

In moments, oft the years I quickly span  
To help Augustus guide the Roman state,  
Or see great Caesar fall 'neath Brutus' hand,  
Or rescue Carthage from her sorry fate.

Again I watch with open-wondering eye  
The Greeks upon the fields of Marathon  
Deny the Persians but the right to die;  
And, dying, in posterity live on.

As years go by imagination dims;  
I cannot picture battles in my mind.  
No more I hear the strains of fairy hymns.  
We suffer loss when childhood's left behind.

—ANON.

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### MARY AND JIMMY, YOU AND I

Little Mary and Jimmy looked very happy as they ran along the narrow country road on their way home from school. The hot June sun smiled down on them, this little boy and girl, as they ran down past old John Hawkin's General Store, and around the bend in the road which leads to their home.

It's so long since we were their age that I suggest you all come along with me and follow them just to see if they are much different than we were. Agreed? Let us hurry around the bend in the road now, or we shall lose all sight of them. There, we can slow down now because they are just up ahead. Don't they seem content swinging along hand in hand?

You remember how, when you were six, you had a special place along the road home from school where you sat and just dreamed. Well, just under that big tree up a little further is where Jimmy and Mary always stop on their way home from school, to sit and dream, and plan what they are going to do when they grow up. Of course we know that many of the things they plan for the future, in their childish minds, will never come true. Because many of our dreams never come true. You know the ones: you were going to become captain of a big white vessel which would travel to all the mysterious places in the world; or you were going to find the loot on Treasure Island. Even though we know this, we would not ruin their dreams by telling them. I hope that they stop by the big tree to-day, and maybe we can get close enough, without being seen, to hear what they are saying. Oh, look, they are stopping now and sitting down in the tall blades of green summer grass. Let us creep up close, but be careful not to make any noise. Is everybody comfortable? Fine. Well for those of you who cannot see Jimmy and Mary clearly from where you are because of



the long grass, I shall describe them to you. Jimmy isn't much different from what you were when you were that age. He has red hair and freckles, and lately he does not want to smile because he has a tooth out right in the front of his mouth. He has on a short-sleeved shirt and short pants, and naturally he is on his bare feet. Just look at what is hanging out of his back pocket: a sling shot and a bean-shooter. Isn't that typical? What did you say? Tell you about Mary? Very well then, I will. She isn't much different from you girls when you use to play with little dolls. She is also six, and has black hair with pig-tails, and I wish that you could see the big yellow ribbon tied to them. You can easily tell that her mother spent a great deal of time getting them tied just so. Mary does not want Jimmy to think that she is stuck up, so she is trying not to act primly although I believe she is worried lest she get grass stains on her new flower dress.

What do you say if we listen to them talking? Everybody be very quiet now.

"Jimmy, what are you going to be when you grow up?

"Well, dad wants me to be a doctor, but I'd like to be a fella that chases pirates away out on the ocean."

"Well wouldn't you be scared, Jimmy?"

"Naw, I'm not scared of anything. Well, I told you. Now what are you going to be Mary?"

"Oh, I'm going to be a nun like Mary Ann O'Reilly's aunt."

"But wouldn't you rather come and chase pirates with me?"

"Oh no, you boys never want to be anything nice."

"Well, Father Kelly told me that he thought I was the right kind of a fella to chase pirates, and he knows."

As we listen to little Jimmy and Mary I'll bet you are like I am. You can't help looking back to the days when you were only six. How sweet those young innocent years were. I do not think that we should ever get too far removed from those childhood days, do you? As a matter of fact I think that most people are only children at heart. Oh, I know they try to act very grown up, but we know they are forced to brush away a tear of mingled joy and sorrow when they look back on the days when the most important thing was whether the teacher liked you or little Billy the better, and when you thought that your father was far stronger than any other boy's father. Yes, those were the days. Santa came at Christmas, the Easter bunny at Easter, and you got a dime for every tooth you lost without crying.

You know all this has put me right in the mood for dreaming. Let us forget Jimmy and Mary for a few minutes, and see if we can still dream as we used to do when we were like them. While I was



listening to the little boy and girl talking about their future, I began to think about the future of that big old tree they are sitting by. I'll bet that it is hundreds of years old, and still it has a future just as Mary and Jimmy have. We do not know what the future holds for it any more than we know what the future holds for the little school chums. It might be a great deal more exciting even than Jimmy's plan for chasing pirates. Let us close our eyes and think of what might happen.

Some day the old tree will be cut down and then, more than likely, it will be taken down to Paddy Flynn's mill. I wonder where it will go from there? Some of the planks from it might be placed alongside planks from other old trees to form the roof of some little church. I think the old tree would like that. Don't you? Then, again, parts of it might even be made into a small desk and placed in some school-room, and all kinds of little boys and girls would use it in learning to write. And, oh yes, parts of the old tree might become planks on the side of some sailing ship. But I like to think that at least one plank from the ancient tree would become a kneeling bench in some church, perhaps an old cathedral, and thousands of people would kneel on this part of the old tree to talk with God. Wouldn't the old maple be proud if that happened? Some old grandmother might rock for years in a rocking chair made from its wood. Likely, however, all these things that we are planning for the tree are very much like our own plans to become old weather-beaten captains, and little Jimmy's plans for chasing pirates. Probably in the end the stately old tree will be some part of an old barn not more than a mile away.

By the way, the sun is setting and here we are still sitting here. I told you that we were all children at heart. Mary and Jimmy have not moved either. Oh look, here comes a man driving a horse and wagon down the road. I wonder who he is? He seems to be looking for someone. Look at the smile on his face as he gets a glance at Mary and Jimmy. When I come to think of it, I know him. He is Mary's father, and I'll bet you he has been looking for them since school was out. It is too bad that we cannot go with them and hear what they are saying to him.

I think that I shall come along this way to-morrow and see if I can meet them again. Even if all of you cannot come, you will have to admit that we did have fun to-day. Didn't we?

—CLARK MacAULAY '47.