

and it took all the abbot's diplomacy, and a splendid dinner in the refectory, and plenty of good wine from the cellars of Buckfast, to put them in a pleasant humor again. But while the great men were being entertained, no one remembered the humble young leech — they called a doctor a leech then — Master Michael Twopenny. He had offered no opinion about the abbot's disease, and he made no comments on his recovery; but, being no longer needed, he quietly departed with his green bag under his cloak, and rode off to his own home at Dartmouth.

This same young Michael Twopenny, the son of poor but worthy people, was struggling hard to make his living, and was really a very good doctor; but I am afraid that most of his patients were extremely poor people — sailors and fishermen, and their families, living in the old seaport of Devon — and those that were not so poor were extremely forgetful about paying the doctor. Michael's purse was usually slim and his doublet threadbare; but, for all that, he was very popular, and he had few ill-wishers, for he had a kind heart and a cheerful way, and was always ready to do for others, no matter how little they did for him. But just at this

time he was very unhappy. He had set his heart on a charming young girl who lived in his neighborhood, but the charming young girl had a father that was anything but charming, — the wealthy brewer, Jacobius Duds. The brewer was not a bad man in his way; but he was enormously rich, and excessively proud of his wealth and his own importance. He had built himself a great house of stone on High Street, a house with oriel windows, supported by quaintly carved brackets which represented monstrous dolphins, and lighted by many diamond panes, which he had imported from France, for window-glass was rare in those days. The walls of his house were hung with rich tapestries, and he had many luxuries which made his poorer neighbors stare with envy; and Master Duds himself had grown to be very overbearing, and puffed up with his riches, and he looked down with contempt on the poor young surgeon across the street who had dared to lift his eyes to his daughter, the lovely Mistress Dolly Duds. His daughter, he said, should marry a prince or a duke, at the very least, and he'd see that threadbare young scamp of a saw-bones in the bottom of one of his hogsheads of beer before he gave him Dolly Duds. As for Mistress Dolly her-



self, though I fear she was rather vain of her wealth, and wore the most marvellous lot of fine clothes, still she had smiled across the way at poor Michael, and she did sometimes loiter on her way home when the young doctor met her — quite by chance, of course — at the other end of the street. In fact, as the princes and dukes in the vicinity were rather scarce, Mistress Dolly grew very friendly, and smiled until all the dimples showed in her rosy cheeks. Once she even threw a rosebud out of the window to young Master Twopenny, and alas, that rosebud caused a great deal of woe; for the brewer chanced to be coming home just at that moment, and he flew into a terrible rage and vowed that he would shut Dolly up and feed her on bread and water, if she ever spoke to her poor admirer again. What was worse, he was as good as his word, and the lovely Dolly spent the next week in a little room high up in a turret at the back of the house, where she could not get even a peep at her neighbors across the street; and though I do not think she exactly lived on bread and water, yet I am afraid that her fare was unusually plain, and she passed a good deal of her time in crying with vexation, while poor young Twopenny raged and stormed

at the door in vain, and the hard-hearted brewer laughed him to scorn.

Matters had reached this state, when the abbot's illness caused such a sensation, and young Dr. Twopenny went with his friend and master, Dr. Killem-sure, to the Abbey of Buckfast, and, as we know, it was Michael who bagged the pixy, and carried it safely home to his lodgings in Dartmouth. Before he proceeded any farther, however, he rushed over to the great house opposite to inquire for the lovely Dolly; but it was all to no purpose. The footman turned him away with a sneer and a stare at his threadbare suit, and old Duds shook his fist out of his window at him, and told him to hire himself out for a scarecrow, for he was certainly dressed like one and not like a suitor for the great and lovely Mistress Duds. Angry and mortified, Michael went back to his lodgings, and sat down to a frugal supper with such a sad heart that he entirely forgot the abbot and his illness, until his eyes suddenly alighted on the green bag lying in the corner, where he had tossed it. In a moment his interest revived, for, though they did not talk so much about microbes then, he probably imagined that he had something very like a microbe in that bag, or, per-



haps, he would have called it a "porwiggle," for that is what they called tadpoles many, many years ago in England. Whatever his thoughts may have been, he straightway picked up the bag, and cautiously—very cautiously—untied the strings, intending to shake the creature out into a bowl that he had set on the table; but no sooner had he untied the string than—whiz!—out flew the pixy, and, whirling around on one leg, it flounced itself down on the table, very much as the abbot had done on the floor of the refectory. Michael jumped back in no little alarm, and stood staring at the tiny, green-clad figure in the greatest amazement. Seeing his dismay, the pixy laughed.

"Hello!" he said; "how do you do, Master Twopenny? And how's Mistress Dolly?" he added, with a tremendous wink.

"My stars!" cried the young physician; "and you came out of the abbot's mouth? Well, well, I'm not at all surprised that the poor old gentleman had the colic!"

"Te he!" laughed the pixy; "but did n't I have a fine time, though I know all my friends are in mourning, for I heard them shriek when I took a header down the abbot's throat. In fact, I've got

to hurry off now to reassure them; but, before I go, I will give you a little help and advice. It makes a fellow benevolent to get out of the inside of an abbot. I can tell you, it's not a pleasant place to be!"

"I am sure I shall be very grateful for your good offices," responded Michael, with a smile, for he did not believe the pixy could help him; "but I fear there is not much for you to do."

"Oh, is n't there?" cried the pixy, with a knowing look. "But how about Mistress Dolly?"

Master Twopenny turned very red. "I am certain that you cannot do anything for her," he replied stiffly.

"Can't I?" said the fairy. "Well, we shall see, young man, we shall see. Here is a phial with a precious ointment in it," he added, pointing to a tiny bottle of clear liquid that suddenly rose out of the table; "when you are called to cure Master Duds, use that, and your fortune is made,—that is, if you have any wit."

Michael rubbed his eyes and stared at the phial; where in the world did it come from? He took it up and felt of it, and, yes, sure enough, it was solid and real, and its contents exhaled a most delightful odor. But there was one thing past belief.



"I never shall be called to attend old Duds!" he declared, "never! and more, he's not even ill."

"Oh, yes, he is," cried the pixy, laughing, "and with a complaint that will puzzle the doctors, for my half-brother, Special Torment, has been pinching his nose all the day."

"He was well enough to insult me an hour ago!" said Michael, indignantly.

"Don't be a fool," replied the other; "he's ill, I tell you; and, after all the other doctors have failed, he will send for you. Apply the ointment to the tip of his nose, and then demand Mistress Dolly to be your wife."

"Pshaw!" cried young Twopenny. "It would take ten bottles of magic to take the color out of that nose, — and ten thousand to make him give me Dolly!"

"Oh, very well!" retorted the pixy. "If you don't believe me, don't try; but if you're not a goose, you will do what I say. Good-bye, Master Michael, and good luck!" And with this, before the young doctor could interfere, the little creature darted out of the window and vanished from sight.

What was more amazing, in half an hour, Michael

heard a great uproar across the street. Servants were running this way and that, the doctor was called and the parish priest, and in a short time, the whole town was astir over the fearful illness of the brewer, the great and wealthy Jacobius Duds. For Master Duds was ill with a very strange disease. Scarcely had he shaken his fist at poor young Dr. Twopenny, when his nose began to swell, and then his face and his head followed suit, and, if you will believe me, by evening Jacobius's head was quite as big as one of his own hogsheads, and his face was so swollen that his eyes had entirely disappeared, and he could only bellow a few words at a time. In fact, he was a most shocking and fearful sight, and no one could bear to look at him, and no one—not the greatest doctor of all—knew what to do, though he had summoned all those who went to Buckfast, and a great many more; and as he was so wealthy they all came, as fast as they could, and in a week the town of Dartmouth was as full of doctors as a beehive of bees, and yet poor old Jacobius sat there with a head like a hogshead, bellowing with pain and rage, and not one of them could help him the least bit in the world. Then it was that Dolly Duds, having escaped from her imprisonment, in-



sisted upon smuggling in the young doctor from over the way; for like many other young women before and since, pretty Dolly had more faith in her lover than other people had, and she thought what a grand thing it would be if he — her own despised Dr. Twopenny — should be the one to cure her father, after all. So, strange to relate, the pixy's prophecy came true, and Michael was summoned to attend the brewer, and you may be sure that he came in a hurry, and that he had a certain wonderful phial down in his pocket. As Jacobius could not see, he made no objection to Michael's approach, and only bellowed with pain as usual, and the young doctor — without a word — quietly opened the phial and gently rubbed the tip of the brewer's nose with the delicately scented ointment. To tell the truth, Michael was himself a little doubtful of the result, so fancy his amazement when the swelling began to subside at once, and in ten minutes the patient was as well as ever, and sat staring in amazement at the physician who could achieve such a miracle. But when he discovered who it was — the despised and shabby young Twopenny — he began to growl in a most ungrateful way, for no sooner was he free of the pain, than he began to forget all he had suffered,

and was only anxious to be rid of this audacious neighbor of his.

"So!" he said, cross as a bear, "'t was you who cured me. 'Pon my word, these physicians must be very poor beggars indeed, to be beaten by a pin-feather boy like you; but here, — Dolly, you minx, give me my purse — now, what do you want, sir? Name your price and be off!"

This was Michael's opportunity, and remembering his friend the pixy, he bowed gravely to old Master Duds and waved back the purse.

"Money will not pay me," he said proudly, with a glance at the blushing Dolly, who stood behind her father's chair. "I have cured you of a dreadful complaint, Master Duds, and I will be paid only in one way."

"Pretzels and beer!" snapped the brewer, with a fearful frown. "Hear the young cub! But name your price, Sir Twopenny; no one shall say that I would n't pay."

"Your daughter, Mistress Dorothy Duds for my wife — that is the price, sir," said Michael firmly.

Dear me, you ought to have heard the fearful roar and bellow that came from old Duds! He jumped up from his chair and fairly danced with



rage, shaking his fists and blowing out his cheeks, and stamping about like one possessed, while poor Dolly was so frightened that she nearly fainted away, and, if the truth be told, Michael felt rather shaky at the knees, but he kept a bold front.

"The impudent wretch! The saucy varlet!" screamed Jacobius, choking with rage and sputtering — like the end of a candle in the socket — "my daughter — my *daughter*! I'd drown her in beer first! Get out of my sight, you young beast, get out of my sight! I swear that I'd go with my head as big as a church before I'd give you Dolly Duds!"

And he danced and screamed, and picking up his great gold-headed staff that he carried to church, he chased Michael out of the room and down the stairs, screaming and bellowing all the way, while the servants looked on and laughed and sneered at the beggarly young doctor from over the way, and poor little Dolly cried until her nose was red, and gave up all hope of her lover's success. But there's an old adage, that pride comes before a fall, and the proud old brewer was destined to have one. Scarcely had Michael shut the door of his own humble lodgings, before Master Duds felt some fearful pangs in the tip of his nose, and, to his horror, it began to

swell and puff and the more he bellowed the larger it grew, and then his face and his head followed suit, at such an alarming rate that it really seemed as if he would have a head as big as a church. You see, he had rejoiced too soon, before the cure was complete, or else that wicked little pixy had been up to his tricks again. However it was, poor old Jacobius — for we cannot help pitying him, cross as he was, — found his last state worse than his first, and he raved, and bellowed, and used some very hard words, but all to no purpose, for he would not send for that impudent young wretch, not he! He sent, instead, for all the fine doctors who had failed before, and he sent for others besides, and he called them fools, and gumps, and drivelling idiots, because they could not cure him, but — horror of horrors — he kept on swelling! And now, he was such an awful sight that all the townspeople came to see, and fought at the doors for a peep at the brewer with the swelled head; for you must know that such a thing as a circus was unheard of in those old times, and poor Jacobius was almost as good as a side show to the town of Dartmouth. The news of his fearful affliction spread far and wide, and by the end of the week, people were coming from the whole country-side to



see, and when they heard of his boast to the poor young doctor they wagged their heads. What would he do, if he did swell up as big as a church?

But the end was near; between swelling and burning old Jacobius was nearly broken down, and at last he sent to beg the despised Dr. Twopenny to come, and he offered him half his fortune if he would come and cure him. But no, Michael said, — Dolly Duds or nothing at all — and slammed his door on the nose of the servant who had sneered at him only a week ago. You can imagine how Master Duds raved at the answer, and declined to accept the terms; but that night he kept on swelling and — mercy! by morning his head was so big that it had to be propped up with posts a foot thick, to keep it from breaking his neck in two. Then he gave up and sent for Michael. He should marry Dolly and have the finest wedding in the world if he would come and come quick! Of course the young doctor went with his magical bottle and coolly anointed the tip of Jacobius's nose, and at once the swelling subsided, his head grew small, and he felt as well as ever. This time he was really grateful, so grateful that he grabbed Michael by both hands, and danced, and capered, and laughed for joy,

and sending for Dolly, he ordered a very fine dinner, and invited the town to meet his future son-in-law.

And the old man was true to his word. He gave Dolly the finest wedding that had ever taken place in Dartmouth. The streets were illuminated, flags were flying, bands played, and barrels of beer were opened before the brewer's door, that all the town might make merry. There was a beautiful ceremony in the church, and garlands of flowers, and a procession of boys and girls, all dressed in white, and a great banquet for rich and poor, and no end of rejoicings. A great many people thought they saw some strange little green figures dancing about in the wildest glee, but no one was sure.

As for Michael, he grew so famous from this wonderful cure that patients flocked to his door, and he and Dolly became great people, and did a great deal of good with the money the brewer gave her for her wedding portion; and old Jacobius was so fond and proud of his celebrated son-in-law, the wise physician, that he could not do enough to make amends for his past treatment of him. And they all lived happy ever after, thanks to the pixy that the abbot swallowed.