



UNCLE said yesterday that we might go over to Flexton to a lantern entertainment. The title of it was, *Song and Story: Illustrated with Lantern Slides*. The man who was to give it couldn't come, but he sent his slides, and Mr. Wychgate, the curate, took his place. Somehow the slides got awfully mixed up, and they didn't suit the songs at all.

For instance, the curate said that the programme would open with an illustrated song called *Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep*.



Then a man with a big, deep bass voice began to sing, and the chemist who was working the lantern put a slide on the screen showing *The Village Blacksmith*. The curate saw the mistake, but he didn't like to stop the singer, and so we had all *The Village Blacksmith* slides one after the other. But we had the *Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep* slides later on when another man sang *I am a Friar of Orders Gray*.

Next the curate said that he would tell us an illustrated story. It was about the Pied Piper – you remember, the man who offered to pipe all the rats out of the town, because they were such a fearful nuisance, making their nests in men's Sunday hats, frightening the babies in the cradles, and things like that. Reg whispered to me that they ought to have got a few terriers, but I told him to shut up and not spoil the story.

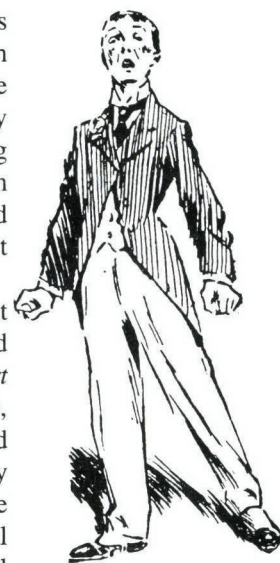
Of course, the slides were all wrong, for the first of them showed some negroes, *Way down upon the Swanee River*, I think. When the curate got to the part where the town councillors wouldn't pay the piper what they promised, and he was the leading the children away out of the town, the slide the chemist put on showed a girl clinging to the clapper of a bell, so that *Curfew shall not ring to-night*.

But the best of all was when a lady sang *Five o'Clock in the Morning*, and the chemist put on a slide upside down, showing a man standing on his head. Everybody laughed at that, and the lady was so offended that she wouldn't go on with her song.

Well, next they brought on Rex Blake to recite. He's a fearful

young bounder is Rex Blake, and he's always reciting. You can't stop him when once he begins. Once at a party of ours he began reciting, and went on for twenty minutes. It was so awful, that when Reg and I caught him in the hall we told him if he did it again we would punch his head and put him under the pump. He hasn't recited in our house since then.

Of course, we couldn't stop him at the concert, and we just had to grin and bear it. The piece he recited was *Hubert and Arthur* – something by Shakespeare, I think; but the slides were comic, and they were meant for a tale about a greedy man. They were the best thing in the whole show, for they were mechanical slides, and you saw a man shovelling all the food on the table into his mouth, and getting fatter and fatter every minute, until he burst.



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It was rare fun, and we enjoyed it so much that we clapped like anything at the finish; and Rex Blake thought it was meant for him, and came on again and gave us another recitation – without slides this time. If we'd known we should have had another recitation from Rex Blake we shouldn't have clapped a bit, I assure you.

After a time they got the slides all right, and then there wasn't any fun. When we got home and told Dad all about it, he laughed a lot, and said he was sorry he'd missed it.

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