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The Bell

RUTH BUCHANAN

ISLAM HIGH SCHOOL
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NELSON'S SPEEDWELL READERS C 6

it is a good story
it is a bad story.

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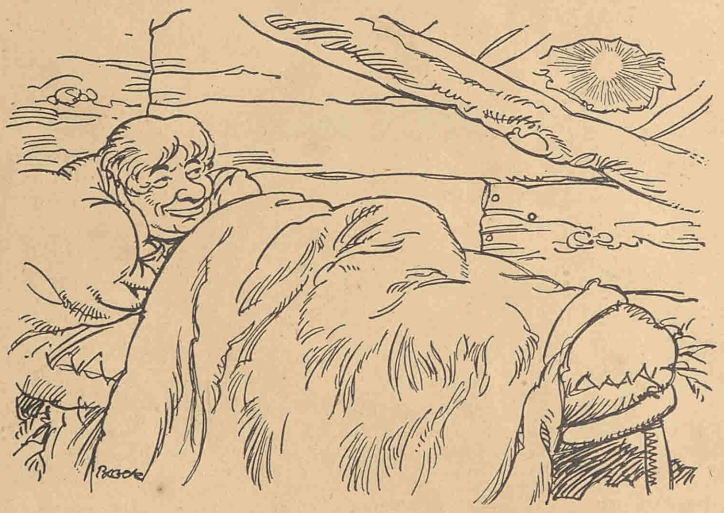
THE BELL

I

EARLY one morning, in the days before men knew how to make clocks—when they told the time from the sun—Old Jonnie, knocker-up to the town of Easyford, lay on his hard straw bed looking up at the sky through a hole in the roof. The stars, still dimly shining, told him that it was not yet four o'clock.

There were two hours, then, before he must get up from his warm bed and walk through the streets knocking on the doors of the houses to wake the people for work. Two hours. At four o'clock in the morning that seemed a long time—much longer than at six in the evening when the day was nearly over, leaving behind a trail of jobs undone.

Two hours. There would be time to sleep again. But he did not feel sleepy. There would be time to think. Old Jonnie stretched contentedly beneath his thin blanket. Time to *think*. What a pleasant way to start a day. His days were usually so full that he did not have time to think of anything except the job in front of him.



Now, as he lay there, he could feel his brain reaching out, like a hand hovering above a box of sweets ready to pick one out.

What should he think about ? Food ? Downstairs in the stone-floored kitchen were rows of golden-brown cakes and great crusty loaves, newly baked by his wife for the market. Jonnie liked watching his wife as she mixed and rolled and kneaded, her large, rough useful hands buried to the wrists in clean white dough.

Thinking of his wife's hands made him think of the town of Easyford, his town. Hands like hers, soothing, sensible hands, seemed to him as much a part of Easyford as its old grey stones—

the cold stones of the church tower ; the warm sunlit cobblestones of the market-place.

Old Jonnie smiled. He loved his town, its people, its buildings, its children. Suddenly he wished there were no feud. For a very long time Easyford had been carrying on a feud, or quarrel, with the nearby town of Muddyford. This feud had begun a hundred years before, when a party of revellers from Muddyford had stolen the beautiful bell from Easyford's church tower. When chased, they had dropped it in the river, and there it had lain ever since, buried in the mud.

The people of Easyford had never forgiven the people of Muddyford for this. Nor had they been able to find another bell with as fine a tone. So their belfry had remained empty. For a hundred years the Easyford people had muttered and shaken their fists every time the chimes of Muddyford's bells had floated down the river. For a hundred years the Muddyford people, because they felt secretly guilty, had found fault with everything at Easyford : its school, its market, and its manners.

What a pity, thought Old Jonnie, that after all this time they could not forget and be friends once more. Children would be more sensible, he decided. Jonnie sighed. If there were no feud he could meet Old Wilf (knocker-up to Muddy-



ford) now and then for a chat and a glass of ale by the river.

The river. At this time in the morning it would be pale, like glass. Suddenly Old Jonnie knew that he was going fishing. Have you ever known that you were going to do something, long before you had the least idea of how it could be managed?

As he lay in bed, wondering how he could get to the river, Jonnie could see himself, quite clearly, sitting on the bank, watching the day begin and waiting for fish to bite. If only he need not wake the town. He needed three clear hours or it would not be worth going at all.

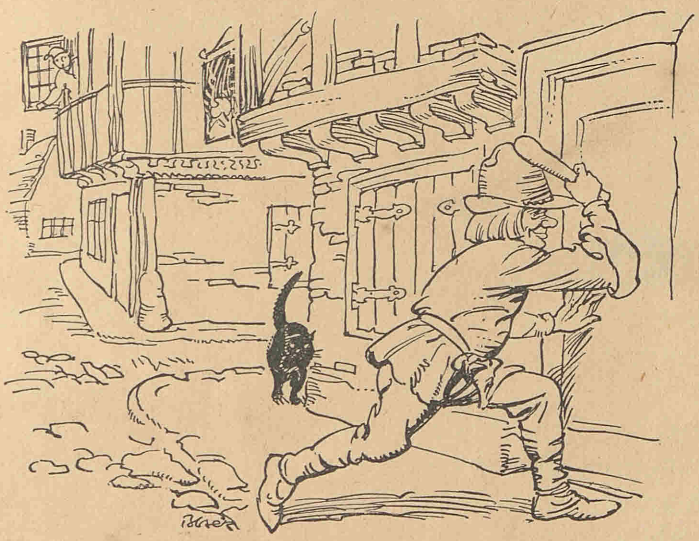
Could he wake them late? Not on market day.

Could his wife do it for him? No, she might not bang loudly enough and they would oversleep.

"Oh dear," sighed Jonnie, "whatever shall I do?" Then he had an idea. "I know," he whispered to himself. "I'll wake them early."

He crept out of bed, pulled on his leather jerkin and his oldest trousers, and went down to wash under the pump. He would wake the whole town two hours early (without telling them, of course).

Now that he had decided, it seemed rather a joke. They would be angry when they found out.



Jonnie chuckled. " But, after all," he said to himself as he shivered under the pump, " they will finish work all the sooner and can go to bed two hours early." That settled it and off he went. Down the streets went Old Jonnie, playing his rat-tat-tat at the doors.

" Six o'clock on a fine summer's morning ! " he called.

When he reached the market-place it was " Past six o'clock on a fine summer's morning ! " —and by the time he had got to the far end of the town he was calling " Half-past six . . ." for there were a great many doors.

When he had roused the whole town Jonnie

went back home, stuck his hat on the back of his head, stuffed his pockets full of food, and strode away to the river with his fishing-rod over his shoulder.

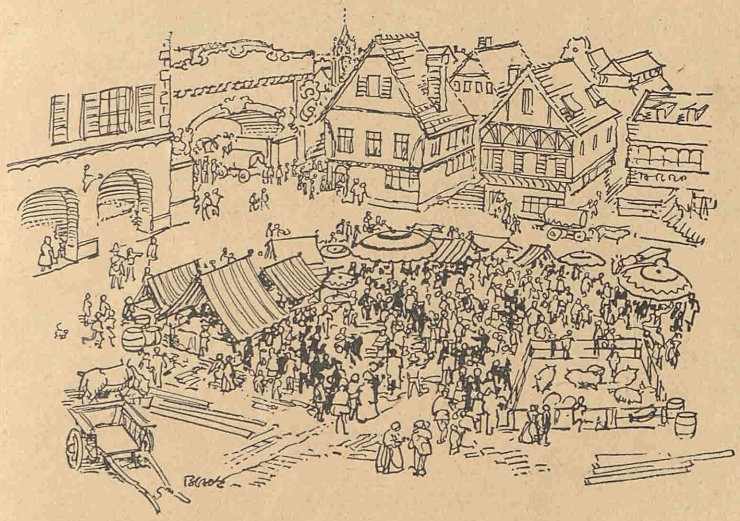
Meanwhile there was confusion in the town. Beds creaked as sleepy people dragged themselves from the comforting warmth ; husbands yawned as they demanded breakfast ; wives replied crossly that it wasn't ready ; children cried as their mothers bundled them into their clothes.

Presently the doors began to open, one by one, and the honest, hard-working people of Easyford staggered out half drunk with sleep, stretching themselves and rubbing their eyes, unable to understand why they could not wake up.

Tired, unwilling horses were harnessed to carts ; bad-tempered drivers climbed into the seats ; bales of cloth, trays of cakes and bread, hand-made mats and baskets were loaded. The people of Easyford were off to market.

They were so busy they did not even look at the sky. Had they done so Jonnie's trick would have been discovered. " What a dark morning," they muttered, and left it at that.

At five o'clock, by the sun, they had nearly set up their market, thinking that the time was at least seven. What a scrambling there was as everyone tried to fix his or her stall before the people from outside arrived, those from the



villages bringing country produce to sell, those from other towns coming to buy.

When all was ready the citizens of Easyford heaved a sigh of relief. Once more they were ready in time. Soon the customers would come. They sat back and waited.

When they had waited an hour and not a single man or woman from another town or village had turned up, they began to scratch their heads. Something had gone wrong. A crowd gathered in the market-place and soon whispers went round. Some said it was a trick by the people of Muddyford who wished to ruin their trade.



" A fire," whispered others. " There has been a great fire which has ravaged the countryside, sparing only Easyford."

" No," said another part of the crowd, " it is the plague. Half the people in the district have died in the night and the other half are weeping by their graves."

The whispers grew to murmurs, the murmurs flowed into each other like waves joining to dash against a cliff, and soon a great shout rose from the crowd. It woke the mayor who slept as late as he pleased. He stuck his head out of the window to ask what was wrong. When told, he said, " Fools ! Send someone to the top of the church tower. From there you can see the countryside and learn what has happened." Then, calling for his breakfast, he went back to bed.

A small boy was sent running to the church. He was gone less than five minutes. When he returned the crowd rushed at him.

" What is it ? " they asked.

" Nothing," said the small boy.

" Dunderhead ! " said his father. " Of course there is something. Look again."

When the boy returned a second time, he was hoisted on to his father's back to prevent the crowd from squashing him.

" Well ? " they demanded.

" Please——" said the small boy.

" Go on," they said.

" There is nothing strange to be seen from the church tower but——"

" But what ? " shouted the crowd.

" The sundial in the churchyard says it is only six o'clock ! "

At last the people of Easyford looked at the sky. They looked at the sun and at the shadows on the cobblestones, and they saw that the small boy was perfectly right. Then they were very angry. Not only had they lost two hours' hard-earned sleep, but now they had also been cheated of excitement which might have coloured an otherwise dull day.

They looked round for someone on whom to work off their rage. Of course. Old Jonnie, the rascal, he should pay for this ! The angriest ones surged out of the market-place to find him.

2

Old Jonnie had just caught his first fish. A very fine one it was too. He sat admiring it for a long time until he began to feel sorry for it. That would never do. Thoughts like that would spoil his morning's fishing. He stowed the fish away in his satchel, rebaited his line, and pulled his breakfast from his pocket.

How peaceful it was by the river, thought Jonnie, as, unaware of the uproar he had caused, he munched a game pasty and gazed at his reflection in the smooth surface of the water. How quiet and how alone. A water-wagtail hopped up to him, bobbing its long graceful tail, but Jonnie had turned again to his line. The float was moving. Another fish was there. . . .

Meanwhile in Easyford things were still happening. The crowd had barely vanished round the corner, leaving the stallholders in the market to wonder what they should do next, before there was a fanfare of trumpets at the Great Gates of the town. The people stared in silence. At six o'clock in the morning ! They must be dreaming ! The fanfare was repeated, this time followed by a thunder of knocking. Then the mayor stuck his head out of the window again. He was hastily dressing.

" Fools ! Dunderheads ! " he shouted. " Have you lost your ears ? The king is at the gates ! "

There followed another scrimmage, this time to open the gates of the city and admit the royal party (though what the king could want in their town at six o'clock in the morning no-one could imagine). They scuffled and they hustled and somehow a procession of a sort was formed, led by the mayor wearing his robes.

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Behind him came the aldermen, the councillors, and the priest. At the very end walked a small pageboy carrying on a velvet cushion the key of the city. Beside him fussed his mother trying to tidy his hair. Beside the mayor hurried his wife, trying to clean the food-stains from his clothes (for it must be confessed that the mayor, a round, merry little man, much loved by his people, was often too intent on other things to be careful how he ate).

By the time they had reached the gates the procession presented quite an imposing array. The mayor drew himself up to his full height (there was only one small egg-stain left on his waistcoat), took the key and opened the gates, which swung back, creaking and groaning, for these particular gates, were opened only on solemn occasions.

Outside stood a wonderful glass coach, with six jet-black horses stamping and champing at their bits. Out of the window peered a tired-looking king. By his side sat his chancellor, who was also tired and very bad-tempered.

The chancellor stepped from the coach and came forward to greet the mayor.

" Our good and gracious king does the citizens of Easyford a great honour by this early call," he began in a pompous voice. Then he muttered, " I presume you have all just scrambled out



of bed. Hard lines. I tried to persuade him not to come but he insisted."

"You are mistaken," replied the mayor in *his* pompous voice. "The people of this town have been awake and at work for over two hours."

"Indeed," said the chancellor, in a manner which clearly showed that he did not believe a word of this, "I am happy to hear it. It is indeed most fortunate for you, as His Majesty happens to be engaged on a tour of inspection."

"Tour of inspection?" repeated the mayor blankly.

"For the past week we have driven round the

country each day at an early hour to find out the time at which His Majesty's subjects rise from their beds and start working to make our land the rich and noble country that she is."

"Well, I'll be—honoured," said the mayor, quickly changing the end of his sentence as he caught a warning look in the chancellor's eye.

"Moreover, a reward is offered to the town or village that works the hardest in the land." Here the mayor began to take interest.

"Our task is a trying and a tiring one," went on the chancellor, "for so far the people of this country have shown a greater willingness to sleep than to work."

"What do they expect," thought the mayor, "if they travel about at this hour?" But he said nothing.

"So," finished the chancellor, "if you will lead the way into your town we will see for ourselves whether the citizens of Easyford are as hard-working as their mayor would have me believe." Then, with a nasty look at the mayor, he signed to the coachman to drive through the gates.

As the carriage clattered through the cobbled streets, the simple people in their poor, homespun clothes were dazzled. The sun, glinting on the glass, turned the coach into a glittering diamond; the horses and footmen were splendid in liveries

of scarlet and gold. The children screamed with delight, thinking the coach must be from fairy-land.

With another flourish of trumpets the coach drew up in the market-place. For a moment the king and chancellor sat silent watching the busy scene before them, the king looking surprised and pleased, the chancellor angry. Then two footmen jumped down and opened the door for the king to alight. He stepped down, followed by the chancellor. All the people who had crowded into the square knelt down, the men taking off their hats. The king turned round and, with a sweeping gesture, said, "Rise, people of Easyford."

Then, with his chancellor in attendance, he began to inspect the market. He looked at each stall, peered at the cheeses, pinched the pigs to feel if they were fat, smelt the hams, and broke off and tasted a piece of bread. At the end of this he and the chancellor stepped aside to talk to each other.

The mayor waited, breathing hard, his mouth hanging ajar with excitement. As for the people, they hardly dared to breathe at all. A child sneezed and was scolded in a whisper; an old man who coughed was frowned at by all.

Suddenly a little mangy dog ran out from the crowd. It went perkily up to the king and sniffed

at the royal robe. A sob of something like agony rose from the crowd. But neither the king nor the chancellor had noticed the little dog. The king was actually smiling as he pointed at the neat array of stalls with a tempting selection of good things to eat laid out under their brightly-coloured awnings.

The chancellor turned to the mayor. " His Majesty desires breakfast," he said.

" And the inspection ? " whispered the mayor. " What is the result of the inspection ? " for he felt he could not possibly wait until the king had eaten to know whether his town had won the reward.

The chancellor was annoyed at finding that the mayor had been truthful when he said the town was already at work. Now he looked straight through him without answering the question.

" His Majesty desires breakfast," he repeated haughtily.

The mayor sprang into action. " We are greatly honoured," he said, bowing into his egg-stain. " May I offer His Majesty the freedom of my household ? " And with that he led the way to his house.

In a short time the king and chancellor were seated at the mayor's table, consuming large helpings of cold roast duck, followed by game

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patties, home-cured ham, fried trout and eggs, washed down by the finest red wine the mayor could provide.

3

Meanwhile the hunt for Old Jonnie was in full swing. First the crowd went to his house, but his wife would not tell them anything. They turned and streamed out of the town by the small gates.

"Try the inns," said one man.

"There is a fair two miles away," said another. "He may have gone there."

They tried both the fair and the inns, but Jonnie was not to be found. The people in the

villages through which they passed were frightened, thinking they must be running from an angry bull, and they too joined the crowd. Soon there were several hundred men and women racing over the countryside, half of whom had no idea where they were going or what they were doing.

At last they found Old Jonnie. He was sound asleep under a haystack, with his hat tilted over his eyes, and his satchel, bursting with fine fat trout, lying by his side. The sun beat down on the peaceful scene. A fly settled on Jonnie's nose, while a cow munched the hay, scattering pieces over his head as she pulled them from the stack.

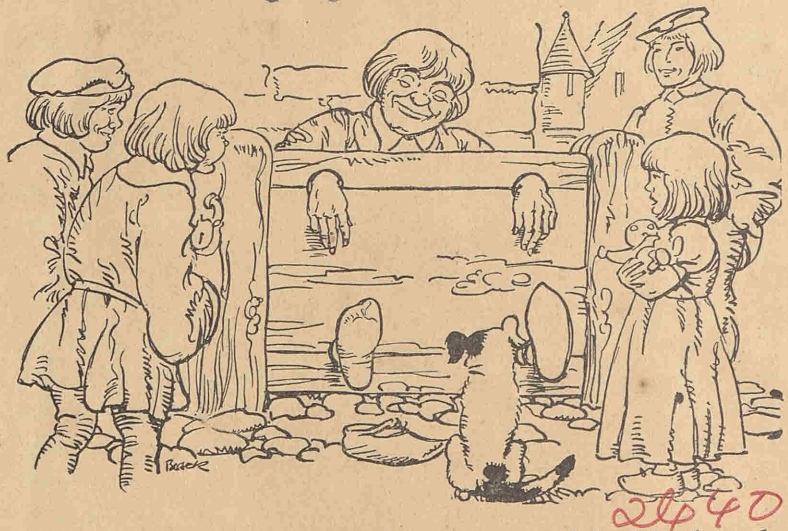
The peace was broken by the mob. They trampled on the bag of fish and sent the cow rushing in a panic to the far end of the field. Jonnie was hoisted on their backs, still fast asleep and dreaming (for the sun, combined with the wine he had drunk at breakfast, had made him drowsy), and was carried in triumph to Easyford. Not until they entered the town did the crowd wonder what they should do with him.

" Let him go," said one man.

" Take him to the mayor," said another.

" Put him in the stocks."

They put Old Jonnie, still fast asleep and dreaming, in the stocks. This was a form of punishment much used in those days. The cul-



prit was forced to sit for hours with his hands and feet sticking through holes cut in a big board, while the people passing by laughed at him.

When Jonnie was safely fixed, they locked the stocks with a special key so that no kind-hearted person could come along and let him out. Then they went off much pleased with themselves.

Half an hour later, just as Jonnie woke up and, finding where he was, began to scream to be let out, the king wiped the last crumbs from the royal beard and pushed back his chair.

" And now to the affairs of the day," he said. " First, send for your knocker-up."

The mayor was taken aback at this. " Our knocker-up, Your Majesty ? " he asked.

"We are pleased," said the king, "greatly pleased, with what we have found in the town of Easyford." The chancellor looked sour when he heard this.

"Before coming here," went on the king, "we had the misfortune to try the town of Muddyford, where it occurred to us we might breakfast. After repeated trumpeting we left without seeing anyone" (the king frowned deeply) "—without seeing anyone at all. The whole town was apparently in a sound sleep.

"We were therefore all the more agreeably surprised to find your town, Mr Mayor, not only awake and up but with a market in full swing at six o'clock in the morning. The first person we wish to see is, naturally, your knocker-up, in order to offer him our congratulations and to confer upon him some title as a reward for his zeal. Send for him."

The mayor bowed himself out of the royal presence without another word. Once outside, he picked up his robes and hurried down the street.

"Where is Jonnie?" he asked the first man he met.

"In the stocks," replied the man. "Can't you hear him shouting?"

"The fools!" cried the mayor. "Tell them to let him out at once! The king wishes to speak

to him ! " With that he ran back to tell the king that Jonnie would be with him in less than a minute.

But the king had to wait a great deal longer than a minute, for there was confusion by the stocks.

" You had it ! " shouted one man.

" No, you ! " shouted another.

" I saw you put it in your cap ! "

" I never touched it ! "

" I saw you put it in your pocket ! " And so on, for they had lost the key to the stocks and it was not to be found anywhere.

Soon tempers were lost and a fight began. Into the middle of this rushed the mayor again.

" Where is Jonnie ? " asked the mayor. " The king is waiting ! "

When he was told that the key had been lost and that they could not get Old Jonnie out of the stocks, he flew into one of his rages.

" Good-for-nothing, worthless dunderheads, " he shouted, dancing about in a fury, " you are bringing disgrace on the town. Find the key or you shall all go to prison."

There followed another wild hunt : in pockets ; under caps ; in coat linings ; on the cobbles ; in the gutters. The mayor looked with the rest, crawling about in a frenzy. When the search was at its height and tempers were again becoming

frayed, a quiet voice behind them brought the people to their feet.

" Good day, citizens," said the king, " have you lost something ? "

The mayor turned round hurriedly. The king, who was tired of waiting for Old Jonnie, had driven out in his coach to see something more of the town. He was now leaning out of the window smiling at the people in a friendly way.

" We have lost a key, Your Majesty," said the mayor, " but it is nothing of importance." This was terrible, he thought. If the king should speak to Jonnie and learn that their early rising had been a mistake he would surely be very angry, and instead of winning a prize they might all be thrown into a dungeon.

Luckily Jonnie was still hidden from the king's view by the crowd. The mayor acted promptly. He picked up an old sack from the ground and put it over Jonnie's head just as the king, followed by the chancellor, stepped from the carriage. They came straight up to the stocks.

" May we ask what crime this man has committed ? "

" Oh, er—er . . ." stammered the mayor, at a loss.

" Something serious, perhaps ? " asked the king.

" Oh yes, Your Majesty," replied the mayor,

master of the situation once more. "This man has done too little work this past week. We punish all such offenders in this way."

The king was impressed. "Very good," he said, "very good. If more towns had as high a standard our land would indeed be rich. And the sack over his head?" he asked. "That is surely a new idea."

"My own idea, Your Majesty. It is supposed to bring further disgrace upon the culprit."

"Excellent," murmured the king, "excellent. But now to other matters. When are we to see your knocker-up? We have waited long enough."

The people stood by with mouths agape. Old Jonnie struggled and shouted from under his sack, but the words could not be heard. The mayor, however, felt ready for anything now.

"I am sorry to have to inform Your Majesty that Old Jonnie our knocker-up is on his bed, very ill with a fever."

"Indeed," said the king, "in that case we must visit him and take him our congratulations."

The mayor turned pale. This was not going according to plan.

"It is with sorrow, Your Majesty, that I have to tell you that poor Jonnie is too ill to see anyone. The truth is, poor Jonnie is dying."

"That is indeed sad," said the king, "and on such a day too. There remains then only one

thing to be done. Our chancellor shall visit his wife and offer her what comfort he can."

This was the end. The mayor gave in. There would be no glory, no royal rewards. Worst of all, there would be no smirking when next he met the mayor of Muddyford.

" If Your Majesty will follow me," he said in a muffled voice as, with bowed head, he led the way to Jonnie's house. On the way he glanced up at the chancellor. Was it his fancy, or did he really see a glint of triumph in the chancellor's eye ?

They stopped in front of Old Jonnie's house. When the door opened the mayor could have wept with relief, for there stood Jonnie's wife pretending to cry into a large handkerchief ! Someone must have warned her of the trouble.

" Oh, Your Majesty," she said, curtseying and sobbing, " I'm honoured, I'm sure. The poor soul is up there on his bed and the doctor with him. If you come this way I'll show you," and she led the way into the house.

The mayor and the chancellor followed, leaving the king in his carriage. Mrs Jonnie went up the stairs. The mayor wondered what she was up to. With another sob she flung open the door of a little room right at the top of the house. There, fast asleep on the bed, with the doctor bending over him and a neighbour in attend

was Jonnie's ninety-year-old father. As he was so old he *did* look very frail and ill.

"How is he, doctor?" asked the wife. The doctor shook his head gravely and walked from the room without saying a word.

The chancellor was taken aback. This was not at all what he had expected to find. Feeling himself to be in the presence of death, he mumbled a few words to Jonnie's wife and allowed himself to be hurried from the room. It was not a moment too soon, for, just as the mayor closed the door behind them, the old father woke up and said angrily, "Who was that? Send them away. I want my dinner."



" Hush, dear, hush," said Mrs Jonnie. " The poor thing is in a fever and doesn't know what he is saying."

" Of course I know what I'm saying," replied the old man indignantly. " I want my dinner ! "

But the chancellor had gone. They were saved.

4

An hour later the townspeople were told to gather once more in the market-place to hear some important news. From every house, cottage and hovel the people flocked, agog to hear the announcement. Presently the royal coach drew up, with an extra loud fanfare of trumpets to mark a special event. Inside, the mayor was seated between the king and chancellor, smiling and talking to them as if he had been friends with them all his life.

The two footmen jumped down and respectfully opened the door of the coach for the mayor, who stepped out, bowing and smiling at the crowd as if he were the king himself. It was the happiest day of his whole life. He mounted a platform that had been hastily erected and addressed the people.

" Noble citizens of Easyford," he began. Then, as if this were too pompous, he went on, " My dear people, I have great news for you." There was a breathless hush in the market-place.

" It has pleased our beloved king " (here the mayor bowed so low that he lost his balance and nearly fell off the platform) " to confer on us and our town a great honour." (The crowd cheered.) " As a reward for what His gracious Majesty is so good as to call our remarkable love of hard work, he has granted our town a week's holiday " (cheers) " and the right to be called ' Kingsford,' by which name we shall in future be known " (more cheers). " Moreover, His Majesty wishes me to say that he intends to present to the town as a gift anything the people care to name."

Here the crowd cheered wildly, and shouted, " Bell ! Give us a bell ! "

The mayor turned to the coach with a beaming smile, " The people would like a bell for their church, Your Majesty, to replace one which was stolen a hundred years ago." The king bowed his head and turned to speak with his chancellor, who then beckoned to the mayor.

When he returned to the platform the mayor's face shone with pleasure. " I am to tell you," he said, " that you shall have your bell tonight. His Majesty has had one newly cast for his own chapel and he insists you shall have it." Here the people nearly went mad, shouting and throwing their caps in the air. The mayor found it hard to make himself heard above the din.

" Finally," he shouted ; " finally, I am to tell

you that Old Jonnie, our knocker-up, is to receive the title of Sir Jonathan. We wish him," ended the mayor, " a speedy return to health and many years in which to enjoy the honour." With that he pushed his way back to the coach, panting and mopping his brow.

When the king and chancellor, the glittering carriage, the jet-black horses, and the footmen in scarlet and gold had finally disappeared from view in a cloud of dust, and the Great Gates of the city had clanged shut once more, the people found it hard to believe that the events of the day were anything more than a lovely dream.

Then they remembered Old Jonnie and knew that it had all really happened, for there he was, still sitting in the stocks with a sack over his head. His friends ran to fetch a saw, and soon he was cut free and carried round the town on their shoulders, to be cheered and thanked by all.

Jonnie's mind was in a tumult. All this had come about just because he wanted a quiet morning's fishing ! He could hardly take it in. One fact, however, stuck out like a jagged rock to worry him. The reward had been won through a trick ! As he was carried in triumph through the streets, his usually calm face puckered with thought, he wondered if it was all quite honest.

Gradually, as he watched the people, his people, his face cleared. For what other town,



thought Jonnie, deserved a reward more than this one? What other people worked as hard or were as kind and loyal and honest as these? Besides, he knew they would work all the harder now to be certain that they had really earned their bell.

Old Jonnie's face broke into a mass of tiny creases and crinkles as he smiled at the waving, cheering mob. How pleased he was to have been the cause of all this excitement. Lifting his hand, he waved back.

When the sun had gone down and deep shadows had crept over the town, the people went mad. They hung out flags and lit bonfires; they marched round the streets beating drums and carrying burning torches. The old people wept

with joy, while the young ones danced and sang in the market-place.

The crowning delight was the arrival of the bell by special coach. A hundred willing hands helped to hang it in the church tower, while the rest of the crowd waited in the churchyard to hear it ring.

The climax of the day was reached when the first peal rang out across the darkness, a triumphant, fearless sound which rallied the people to new hopes and fresh resolves. Easyford's past had been quiet and unremarkable, but the future of Kingsford should be written in glory for the children of all generations to read.

Soon after midnight the mayor climbed to the top of the church tower. He looked down on the moon-lit market-place where a mob of excited people danced round a giant bonfire ; then he looked away to where he knew Muddyford lay hidden by the night.

Did today's events mark the end of the feud ? Surely, thought the mayor, now that his people had such a fine bell presented by the king himself and inscribed with his name, surely they could not feel anything but goodwill towards the other town ? Besides, they would all have tucked away in their hearts a tiny guilty feeling about that bell, which would match Muddyford's guilty feeling at having stolen the first one. Perhaps this fellow-



feeling would make a bond between the two towns. He hoped that it would.

The mayor looked down once more on his town. The merrymaking had died down, the bonfire had sunk low, and the people, tired out but happy, were saying goodnight. As he watched, the doors of the houses shut behind them, and gradually the town was folded in darkness as, one by one, the little rush lights by the bedsides were snuffed out.

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Good Story

24.40

THE SPEEDWELL READERS

Graded supplementary readers suitable for children aged 7 to 11

SERIES A

1 The Lion who Lost his Tail
2 The Man who Grew Christmas Trees
3 The Whale who Wanted a Waistcoat
4 The New Elf
5 The Elves Go Skating
6 The Chinese Bubble Man
7 The New Umbrella
8 The Wasp without Wings
9 The Little House
10 A Letter for Susan
11 Stumpy Sings on Wednesdays too
12 The Shoes that Walked Away
13 The Road that Lost its Way
14 Wizard Winkle
15 A Present for Mother Pixie's Birthday

SERIES B

1 The Poor Magician
2 Quite Preposterous!
3 Jenny and the Old Red Bus
4 Why the Tarts were Stolen
5 Funny Names
6 Hoppitty Goblin
7 The Red Scarf
8 The Disobedient Cuckoo Clock
9 The Train that Tried to Please Everybody
10 The Exciting River
11 Tufty and Top-knot
12 Henrietta's Adventure
13 The Bouncing Baby
14 Benjamin Bear and the Rag Doll
15 Timothy Wins a Medal; 'Toasted Teas Limited'

SERIES C

1 The Wizard Nightingale
2 Prize for Gardening
3 Trespassers will be Prosecuted
4 The Man with the Twisted Nose
5 Selina
6 The Bell
7 The Adventures of Olive
8 Penny and Mokey
9 Reddy the Fox
10 The House with the Crooked Chimney
11 Tales from a Bamboo Hut
12 White-socks
13 Cross River Tales—I
14 Cross River Tales—II
15 More Tales from a Bamboo Hut
16 Priory Island

SERIES D

1 Submarine Pirates
2 Adventure at Seamarshes
3 The Buccaneers
4 Yukon Gold
5 Jane in Norway
6 Caterpillar Capers
7 Flash
8 The Missing Cargo
9 Gentleman Jack
10 The Secret of the Drum