiff's main export?—8. Describe the City Hall.

* 'edinbərə — indi'vidjuəl — 'æŋkʃəs — i'mædʒɪnətɪv — 'keltɪk — 'geɪlɪk — kə'θi:drəl
— mi'mɔ:riəl — 'wɔ:ltə — 'ni:ou'klæsɪkl — 'glɑ:sgou — 'brɪstl — mju:'ziəm.

SNOWFLAKE

A Poetic Tale
by Paul Gallico

I

The snowstorm lasted all day and all night, and when it was over, Snowflake was *buried under many feet of the new fall.

It was quite dark and she could no longer see anything.

But although she could not see, she could still hear, and, *listening, she tried to guess* the things that were happening to her.

Snowflake knew, for instance, that the peasant must be driving the grey cow home to milk, for she heard her soft moo, and the gentle tinkling of the square bell around her neck.

Thus she strained *eagerly* for all the well-known sounds that told her that even while she lay buried and forgotten, life in the village was going on. She heard the church clock strike the hours and the bells ring out to come to service. There were the sounds of wood being sawed, nails being hammered and roosters *crowing. Dogs barked, cats *mewed. There were footsteps and people *hailed* one another with "Grüss Gott!" as they passed.

Buried there, Snowflake thought that *surely this could not be the end. She felt as though perhaps something wonderful might be about to happen to her.

II

It began first with a strange drumming* that sounded from overhead and seemed to go on endlessly. Snowflake had never before heard anything like it, for it was the noise made by rain when first it falls in the early spring upon the hard crust* of the winter's snow.

The drumming *softened to a plashing* to which was added now a gentle *murmuring. The long rains at last had filtered down from above and the waters were moving restlessly *beneath the *layers* of frozen snow and ice that still covered the earth.

Then one day the rain *ceased and it began to grow lighter. At first Snowflake could not believe it was true. But the darkness in which she had lived so long turned to deep blue, then emerald green, changing to yellow as though a strong light were shining through a heavy veil.

The next moment, as though by magic, the veil was lifted. Overhead the sun, warm and strong, burned from a cloudless sky. Snowflake was free once again. Her *heart gave a great shout: "The sun! The sun! Dearly *beloved* sun! How glad I am to see you."

* 'berid — 'lisniŋ — 'i:gəli — mju:d — 'fuəli — 'səfnd — 'mə:məriŋ — bi'ni:θ — 'leəz — si:st
— ha:t — bi'ləvd (or: bi'lavid).

THE NOBLEST INSTRUMENT

A Humorous Narrative

by Clarence Day

I

In spite of my failure^{*} as a singer, Father was still bound^{*} to have us taught music. We boys were ⁵ *summoned^{*} before him and informed that we must at once learn to play on something. We might not ⁵ *appreciate it now, he said, but we should later on. "You, ⁵ *Clarence, will learn the ⁵ *violin. George, you the ⁵ *piano. Julian—well, ⁵ *Julian is too young yet. But you older boys must have lessons."

I was ¹⁰ *appalled at this order. At the age of ten it seemed a ¹⁰ *disaster to lose any more of my freedom. The days were already too short for our games after school; and now here was a ¹⁰ *chunk^{*} to come out of playtime three days every week. A chunk every day, we found afterward, because we had to practise.

George sat at the piano in the parlour, and faithfully learned to pound^{*} out his exercises. He had all the luck. He was not an inspired player, but at least ¹⁵ he had some ear for music. He also had the advantage of playing on a good robust instrument, which he didn't have to be careful not to drop, and was in no danger of breaking. ¹⁵ *Furthermore^{*}, he did not have to tune^{*} it. A piano had some good points.

But I had to go through a blacker and more ²⁰ *gruesome^{*} experience. It was bad enough to have to come in from the street and the sunlight and go down into our dark little basement^{*} where I took my lessons. But that was only the opening chill^{*} of the struggle that followed.

II

DISQUES
face
19

The whole thing was uncanny^{*}. The violin itself was a queer^{*}, ²⁵ *fragile, *cigar-boxy thing, that had to be handled most gingerly^{*}. Why, a fellow was ²⁵ *liable^{*} to crack it putting it into its case. And then my teacher, he was queer too. He had a queer pickled^{*} smell.

He wore a black, wrinkled^{*} frock coat^{*}, and a discolored gold watch-chain. He had small, black-rimmed^{*} glasses; not ³⁰ *tortoise-shell, but thin rims of metal. His violin was dark, rich, and polished, and would do anything for him. Mine was ³⁰ *awkward^{*}, brand new^{*}, and of a light, common color.

My teacher greeted me as a possible ³⁵ *genius. He taught me how to hold the contraption^{*}, tucked under my chin. I learned how to move my fingers here and there on its handle or stem. I learned how to draw the ³⁵ *bow across the strings, and thus produce sounds...

* 'sʌmənd — ə'pri:ʃieit — 'klærəns — ,vaɪə'lin — 'pjænou — 'dʒu:lʃən — ə'pɔ:ld —
di'zʌ:stə — tʃʌŋk — 'fə:ðə'mo: — 'gru:səm — 'frædʒail — si'gə: — 'laɪəbl — 'tɔ:təs —
'ə:kwəd — 'dʒi:njəs — bou.

Story 1

Surprise!

Jerry and Emma are husband and wife. It's summer, and Jerry's birthday is approaching. Emma wants to give him a present for his birthday, but she wants it to be a surprise, so she must keep everything a secret.

But she has a big problem. If Jerry cannot know about her plan, how does *she* find out what to get him for his birthday?

She decides to use a secret technique. For a whole week, while she pretends to do other things, she actually listens very carefully for clues.

However, Jerry doesn't really talk about this subject. A whole week passes with no mention of something he actually wants or needs!

"That's it!" Emma thinks to herself. "Jerry's birthday is tomorrow! I'm taking off the gloves!"

She calls her sister-in-law Mary, and they make a secret plan.

Mary will call Jerry, ask him what he would like to receive for his birthday, and Emma will listen to the conversation (without Jerry knowing it).

The scheme starts out as planned. Mary calls Jerry, and they have a nice chat about his upcoming birthday. Emma listens carefully from the other room.

Finally, she hears what he wants—a pair of sneakers!

"All right!" she thinks to herself.

Full of excitement, she runs out of the room. She is not so quiet, but who can blame her?

She rushes off to the shop and buys a pair of shiny sneakers, exactly Jerry's size. She's very happy. She will get him the present he wants, and it will be a complete surprise!

Today is Jerry's birthday. Emma waits until their special dinner at night.