

Mother's Birthday



London:
Society for Promoting
Christian
Knowledge

New-York: E. & J. B. Young & Co.

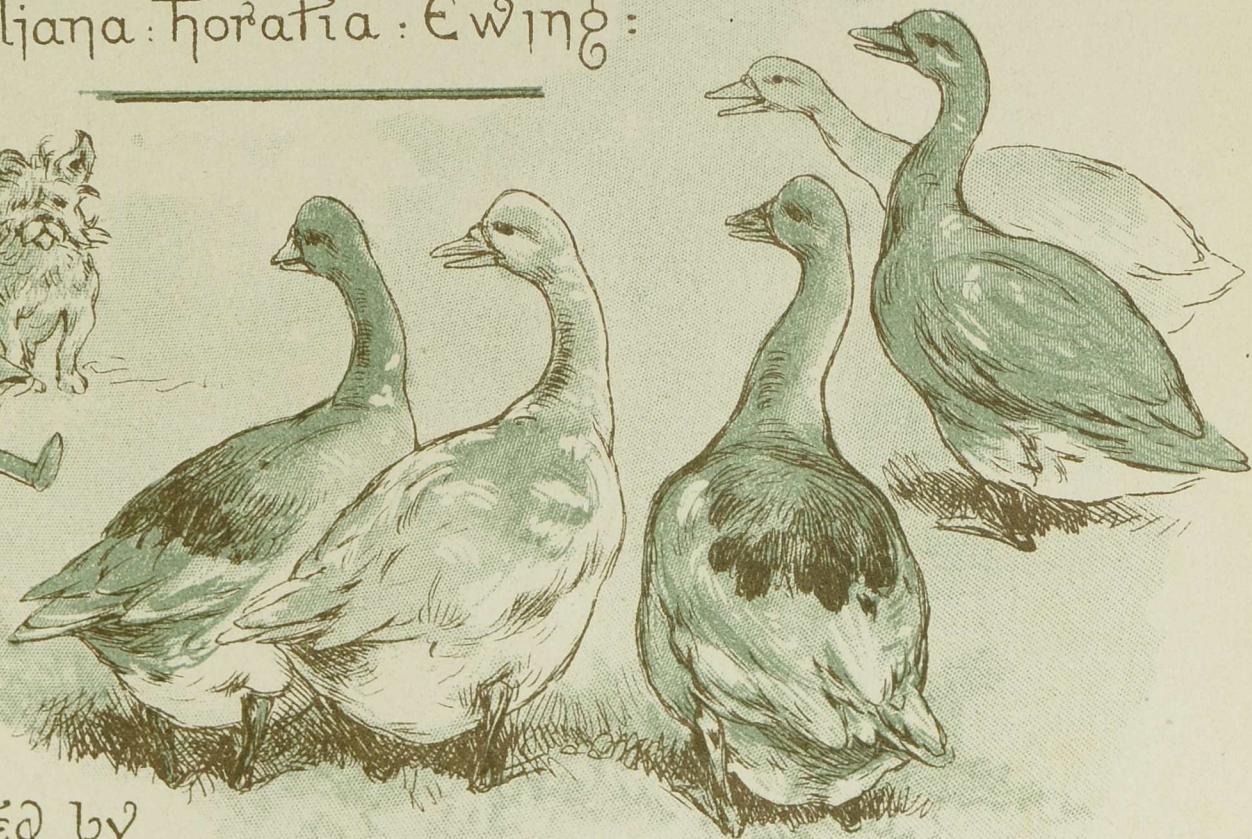
Rebecca H. Wright.

Dec. 25th 1887.

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Mother's Birthday Review:

Written by
Juliana Horatia Ewing:



Depicted by
R. André:



R. André

MOTHER'S BIRTHDAY REVIEW

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Mother's Birthday Review

BROTHER BILL.

To have a good birthday for a grown-up person is very difficult indeed,

We don't give it up, for Mother says the harder things are, the harder you must try till you succeed.

Still, our birthdays are different; we want so many things, and choosing your own pudding, and even half holidays are treats.

But what can you do for people who always order the dinner and never have lessons, and don't even like sweets?

I know Mother does not, Baby put a big red comfit in her mouth, and I saw her take it out again on the sly.

I don't believe she even enjoys going a-gypseying, for she gets neuralgia if she stands about where it isn't dry.

And how can you boil the kettle if you're not near the brook. But it's the last time she shall go there.

I told her so; I said "What's the good of having five sons, except to mount guard over you, you Queen of all Mothers that ever were?"





But she's not easy to manage, and she shams sometimes and shamming is a thing I can't bear

She shammed about the real comfit, when she didn't think Baby could see her;

And (because they're the only things we can think of for birthday presents for her) she shams wearing out a needle-book and a pincushion every year.

The only things we can think of for Father are paper-cutters; but there's no sham about his wearing them out;

He would always lose them, long before his next birthday, if Mother did not keep finding them lying about

Last year's paper-cutter was as big as a sword (not as big as Father's sword, but as big as a wooden one, like ours)

And he lost it behind in a railway carriage, when he'd had it just thirty six hours

So we know he was ready for another. It was Mother's birthday that bothered us so

And if it hadn't been for Dolly's Major (he's her Godfather and she calls him "my Major") what we should have done I really don't know

He said "What's the matter?" And Dolly said, "Mother's birthday's the matter" And I said, "We can't think what to devise

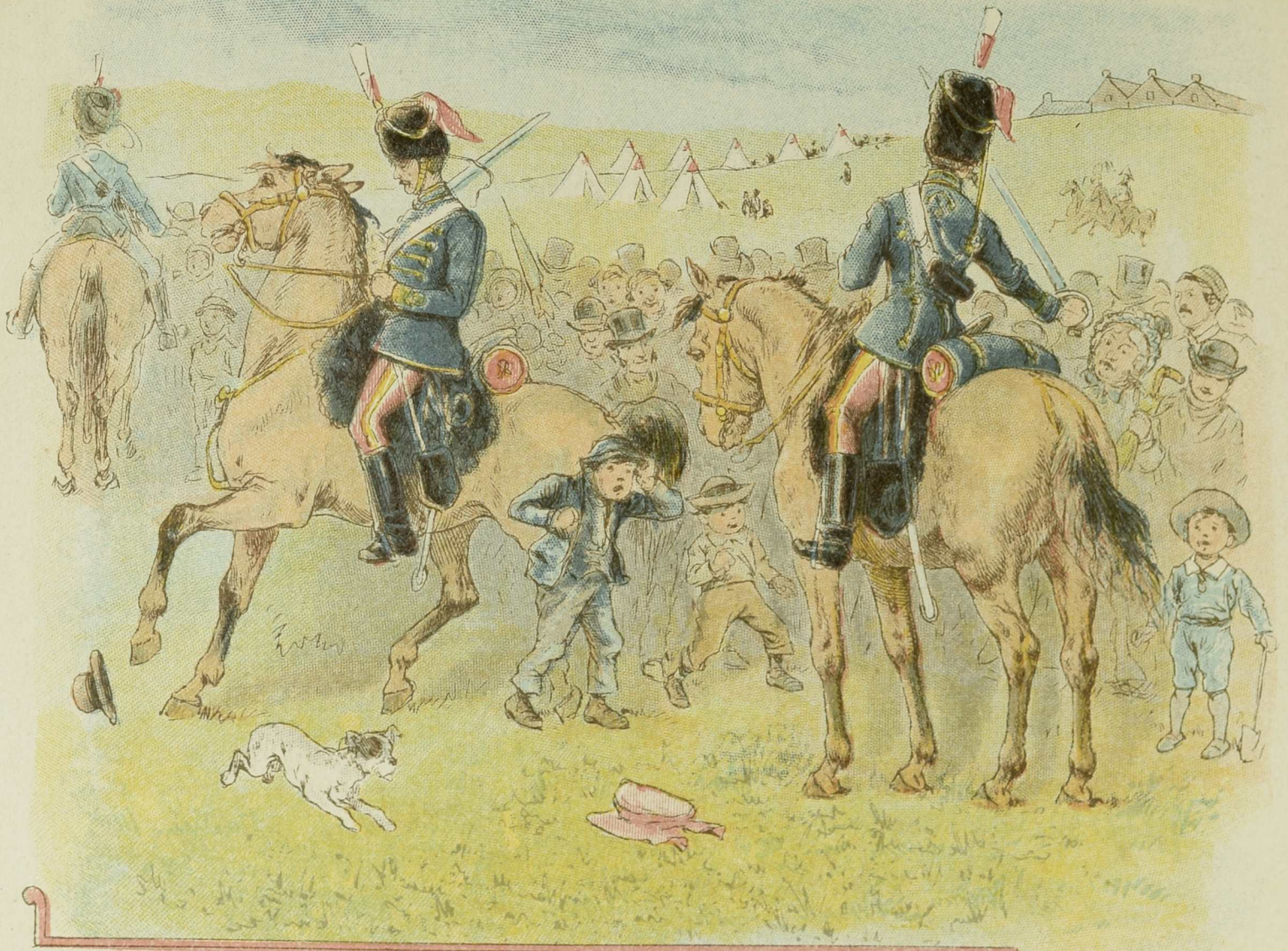
To give her a birthday treat that won't give her neuralgia and will take her by surprise,

Look here's Major! How can you give people treats who can order what they wish for far better than you

I wonder what they do for the Queen! her birthday must be the hardest of all" But he said

Not a bit of it! They have a review

Cocked hats and all the rest of it; and a salute, and a feu de joie, and a March Past



"Cocked hats, and all the rest of it."

Page 9:

RANDOLPH



That's the way we keep the Queen's Birthday;
and every year the same as the last"

So I settled at once to have a Mother's Birth-
-day Review; and that she should be Queen, and I
should be the General in command

I thought she couldn't come to any harm by
sitting in a fur cloak and a birthday wreath at the
window, and bowing and waving her hand,

We did not tell her what was coming, we only
asked for leave to have all the seven donkeys for an
hour and a half

(We always hire them from the same old man)
two for the girls, and five for me and my brother's

I told him, "for me and my staff"

We could have managed with five, if the
girls would only have been Maids of Honour and
stayed indoors with the Queen

Maggie would if I'd asked her; but Dolly

Will go her own way, and that's into the thick of every-
thing, to see whatever there is to be seen

She's only four year's old, but she's ridiculously
like the picture of an ancient ancestress of ours

Who defended an old castle in Corn'wall
against the French for hours and hours

Her husband was away, so she was in
command, and all her household obeyed her

She made them strip the lead off the roofs,
and they did, and she boiled it down and gave
it very hot indeed to the French invader,

Maggie would have let the French in; She
doesn't like me to say so, but I know she would, you
can get anything out of Maggie by talking

She likes to hire a donkey, and then sham she'd
rather not ride, for fear of being too heavy, and to
take Spike out for a run, and then carry him to
save him the trouble of walking



: Dame Elizabeth Treffry (temp. Henry VI.), defended Place House, Fowey, Cornwall, in the circumstances, and with the vigorous measures described: Page 13.

P. André



But she's very good; she made all our cocked hats and at the review she and Dolly, and Spike, were the loyal crowd Dick, and Tom, and Harry were the troops, and I was the General, and Mother looked quite like a Queen at the window, and bowed

The donkeys made very good chargers on the whole, and especially mine

Jem's was the only one that gave trouble, and neither fair means nor foul would keep him in line

Just when I'd dressed all their noses to a nice level (you can do nothing with their ears) then back went Jem's brute

And Jem caught him a whack with the flat of his sword (a thing you never see done on the Staff) and it rather spoilt the salute

But the spirit of the troops was excellent, and we'd a feu de joie with penny pistols (Jem's donkey was the only one that shied) and Dolly's Major says that, all things considered, he never saw a better March Past

And Mother was delighted with her first Birthday Review, and she is none the worse for it, and says she

only hopes that it wont be the last

Dolly

They call me Dolly, but t'm not a doll, and I'm not a baby, though Baby is sometimes my name

I behave beautifully at meals and at Church and I can put on my own boots and say a good deal of the catechism; and ride a donkey, and play at any boys' game

I've ridden a donkey that kicks (at least I rode him as long as I was on) and a donkey that rolls, and an old donkey that goes lame

I mean to ride like a lady now, but that's because I ought, not because I easily can

For what with your legs and your pommles (I mean the saddle's pommles) it would be much easier always to ride like a man

Boys looks braver but I think it's really more dangerous to ride side-ways, because of the saddle slipping round



RAU-2



R. Andre

(I didn't cry; I played at slipping round the world and getting to New-Zealand with my head upside down on the ground)

The reason the saddle is slippery is not because it's smooth, for it's rather rough; and there's a hard ridge behind

And the horses hair coming through the donkey's back (I mean through his saddle) scratches you dreadfully; but I tuck my things under me, and pretend I don't mind

They work out again though, particularly when they are starched, and I think brooks get shorter every time they go to the wash

But I don't complain, if it's very uncomfortable I make an ugly face to myself and say, "Bosh!"

We've all of us, had a good deal of practice, so we ought to know how to ride;

We've ridden a great deal since we came to live on the heath, and we rode a good deal when Father was stationed at the sea-side

My Major taught me to ride sideways, and at first he would hold me on

But I don't like being touched; and I don't call it riding like a lady if you're held on by an officer and I'd rather tumble off if I can't stick on, by myself so I sent him away and the nasty saddle slipped round directly he was gone

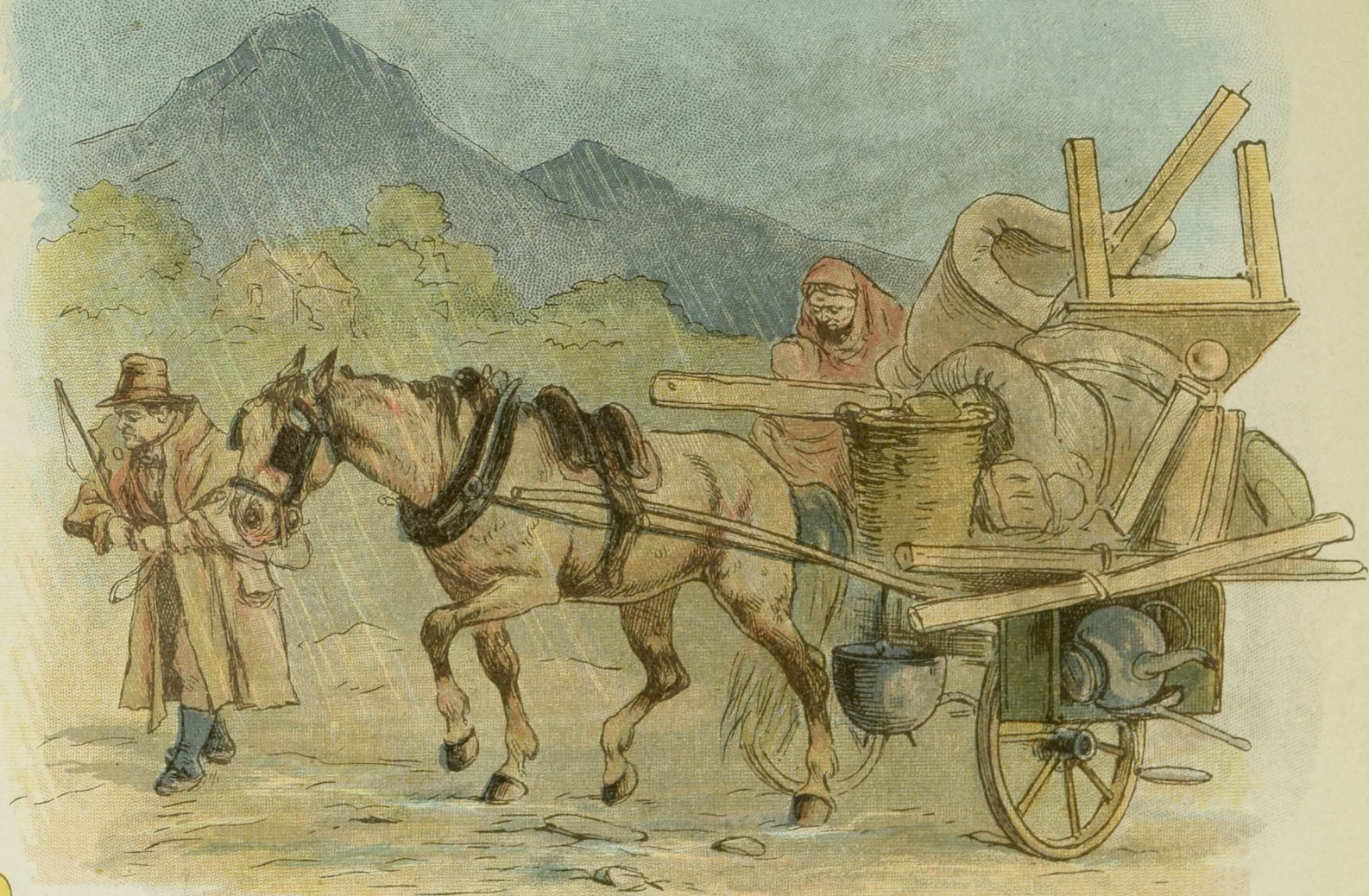
I only crushed my sun-bonnet, and the donkey stood quite still (We always call that one "the old stager")

I wasn't frightened, except just the tiniest bit; but he says he was dreadfully frightened. So I said, "Then you ought to be ashamed of yourself, considering all your medals, and that you're a Major."

He likes me very much, and I like him, and when my fifth birthday comes, he says I'm to choose a donkey, and he'll buy it for me, but the saddle and bridle shall be quite new:

So I've made up my mind to choose the one Brother Bill had for his charger at Mother's Birthday Review;

And Maggie is so glad - she says her life is quite miserable with thinking



How miserable other lives are,

R. André

TO DORKING
HORSHAM.

GROCCER

J. SHOOLBRED

DRAPER

FITTER

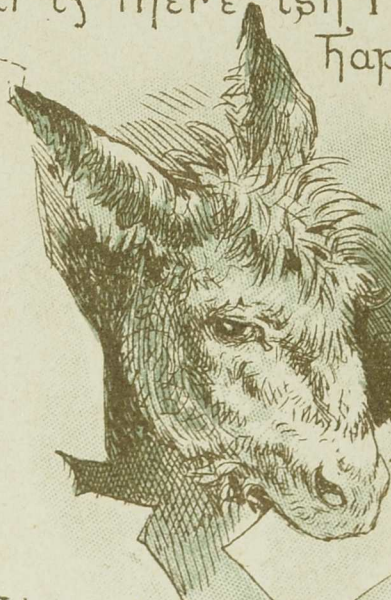
LEATHERHEAD
AMATEUR
MERRILL



P. Anon

if only we knew.

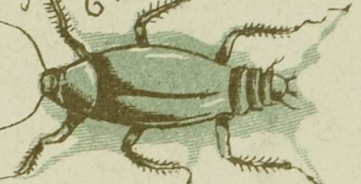
Maggie loves every creature that lives. She won't confess to black beetles, but she can't stamp on them (I've stamped out lots in my winter boots,) and she doesn't even think a donkey ugly when he brays; And she says she shall buy a brush, out of her pocket money, and brush my donkey every day till he looks like a horse, and that it shan't be her fault if there isn't one poor old brute beast who lives happily to the end of his days.



JACK ASS:

The dew falls
over the heath,
Brother Donkeys, and
the darkness falls, but
still through the gathering night.
All around us spreads

the Heath Bedstraw in glimmering sheets of white.
Dragged and trampled, and plucked and wasted,
it patiently spreads and survives;



Kicked and thwacked, and prodded, and over-
laden, we patiently cling to our lives

Hee-haw! for the rest and silence of darkness
that follow the labours of light

Hee-haw! for the hours from night to morning that
balance the hours from morning to night;

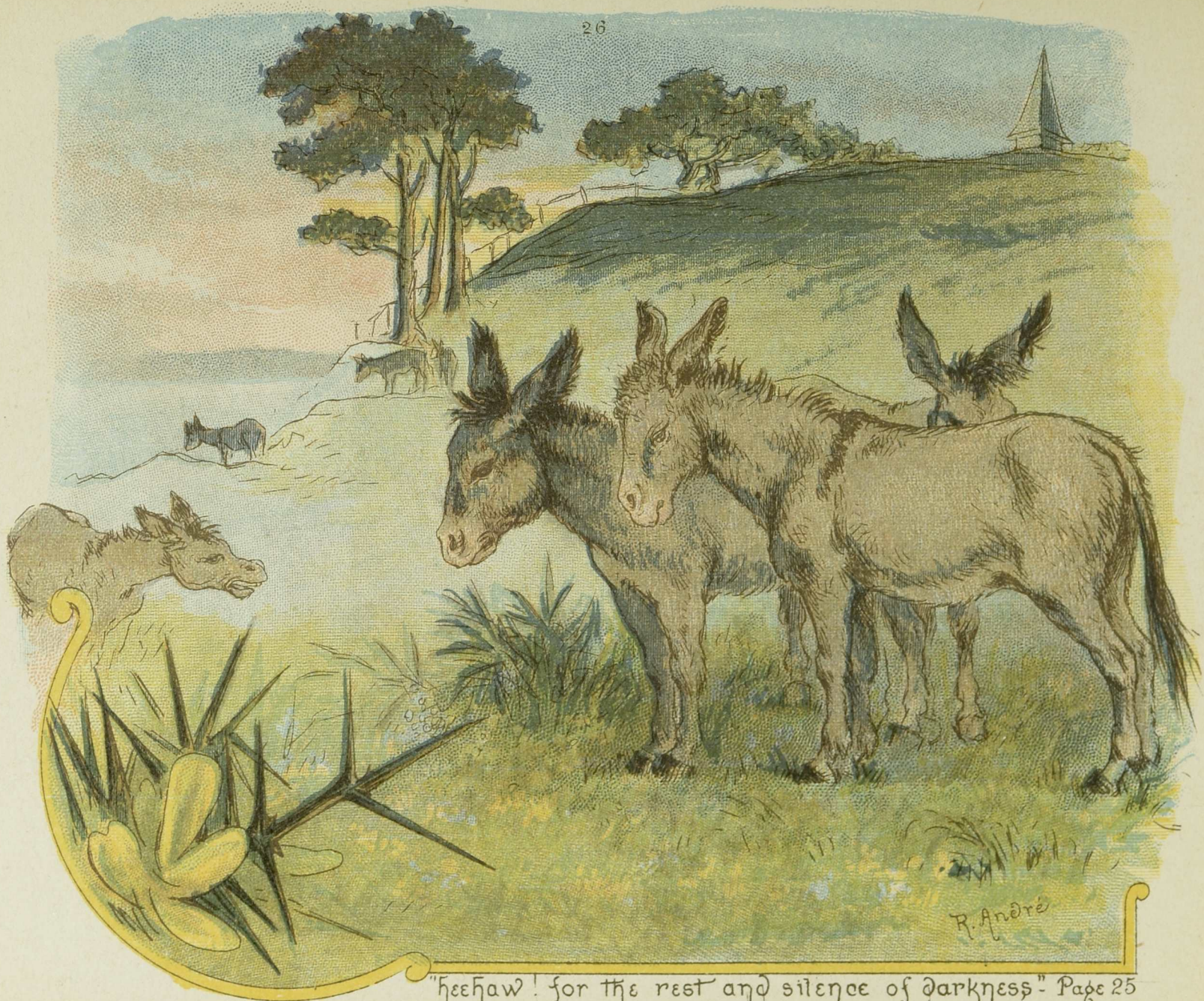
Hee-haw! for the sweet night air that gives human
beings cold in the head;

Hee-haw! for the civilisation that sends human
beings to bed

Rest, Brother Donkeys, rest, from the bit, the burden,
the blow

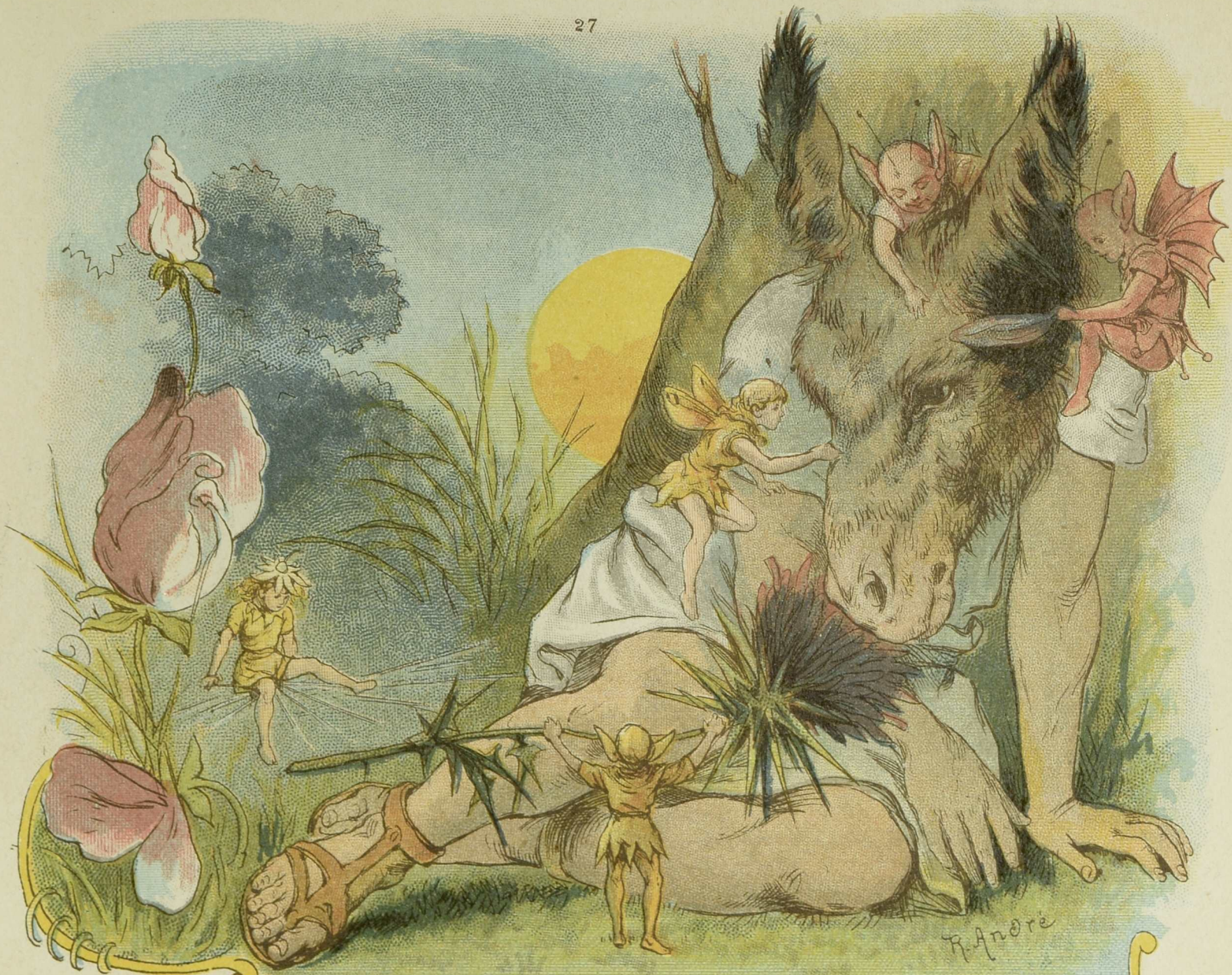
The dust, the flies, the restless children, the brutal
roughs, the greedy donkey-master, the greedier
donkey-hirer, the holiday-maker who knows
no better, and the holiday makers who ought to
know!

When the odorous furze-bush prickles the seeking
nose, and the short damp grass refreshes the tongue -



R. André

"Heehaw! for the rest and silence of darkness" - Page 25



"hee-haw! for the hours from night to morning"

Listen, Brother Donkeys, listen a long and attentive ear

Whilst I proudly brag
Of the one bright day

In our hard and chequered career

I've dragged pots, and vegetables, and invalids,
and fish, and I've galloped with four costermongers
to the races;

I've carried babies, and sea coal and sea sand,
and sea weed in panniers, and been sold to the gypsies
and bought back for the sea-side, and ridden (in a
white saddle-cloth with scarlet braid) by the fashi-
onable visitors (There was always a certain distinction
in my paces

Though I say it who should not) I've spent a summer on
the Heath, and next winter near Covent Garden, and
moved the following year to the foot of a mountain, to
take people up to the top to show them the view

But how little we know what's before us!

And how little I guessed I should ever be
chief charger at a Queen's Birthday Review!

Did I triumph alone? No, Brother Donkeys, no!
 You also took your place with the defenders of
 the nation

Subordinate positions to my own, but meritoriously
 filled, though a little more style would have well
 become so great an occasion

That malevolent old Moke - may his next.... thistle
 choke him! - disgraced us all with his jibbing - the ill-
 tempered old ass!

Young Neddly is shaggy and shy, but not amiss, if
 he'd held his ears up, and not kept his eyes on the
 grass

Nothing is more je-june (I may say vulgar)
 than to seem anxious to eat when the crisis calls
 for public spirit, enthusiasm, and an elevated tone,

And I wish, Brother Donkeys, I wish that all had
 felt as I felt, the responsibility of a March Past the
 Throne!

Respect and self-respect delicately blended; one ear
 up, and the other lowered to salute, as I passed the
 window from which we were seen



"Rest, Brother Donkeys, rest, from the burden, the dust, the flies."
page 25.



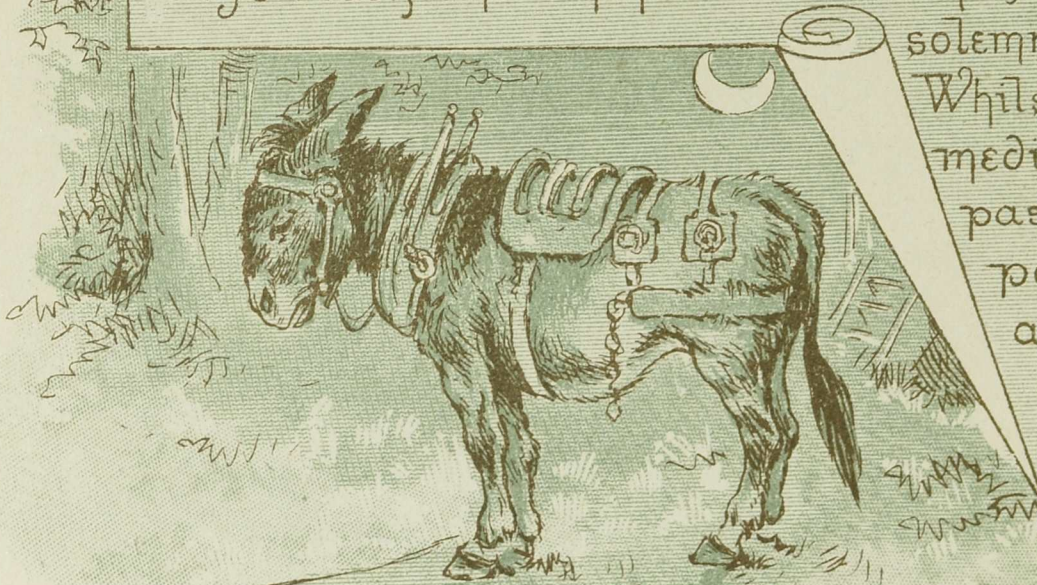
"the holiday-makers who ought to know better"..... Page 25:

Unless I grievously misunderstood the young
 (General this morning) by no less a personage than
 Her Most Gracious Majesty **THE QUEEN**.

Sleep, Brother Donkeys, sleep! But I fancy
 you're sleeping already, for you make no reply;

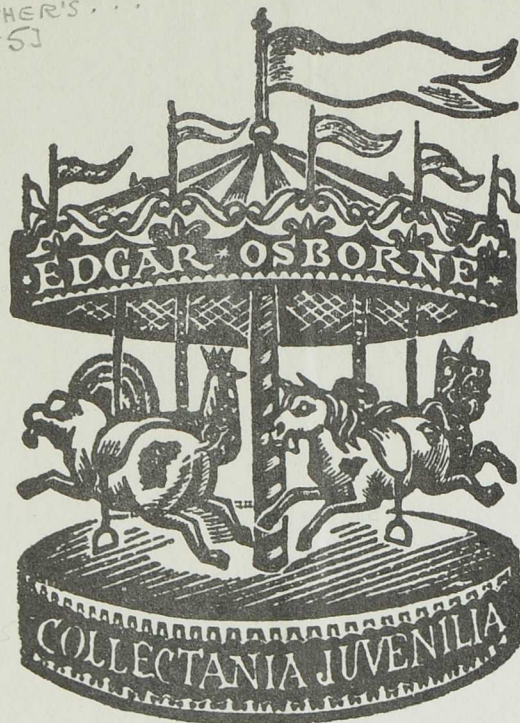
Not a quiver of your ears, not a sign from
 your motionless drooping noses, dark against the
 dusky night sky.

As black and immoveable as the silent fir trees you
 solemnly slumber beneath,
 Whilst I wakefully
 meditate on a glorious
 past, and painfully
 ponder the future,
 as the dew's fall
 over the Heath:



The End

P (150)
EWING, J. H. G.
MOTHER'S . . .
[1885]



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