

# **The History Of Gog And Magog, The Champions of London**

John Galt

## Table of Contents

<u>The History Of Gog And Magog, The Champions of London</u> .....	1
<u>John Galt</u> .....	1
<u>CHAPTER I. SOME ACCOUNT OF THE DOMINIONS AND CHARACTER OF HUMBUG THE GIANT</u> .....	1
<u>CHAP. II. HOW HUMBUG THE GIANT FELL IN LOVE WITH THE BEAUTIFUL PRINCESS LONDONA</u> .....	3
<u>CHAP. III. HOW GOG AND MAGOG RESOLVED TO AVENGE THE WRONGS OF THE PRINCESS LONDONA</u> .....	5
<u>CHAP. IV. HOW GOG AND MAGOG WERE REPULSED BY THE GIANT HUMBUG, AND WHAT ENSUED</u> .....	6
<u>CHAP. V. HOW GOG AND MAGOG PROCEEDED TO ATTACK THE CASTLE</u> .....	8
<u>CHAP. VI. HOW GOG AND MAGOG MAGNANIMOUSLY DEVOTED THEIR LIVES AND PROPERTY FOR THE DELIVERANCE OF LONDONA</u> .....	10
<u>CHAP. VII. HOW GOG AND MAGOG WERE EXCHANGED FOR THE PRINCESS LONDONA</u> .....	11
<u>CHAP. VIII. HOW THE GIANT USED GOG AND MAGOG</u> .....	13
<u>CHAP. IX. HOW THE PRINCESS LONDONA ADVANCED TO STORM THE CASTLE OF HUMBUG, AND HOW THE GIANT WAS SLAIN</u> .....	14
<u>CHAP. X. HOW LONDONA REWARDED GOG AND MAGOG FOR THEIR NOBLE SELF DEVOTION IN HER CAUSE</u> .....	15
<u>CHAP. XI. HOW THE PRINCESS RESOLVED TO BUILD A CITY, AND CALLED IT LONDON, AFTER HERSELF</u> .....	17
<u>CHAP. XII. HOW THE COMMON COUNCIL RESOLVED TO ADDRESS THE PRINCESS, AND IN WHAT MANNER THE COURT OF ALDERMEN ORIGINATED</u> .....	18
<u>CHAP. XIII. HOW THE PRINCESS LANDONA RECEIVED THE ALDERMEN, AND BESTOWED THE TITLE OF "MY LORD MAYOR;" WITH SOME CURIOUS FACTS RESPECTING THE ORIGIN OF NEWSPAPERS AND CLUB- ROOMS</u> .....	19
<u>CHAP. XIV. HOW THE PRINCESS WAS SOUGHT IN MARRIAGE BY SEVERAL GREAT CHARACTERS; AND, HAVING, PREFERRED TOOLY, PRINCE OF SOUTHWARK, ABOVE ALL OTHERS, HOW LONDON- BRIDGE WAS BUILT TO FACILITATE THEIR UNION</u> .....	21
<u>CHAP. XVI. HOW THE SON AND HEIR OF THE PRINCESS LONDONA WAS CALLED COCKNEY, AND WHY GOG AND MAGOG WERE NOT SPONSERS WHEN HE RECEIVED HIS NAME</u> .....	25
<u>CHAP. XVII. HOW GOG AND MAGOG GREW OLD, AND DIED; AND HOW THEIR STATUES WERE PLACED IN GUILD-HALL</u> .....	26

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- [CHAPTER I. SOME ACCOUNT OF THE DOMINIONS AND CHARACTER OF HUMBUG THE GIANT.](#)
  - [CHAP. II. HOW HUMBUG THE GIANT FELL IN LOVE WITH THE BEAUTIFUL PRINCESS LONDONA.](#)
  - [CHAP. III. HOW GOG AND MAGOG RESOLVED TO AVENGE THE WRONGS OF THE PRINCESS LONDONA.](#)
  - [CHAP. IV. HOW GOG AND MAGOG WERE REPULSED BY THE GIANT HUMBUG, AND WHAT ENSUED.](#)
  - [CHAP. V. HOW GOG AND MAGOG PROCEEDED TO ATTACK THE CASTLE.](#)
  - [CHAP. VI. HOW GOG AND MAGOG MAGNANIMOUSLY DEVOTED THEIR LIVES AND PROPERTY FOR THE DELIVERANCE OF LONDONA.](#)
  - [CHAP. VII. HOW GOG AND MAGOG WERE EXCHANGED FOR THE PRINCESS LONDONA.](#)
  - [CHAP. VIII. HOW THE GIANT USED GOG AND MAGOG.](#)
  - [CHAP. IX. HOW THE PRINCESS LONDONA ADVANCED TO STORM THE CASTLE OF HUMBUG, AND HOW THE GIANT WAS SLAIN.](#)
  - [CHAP. X. HOW LONDONA REWARDED GOG AND MAGOG FOR THEIR NOBLE SELF DEVOTION IN HER CAUSE.](#)
  - [CHAP. XI. HOW THE PRINCESS RESOLVED TO BUILD A CITY, AND CALLED IT LONDON, AFTER HERSELF.](#)
  - [CHAP. XII. HOW THE COMMON COUNCIL RESOLVED TO ADDRESS THE PRINCESS, AND IN WHAT MANNER THE COURT OF ALDERMEN ORIGINATED.](#)
  - [CHAP. XIII. HOW THE PRINCESS LANDONA RECEIVED THE ALDERMEN, AND BESTOWED THE TITLE OF "MY LORD MAYOR;" WITH SOME CURIOUS FACTS RESPECTING THE ORIGIN OF NEWSPAPERS AND CLUB- ROOMS.](#)
  - [CHAP. XIV. HOW THE PRINCESS WAS SOUGHT IN MARRIAGE BY SEVERAL GREAT CHARACTERS; AND, HAVING, PREFERRED TOOLY, PRINCE OF SOUTHWARK, ABOVE ALL OTHERS, HOW LONDON- BRIDGE WAS BUILT TO FACILITATE THEIR UNION.](#)
  - [CHAP. XVI. HOW THE SON AND HEIR OF THE PRINCESS LONDONA WAS CALLED COCKNEY, AND WHY GOG AND MAGOG WERE NOT SPONSERS WHEN HE RECEIVED HIS NAME.](#)
  - [CHAP. XVII. HOW GOG AND MAGOG GREW OLD, AND DIED; AND HOW THEIR STATUES WERE PLACED IN GUILD-HALL.](#)
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## CHAPTER I. SOME ACCOUNT OF THE DOMINIONS AND CHARACTER OF HUMBUG THE GIANT.

MANY disputes have arisen among the learned respecting the origin of the city of

London; and it has hitherto never been very satisfactorily explained, why the two colossal statues of Gog and Magog were placed in the Guild-hall of that famous capital. What has been denied to antiquarian research, has been happily revealed to me, for the express purpose of being related to the rising generation; in order that future ages may have no doubt regarding two points of knowledge, in which so much of the happiness and prosperity of the citizens of the British metropolis is so deeply involved.

In a rude age, long before the Roman legions, under the command of Julius Caesar, invaded the island of Britain, it appears, by the most authentic written chronicles of the time, that a huge giant inhabited a strong and dismal castle, situated where the Guild-hall of London now stands ; and that he ruled all the adjacent country with an iron sceptre. His dominions extended from the banks of the pleasant Brent on the west, were bounded by the majestic tides of the Thames on the south, on the east they were watered by the meandering Lea, and extended so far to the north, as to comprehend the breezy hills of Hampstead and Highgate. He was, in a word, the greatest monarch in the county of Middlesex; and, there is even reason to believe, that his territories actually embraced the whole extent of the shire. But, in a matter of this sort, it is unnecessary to be more particular, especially as his throne and sovereignty were utterly abolished by the events which it is my happy duty, as a faithful historian, to relate.

At the period alluded to, no part of the island of Britain might have presented such a scene of rural and pastoral beauty, as the dominions of the giant. The soil was surprisingly fertile, particularly in those parts which are now occupied by the numerous buildings of the city; indeed, the very name of Cornhill, which exists to this day, indicates the amazing fertility of the spot: so that, but for the tyrant of the neighbouring castle, it would, in all human probability, have been an earthly paradise. Alas! his ruthless sway rendered it a solitude, compared to what it now is.

The name of this monstrous giant was Humbug, and his dispositions were not more

merciless than his appearance was dreadful to behold. His hair and beard were of a coal-black colour; his eyes sparkled with malignant ferocity towards the whole race of mankind ; and his complexion was of that pallid hue, which denotes hardness of heart. He set no bounds to his inordinate desires, but seized everything that he coveted, in the most lawless manner ; and the malice of his vengeance was chiefly directed against the defenceless, which is always the case with persons of evil inclinations : and giants are remarkably liable to have inclinations of the worst kind.

In this manner Humbug had lived, or, more properly speaking, had domineered, to the great terror and dismay of the country, for upwards of fifty years. That he was, in consequence, cordially hated, need not be told ; but he had the folly to think he was capable of inspiring a beautiful young lady with sentiments of the tender passion : so much does self-love blind even giants to their defects, as well as the sons of men. For Humbug was at this time old and corpulent ; and the natural badness of his temper was aggravated by the gout, a disease which he had brought upon himself by the liberties which he took with fish, flesh, and fowl.

## **CHAP. II. HOW HUMBUG THE GIANT FELL IN LOVE WITH THE BEAUTIFUL PRINCESS LONDONA.**

ONE fine summer's day, as Humbug was taking a stroll by himself, meditating on the benevolence of Nature, in raising so many nutritious herbs, to give beef, mutton, and venison their savoury juices, he happened to spy the charming Londona, walking alone on the margin of a purling brook, now known by the name of Fleet-ditch, and highly celebrated as such by Pope, that great poet ; but which was then a crystal rivulet, overshadowed with elder-trees and Willows.

Greatly astonished at the splendor of her beauty, he thought proper to fall desperately in love with her ; not aware that she could never return his passion ; for she was the daughter of a king, whom he had himself dethroned and murdered, many years before ; and whose crown and dignity he had usurped in the most shameful manner.

When he beheld Londona he did not know her name ; nor, indeed, was he acquainted that the daughter of his victim existed ; for, from the death of her royal father, that unfortunate princess had remained concealed in the cottage of an old woman called Mary Lebon, who lived at the bottom of the verdant rising ground, so well known to the metropolitan youth of both sexes by the name of Primrose-hill. It has been conjectured that the cottage of old Mary Lebon stood on the very spot where Chalk-farm public-house is now situated, --so renowned as the scene of duels, and other feats of heroism and gallantry.

Having looked at the princess some time, and seeing her greatly agitated at the sight of him, which he supposed was owing to the soft impression his appearance made on her heart, he went towards her ; and, falling on his knees at her feet, declared his love with all the rhetoric of which he was master. Placing his hand on his breast, he assured her, with the sincerity of a giant, that the radiance of her eyes quite melted his heart ; and that, if she did not consent to become his bride, he would expire in agonies on the spot, and leave the recollection of his death as a ghost to upbraid her conscience.

Londona, however, knew his character too well, to entertain the slightest sympathy for any such love as his ; and moreover, reflecting that he was the murderer of her father, she rejected his fond entreaties with the most dignified contempt.

Her scorn, however, only served to inflame his passion ; and he became at last so rude and importunate, that she saw no other way of escaping the menaces of his affection, than by taking to her heels, and running off as fast as she could.

Being nimbler than the giant, she would have certainly escaped ; but, unfortunately, in running up Holborn-hill, --which was

then a smooth and verdant declivity, enamelled with daisies, — her foot slipped, and she tumbled down. Before she could recover herself, the giant came up; and, seizing her by the hair, carried her to his gloomy abode, and threw her into a dark dungeon, in the hope of thereby gaining her affections.

### **CHAP. III. HOW GOG AND MAGOG RESOLVED TO AVENGE THE WRONGS OF THE PRINCESS LONDONA.**

AT the time that Humbug the giant committed this violent outrage on the Princess Londona, a miller, who lived on the identical spot where Westminster-hall now stands, had two sons, twins, called Gog and Magog. These young men were much renowned among persons of their own condition in life, for strength of body, and the generosity of their dispositions. They excelled all their companions in feats of vigour and manly dexterity : in short, there was not one in the whole district, subject to the tyrannical giant, who could compare with Gog and Magog, either in masculine stature, or the valiant virtues of frank and generous hearts.

It happened that, on the very day on which the outrage was perpetrated, a fair was held on a green hill ; where, by-the-bye, Julius Caesar, many years afterwards, built the Tower : and that Gog and Magog were at the fair, enjoying the sports and pastimes, when the news arrived. Filled with noble indignation at this fresh instance of the giant's lawless tyranny, they loudly exclaimed to their companions, that it was disgraceful to endure any longer the arbitrary oppression of such a despot ; declaring, at the same time, that if they were well supported, they would not scruple to attempt the rescue of the unfortunate princess.

Their known bravery, and the valour with which they expressed themselves, gave resolution and energy to all who heard them. The amusements of the fair were suspended; and the most prompt and

decisive measures taken, on the instant, to attack the ferocious Humbug, in his gloomy fortress. Gog divided the young men, whom his eloquence had inspired, into different companies, and appointed captains to each : while Magog went with a detachment, breathing revenge, to provide weapons suitable to their warlike enterprise.

It is, I presume, unnecessary to inform my attentive auditors, that, in the rude period in which this affair took place, fire-arms were totally unknown ; but, perhaps, it is not generally understood, that even swords were not then invented : at least, I have not found any such thing mentioned in the numerous volumes that have furnished me with the materials from which I have compiled this most authentic history. The fact seems to be, that the only warlike weapons then in use, were clubs and shields; but even with these the country lads, who were enjoying the diversions of the fair, were not provided; for I find it recorded, that Magog led his men to the banks of the Fleet rivulet, where they cut down the elder and willow-trees which, as I have already mentioned, overshadowed its limpid and purling waters, and converted the trunks and branches into hostile weapons. With these they returned to Gog ; and, having distributed the clubs thus procured, the whole body moved towards the giant's castle in battle array.

#### **CHAP. IV. HOW GOG AND MAGOG WERE REPULSED BY THE GIANT HUMBUG, AND WHAT ENSUED.**

THE warden of the castle being at his post, on the top of the highest tower, saw the army of Gog and Magog advancing over Cornhill, and instantly sounded an alarm. Humbug, with all his tyrannical qualities, was not deficient in personal courage ; but, as he was rather advanced in years, corpulent and afflicted with the gout, he could not move about with that celerity which he was wont to shew on the field of

## The History Of Gog And Magog, The Champions of London

glory. However, he buckled on his armour as fast as he could ; and, heading his vassals, boldly issued from the castle-gate, with colours flying, and all the pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war, determined to conquer or die : at all events, to punish the insurgents with exemplary rigour.

Gog and Magog not being then versed in the stratagems of war, were not prepared for those open and offensive proceedings. The result was, that the giant and his followers, experienced as they were in military enterprises, completely disconcerted them ; and, after a short conflict, in which no want of courage was shewn on the part of the champions of Londona, and their companions, the brave youths were obliged to make a precipitate retreat.

Humbug, fatigued with his exertions in the field, was satisfied with this victory, and retired to his castle ; while the assailants fell back to the top of Ludgate-hill, and halted on a spot which was ever after deemed sacred, and is now occupied by the magnificent structure of St. Paul's Cathedral.

Gog and Magog, conscious that their enterprise had been rashly undertaken, freely confessed this to their companions, but advised them not to consider the cause as hopeless ; on the contrary, to assure themselves, that, by properly using the instruction which they had received from adverse fortune, they would, in the end, attain that object they had all so much at heart.

Greatly encouraged by these cheering assurances, the whole party resolved to prosecute the war with redoubled vigour ; and, in order to do so with the more effect, it was agreed that they should march back to the place where the fair had been held, and fortify the hill, as a place of refuge, from the vassals of the giant ; and as a depot for arms and provisions, which they perceived it became necessary to collect, in order to carry on the contest properly. Hence it is that this spot, now called the Tower of London, has, in all subsequent ages, been the grand magazine of the military stores of the British nation : a decided proof of the discernment and military genius of Gog and

Magog.

## **CHAP. V. HOW GOG AND MAGOG PROCEEDED TO ATTACK THE CASTLE.**

WHEN the hill was fortified, by digging the ditch around it, which remains to this day, and the whole inclosed with a strong pallisade, which occupied the line of the present walls ; Gog and Magog invited every person, who had suffered by the tyranny of Humbug, or who resented his manifold aggressions, to take refuge within the inclosure : for, as it was resolved to wage war, until he was completely subdued, it was natural to expect he would wreak his vengeance on all who had suffered by him ; conscious as he was, that they must, therefore, be his enemies. In consequence of a proclamation to this effect, a great number of families, with their property, flocked into the fortress ; and the two champions, and their friends, having, in the mean time, improved their arms and discipline, marched out again to hazard another battle.

The giant, awake to the increasing danger of his situation, was not, in the mean time, idle. He strengthened the walls of his castle, exercised his troops with the skill of an experienced general ; and, in the hope that Londona might be induced to mediate between him and the insurgents, he softened the rigours of her captivity. But she was not to be deceived, nor tempted, by this change. Her demeanour towards him remained unaltered ; and, when he sometimes stormed at her stubborn virtue she replied to his fury with silent scorn; as became her beauty, and illustrious birth; and answered his threats, by expressing her perfect persuasion that his downfall was at hand.

On the morning of that day, the anniversary of which has ever since been consecrated to manly recreations by the inhabitants of the English capital, under the

name of Easter Monday, Gog and Magog advanced towards the walls of the castle, which were thronged with formidable warriors, and bands of archers, stationed at the windows, and on the tops of all the towers. They halted in a field, through which a foot-path then ran, that, in process of time, has become the street of Cheapside ; and Gog, having a large horn suspended from his neck by a leathern thong, stepped out in front, and blew a loud blast, summoning the giant to a parley. Humbug regarded this as a mere bravado ; and, instead of answering, as, according to the laws of war, he was bound to do, he shook his spear at the youthful champion, as if he had been a country-gentleman, and Gog a schoolboy coming to break into his orchard.

This convinced the army of Gog and Magog that it was unnecessary to treat with such a fierce and faithless tyrant; but that blows were the only terms in which they ought to address him. Accordingly, they marched bravely up to the castle ; and, getting close under the walls, the archers at the windows, and in the towers, could do them no offence. Humbug, who had not anticipated any such manoeuvre, was, for a moment, disconcerted ; but the evil genius, which constantly attended him, soon suggested an expedient worthy of his character. He ordered the beautiful Londona to be instantly brought forth, with a rope round her neck ; and, looking down from his lofty station over the castle-gate, he cried to Gog and Magog, that, if they did not immediately withdraw their troops, he would strangle the lady before their eyes. This singular and desperate stratagem had the effect intended. The generous Gog and Magog could not remain and see the lady perish ; and, therefore, they immediately drew off their men, and returned, extremely down-hearted at this second failure, to their fortress.

## CHAP. VI. HOW GOG AND MAGOG MAGNANIMOUSLY DEVOTED THEIR LIVES AND PROPERTY FOR THE DELIVERANCE OF LONDONA.

HUMBUG having discovered, by the effect of this stratagem, that he had the means of controlling his enemies in his own power, no sooner saw the army of the champions at a convenient distance, than he sent out a herald, on a black charger, to demand, by sound of trumpet, as the price of Londona's life, that the brave twin-brothers should be delivered into his hands. This audacious proposal met with a suitable answer. The whole army, with one heart and voice, exclaimed, with indignation [sic], that they never would be guilty of so great a crime ; that they knew her life would not be one jot safer by sacrificing Gog and, Magog ; and that, if he ventured to hurt a hair of her head, they would cut him into as many pieces as there were hairs on his own.

But Gog and Magog saw that they were never to expect a pardon for their rebellion ; and, therefore, thought the best thing they could do, would be to negociate with the giant, and offer themselves in exchange for the princess. They accordingly communicated this generous intention to their companions, by whom every argument that affection and reason could suggest was urged, in vain, to dissuade them from this self-immolation. They were, however, firm to their purpose ; and, having chosen a proper person to make the overture to the giant, they waited his return with undaunted serenity.

Humbug having found, by this time, that it was hopeless to think Londona would ever consent to become his bride, was glad of an opportunity to get at once so well rid of her, and to obtain his two most formidable enemies into his hands. He therefore at once acquiesced in the proposal ; and the next morning was appointed to carry this treaty into effect. The place appointed for Londona to be delivered to the giant, and for Gog and Magog to surrender themselves, was on the top of Cornhill, where the Royal Exchange now stands. Whether the name

took its rise from this transaction may be questioned ; but the spot is still held in great reverence by the citizens of London. It is not, however, any part of my task to settle differences of opinion, and I have only alluded to the circumstance, that some learned doctor, more conversant in matters of this sort, may investigate the business for the satisfaction of the members of the Antiquarian Society, as well as the Court of Aldermen, who are all lamentably ignorant of the illustrious fact, of which I have the felicity of being the first modern historian. What ancient authorities have said on the subject, falls not within the scope haveof the present narrative.

## **CHAP. VII. HOW GOG AND MAGOG WERE EXCHANGED FOR THE PRINCESS LONDONA.**

THE lady was led to the spot veiled, and in tears, at the time appointed; and Gog and Magog, her gallant champions, stepped forward, at the same moment, with a manly air, and delivered themselves into the hands of the officers of their implacable enemy, by whom they were immediately conducted to the castle, in the hall of which Humbug was seated, at the upper end.

It would require the pen, of a master to describe the interview. The giant looked at the two courageous youths with an aspect of mingled revenge and cruelty, and his huge bulk was terribly shaken with the conflict of violent passions.

At one moment he seemed disposed to tear them in pieces, and give their limbs to his dogs ; at another he eyed them with an expression of abhorrence, as if he had a presentiment that they were destined to end his flagitious career. But, after debating within himself in what manner he might best glut his vengeance by their destruction, and spitting in their faces with perfect rage, he ordered them to be thrown into separate dungeons, to await his pleasure.

Gog and Magog, as you have seen, being possessed of firm and undaunted minds,

listened to the exasperated threats of the tyrant in the coolest manner ; and, warily casting their eyes round the hall, saw piles of clubs and shields in different places. Having been born twins, and resembling each other strongly in person and character, they happened also to think much alike ; accordingly, without communicating their thoughts to one another, they both resolved, at the same time, that, when they were next brought before the giant to take an opportunity of seizing some of the arms in the hall, and free themselves and their country from his oppression on the spot. In the mean time, Londona, who had been conducted by the friends of Gog and Magog to the fortress, was inconsolable at the idea of having caused the death of two such courageous young men ; for it was not doubted that Humbug had sacrificed them to his ungovernable vengeance. When she had awhile indulged her sorrow for their fate, she recollected that, being herself the daughter of a British king, she was qualified to lead armies to battle ; and that it more became her blood, and birth, to avenge the wrongs that had been done, than to bewail it with tears. She thereupon rose from the seat where she had sat weeping ; and, going out to the crowd of young men who were mourning the loss of their leaders, and repining at their own want of resolution, in permitting such a sacrifice to take place, addressed them in very lofty language, and rebuked them for thinking that she, the daughter of a royal line, would tamely allow the destroyer of her father, the usurper of her birthright, and the wasteful oppressor of their common country, to continue in the enjoyment of his crimes.

The heroic sentiments of Londona met with lively sympathy in every bosom. Shouts of admiration and devotion answered her address, followed with cries of impatience to be led on to attack the tyrant in his strong-hold.

## CHAP. VIII. HOW THE GIANT USED GOG AND MAGOG.

THE war, which I have thus described as commencing at Easter, had raged all the summer in the bosoms of the antagonists, and the autumn was by this time long over. In fact, it was the 9th of November when the exchange of Londona for Gog and Magog took place, a day annually commemorated by the Lord Mayor resigning the magisterial functions to his successor ; a ceremony instituted to keep up to all posterity the memory of the deliverance of LondonA. When Humbug had settled his scheme of torture, he seated himself at his supper-table, and ordered Gog and Magog to be brought before him. The prisoners, expecting to be put to death, had thought it unnecessary that morning to take any breakfast ; they were, therefore, exceedingly hungry. The giant knew this, and had directed his cook to prepare a sumptuous banquet, of the most savoury viands, that he might sharpen their appetite with the smell. Smarting with the pains of hunger, as Gog and Magog then were, they bore the tantalizing offers which Humbug made them, of dainty morcels on his fork, with as much apparent equanimity as their statues overlook the vanishing luxuries of the city-feast, which is annually held in the same place, to perpetuate a just abhorrence of the tyrant's method of torture. When the giant perceived that they were not to be moved by his insulting and refined cruelty, he grew exceedingly fierce ; and, bending forward, he grinned with vexation in their face. This was too much for their patience ; and they both simultaneously hit him such a blow in the mouth, with their fists, that it loosened several of his enormous teeth. The instantaneous pain of the blow stunned him for a moment, and he rose upon them like a tempest. One of his attendants, having observed the manner in which they had struck the giant, would have sacrificed them on the instant, but Humbug called to him to forbear, for they were his own prey, and he would give into fractions the audacious mortal that

dared to interfere with his revenge.

The prisoners, who had retreated to the bottom of the hall from the presence of the wrathful giant, saw no possibility of escape ; and the servants, whom the uproar had gathered round, stood so between them and the piles of clubs and shields, that they had no means of defence in their power.

The giant came towards them, dilated with passion, and thundering vengeance ; but, just as he approached so near as to put forth his hand to seize Gog by the throat, Magog leapt forward, and gave him such a stamp with his heel on the gouty toe, that the monster roared out in an agony of pain, and the courageous youths again escaped from his clutches.

## **CHAP. IX. HOW THE PRINCESS LONDONA ADVANCED TO STORM THE CASTLE OF HUMBUG, AND HOW THE GIANT WAS SLAIN.**

IN the meantime, the spirited Londona advanced towards the castle, and, the night being dark, she led her army close to the walls undiscovered ; when she paused for a moment, and listened to the noise which raged within ; for the outcry of the giant sounded loud and terrible, and she feared that he was then busy with the destruction of his victims.

Without loss of time she therefore directed a number of her stoutest men to kneel down on all-fours, and the rest, to mount on their backs, and so to scale

38.

the walls, herself shewing them a most intrepid example. By this bold and skilful enterprise, she made herself mistress of the walls and towers before the warden had time to sound an alarm ; and when he had winded his horn, the vassals and retainers who were assembled in the hall, thought at first that he had only done so in consequence of the uproar between Humbug and the prisoners..

This fortunate misconception of the signal on their part, enabled the courageous Princess to attack the inner wards before the household were aware of their danger : indeed, it was not until the noise of the assailants over-powered the groans and roaring vengeance of the giant, that those who were in the hall had the slightest notion of what was going forward. Humbug himself first observed the noise, and exclaimed, with a tremendous oath, that he would make dog's-meat of the rioters. But, in the same moment, a thundering peal was rattled on the folding doors of the hall ; and, the doors flying open, Londona entered, followed by a number of her troops. At the sight of her, the giant saw that he was undone ; and Gog and Magog, having obtained a club a-piece, levelled together such a blow on his forehead, that they laid him brainless at the feet of the Princess.

## **CHAP. X. HOW LONDONA REWARDED GOG AND MAGOG FOR THEIR NOBLE SELF DEVOTION IN HER CAUSE.**

THE remorseless tyrant, who had so long oppressed the country, being thus laid low, his vassals and retainers surrendered at discretion, and the castle and territory were declared the conquest of the princess Londona. After a day of danger and fatigue, there is nothing so comfortable as an excellent supper; and fortunately, the sumptuous banquet which Humbug had prepared for his own luxurious appetite, stood ready to regale the victors. The Princess accordingly taking the head of the table, and requesting Gog and Magog to place themselves on her right and left, she directed her most distinguished officers also to be seated ; and, cutting up a large venison pasty, she commenced the convivial operations of that ever-memorable evening. After supper, on the cloth being removed, and Non Nobis sung with great effect, she filled a bumper, and proposed as a toast-- The health of Gog and Magog ; observing

that, " but for their bold and masterly measures, she might still have been in the thralldom of her implacable enemy, and the whole country still groaning beneath the intolerable burthen of his oppression."

Her speech was frequently interrupted by the most enthusiastic shouts of admiration, and the toast received with thunders of applause.

When the acclamations had subsided, Gog arose ; and, in a speech replete with the noblest sentiments, returned thanks for the Honour that had been done to him and his brother ; declaring that, " while a drop of blood flowed in their veins, they would cheerfully shed it in defence of injured innocence ; that it was particularly gratifying to him, as well as his gallant relation, to meet such an assemblage of their countrymen on so interesting an occasion. " We feel," exclaimed the magnanimous Gog, "that we are, more than repaid for all our endeavours in the field of battle ; for all the dangers we have encountered ; and for all the insults that we have endured, – by these flattering testimonies of your approbation, than which nothing can be more gratifying to our hearts – and we are free to declare, and we do so with the utmost sincerity, that our feeble exertions would have been of no avail in the great struggle for all that was dear to us as men, had those exertions not been seconded by the heroic achievements of that incomparable Princess at the head of the table – a Princess, whose wisdom in council is only surpassed by her abilities in the field ; and how much these excel those of every other lady, I need not point out to your judicious attention : for ye have witnessed with what intrepidity she advanced, with what resolution she persevered, until the enemy of social order, and the child and champion of anarchy and confusion, was laid prostrate at her feet. With your permission, after returning you my warmest thanks for the honour you have done to me and my gallant relative on the left of the chairwoman, I would therefore propose the health of the princess LondonA." It would be in vain for me even to attempt to describe the rapture with which this toast was received by the whole company. Suffice it to say, that there never was an

evening spent with more convivial reciprocity, and that the form of proceedings, as to drinking healths and returning thanks, practised on that interesting occasion, has become a precedent which the citizens of London have never allowed to become obsolete when they entertain the illustrious or the renowned.

## **CHAP. XI. HOW THE PRINCESS RESOLVED TO BUILD A CITY, AND CALLED IT LONDON, AFTER HERSELF.**

NEXT morning the Princess summoned a council of all her followers, the friends and companions of Gog and Magog ; and, having informed them, that being happily restored to the throne of her ancestors, with dominions extended by the overthrow of the giant Humbug, she was determined to build a capital city, and that she thought the families who had taken refuge within the fortress of her gallant deliverers, should remain on the spot, and become the first inhabitants.

The proposal was received with great approbation and Gog and Magog advised the Princess to honour with particular privileges all the brave young men who had cooperated in the storming of the castle.

This suggestion not only met the disposition of Londona, but of all present ; and she accordingly declared, that those who had united themselves to the enterprise of Gog and Magog, should be distinguished from the rest of the inhabitants as her special vassals; by which, in the process of time, they came to be known as the liverymen of LondonA. To these, as they were too numerous for purposes of business, she gave authority to elect a certain number of the most intelligent members of their body to form a council ; and out of this institution grew the now far-famed common council of London.

When she had thus given a foundation and a constitution to the city, and called it London, after her own

name ; as Rome, several ages later, was named from its founder Romulus ; the brother of Remus, who, as every classical scholar knows, were suckled by a wolf.

## **CHAP. XII. HOW THE COMMON COUNCIL RESOLVED TO ADDRESS THE PRINCESS, AND IN WHAT MANNER THE COURT OF ALDERMEN ORIGINATED.**

THIS amiable and legitimate Princess being thus restored to the throne of her ancestors, the first instance of so joyful an event in the records of British history, – and her subjects being extremely anxious to obtain an heir to the throne, of the same illustrious race, it was suggested, in Common Council assembled, that a most dutiful and loyal address should be drawn up, and, presented to the Princess, imploring that her highness might be graciously pleased to take into her royal consideration the expediency of allying herself with some distinguished family, in order to secure, to her loving subjects and their posterity, the great blessings which they already experienced under her benign sway.

In a matter of such grave importance, too much deliberation could not be employed ; and therefore it was moved, by Mr. Deputy Gog, that the different wards of the new city, which was daily increasing in population, should be required to select from among the eldest of the wisest of the housekeepers, in the respective wards, a fit person to advise and assist in drawing up the said dutiful and loyal address. His brother, Mr. Deputy Magog, seconded the motion ; which, after some judicious observations from Deputy Dixit, and a long irrelevant speech by Mr. Waffman, two persons who busied themselves very much on the subject of places and pensions in these remote days, was finally carried.

The wards accordingly elected their respective elder-men; a title which, by those changes that living languages are subject to,

has since been altered to that of aldermen. These representatives of the wards, or aldermen, as they are now called, having met as a committee, framed a very suitable address for the occasion ; which, being approved of by the Common Council, they were appointed to carry up the address ; and Gog and Magog having, in the meantime, been chosen sheriffs for the city and Middlesex, were directed to enquire when the address would be received. Hence arose the practice of the sheriffs, on all similar occasions, apprising the ruling sovereign of the city addresses, furnishing, at the same time, a copy, that the Court might have time to prepare a suitable answer.

### **CHAP. XIII. HOW THE PRINCESS LANDONA RECEIVED THE ALDERMEN, AND BESTOWED THE TITLE OF "MY LORD MAYOR;" WITH SOME CURIOUS FACTS RESPECTING THE ORIGIN OF NEWSPAPERS AND CLUB- ROOMS.**

THE Princess, on being informed of the object of the address, the first from her new city, determined to receive the deputation seated upon her throne. Thus was a precedent established, by which, in time, the citizens of London became possessed of this enviable privilege, which they have ever since claimed, of addressing the sovereign on the throne ; and here, it should be remarked, that there was nothing, in the first instance, to justify the modern pretensions of the Common Council to the enjoyment of the same privilege : it being clear, from all the learned authorities which we have consulted, in drawing up this authentic history, that it was the aldermen, and not the Common Council, who obtained this distinguished honour. On the day appointed, the deputation , with sheriffs Gog, and Magog, set out, in grand procession, for the royal palace at Tottenham Court. On their arrival, they were received with great state, and conducted, by the usher of the black rod,

into the presence-chamber, where the Recorder of the city read the address with appropriate solemnity. At this period the office of recorder was a very important one ; for, as neither the Bell nor Lancasterian schools had then been established,

54.

none of the corporation could write, or even read. The title of the office expresses the duty which then attached to it, that of recording the transactions of the corporation.

The Princess was deeply affected with this expression of the great interest which the citizens of her good city of London took in her happiness, and the stability of her throne ; and replied, with all that delicacy, grace, and dignity, which ever adorns persons of her high station.

We should have been happy to have been able to favour our readers with a copy of the speech ; but, unfortunately, the folio of the record in which it was preserved, was destroyed in the fire of London ; a circumstance greatly to be regretted, as it has thrown a cloud of obscurity over this interesting part of the history of the metropolis of the British empire. We have, however, had the good fortune to obtain a very curious document, which was lately discovered on removing that part of the ancient wall of the city which formed the scite [sic] of Old Bedlam ; and which, on being, examined by a special committee of that learned body, the Antiquarian Society, appears to have been a manuscript newspaper of the time, entitled The Trumpeter, containing a programme of the whole ceremony. It is not legible throughout ; but enough remains, to enable us to ascertain, that it was on this occasion that the title and dignity of "MY LORD MAYOR," was given to the senior alderman: at least it is stated, in the leading paragraph of The Trumpeter, that the Princess honoured him with the title of My Lord Major, from the very circumstance of his being the senior; and few will dispute that mayor is not a corruption of that term. Every classical reader knows that Julius

Caesar introduced into Rome the practice of circulating bulletins or commentaries, the newspapers of that day ; but, until the discovery of the Antiquarian Society, it was never even suspected, that he took the hint from the customs of this country, when he, as the Napoleon of his day, came hither, and overturned the ancient institutions of the country. Newspapers are evidently indigenous to London ; for in no part of the world have they grown to such perfection, or contributed in any similar degree, to the enlightening of mankind. This valuable relict, now in our possession, contains a notification that The Trumpeter would in future be regularly read at the sign of The Club, by a "learned clerk;" and we are of opinion, that this little circumstance explains how associations and meetings for hearing and canvassing the news of the day came to be called clubs ; the principal [sic] place of resort for this purpose, in the time of the Princess Londona, having been the Club Tavern. We conjecture, that this was on the same scite [sic] where the Gun Tavern now stands, at Billingsgate, which is in the vicinity of the great military station of Gog and Magog, as described in our fourth chapter. The house having been rebuilt about the time of the invention of fire-arms, the sign was probably changed from the Club to the Gun. We are the more inclined to this opinion, from finding from the state papers that we have consulted, that at this era Cannon Street obtained its name, from the circumstance of the first piece of ordnance sent to the Tower having gone by that road.

**CHAP. XIV. HOW THE PRINCESS WAS SOUGHT IN MARRIAGE BY SEVERAL GREAT CHARACTERS; AND, HAVING, PREFERRED TOOLY, PRINCE OF SOUTHWARK, ABOVE ALL OTHERS, HOW LONDON-BRIDGE WAS BUILT TO FACILITATE THEIR UNION.**

THE readiness expressed by the Princess, in

her answer to the city address, to comply with the request of the corporation, was soon rumoured abroad, and many illustrious suitors made proposals of marriage ; but none were encouraged, except TOOLY, the hereditary prince of Southwark, an ancient maritime state, on the south side of the Thames, which had already shewn much jealousy at the rising commerce and prosperity of the new city, and with which an alliance was the more desirable, as the Londoners were not yet in a condition to dispute with that people the sovereignty of the river.

When all the preliminaries for the marriage were settled, as the union of the two people was the main object of the match, it was thought that the event could not be more appropriately celebrated than by the Formation of some public work, that should remain as a monument of the same to posterity. After many consultations held on the subject, it was at last determined that the best and most useful work to which the abilities and resources of the two states could be applied, was the construction of a bridge that should unite the new city with the territories of Southwark. This important measure being resolved on, Gog and Magog were instructed to have the same executed with all speed, that the bridge might be ready to be opened for the marriage procession.

It was not then customary to have public works executed by contract ; and Gog and Magog, having no view to personal emolument, they proceeded with this undertaking in the most economical manner.

A survey was taken of the standing timber on the domains of the deceased giant ; and the largest and best trees, for such an erection, were found on the ground now well known by the name of Woodstreet. Gog, gave directions to have them cut down ; while Magog, attended by several respectable citizens, was making provision for having them disposed in their proper places in the river by means of pile-drivers.

One great difficulty, however, remained to be conquered, namely, the impediments which presented themselves to the removal

of such heavy and unwieldy masses of timber. The sagacity of Gog, who was ever fruitful in expedients, supplied the remedy. He ordered the trunks of the trees to be rolled to the side of a small stream, which, in after ages, was known by the name of Walbrook ; but which, since the great fire in 1666, has flowed in a subterranean channel ; and, although it passes in the immediate neighbourhood of the Mansion-house, is but little known to the public. Here, having dammed up the waters in their descent below Lawrence Pountney-hill, he launched the timber and so floated it down till it arrived at a fall of the current, where it was stopped by the broken nature of the channel. And having, by an ingenious contrivance, afterwards contrived to move it to the river on rollers, the place acquired the name of Budge Row, from the timber being moved or budged at that place ; every body being aware, that to budge, and to move, are words of equal import in the genuine language of this, enlightened and highly civilized nation.

The timber for the bridge being thus conveyed to the Thames, Magog, with his party, placed it in its proper station : so that, in a wonderful short time, the first London-bridge was constructed. Several centuries after, when it stood in need of repair, this original structure was removed, and the present stone fabric, substituted in its place ; but some remains of the ancient edifice may still be seen at low water.

As soon as the bridge was finished, a day was fixed for the opening of it ; and his serene highness, Prince Tooly, was conducted, with a goodly train of gentlemen, knights, and other persons of rank and quality, across the same, from his hereditary residence in Southwark to the mansion of Londona, where the marriage was celebrated with all the magnificence and splendour befitting the dignity of her high station, and her own renowned achievements.

HOW THE PRINCESS LONDONA WAS  
DELIVERED OF A FINE BOY WITHIN THE  
SOUND OF BOW BELL, WHEN IT WAS  
FIRST RUNG.

IN due course of time and Nature, the Princess Londona, to the inexpressible joy of her beloved husband, the renowned Tooly, hereditary prince of Southwark, and of their united and loyal people, was safely delivered of a son and heir. In order to give the greater eclat to this happy event, it had been previously determined that she should lie-in at the Guild-hall of the city ; and it so happened that, at the very hour when the little prince first saw the light, a fine bell had been hung on the bough of a stately tree, which then grew in Cheapside. This bell was called the Bell-of-the-bough, or Bough-bell ; but when, in afterages, a church was built near the spot, and dedicated to the Virgin Mary, the church was called St. Mary-le-Bough, and the orthography was, at the same time, altered ; such are the deplorable effects of the corruptions of time, and of Popish superstition. Indeed, but for our fortunate researches, undertaken with so much zeal, pursued with such ardour, and crowned with so much success, this interesting incident respecting the bell, would have silently perished in oblivion. Bough-bell, or as we must now spell it, in compliance with vulgar prejudices, Bow-bell, being rung for the first time when the prince was born, the royal infant was obliged to exert its little lungs to an inordinate degree before he could make himself heard by the midwife. But the mother, whose courage the pangs of birth could only struggle with, not subdued, was so delighted at the birth of a man-child, that she looked from behind the curtains of the bed, and declared, with an audible voice, to all the assembled gossips that from and after that day, every male born within the sound of the bell, should be pre-eminently distinguished over all her other subjects. The midwife, surprised at this supernatural exertion of strength, requested her royal highness to lie quiet, by which she was cut short in the declaration of her will and pleasure ; so that it was not known in what manner she intended to determine that such children should be so distinguished. But naturalists may suppose that it was owing to some metaphysical influence of this decree, that the youth of the city of London uniformly maintain extensive

pretensions to distinction, without ever verifying the same, it being certain and unquestionable, that, if the Princess had been allowed to mention in what their superiority was to consist they would have proved themselves well able to assert it. For, of all the British youth, those of London are the most distinguished for their talkative capacity ; and it cannot be doubted that, with such powers to amuse, they are well calculated to play a distinguished part in every conversation.

## **CHAP. XVI. HOW THE SON AND HEIR OF THE PRINCESS LONDONA WAS CALLED COCKNEY, AND WHY GOG AND MAGOG WERE NOT SPONSERS WHEN HE RECEIVED HIS NAME.**

IT is unnecessary to inform the young and courteous reader, that the Princess Londona was delivered of her son and heir long before the Christian era ; and that this alone was the cause why the royal infant was not baptized. Had he been baptized, Gog and Magog would no doubt have been the sponsors, considering the great esteem in which this sovereign lady ever held those two illustrious statesmen. But, although the son of Londona, by her spouse Tooly, the hereditary prince of Southwark, was not christened, yet he received a name with much solemnity and sumptuous banquetting ; which name, however, has been lost in his more characteristic surname.

The reader, whom we must suppose well acquainted with history, cannot but, in the course of his reading, have remarked how many illustrious heroes derived their surnames from some personal peculiarity. There, was in England King, Edmund Ironside, so called on account of his great strength ; and Edward Long-shanks, who is more frequently mentioned in the chronicles by his surname than any other ; not to speak of Richard Coeur de Lion, or that fell and bloody other Richard, so well known by the nickname of Crook-back. In like manner,

when the son of Londona grew towards manhood, it was observed that he was somewhat loosely jointed at the knees ; from which circumstance he came, in process of time, to be called KNOCK–KNEE ; and with that commendable loyalty which induces faithful and loving subjects to name their children after the reigning king or queen, the citizens of London, called so many of their sons after KNOCK–KNEE, that the term at last became the peculiar title of all native youth of London.

On the honourable epithet of KNOCK–KNEE, time has not been more sparing than on that of BOUGH–BELL ; for, in the lapse of years, the N has been gradually omitted in the knock, and the K in the knee. Hence the vulgar term of Kocknee ; or, as it is usually written, Cockney, has been substituted. In what manner this happened is not easy, at this distance of time, to ascertain ; but we presume that it took place in consequence of the too–frequent negligence of transcribers. Every antiquary, however, must feel extremely delighted at the complete and clear manner in which we have thus traced the origin and history of a name so dear and venerated by all the youths born within the sound of Bow–bell.

## **CHAP. XVII. HOW GOG AND MAGOG GREW OLD, AND DIED; AND HOW THEIR STATUES WERE PLACED IN GUILD–HALL.**

WHILE his highness, Prince Cockney, the son of Londona, was improving in knowledge and stature, and becoming in fact, an exceedingly spruce and chatty young gentleman, those two excellent and great men, Gog and Magog, were declining into the vale of years. But their assiduous labours for the good of the city, which owed its foundation to the valour and magnanimity of their youthful days, were none relaxed : nor were they merely restricted to public works. They deemed it

no less their duty to rectify the abuses which had crept into the government of the country during the mal-administration of Humbug the giant, than to co-operate in measures which had for their object the formation of new institutions, for the benefit of the city of London. Thus affording an example to all future magistrates of the metropolis, not only to go hand-and-glove with the government, but to take care that no corruptions entered into their own department, nor that abuses should be suffered to remain, however respected by age or sanctioned by acquiescence.

But, alas! short is the term of human life ; and the wise and good are no more respected by impartial Death than giants, or other bad and tyrannical characters : all must die; and it was ordained that Gog and Magog, though still in a green old age, should, on the same day, pay the debt of Nature.

The circumstances attending the death of these illustrious twin-brothers, who in virtue, and all that dignifies human nature, so much excelled the Castor and Pollux of antiquity, have not been narrated. The corporation of London having, with that exquisite taste for which it is so justly celebrated, after a long debate in Guild-hall, determined that it was sufficient to record the date of the event. "It is enough," said an eloquent draper and citizen, on that mournful occasion, " to state, that on this day Gog and Magog died.

Posterity, in deploring the calamity, will not suspend her weeping to enquire into the cause. It is enough for all the world, and particularly for the city of London, to know, that Gog and Magog were mortal, and are now no more.

Gog and Magog are dead! The renowned, the munificent, the courageous, Gog, and Magog, are gone. But their spirit will never die : it will enter into the hearts of all good citizens. I feel it kindling already in my own, and stimulating me, by its immortal fires, to the imitation of their patriotic deeds."

After this pathetic funeral oration, for such it may be justly called, although it contained no flattery, it was unanimously resolved, that the statues of these two famous champions should be placed in the Guild-hall, as a perpetual mark of the

## The History Of Gog And Magog, The Champions of London

estimation in which they had been held by the city ; and the statues were placed there in due course of time accordingly, Thus did that excellent custom arise, of occasionally reverencing the services of the brave and wealthy, by erecting statues and monuments to their memory in the same place.

Having now brought our learned and eventful history to a close, it is my humble duty to take leave of the reader with all becoming respect, and to assure him, that if he makes a proper use of the moral inculcated, I may, at some future time, relate the story of John Doe and Richard Roe ; who, though long posterior to Gog and Magog, are no less celebrated at Westminster than the champions of the Princess Londona are in London. And now, heartily wishing all manner of prosperity and renown to the citizens, common council, and aldermen, of the city, in the hope that they will continue to cherish, like Gog and Magog, an invincible animosity against giants, and oppressors of every description, nor ever permit any of the Humbug race to domineer again in their Guild-hall, we conclude, as in duty bound, with – GOD SAVE THE PRINCE REGENT.