

**THE ADVENTURES OF MR.
VERDANT
GREEN, AN OXFORD
FRESHMAN, PP. 256-500**

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The adventures of Mr. Verdant Green, an Oxford freshman, pp. 256-500 by Cuthbert Bede

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CUTHBERT BEDE

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THE
FURTHER ADVENTURES
OF
MR. VERDANT GREEN
AN OXFORD UNDERGRADUATE



BY
CUTHBERT BEDE, B.A.

WITH

80 ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR

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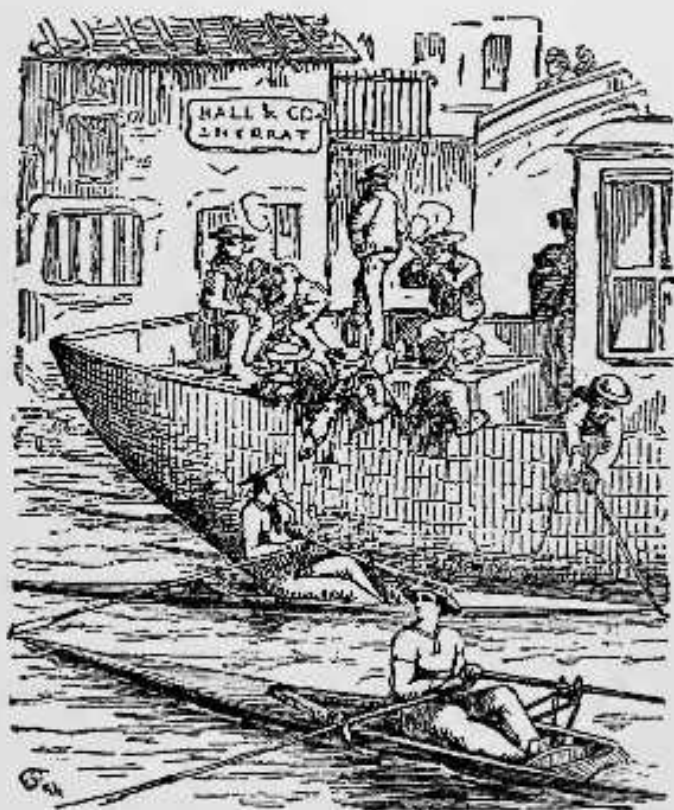
CHAPTER VI.

MR. VERDANT GREEN FEATHERS HIS OARS WITH SKILL
AND DEXTERITY.

NOVEMBER is not always the month of fog and mist and dulness. Oftentimes there are brilliant exceptions to that generally-received rule of depressing weather, which, in this month (according to our lively neighbours), induces the natives of our English metropolis to leap in crowds from the Bridge of Waterloo. There are in November days of calm beauty, which are peculiar to that month — that kind of calm beauty which is so often seen as the herald of decay.

But, whatever weather the month may bring to Oxford, it never brings gloom or despondency to Oxford men. They are a happily constituted set of beings, and can always create their own amusements; they crown Minerva with flowers without heeding her influ-

enza, and never seem to think that the rosy-bosomed Hours may be laid up with bronchitis. Winter and summer appear to be pretty much the same to them: reading and recreation go hand-in-hand all the year



round; and, among other pleasures, that of boating finds as many votaries in cold November, as it did in sunny June — indeed, the chillness of the air, in the former month, gives zest to an amusement which degenerates to hard labour in the dog-days. The classic Isis in the month of November, therefore,

whenever the weather is any thing like favourable, presents an animated scene. Eight-oars pass along, the measured pull of the oars in the rowlocks marking the time in musical cadence with their plashing dip in the water; perilous skiffs flit like fire-flies over the glassy surface of the river; men lounge about in the house-boats and barges, or gather together at King's, or Hall's, and industriously promulgate small talk and tobacco-smoke. All is gay and bustling. Although the feet of the strollers in the Christ-Church meadows rustle through the sere and yellow leaf, yet rich masses of brown and russet foliage still hang upon the trees, and light up into gold in the sun. The sky is of a cold but bright blue; the distant hills and woods are mellowed into sober purplish-grey tints, but over them the sun looks down with that peculiar red glow which is only seen in November.

It was one of these bright days of "the month of gloom," that Mr. Verdant Green and Mr. Charles Larkyns being in the room of their friend Mr. Bouncer, the little gentleman inquired, "Now then! what are you two fellers up to? I'm game for any thing, I am! from pitch-and-toss to manslaughter."

"I'm afraid," said Charles Larkyns, "that we can't accommodate you in either amusement, although we are going down to the river, with which Verdant wishes to renew his acquaintance. Last term, you remember, you picked him up in the Gut, when he had been played with at pitch-and-toss in a way that very nearly resembled manslaughter."

"I remember, I remember, how old Gig-lamps floated by!" said Mr. Bouncer; "you looked like a half-bred mermaid, Gig-lamps."

“But the gallant youth,” continued Mr. Larkyns, “undismayed by the perils from which he was then happily preserved, has boldly come forward and declared himself a worshipper of Isis, in a way worthy of the ancient Egyptians, or of Tom Moore’s Epicurean.”



“Well! stop a minute, you fellers,” said Mr. Bouncer; “I must have my beer first: I can’t do without my Bass relief. I’m like the party in the old song, and I likes a drop of good beer.” And as he uncorked a bottle of Bass, little Mr. Bouncer sang, in notes as musical as those produced from his own tin horn —

“Twixt wet and dry I always try
Between the extremes to steer;
Though I always shrunk from getting — intoxicated,
I was always fond of my beer!

For I likes a drop of good beer!
 I'm particularly partial to beer!
 Porter and swipes
 Always give me the — stomach-ache!
 But that's never the case with beer!"

"Bravo, Harry!" cried Charles Larkyns; "you roar us an 't were any nightingale. It would do old Bishop Still's heart good to hear you; and 'sure I think that *you* can drink with any that wears a hood,' or that *will* wear a hood when you take your Bachelor's, and put on your gown." And Charles Larkyns sang, rather more musically than Mr. Bouncer had done, from that song which, three centuries ago, the Bishop had written in praise of good ale, —

Let back and side go bare, go bare,
 Both hand and foot go cold:
 But, belly, God send thee good ale enough,
 Whether it be new or old.

They were soon down at the river side, where Verdant was carefully put into a tub (alas! the dear, awkward, safe, old things are fast passing away; they are giving place to suicidal skiffs, and will soon be numbered among the boats of other days!) — and was started off with almost as much difficulty as on his first essay. The tub — which was, indeed, his old friend the "Sylph," — betrayed an awkward propensity for veering round towards Folly Bridge, which our hero at first failed to overcome; and it was not until he had performed a considerable amount of crab-catching, that he was enabled to steer himself in the proper direction. Charles Larkyns had taken his seat in an outrigger skiff (so frail and shaky that it made Verdant nervous to look at it), and, with one or two powerful