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THE WIT AND HUMOR OF AMERICA

In Ten Volumes

VOL. IX

EDGAR WILSON NYE (BILL NYE)
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WIT AND HUMOR OF AMERICA

EDITED BY MARSHALL P. WILDER

Volume IX

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THE NINE LITTLE GOBLINS

BY JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

They all climbed up on a high board-fence—
Nine little Goblins, with green-glass eyes—

Nine little Goblins that had no sense,
  And couldn't tell coppers from cold mince pies;
    And they all climbed up on the fence, and sat—
    And I asked them what they were staring at.

And the first one said, as he scratched his head
  With a queer little arm that reached out of his ear
And rasped its claws in his hair so red—
  "This is what this little arm is fer!"
    And he scratched and stared, and the next one said
    "How on earth do *you* scratch your head?"

And he laughed like the screech of a rusty hinge—
  Laughed and laughed till his face grew black;
And when he choked, with a final twinge
  Of his stifling laughter, he thumped his back
    With a fist that grew on the end of his tail
    Till the breath came back to his lips so pale.

And the third little Goblin leered round at me—
  And there were no lids on his eyes at all—
And he clucked one eye, and he says, says he,
  "What is the style of your socks this fall?"
    And he clapped his heels—and I sighed to see
    That he had hands where his feet should be. [Pg 1636]

Then a bald-faced Goblin, gray and grim,
  Bowed his head, and I saw him slip
His eyebrows off, as I looked at him,
  And paste them over his upper lip;
    And then he moaned in remorseful pain—
    "Would—Ah, would I'd me brows again!"

And then the whole of the Goblin band
  Rocked on the fence-top to and fro,
And clung, in a long row, hand in hand,
  Singing the songs that they used to know—
    Singing the songs that their grandsires sung
    In the goo-goo days of the Goblin-tongue.

And ever they kept their green-glass eyes
  Fixed on me with a stony stare—
Till my own grew glazed with a dread surmise,
  And my hat whooped up on my lifted hair,
    And I felt the heart in my breast snap to
    As you've heard the lid of a snuff-box do.

And they sang, "You're asleep! There is no board-fence,
  And never a Goblin with green-glass eyes!—
'Tis only a vision the mind invents
  After a supper of cold mince-pies,—
    And you're doomed to dream this way," they said,—
    "*And you sha'n't wake up till you're clean plum dead!*"

[Pg 1637]

OUR VERY WISHES

BY HARRIET PRESCOTT SPOFFORD

It was natural that it should be quiet for Mrs. Cairnes in her empty house. Once there had been such a family of brothers and sisters there! But one by one they had married, or died, and at any rate had drifted out of the house, so that she was quite alone with her work, and her memories, and the echoes in her vacant rooms. She hadn't a great deal of work; her memories were not pleasant; and the echoes were no pleasanter. Her house was as comfortable otherwise as one could wish; in the very centre of the village it was, too, so that no one could go to church, or to shop, or to call, unless Mrs. Cairnes was aware of the fact, if she chose; and the only thing that protected the neighbors from this supervision was Mrs. Cairnes's mortal dread of the sun on her carpet; for the sun lay in that bay-windowed corner nearly all the day, and even though she filled the window full of geraniums and vines and calla-lilies she could not quite shut it out, till she resorted to sweeping inner curtains.

Mrs. Cairnes did her own work, because, as she said, then she knew it was done. She had refused the company of various individuals, because, as she said again, she wouldn't give them house-

room. Perhaps it was for the same reason that she had refused several offers of marriage; although the only reason that she gave was that one was quite enough, and she didn't want any boots bringing in mud for her to wipe up. But the fact was that Captain Cairnes had been a mistake; and his relict never allowed herself to dwell upon the fact of her loss, but she felt herself [Pg 1638] obliged to say with too much feeling that all was for the best; and she dared not risk the experiment again.

Mrs. Cairnes, however, might have been lonelier if she had been very much at home; but she was President of the First Charitable, and Secretary of the Second, and belonged to a reading-club, and a sewing-circle, and a bible-class, and had every case of illness in town more or less to oversee, and the circulation of the news to attend to, and so she was away from home a good deal, and took many teas out. Some people thought that if she hadn't to feed her cat she never would go home. But the cat was all she had, she used to say, and nobody knew the comfort it was to her. Yet, for all this, there were hours and seasons when, obliged to stay in the house, it was intolerably dreary there, and she longed for companionship. "Some one with an interest," she said. "Some one who loves the same things that I do, who cares for me, and for my pursuits. Some one like Sophia Maybury. Oh! how I should have liked to spend my last days with Sophia! What keeps Dr. Maybury alive so, I can't imagine. If he had only—gone to his rest"—said the good woman, "Sophia and I could join our forces and live together in clover. And how we should enjoy it! We could talk together, read together, sew together. No more long, dull evenings and lonely nights listening to the mice. But a friend, a dear sister, constantly at hand! Sophia was the gentlest young woman, the prettiest,—oh, how I loved her in those days! She was a part of my youth. I love her just as much now. I wish she could come and live here. She might, if there weren't any Dr. Maybury. I can't stand this solitude. Why did fate make me such a social old body, and then set me here all alone?" [Pg 1639]

If Sophia was the prettiest young woman in those days, she was an exceedingly pretty old woman in these, with her fresh face and her bright eyes, and if her hair was not all her own, she had companions in bangs. Dr. Maybury made a darling of her all his lifetime, and when he died he left her what he had; not much,—the rent of the Webster House,—but enough.

But there had always been a pea-hen in Mrs. Maybury's lot. It was all very well to have an adoring husband,—but to have no home! The Doctor had insisted for years upon living in the tavern, which he owned, and if there was one thing that his wife detested more than another, it was life in a tavern. The strange faces, the strange voices, the going and coming, the dreary halls, the soiled table-cloths, the thick crockery, the damp napkins, the flies, the tiresome *menu*—every roast tasting of every other, no gravy to any,—the all out-doors feeling of the whole business, your affairs in everybody's mouth, the banging doors, the restless feet, the stamping of horses in the not distant stable, the pandemonium of it all! She tried to make a little home in the corner of it; but it was useless. And when one day Dr. Maybury suddenly died, missing him and mourning him, and half distracted as she was, a thrill shot across the darkness for half a thought,—now at any rate she could have a home of her own! But presently she saw the folly of the thought,—a home without a husband! She staid on at the tavern, and took no pleasure in life.

But with Dr. Maybury's departure, the thought recurred again and again to Mrs. Cairnes of her and Sophia's old dream of living together. "We used to say, when we were girls, that we should keep house together, for neither of us would ever marry. And it's a great, great pity we did! I dare say, though, she's been very happy. I know she has, in fact. But then if she hadn't been so [Pg 1640] happy with him, she wouldn't be so unhappy without him. So it evens up. Well, it's half a century gone; but perhaps she'll remember it. I should like to have her come here. I never could bear Dr. Maybury, it's true; but then I could avoid the subject with her. I mean to try. What a sweet, comfortable, peaceful time we should have of it!"

A sweet, comfortable, peaceful time! Well; you shall see. For Mrs. Maybury came; of course she came. Her dear, old friend Julia! Oh, if anything could make up for Dr. Maybury's loss, it would be living with Julia! What castles they used to build about living together and working with the heathen around home. And Julia always went to the old East Church, too; and they had believed just the same things, the same election, and predestination and damnation and all; at one time they had thought of going out missionaries together to the Polynesian Island, but that had been before Julia took Captain Cairnes for better or worse, principally worse, and before she herself undertook all she could in converting Dr. Maybury,—a perfect Penelope's web of a work; for Dr. Maybury died as he had lived, holding her fondest beliefs to be old wives' fables, but not quarreling with her fidelity to them, any more than with her finger-rings or her false bangs, her ribbons, and what she considered her folderols in general. And how kind, she went on in her thoughts, it was of Julia to want her now! what comfort they would be to each other! Go,—of course she would!

She took Allida with her; Allida who had been her maid so long that she was a part of herself; and who, for the sake of still being with her mistress, agreed to do the cooking at Mrs. Cairnes's and help in the house-work. The house was warm and light on the night she arrived; other friends had [Pg 1641] dropped in to receive her, too; there were flowers on the table in the cosy red dining-room, delicate slices of ham that had been stuffed with olives and sweet herbs, a cold queen's pudding rich with frosting, a mold of coffee jelly in a basin of whipped cream, and little thin bread-and-butter sandwiches.

"Oh, how delightful, how homelike!" cried Mrs. Maybury. How unlike the great barn of a dining-room at the Webster House! What delicious bread and butter! Julia had always been such a

famous cook! "Oh, this is home indeed, Julia!" she cried.

Alas! The queen's pudding appeared in one shape or another till it lost all resemblance to itself, and that ham after a fortnight became too familiar for respect.

Mrs. Cairnes, when all was reëstablished and at rights, Sophia in the best bedroom, Allida in the kitchen, Sophia's board paying Allida's wages and all extra expense, Sophia's bird singing like a little fountain of melody in the distance, Mrs. Cairnes then felt that after a long life of nothingness, fate was smiling on her; here was friendship, interest, comfort, company, content. No more lonesomeness now. Here was a motive for coming home; here was somebody to come home to! And she straightway put the thing to touch, by coming home from her prayer-meeting, her bible-class, her Ladies' Circle, her First Charitable, and taking in a whole world of pleasure in Sophia's waiting presence, her welcoming smile, her voice asking for the news. And if Sophia were asking for the news, news there must be to give Sophia! And she went about with fresh eagerness, and dropped in here, there, and everywhere, and picked up items at every corner to retail to Sophia. She found it a little difficult to please Sophia about the table. Used to all the variety of a public-house, Mrs. Maybury did not take very kindly to the simple fare, did not quite [Pg 1642] understand why three people must be a whole week getting through with a roast,—a roast that, served underdone, served overdone, served cold, served warmed up with herbs, served in a pie, made five dinners; she didn't quite see why one must have salt fish on every Saturday, and baked beans on Sunday; she hankered after the flesh-pots that, when she had them, she had found tiresome, and than which she had frequently remarked she would rather have the simplest home-made bread and butter. Apples, too. Mrs. Cairnes's three apple-trees had been turned to great account in her larder always; but now,—Mrs. Maybury never touched apple-sauce, disliked apple-jelly, thought apple-pie unfit for human digestion, apple-pudding worse; would have nothing with apples in it, except the very little in mince-pie which she liked as rich as brandy and sherry and costly spices could make it.

"No profit in this sort of boarder," thought the thrifty Mrs. Cairnes. But then she didn't have Sophia for profit, only for friendliness and companionship; and of course there must be some little drawbacks. Sophia was not at all slow in expressing her likes and dislikes. Well, Mrs. Cairnes meant she should have no more dislikes to express than need be. Nevertheless, it made Mrs. Cairnes quite nervous with apprehension concerning Mrs. Maybury's face on coming to the dinner-table; she left off having roasts, and had a slice of steak; chops and tomato-sauce; a young chicken. But even that chicken had to make its reappearance till it might have been an old hen. "I declare," said Mrs. Cairnes, in the privacy of her own emotions, "when I lived by myself I had only one person to please! If Sophia had ever been any sort of a housekeeper herself—it's easy to see why Dr. Maybury chose to live at a hotel!" Still the gentle face opposite her at the table, the [Pg 1643] lively warmth of a greeting when she opened the door, the delight of some one with whom to talk things over, the source of life and movement in the house; all this far outweighed the necessity of having to plan for variety in the little dinners.

"I really shall starve to death if this thing does on," Mrs. Maybury had meanwhile said to herself. "It isn't that I care so much for what I have to eat; but I really can't eat enough here to keep me alive. If I went out as Julia does, walking and talking all over town, I daresay I could get up the same sort of appetite for sole-leather. But I haven't the heart for it. I can't do it. I have to sit at home and haven't any relish for anything. I really will see if Allida can't start something different." But Allida could not make bricks without straw; she could only prepare what Mrs. Cairnes provided, and as Mrs. Cairnes had never had a servant before, she looked on the whole tribe of them as marauders and natural enemies, and doled out everything from a locked store-room at so much a head. "Well," sighed Mrs. Maybury, "perhaps I shall get used to it." From which it will be seen that Julia's efforts after all were not particularly successful. But if Mrs. Cairnes had been lonely before Mrs. Maybury came, Mrs. Maybury was intolerably lonely, having come; the greater part of the time, Allida being in the kitchen, or out herself, and no one in the house but the sunshine, the cat, and the bird; and she detested cats, and had a shudder if one touched her. However, this was Julia's cat, this great black and white evil spirit, looking like an imp of darkness; she would be kind to it if it didn't touch her. But if it touched her—she shivered at the thought—she couldn't answer for the consequences. Julia was so good in taking her into her house, and listening to her woes, and trying to make her comfortable,—only if this monster [Pg 1644] tried to kill her bird,—Mrs. Maybury, sitting by herself, wept at the thought. How early it was dark now, too! She didn't see what kept Julia so,—really she was doing too much at her age. She hinted that gently to Julia when Mrs. Cairnes did return. And Mrs. Cairnes could not quite have told what it was that was so unpleasant in the remark. "My age," she said, laughing. "Why, I am as young as ever I was, and as full of life. I could start on an exploring expedition to Africa, to-morrow!" But she began to experience a novel sense of bondage,—she who had all her life been responsible to no one. And presently, whenever she went out, she had a dim consciousness in her mental background of Sophia's eyes following her, of Sophia's thoughts upon her trail, of Sophia's face peering from the bay-window as she went from one door to another. She begged some slips, and put a half dozen new flower-pots on a bracket-shelf in the window, in order to obscure the casual view, and left the inner curtain drawn.

She came in one day, and there was that inner curtain strung wide open, and the sun pouring through the plants in a broad radiance. Before she took off her bonnet she stepped to the window and drew the curtain.

"Oh!" cried Mrs. Maybury, "what made you do that? The sunshine is so pleasant."

"I can't have the sun streaming in here and taking all the color out of my carpet, Sophia!" said Julia, with some asperity.

"But the sun is so very healthy," urged Mrs. Maybury.

"Oh, well! I can't be getting a new carpet every day."

"You feel," said Mrs. Maybury, turning away wrath, "as you did when you were a little girl, and the teacher told you to lay your wet slate in your lap: 'It'll take the fade out of my gown,' said you. How long ago is it! Does it seem as if it were you and I?" [Pg 1645]

"I don't know," said Julia tartly. "I don't bother myself much with abstractions. I know it is you and I." And she put her things on the hall-rack, as she was going out again in the afternoon to bible-class.

She had no sooner gone out than Mrs. Maybury went and strung up every curtain in the house where the sun was shining, and sat down triumphantly and rocked contentedly for five minutes in the glow, when her conscience overcame her, and she put them all down again, and went out into the kitchen for a little comfort from Allida. But Allida had gone out, too; so she came back to the sitting-room, and longed for the stir and bustle and frequent faces of the tavern, and welcomed a book-canvasser presently as if she had been a dear friend.

Perhaps Julia's conscience stirred a little, too; for she came home earlier than usual, put away her wraps, lighted an extra lamp, and said, "Now we'll have a long, cosy evening to ourselves."

"We might have a little game of cards," said Sophia, timidly. "I know a capital double solitaire—"

"Cards!" cried Julia.

"Why—why not?"

"Cards! And I just came from bible-class!"

"What in the world has that got to do with it?"

"Everything!"

"Why, the Doctor and I used—"

"That doesn't make it any better."

"Why, Julia, you can't possibly mean that there's any harm,—that,—that it's wicked—"

"I think we'd better drop the subject, Sophia," said Julia loftily.

"But I don't want to drop the subject!" exclaimed Mrs. Maybury. "I don't want you to think that the Doctor would—" [Pg 1646]

"I can't help what the Doctor did. I think cards are wicked! And that's enough for me!"

"Well!" cried Mrs. Maybury, then in great dudgeon. "I'm not a member of the old East Church in good and regular standing for forty years to be told what's right and what's wrong by any one now!"

"If you're in good and regular standing, then the church is very lax in its discipline, Sophia; that's all I've got to say."

"But, Julia, things have been very much liberalized of late years. The minister's own daughter has been to dancing-school." The toss of Julia's head, and her snort of contempt only said, "So much the worse for the minister's daughter!"

"Nobody believes in infant damnation now," continued Mrs. Maybury.

"I do."

"O Julia!" cried Mrs. Maybury, for the moment quite faint, "that is because," she said, as soon as she had rallied, and breaking the dreadful silence, "you never had any little babies of your own, Julia." This was adding insult to injury, and still there was silence. "I don't believe it of you, Julia," she continued, "your kind heart—"

"I don't know what a kind heart has to do with the immutable decrees of an offended deity!" cried the exasperated Julia. "And this only goes to show what forty years' association with a free-thinking—"

"You were right in the beginning, Julia; we had better drop the subject," said Mrs. Maybury; and she gathered up her Afghan wools gently, and went to her room.

Mrs. Maybury came down, however, when tea was ready, and all was serene again, especially as Susan Peyster came in to tell the news about Dean Hampton's defalcation at the village bank, and had a seat at the table. [Pg 1647]

"But I don't understand what on earth he has done with the money," said Mrs. Maybury.

"Gambled," said Susan.

"Cards," said Mrs. Cairnes. "You see!"

"Not that sort of gambling!" cried Susan. "But stocks and that."

"It's the same thing," said Mrs. Cairnes.

"And that's the least part of it! They do say"—said Susan, balancing her teaspoon as if in doubt about speaking.

"They say what?" cried Mrs. Cairnes.

But for our part, as we don't know Mr. Dean Hampton, and, therefore, can not relish his misdoings with the same zest as if we did, we will not waste time on what was said. Only when Susan had gone, Mrs. Maybury rose, too, and said, "I must say, Julia, that I think this dreadful conversation is infinitely worse and more wicked than any game of cards could be!"

"What are you talking about?" said Julia, jocosely, and quite good-humored again.

"And the amount of shocking gossip of this description that I've heard since I've been in your house is already more than I've heard in the whole course of my life! Dr. Maybury would never allow a word of gossip in our rooms." And she went to bed.

"You shall never have another word in mine!" said the thunderstricken Julia to herself. And if she had heard that the North Pole had tipped all its ice off into space, she wouldn't have told her a syllable about it all that week.

But in the course of a fortnight, a particularly choice bit of news having turned up, and the edge of her resentment having worn away, Mrs. Cairnes could not keep it to herself. And poor Mrs. Maybury, famishing now for some object of interest, received it so kindly that things returned to [Pg 1648] their former footing. Perhaps not quite to their former footing, for Julia had now a feeling of restraint about her news, and didn't tell the most piquant, and winked to her visitors if the details trenched too much on what had better be unspoken. "Not that it was really so very—so very—but then Mrs. Maybury, you know," she said afterward. But she had never been accustomed to this restraint, and she didn't like it.

In fact Mrs. Cairnes found herself under restraints that were amounting to a mild bondage. She must be at home for meals, of course; she had been in the habit of being at home or not as she chose, and often of taking the bite and sup at other houses, which precluded the necessity of preparing anything at home. She must have the meals to suit another and very different palate, which was irksome and troublesome. She must exercise a carefulness concerning her conversation, and that of her gossips, too, which destroyed both zest and freedom. She strongly suspected that in her absence the curtains were up and the sun was allowed to play havoc with her carpets. She was remonstrated with on her goings and comings, she who had had the largest liberty for two score years. And then, when the minister came to see her, she never had the least good of the call, so much of it was absorbed by Mrs. Maybury. And Mrs. Maybury's health was delicate, she fussed and complained and whined; she cared for the things that Mrs. Cairnes didn't care for, and didn't care for the things that Mrs. Cairnes did care for; Mrs. Cairnes was conscious of her unspoken surprise at much that she said and did, and resented the somewhat superior gentleness and refinement of her old friend as much as the old friend resented her superior strength and liveliness.

"What has changed Sophia so? It isn't Sophia at all! And I thought so much of her, and I looked [Pg 1649] forward to spending my old age with her so happily!" murmured Julia. "But perhaps it will come right," she reasoned cheerily. "I may get used to it. I didn't suppose there'd be any rubbing of corners. But as there is, the sooner they're rubbed off the better, and we shall settle down into comfort again, at last instead of at first, as I had hoped in the beginning."

Alas! "I really can't stand these plants of yours, Julia, dear," said Mrs. Maybury, soon afterward. "I've tried to. I've said nothing. I've waited, to be very sure. But I never have been able to have plants about me. They act like poison to me. They always make me sneeze so. And you see I'm all stuffed up—"

Her plants! Almost as dear to her as children might have been! The chief ornament of her parlors! And just ready to bloom! This was really asking too much. "I don't believe it's the plants at all," said Julia. "That's sheer nonsense. Anybody living on this green and vegetating earth to be poisoned by plants in a window! I don't suppose they trouble you any more than your lamp all night does me; but I've never said anything about that. I can't bear lamplight at night; I want it perfectly dark, and the light streams out of your room—"

"Why don't you shut the door, then?"

"Because I never shut my door. I want to hear if anything disturbs the house. Why don't you shut yours?"

"I never do, either. I've always had several rooms, and kept the doors open between. It isn't healthy to sleep with closed doors."

"Healthy! Healthy! I don't hear anything else from morning till night when I'm in the house."

"You can't hear very much of it, then."

"I should think, Sophia Maybury, you wanted to live forever!" [Pg 1650]

"Goodness knows I don't!" cried Mrs. Maybury, bursting into tears. And that night she shut her

bedroom door and opened the window, and sneezed worse than ever all day afterward, in spite of the fact that Mrs. Cairnes had put all her cherished plants into the dining-room alcove.

"I can't imagine what has changed Julia so," sighed Mrs. Maybury. "She used to be so bright and sweet and good-tempered. And now I really don't know what sort of an answer I'm to have to anything I say. It keeps my nerves stretched on the *qui vive* all day. I am so disappointed. I am sure the Doctor would be very unhappy if he knew how I felt."

But Mrs. Maybury had need to pity herself; Julia didn't pity her. "She's been made a baby of so long," said Julia, "that now she really can't go alone." And perhaps she was a little bitterer about it than she would have been had Captain Cairnes ever made a baby of her in the least, at any time.

They were sitting together one afternoon, a thunderstorm of unusual severity having detained Mrs. Cairnes at home, and the conversation had been more or less acrimonious, as often of late. Just before dusk there came a great burst of sun, and the whole heavens were suffused with splendor.

"O Julia! Come here, come quick, and see this sunset!" cried Mrs. Maybury. But Julia did not come. "Oh! I can't bear to have you lose it," urged the philanthropic lover of nature again. "There! It's streaming up the very zenith. I never saw such color—do come."

"Mercy, Sophia! You're always wanting people to leave what they're about and see something! My lap's full of worsteds."

"Well," said Sophia. "It's for your own sake. I don't know that it will do me any good. Only if one [Pg 1651] enjoys beautiful sights."

"Dear me! Well, there! Is that all? I don't see anything remarkable. The idea of making one get up to see that!" And as she took her seat, up jumped the great black and white cat to look out in his turn. Mrs. Maybury would have been more than human if she had not said "Scat! scat! scat!" and she did say it, shaking herself in horror.

It was the last straw. Mrs. Cairnes took her cat in her arms and moved majestically out of the room, put on her rubbers, and went out to tea, and did not come home till the light up stairs told her that Mrs. Maybury had gone to her room.

Where was it all going to end? Mrs. Cairnes could not send Sophia away after all the protestations she had made. Mrs. Maybury could never put such a slight on Julia as to go away without more overt cause for displeasure. It seemed as though they would have to fight it out in the union.

But that night a glare lit the sky which quite outdid the sunset; the fire-bells and clattering engines called attention to it much more loudly than Sophia had announced the larger conflagration. And in the morning it was found that the Webster House was in ashes. All of Mrs. Maybury's property was in the building. The insurance had run out the week before, and meaning to attend to it every day she had let it go, and here she was penniless.

But no one need commiserate with her. Instead of any terror at her situation a wild joy sprang up within her. Relief and freedom clapped their wings above her.

It was Mrs. Cairnes who felt that she herself needed pity. A lamp at nights, oceans of fresh air careering round the house, the everlasting canary-bird's singing to bear, her plants exiled, her [Pg 1652] table revolutionized, her movements watched, her conversation restrained, her cat abused, the board of two people and the wages of one to come out of her narrow hoard. But she rose to the emergency. Sophia was penniless. Sophia was homeless. The things which it was the ashes of bitterness to allow her as a right, she could well give her as a benefactress. Sophia was welcome to all she had. She went into the room, meaning to overwhelm the weeping, helpless Sophia with her benevolence. Sophia was not there.

Mrs. Maybury came in some hours later, a carriage and a job-wagon presently following her to the door. "You are very good, Julia," said she, when Julia received her with the rapid sentences of welcome and assurance that she had been accumulating. "And you mustn't think I'm not sensible of all your kindness. I am. But my husband gave the institution advice for nothing for forty years, and I think I have rights there now without feeling under obligations to any. I've visited the directors, and I've had a meeting called and attended,—I've had all your energy, Julia, and have hurried things along in quite your own fashion. And as I had just one hundred dollars in my purse after I sold my watch this morning, I've paid it over for the entrance-fee, and I've been admitted and am going to spend the rest of my days in the Old Ladies' Home. I've the upper corner front room, and I hope you will come and see me there."

"Sophia!"

"Don't speak! Don't say one word! My mind was made up irrevocably when I went out. Nothing you, nothing any one, can say, will change it. I'm one of the old ladies now."

Mrs. Cairnes brought all her plants back into the parlor, pulled down the shades, drew the inside curtain, had the cat's cushion again in its familiar corner, and gave Allida warning, within half an [Pg 1653] hour. She looked about a little while and luxuriated in her freedom,—no one to supervise her conversation, her movements, her opinions, her food. Never mind the empty rooms, or the echoes

there! She read an angry psalm or two, looked over some texts denouncing pharisees and hypocrites, thought indignantly of the ingratitude there was in the world, felt that any way, and on the whole, she was where she was before Sophia came, and went out to spend the evening, and came in at the nine-o'clock bell-ringing with such a sense of freedom, that she sat up till midnight to enjoy it.

And Sophia spent the day putting her multitudinous belongings into place, hanging up her bird-cage, arranging her books and her bureau-drawers, setting up a stocking, and making the acquaintance of the old ladies next her. She taught one of them to play double solitaire that very evening. And then she talked a little while concerning Dr. Maybury, about whom Julia had never seemed willing to hear a word; and then she read, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," and went to bed perfectly happy.

Julia came to see her the next day, and Sophia received her with open arms. Every one knew that Julia had begged her to stay and live with her always, and share what she had. Julia goes now to see her every day of her life, rain or snow, storm or shine; and the whole village says that the friendship between those two old women is something ideal. [Pg 1654]

THE MYSTERY OF GILGAL

BY JOHN HAY

The darkest, strangest mystery
I ever read, or heern, or see
Is 'long of a drink at Taggart's Hall—
  Tom Taggart's of Gilgal.

I've heern the tale a thousand ways,
But never could git through the maze
That hangs around that queer day's doin's;
  But I'll tell the yarn to youans.

Tom Taggart stood behind his bar,
The time was fall, the skies was fa'r,
The neighbors round the counter drawed,
  And ca'mly drinked and jawed.

At last come Colonel Blood of Pike,
And old Jedge Phinn, permiscus-like,
And each, as he meandered in,
  Remarked, "A whisky-skin."

Tom mixed the beverage full and fa'r,
And slammed it, smoking, on the bar.
Some says three fingers, some says two,—
  I'll leave the choice to you. [Pg 1655]

Phinn to the drink put forth his hand;
Blood drawed his knife, with accent bland,
"I ax yer parding, Mister Phinn—
  Jest drap that whisky-skin."

No man high-toneder could be found
Than old Jedge Phinn the country round.
Says he, "Young man, the tribe of Phinns
  Knows their own whisky-skins!"

He went for his 'leven-inch bowie-knife:—
"I tries to foller a Christian life;
But I'll drap a slice of liver or two,
  My bloomin' shrub, with you."

They carved in a way that all admired,
Tell Blood drawed iron at last, and fired.
It took Seth Bludso 'twixt the eyes,
  Which caused him great surprise.

Then coats went off, and all went in;
Shots and bad language swelled the din;
The short, sharp bark of Derringers,
  Like bull-pups, cheered the furse.

They piled the stiffs outside the door;
They made, I reckon, a cord or more.
Girls went that winter, as a rule,
  Alone to spellin'-school.

I've sarched in vain, from Dan to Beer-
Sheba, to make this mystery clear;
But I end with hit as I did begin,—
  WHO GOT THE WHISKY-SKIN?

[Pg 1656]

THE GUSHER

BY CHARLES BATTELL LOOMIS

Of course an afternoon tea is not to be taken seriously, and I hold that any kind of conversation goes, as long as it is properly vacuous and irrelevant.

One meets many kinds of afternoon teas—the bored, the bashful, the intense, and once in a while the interesting, but for pure delight there is nothing quite equals the gusher. She is generally very pretty. Nature insists upon compensations.

When you meet a real gusher—one born to gush—you can just throw all bounds of probability aside and say the first thing that comes into your head, sure that it will meet with an appreciative burst of enthusiasm, for your true gusher is nothing if she is not enthusiastic. There are those who listen to everything you say and punctuate it with "Yes-s-s, yes-s-s, yes-s-s," until the sibilance gets on your nerves; but the attention of the Simon-pure gusher is purely subconscious. She could not repeat a thing of what you have told her a half minute after hearing it. Her real attention is on something else all the while—perhaps on the gowns of her neighbors, perhaps on the reflection of her pretty face—but never on the conversation. And why should it be? Is a tea a place for the exercise of concentration? Perish the thought.

You are presented to her as "Mr. Mmmm," and she is "delighted," and smiles so ravishingly that you wish you were twenty years younger. You do not yet know that she is a gusher. But her first remark labels her. Just to test her, for there is something in the animation of her face and the farawayness of the eye that makes you suspect her sincerity, you say: [Pg 1657]

"I happen to have six children—"

"Oh, how perfectly dee-ar! How old are they?"

She scans the gown of a woman who has just entered the room and, being quite sure that she is engaged in a mental valuation of it, you say:

"They're all of them six."

"Oh, how lovely!" Her unseeing eyes look you in the face. "Just the right age to be companions."

"Yes, all but one."

The eye has wandered to another gown, but the sympathetic voice says:

"Oh, what a pi-i-ty!"

"Yes, isn't it? But he's quite healthy."

It's a game now—fair game—and you're glad you came to the tea!

"Healthy, you say? How nice. It's perfectly lovely to be healthy. Do you live in the country?"

"Not exactly the country. We live in Madison Square, under the trees."

"Oh, how perfectly idyllic!"

"Yes; we have all the advantages of the city and the delights of the country. I got a permit from the Board of Education to put up a little bungalow alongside the Worth monument, and the children bathe in the fountain every morning when the weather is cold enough."

"Oh, how charming! How many children have you?"

"Only seven. The oldest is five and the youngest is six."

"Just the interesting age. Don't you think children fascinating?" [Pg 1658]

Again the roaming eye and the vivacious smile.

"Yes, indeed. My oldest—he's fourteen and quite original. He says that when he grows up he doesn't know what he'll be."

"Really? How cute!"

"Yes, he says it every morning, a half-hour before breakfast."

"Fancy! How old did you say he was?"

"Just seventeen, but perfectly girl-like and masculine."

She nods her head, bows to an acquaintance in a distant part of the room, and murmurs in musical, sympathetic tones:

"That's an adorable age."

"What, thirteen?"

"Yes. Did you say it was a girl?"

"Yes, his name's Ethel. He's a great help to her mother."

"Little darling."

"Yes; I tell them there may be city advantages, but I think they're much better off where they are."

"Where did you say you were?"

"On the Connecticut shore. You see, having only the one child, Mrs. Smith is very anxious that it should grow up healthy" (absent-minded nods indicative of full attention), "and so little Ronald never comes to the city at all. He plays with the fisherman's child and gets great drafts of fresh air."

"Oh, how perfectly entrancing! You're quite a poet."

"No; I'm a painter."

Now she is really attentive. She thought you were just an ordinary beast, and she finds that you may be a lion. Smith? Perhaps you're Hopkinson Smith.

"Oh, do you paint? How perfectly adorable! What do you paint—landscapes or portraits?" [Pg 1659]

Again the eye wanders and she inventories a dress, and you say:—

"Oils."

"Do you ever allow visitors come to your studio?"

"Why, I never prevent them, but I'm so afraid it will bore them that I never ask them."

"Oh, how could anybody be bored at anything?"

"But every one hasn't your enthusiasm. My studio is in the top of the Madison Square tower, and I never see a soul from week's end to week's end."

"Oh, then you're not married."

"Dear, no; a man who is wedded to his art mustn't commit bigamy."

"Oh, how clever. So you're a bachelor?"

"Yes, but I have my wife for a chaperon and I'd be delighted to have you come and take tea with us some Saturday from six until three."

"Perfectly delighted!" Her eye now catches sight of an acquaintance just coming in, and as you prepare to leave her you say:—

"Hope you don't mind a little artistic unconventionality. We always have beer at our teas served with sugar and lemons, the Russian fashion."

"Oh, I think it's much better than cream. I adore unconventionality."

"You're very glad you met me, I'm sure."

"Awfully good of you to say so."

Anything goes at an afternoon tea. But it's better not to go. [Pg 1660]

THE WIDOW BEDOTT'S VISITOR

BY FRANCES M. WHICHER

Jest in time, Mr. Crane: we've jist this minit sot down to tea. Draw up a cheer and set by. Now, don't say a word: I shan't take *no* for an answer. Should a had things ruther different, to be sure, if I'd suspected *you*, Mr. Crane; but I won't appolligize,—appolligies don't never make nothin' no better, you know. Why, Melissy, you hain't half sot the table: where's the plum-sass? thought you was a-gwine to git some on't for tea? I don't see no cake, nother. What a keerless gal you be! Dew

bring 'em on quick; and, Melissy, dear, fetch out one o' them are punkin pies and put it warmin'. How do you take your tea, Mr. Crane? clear, hey? How much that makes me think o' husband! he always drunk hisen clear. Now, dew make yerself to hum, Mr. Crane: help yerself to things. Do you eat johnny-cake? 'cause if you don't I'll cut some white bread. Dew, hey? We're all great hands for injin bread here, 'specially Kier. If I don't make a johnny-cake every few days he says to me, says he, "Mar, why don't you make some injin bread? it seems as if we hadn't never had none." Melissy, pass the cheese. Kier, see't Mr. Crane has butter. This 'ere butter's a leetle grain frouzy. I don't want you to think it's my make, for't ain't. Sam Pendergrass's wife (she 'twas Sally Smith) she borrowed butter o' me t'other day, and this 'ere's what she sent back. I wouldn't 'a' [Pg 1661] had it on if I'd suspected company. How do you feel to-day, Mr. Crane? Didn't take no cold last night! Well, I'm glad on't. I was raly afeard you would, the lectur'-room was so turrible hot. I was eny-most roasted, and I wa'n't dressed wonderful warm nother,—had on my green silk mankiller, and that ain't very thick. Take a pickle, Mr. Crane. I'm glad you're a favorite o' pickles. I think pickels a delightful beveridge,—don't feel as if I could make out a meal without 'em. Once in a while I go visitin' where they don't have none on the table, and when I git home the fust thing I dew's to dive for the butt'ry and git a pickle. But husband couldn't eat 'em: they was like pizen tew him. Melissy never eats 'em nother: she ain't no pickle hand. Some gals eat pickles to make 'em grow poor, but Melissy hain't no such foolish notions. I've brung her up so she shouldn't have. Why, I've heered of gals drinkin' vinegar to thin 'em off and make their skin delekit. They say Kesier Winkle—Why, Kier, what be you pokin' the sass at Mr. Crane for? Melissy jest helped him. I heered Carline Gallup say how't Kesier Winkle—Why, Kier, what do you mean by offerin' the cold pork to Mr. Crane? jest as if he wanted pork for his tea! You see, Kier's been over to the Holler to-day on bizness with old Uncle Dawson, and he come hum with quite an appertite: says to me, says he, "Mar, dew set on some cold pork and 'taters, for I'm as hungry as a bear." Lemme fill up your cup, Mr. Crane. Melissy, bring on that are pie: I guess it's warm by this time. There, I don't think anybody'd say that punkin was burnt a-stewin! Take another pickle, Mr. Crane. Oh, I was a-gwine to tell what Carline Gallup said about Kesier Winkle. Carline Gallup was a manty-maker—What, Kier? ruther apt to talk? well, I know she was; but then she used to be sewin' 't old Winkle's about half the time, and she know'd purty well what went on there: yes, I know sewin'- [Pg 1662] gals is ginerally tattlers.... But I was gwine to tell what Carline Gallup said. Carline was a very stiddy gal: she was married about a year ago,—married Joe Bennet,—Philander Bennet's son: you remember Phil Bennet, don't you, Mr. Crane?—he 'twas killed so sudding over to Ganderfield? Though, come to think, it must 'a' ben arter you went away from here. He'd moved over to Ganderfield the spring afore he was killed. Well, one day in hayin'-time he was to work in the hay-field—take another piece o' pie, Mr. Crane: oh, dew! I insist on't—well, he was to work in the hay-field, and he fell off the hay-stack. I s'pose 'twouldn't 'a' killed him if it hadn't 'a' ben for his comin' kermash onto a jug that was a-settin' on the ground aside o' the stack. The spine of his back went right onto the jug and broke it,—broke his back, I mean,—not the jug: that wa'n't even cracked. Cur'us, wa'n't it? 'Twas quite a comfort to Miss Bennet in her affliction: 'twas a jug she valleyed,—one 'twas her mother's....

Take another cup o' tea, Mr. Crane. Why, you don't mean to say you've got done supper! ain't you gwine to take nothin' more? no more o' the pie? nor the sass? Well, won't you have another pickle? Oh, that reminds me: I was a-gwine to tell what Carline Gallup said about Kesier Winkle. Why, Kier, seems to me you ain't very perlite to leave the table afore anybody else does. Oh, yes, I remember now; it's singin'-school night: I s'pose it's time you was off. Melissy, you want to go tew, don't you? Well, I guess Mr. Crane'll excuse you. We'll jest set back the table ag'in' the wall. I won't dew the dishes jest now. Me and Melissy does the work ourselves, Mr. Crane. I hain't kept no gal sense Melissy was big enough t' aid and assist me. I think help's more plague than profit. [Pg 1663] No woman that has growed-up darters needn't keep help if she's brung up her gals as she'd ought tew. Melissy, dear, put on your cloak: it's a purty tejus evenin'. Kier, you tie up your throat: you know you was complainin' of a soreness in't to-day; and you must be keerful to tie it up when you cum hum: it's dangerous t' egspose yerself arter singin'—apt to give a body the brown-critters,—and that's turrible. You couldn't sing any more if you should git that, you know. You'd better call for Mirandy and Seliny, hadn't you? Don't be out late.

Now, Mr. Crane, draw up to the stove: you must be chilly off there. You gwine to the party to Major Coon's day arter to-morrow? S'pose they'll give out ther invatations to-morrow. Do go, Mr. Crane: it'll chirk you up and dew you good to go out into society ag'in. They say it's to be quite numerous. But I guess ther won't be no dancin' nor highty-tighty dewin's. If I thought ther would be I shouldn't go myself; for I don't approve on 'em, and couldn't countenance 'em. What do you think Sam Pendergrass's wife told me? She said how't the widder Jinkins (she 'twas Poll Bingham) is a-havin' a new gownd made a purpose to wear to the party,—one of these 'ere flambergasted, blazin' plaid consarns, with tew awful wide kaiterin' flounces around the skirt. Did you ever! How reedickilous for a woman o' her age, ain't it? I s'pose she expects t' astonish the natyves, and make her market tew, like enough. Well, she's to be pitied. Oh, Mr. Crane, I thought I *should go off* last night when I see that old critter squeeze up and hook onto you. How turrible imperdent, wa'n't it! But seems to me I shouldn't 'a' felt as if I was obleeged to went hum with her if I'd 'a' ben in your place, Mr. Crane. She made a purty speech about me to the lectur': I'm 'most ashamed to tell you on't, Mr. Crane, but it shows what the critter is. Kier says he heered [Pg 1664] her stretch her neck acrost and whisper to old Green, "Mr. Green, don't you think the widder Bedott seems to be wonderfully took up with *crainiology*?" She's the brazin'-facedest critter 't ever lived; it does beat all; I never *did* see her equill. But it takes all sorts o' folks to make up the world, you know. What did I understand you to say, Mr. Crane?—a few minnits' conversation with me? Deary me! Is it anything pertickler, Mr. Crane? Oh, dear suz! how you *dew* frustrate me! Not

that it's anything oncommon fer the gentlemen to ax to have private conversations with me, you know; but then—but then—bein' you, it's different: circumstances alter cases, you know. What was you a-gwine to say, Mr. Crane?

Oh, no, Mr. Crane, by no manner o' means; 'tain't a minute tew soon for you to begin to talk about gittin' married ag'in. I am amazed you should be afeerd I'd think so. See—how long's Miss Crane been dead? Six months!—land o' Goshen!—why, I've know'd a number of individdiwals get married in less time than that. There's Phil Bennet's widder 't I was a-talkin' about jest now,—she 'twas Louisy Perce: her husband hadn't been dead but *three* months, you know. I don't think it looks well for a *woman* to be in such a hurry; but for a *man* it's a different thing: circumstances alter cases, you know. And then, sittiwated as you be, Mr. Crane, it's a turrible thing for your family to be without a head to superintend the domestic consarns and 'tend to the children,—to say nothin' o' yerself, Mr. Crane. You dew need a companion, and no mistake. Six months! Good grevious! Why, Squire Titus didn't wait but six *weeks* after he buried his fust wife afore he married his second. I thought ther' wa'n't no partickler need o' his hurryin' so, seein' his family was all growed up. Such a critter as he pickt out, tew! 'Twas very onsuitable; but every man to his taste,—I hain't no dispersition to meddle with nobody's consarns. There's old farmer Dawson, [Pg 1665] tew,—his pardner hain't ben dead but ten months. To be sure, he ain't married yet; but he would 'a' ben long enough ago, if somebody I know on 'd gin him any incurridgement. But 'tain't for me to speak o' that matter. He's a clever old critter, and as rich as a Jew; but—lawful sakes!—he's old enough to be my father. And there's Mr. Smith,—Jubiter Smith: you know him, Mr. Crane,—his wife, (she 't was Aurory Pike) she died last summer, and he's ben squintin' round among the wimmin ever since, and he *may* squint for all the good it'll dew him so far as I'm consarned,—though Mr. Smith's a respectable man,—quite young and hain't no family,—very well off, tew, and quite intellectible,—but I'm purty partickler. Oh, Mr. Crane, it's ten years come Jinniwary sense I witnessed the expiration o' my belovid companion!—an uncommon long time to wait, to be sure; but 'tain't easy to find anybody to fill the place o' Hezekier Bedott. I think *you're* the most like husband of ary individdiwal I ever see, Mr. Crane. Six months! murderation! cur'us you should be afeard I'd think 'twas too soon. Why, I've knowed—

Mr. Crane—Well, widder, I've been thinking about taking another companion, and I thought I'd ask you—

Widow—Oh, Mr. Crane, egscuse my commotion; it's so onexpected. Jest hand me that are bottle of camfire off the mantletry shelf: I'm ruther faint. Dew put a little mite on my handkercher and hold it to my nuz. There, that'll dew: I'm obleeged tew ye. Now I'm ruther more composed: you may perceed, Mr. Crane.

Mr. C.—Well, widder, I was a-going to ask you whether—whether—

Widow—Continner, Mr. Crane,—dew. I know it's turrible embarrassin'. I remember when my dezeased husband made his suppositions to me he stammered and stuttered, and was so awfully [Pg 1666] flustered it did seem as if he'd never git it out in the world; and I suppose it's ginerally the case,—at least it has been with all them that's made suppositions to me: you see they're generally oncerting about what kind of an answer they're a-gwine to git, and it kind o' makes 'em narvous. But when an individdiwal has reason to s'pose his attachment's reciperated, I don't see what need there is o' his bein' flustrated,—though I must say it's quite embarrassin' to me. Pray continner.

Mr. C.—Well, then, I want to know if you're willing I should have Melissy.

Widow—The dragon!

Mr. C.—I hain't said anything to her about it yet,—thought the proper way was to get your consent first. I remember when I courted Trypheny we were engaged some time before mother Kenipe knew anything about it, and when she found it out she was quite put out because I didn't go to her first. So when I made up my mind about Melissy, thinks me, I'll do it right this time, and speak to the old woman first—

Widow—Old woman, hey! That's a purty name to call me!—amazin' perlite, tew! Want Melissy, hey! Tribble-ation! gracious sakes alive! Well, I'll give it up now! I always knowed you was a simpleton, Tim Crane, but, I *must* confess, I didn't think you was *quite* so big a fool. Want Melissy, dew ye? If that don't beat all! What an everlastin' old calf you must be, to s'pose she'd *look* at *you*! Why, you're old enough to be her father, and more, tew; Melissy ain't only in her twenty-oneth year. What a reedickilous idee for a man o' your age! As gray as a rat, tew! I wonder what this world *is* a-comin' tew: 'tis astonishin' what fools old widdiwers will make o' themselves! Have Melissy! Melissy! [Pg 1667]

Mr. C.—Why, widder, you surprise me. I'd no idee of being treated in this way, after you'd ben so polite to me, and made such a fuss over me and the girls.

Widow—Shet yer head, Tim Crane; nun o' yer sass to me. *There's* your hat on that are table, and *here's* the door; and the sooner you put on *one* and march out o' t'other the better it will be for you. And I advise you, afore you try to git married ag'in, to go out West and see 'f yer wife's cold; and arter yer satisfied on that p'int, jest put a little lampblack on yer hair,—'twould add to yer appearance, undoubtedly, and be of sarvice tew you when you want to flourish round among the gals; and when ye've got yer hair fixt, jest splinter the spine o' your back,—'twouldn't hurt your looks a mite: you'd be intirely unresistible if you was a *leetle* grain straiter.

Mr. C.—Well, I never!

Widow—Hold your tongue, you consarned old coot you! I tell you *there's* your hat, and *there's* the door: be off with yerself, quick metre, or I'll give ye a h'ist with the broomstick.

Mr. C.—Gimmeni!

Widow (rising)—Git out, I say! I ain't a-gwine to stan' here and be insulted under my own ruff; and so git along; and if ever you darken my door ag'in, or say a word to Melissy, it'll be the wuss for you,—that's all.

Mr. C.—Treemenjous! What a buster!

Widow—Go 'long,—go 'long,—go long, you everlastin' old gum! I won't hear another word (stops her ears). I won't. I won't. I won't. (Exit Mr. Crane.)

(Enter Melissy, accompanied by Captain Canoot.)

Good-evenin', cappen! Well, Melissy, hum at last, hey? Why didn't you stay till mornin'? Purty business keepin' me up here so late waitin' for you, when I'm eny-most tired to death iornin' and [Pg 1668] workin' like a slave all day,—ought to ben abed an hour ago. Thought ye left me with agreeable company, hey? I should like to know what arthly reason you had to s'pose old Crane's was agreeable to me? I always despised the critter; always thought he was a turrible fool, and now I'm convinced on't. I'm completely dizgusted with him; and I let him know it to-night. I gin him a piece o' my mind't I guess he'll be apt to remember for a spell. I ruther think he went off with a flea in his ear. Why, cappen, did ye ever hear of such a piece of audacity in all yer born days? for him—*Tim Crane*—to durst to expire to my hand,—the widder o' Deacon Bedott! Jest as if *I'd* condescen' to look at *him*,—the old numskull! He don't know B from a broomstick; but if he'd 'a' stayed much longer I'd 'a' teached him the difference, I guess. He's got his *walkin'-ticket* now. I hope he'll lemme alone in futur'. And where's Kier? Gun home with the Cranes, hey! Well, I guess it's the last time. And now, Melissy Bedott, you ain't to have nothin' more to dew with them gals,—d'ye hear? You ain't to 'sociate with 'em at all arter this: 'twould only be incurridgin' the old man to come a-pesterin' me ag'in; and I won't have him round,—d'ye hear? Don't be in a hurry, cappen, and don't be alarmed at my gettin' in such a passion about old Crane's persumption. Mebby you think 'twas onfeelin' in me to use him so,—and I don't say but what 'twas, *ruther*; but then he's so awful dizagreeable tew me, you know: 'tain't *everybody* I'd treat in such a way. Well, if you *must* go, good-evenin'! Give my love to Hanner when you write ag'in: dew call frequently, Captain Canoot,—dew. [Pg 1669]

THE LUGUBRIOUS WHING-WHANG

BY JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

The rhyme o' The Raggedy Man's 'at's best
  Is Tickle me, Love, in these Lonesome Ribs,—
'Cause that-un's the strangest of all o' the rest,
An' the worst to learn, an' the last one guessed,
An' the funniest one, an' the foolishest.—
  Tickle me, Love, in these Lonesome Ribs!

I don't know what in the world it means—
  Tickle me, Love, in these Lonesome Ribs!—
An' nen when I *tell* him I don't, he leans
Like he was a-grindin' on some machines
An' says: Ef I *don't*, w'y, I don't know *beans*!
  Tickle me, Love, in these Lonesome Ribs!

Out on the margin of Moonshine Land,
  Tickle me, Love, in these Lonesome Ribs!
Out where the Whing-Whang loves to stand,
Writing his name with his tail in the sand,
And swiping it out with his oogerish hand;
  Tickle me, Love, in these Lonesome Ribs!

Is it the gibber of Gungs or Keeks?
  Tickle me, Love, in these Lonesome Ribs!
Or what *is* the sound that the Whing-Whang seeks?
Crouching low by the winding creeks
And holding his breath for weeks and weeks!
  Tickle me, Love, in these Lonesome Ribs! [Pg 1670]

Anoint him, the wraithest of wraithly things!
  Tickle me, Love, in these Lonesome Ribs!
'Tis a fair Whing-Whangess, with phosphor rings,
And bridal-jewels of fangs and stings;
And she sits and as sadly and softly sings
As the mildewed whir of her own dead wings,—
  Tickle me, Dear,
    Tickle me here,
  Tickle me, Love, in me Lonesome Ribs!

[Pg 1671]

THE RUNAWAY TOYS

BY FRANK L. STANTON

The Hobby Horse was so tired that day,
  With never a bite to eat,
That he whispered the Doll: "I shall run away!"
  And he galloped out to the street
With the curly-headed Doll Baby on his back;
And hard at his heels went the Jumping Jack!
And the little boy—he never knew,
Though the little Steam Engine blew and blew!

Then the Humming Top went round and round,
  And crashed through the window-pane,
And the scared Tin Monkey made a bound
  For the little red Railroad Train.
The painted Duck went "Quack! quack! quack!"
But the Railroad Train just whistled back!
Till the Elephant saw what the racket meant
And packed his trunk and—away he went!

The little Toy Sheep in the corner there
  Was bleating long and loud;
But the Parrot said "Hush!" and pulled his hair,
  And he galloped off with the crowd!
And the Tin Horn blew and the Toy Drum beat,
But away they went down the frightened street,
Till they all caught up with the Railroad Train,
And they never went back to their homes again!

[Pg 1672]

The blue policeman and all the boys
  Went racing away—away!
For a big reward for the runaway Toys
  Was cried in the streets that day.
But they kept right on round the world so wide,
While the Little Boy stood on the steps and cried.
Where did they go to, and what did they do?
Bored a hole to China and—dropped through!

[Pg 1673]

TIM FLANAGAN'S MISTAKE

BY WALLACE BRUCE AMSBARY

Dat Irishman named Flanagan,
  He's often joke wid me,
He leeve here now mos' twanty year,
  Ver' close to Kankakee;
I always look for chance to gat
  An' even op wid heem,
But he's too smart, exception wance,
  Dis Irishman named Tim.

Wan Sunday tam' I'm walking out
  I meet Tim on de knoll,
We bot' are hav' a promenade
  An' mak' a leddle stroll;
We look down from de top of hill,

An' on de reevere's edge
Is w'at you call a heifer calf,—
He stan' dere by de hedge.

Dat calf stan' still an' wag hees tail
On eas' an' den wes' side,
An' den he wag it to de sout'
For whip flies off hees hide;
I say to Tim dat heifer calf
Dat stan' so quiet still,
You can not push him on de stream;
He say, "By gosh, I will." [Pg 1674]

An' den he grin an' smile out loud,
He fall opon de groun',
An' den he laugh wance mor' again
An' roll de place aroun':
He say, 'twill be a ver' good joke
Opon dat heifer calf,
An' wance mor' he start op h'right quick
An' mak' de beeg horse laugh.

Says Tim, "You watch me now, ma frien',
I'll geeve dat calf wan scare,
I will rone down an' push him quick
On Kankakee Reevere."
An' he laugh out a beeg lot mor',
Den he t'row off hees hat,
An' start down hill two-forty gait,
He fly as swif' as bat.

Dat calf he stan' an' wag hees tail
For 'bout two t'ree tam' mor';
W'en Tim com' ronnin' down de hill
She move two yard down shore;
But Tim now com' lak' cannon ball,
He can't turn right nor lef',
He miss de calf an' den, by gosh!
Fall on reevere himse'f.

Dose Sunday close dat Tim had on
He wet dem t'roo an' t'roo,
An' w'en he pick himse'f op slow
An' walk heem out de sloo,
He say, "Dat's good I mak' a laugh
Before I tak' dat fall;
I laugh not den, I hav' no fone
Out of dis t'ing at all." [Pg 1675]

THE MILLIONAIRES

BY MAX ADELER

It had always been one of the luxuries of the Grimeses to consider what they would do if they were rich. Many a time George and his wife, sitting together of a summer evening upon the porch of their own pretty house in Susanville, had looked at the long unoccupied country-seat of General Jenkins, just across the way, and wished they had money enough to buy the place and give it to the village for a park.

Mrs. Grimes often said that if she had a million dollars, the very first thing she would do would be to purchase the Jenkins place. George's idea was to tear down the fences, throwing everything open, and to dedicate the grounds to the public. Mrs. Grimes wanted to put a great free library in the house and to have a club for poor working-women in the second-floor rooms. George estimated that one hundred thousand dollars would be enough to carry out their plans. Say fifty thousand dollars for purchase money, and then fifty more invested at six per cent. to maintain the place.

"But if we had a million," said George, "I think I should give one hundred and fifty thousand to the enterprise and do the thing right. There would always be repairs and new books to buy and matters of that kind."

But this was not the only benevolent dream of these kind-hearted people. They liked to think of

the joy that would fill the heart of that poor struggling pastor, Mr. Borrow, if they could tell him that they would pay the whole debt of the Presbyterian Church, six thousand dollars. [Pg 1676]

"And I would have his salary increased, George," said Mrs. Grimes. "It is shameful to compel that poor man to live on a thousand dollars."

"Outrageous," said George. "I would guarantee him another thousand, and maybe more; but we should have to do it quietly, for fear of wounding him."

"That mortgage on the Methodist Church," said Mrs. Grimes. "Imagine the happiness of those poor people in having it lifted! And so easy to do, too, if we had a million dollars."

"Certainly, and I would give the Baptists a handsome pipe-organ instead of that wheezing melodeon. Dreadful, isn't it?"

"You can get a fine organ for $2,000," said Mrs. Grimes.

"Yes, of course, but I wouldn't be mean about it; not mean on a million dollars. Let them have a really good organ, say for $3,000 or $3,500; and then build them a parsonage, too."

"The fact is," said Mrs. Grimes, "that people like us really ought to have large wealth, for we know how to use it rightly."

"I often think of that," answered George. "If I know my own soul I long to do good. It makes my heart bleed to see the misery about us, misery I am absolutely unable to relieve. I am sure that if I really had a million dollars I should not want to squander it on mere selfish pleasure, nor would you. The greatest happiness any one can have is in making others happy; and it is a wonder to me that our rich people don't see this. Think of old General Jenkins and his twenty million dollars, and what we would do for our neighbors with a mere fraction of that!" [Pg 1677]

"For we really want nothing much for ourselves," said Mrs. Grimes. "We are entirely satisfied with what we have in this lovely little home and with your $2,000 salary from the bank."

"Almost entirely," said George. "There are some few little things we might add in—just a few; but with a million we could easily get them and more and have such enormous amounts of money left."

"Almost the first thing I would do," said Mrs. Grimes, "would be to settle a comfortable living for life on poor Isaac Wickersham. That man, George, crippled as he is, lives on next to nothing. I don't believe he has two hundred dollars a year."

"Well, we could give him twelve hundred and not miss it and then give the same sum to Widow Clausen. She can barely keep alive."

"And there's another thing I'd do," said Mrs. Grimes. "If we kept a carriage I would never ride up alone from the station or for pleasure. I would always find some poor or infirm person to go with me. How people can be so mean about their horses and carriages as some rich people are is beyond my comprehension."

It is delightful pastime, expending in imagination large sums of money that you haven't got. You need not regard considerations of prudence. You can give free rein to your feelings and bestow your bounty with reckless profusion. You obtain almost all the pleasure of large giving without any cost. You feel nearly as happy as if you were actually doing the good deeds which are the children of your fancy.

George Grimes and his wife had considered so often the benevolences they would like to undertake if they had a million dollars that they could have named them all at a moment's notice without referring to a memorandum. Nearly everybody has engaged in this pastime, but the [Pg 1678] Grimeses were to have the singular experience of the power to make their dream a reality placed in their hands.

For one day George came flying home from the bank with a letter from the executors of General Jenkins (who died suddenly in Mexico a week or two before) announcing that the General had left a million dollars and the country-seat in Susanville to George Grimes.

"And to think, Mary Jane," said George when the first delirium of their joy had passed, "the dear old man was kind enough to say—here, let me read it to you again from the quotation from the will in the letter: 'I make this bequest because, from repeated conversations with the said George Grimes, I know that he will use it aright.' So you see, dear, it was worth while, wasn't it, to express our benevolent wishes sometimes when we spoke of the needs of those who are around us?"

"Yes, and the General's kind remark makes this a sacred trust, which we are to administer for him."

"We are only his stewards."

"Stewards for his bounty."

"So that we must try to do exactly what we think he would have liked us to do," said George.

"Nothing else, dear?"

"Why, of course we are to have some discretion, some margin; and besides, nobody possibly could guess precisely what he would have us do."

"But now, at any rate, George, we can realize fully one of our longing desires and give to the people the lovely park and library?"

George seemed thoughtful. "I think, Mary Jane," he said, "I would not act precipitately about that. Let us reflect upon the matter. It might seem unkind to the memory of the General just to give away his gift almost before we get it." [Pg 1679]

They looked at each other, and Mrs. Grimes said:

"Of course there is no hurry. And we are really a little cramped in this house. The nursery is much too small for the children and there is not a decent fruit tree in our garden."

"The thing can just stay open until we have time to consider."

"But I am so glad for dear old Isaac. We can take care of him, anyhow, and of Mrs. Clausen, too."

"To be sure," said George. "The obligation is sacred. Let me see, how much was it we thought Isaac ought to have?"

"Twelve hundred a year."

"H-m-m," murmured George, "and he has two hundred now; an increase of five hundred per cent. I'm afraid it will turn the old man's head. However, I wouldn't exactly promise anything for a few days yet."

"Many a man in his station in life is happy upon a thousand."

"A thousand! Why, my dear, there is not a man of his class in town that makes six hundred."

"George?"

"Well?"

"We must keep horses, and there is no room to build a stable on this place."

"No."

"Could we live here and keep the horses in the General's stables across the way, even if the place were turned into a park?"

"That is worth thinking of."

"And George?"

"Well, dear?"

"It's a horrid thing to confess, but do you know, George, I've felt myself getting meaner and meaner, and stingier and stingier ever since you brought the good news." [Pg 1680]

George tried to smile, but the effort was unsuccessful; he looked half-vexed and half-ashamed.

"Oh, I wouldn't put it just that way," he said. "The news is so exciting that we hardly know at once how to adjust ourselves to it. We are simply prudent. It would be folly to plunge ahead without any caution at all. How much did you say the debt of the Presbyterian Church is?"

"Six thousand, I think."

"A good deal for a little church like that to owe."

"Yes, but—"

"You didn't promise anything, Mary Jane, did you, to Mrs. Borrow?"

"No, for I had nothing to promise, but I did tell her on Sunday that I would help them liberally if I could."

"They will base large expectations on that, sure. I wish you hadn't said it just that way. Of course, we are bound to help them, but I should like to have a perfectly free hand in doing it."

There was silence for a moment, while both looked through the window at the General's place over the way.

"Beautiful, isn't it?" asked Mrs. Grimes.

"Lovely. That little annex on the side would make a snug den for me; and imagine the prospect from that south bedroom window! You would enjoy every look at it."

"George?"

"What?"

"George, dear, tell me frankly, do you really feel in your heart as generous as you did yesterday?"

"Now, my dear, why press that matter? Call it meaner or narrower or what you will; maybe I am a [Pg 1681]

little more so than I was; but there is nothing to be ashamed of. It is the conservative instinct asserting itself; the very same faculty in man that holds society together. I will be liberal enough when the time comes, never fear. I am not going to disregard what one may call the pledges of a lifetime. We will treat everybody right, the Presbyterian Church and Mr. Borrow included. His salary is a thousand, I think you said?"

"Yes."

"Well, I am willing to make it fifteen hundred right now, if you are."

"We said, you remember, it ought to be two thousand."

"Who said so?"

"You did, on the porch here the other evening."

"I never said so. There isn't a preacher around here gets that much. The Episcopalians with their rich people only give eighteen hundred."

"And a house."

"Very well, the Presbyterians can build a house if they want to."

"You consent then to pledge five hundred more to the minister's salary?"

"I said I would if you would, but my advice is just to let the matter go over until to-morrow or next day, when the whole thing can be considered."

"Very well, but, George, sixty thousand dollars is a great deal of money, and we certainly can afford to be liberal with it, for the General's sake as well as for our own!"

"Everything depends upon how you look at it. In one way the sum is large. In another way it isn't. General Jenkins had just twenty times sixty thousand. Tremendous, isn't it? He might just as well have left us another million. He is in Heaven and wouldn't miss it. Then we could have some of our plans more fully carried out." [Pg 1682]

"I hate to be thought covetous," answered Mrs. Grimes, "but I do wish he had put on that other million."

The next day Mr. Grimes, while sitting with his wife after supper, took a memorandum from his pocket and said:

"I've been jotting down some figures, Mary Jane, just to see how we will come out with our income of sixty thousand dollars."

"Well?"

"If we give the place across the street for a park and a library and a hundred thousand dollars with which to run it, we shall have just nine hundred thousand left."

"Yes."

"We shall want horses, say a carriage pair, and a horse for the station wagon. Then I must have a saddle horse and there must be a pony for the children. I thought also you might as well have a gentle pair for your own driving. That makes six. Then there will have to be, say, three stable men. Now, my notion is that we shall put up a larger house farther up town with all the necessary stabling. Count the cost of the house and suitable appointments, and add in the four months' trip to Europe which we decided yesterday to take next summer, and how much of that fifty-four thousand do you think we shall have left at the end of the year?"

"But why build the house from our income?"

"Mary Jane, I want to start out with the fixed idea that we will not cut into our principal."

"Well, how much will we have over?"

"Not a dollar! The outlay for the year will approximate fifty-six thousand dollars."

"Large, isn't it?"

"And yet I don't see how we can reduce it if we are to live as people in our circumstances might reasonably be expected to live." [Pg 1683]

"We must cut off something."

"That is what I think. If we give the park and the library building to the town why not let the town pay the cost of caring for them?"

"Then we could save the interest on that other hundred thousand."

"Exactly, and nobody will suffer. The gift of the property alone is magnificent. Who is going to complain of us? We will decide now to give the real estate and then stop."

Two days later Mr. Grimes came home early from the bank with a letter in his hand. He looked white and for a moment after entering his wife's room he could hardly command utterance.

"I have some bad news for you, dear—terrible news," he said, almost falling into a chair.

The thought flashed through Mrs. Grimes' mind that the General had made a later will which had been found and which revoked the bequest to George. She could hardly whisper:

"What is it?"

"The executors write to me that the million dollars left to me by the General draws only about four per cent. interest."

"George!"

"Four per cent! Forty thousand dollars instead of sixty thousand! What a frightful loss! Twenty thousand dollars a year gone at one breath!"

"Are you sure, George?"

"Sure? Here is the letter. Read it yourself. One-third of our fortune swept away before we have a chance to touch it!" [Pg 1684]

"I think it was very unkind of the General to turn the four per cents. over to us while somebody else gets the six per cents. How *could* he do such a thing? And you such an old friend, too!"

"Mary Jane, that man always had a mean streak in him. I've said so to myself many a time. But, anyhow, this frightful loss settles one thing; we can't afford to give that property across the street to the town. We must move over there to live, and even then, with the huge expense of keeping such a place in order, we shall have to watch things narrowly to make ends meet."

"And you never were good at retrenching, George."

"But we've *got* to retrench. Every superfluous expenditure must be cut off. As for the park and free library, that seems wild now, doesn't it? I don't regret abandoning the scheme. The people of this town never did appreciate public spirit or generosity, did they?"

"Never."

"I'm very sorry you spoke to Mrs. Borrow about helping their church. Do you think she remembers it?"

"She met me to-day and said they were expecting something handsome."

Mr. Grimes laughed bitterly.

"That's always the way with those people. They are the worst beggars! When a lot of folks get together and start a church it is almost indecent for them to come running around to ask other folks to support it. I have half a notion not to give them a cent."

"Not even for Mr. Borrow's salary?"

"Certainly not! Half the clergymen in the United States get less than a thousand dollars a year; why can't he do as the rest do? Am I to be called upon to support a lot of poor preachers? A good deal of nerve is required, I think, to ask such a thing of me." [Pg 1685]

Two weeks afterward Mr. Grimes and his wife sat together again on the porch in the cool of the evening.

"Now," said Grimes, "let us together go over these charities we were talking about and be done with them. Let us start with the tough fact staring us in the face that, with only one million dollars at four per cent. and all our new and necessary expenses, we shall have to look sharp or I'll be borrowing money to live on in less than eight months."

"Well," said Mrs. Grimes, "what shall we cut out? Would you give up the Baptist organ that we used to talk about?"

"Mary Jane, it is really surprising how you let such things as that stay in your mind. I considered that organ scheme abandoned long ago."

"Is it worth while, do you think, to do anything with the Methodist Church mortgage?"

"How much is it?"

"Three thousand dollars, I think."

"Yes, three thousand from forty thousand leaves us only thirty-seven thousand. Then, if we do it for the Methodists we shall have to do it for the Lutherans and the Presbyterians and swarms of churches all around the country. We can't make flesh of one and fowl of another. It will be safer to treat them all alike; and more just, too. I think we ought to try to be just with them, don't you, Mary Jane?"

"And Mr. Borrow's salary?"

"Ha! Yes! That is a thousand dollars, isn't it? It does seem but a trifle. But they have no children and they have themselves completely adjusted to it. And suppose we should raise it one year and die next year? He would feel worse than if he just went along in the old way. When a man is fully [Pg 1686] adjusted to a thing it is the part of prudence, it seems to me, just to let him alone."

"I wish we could—"

"Oh, well, if you want to; but I propose that we don't make them the offer until next year or the year after. We shall have our matters arranged better by that time."

"And now about Isaac Wickersham?"

"Have you seen him lately?"

"Two or three days ago."

"Did he seem discontented or unhappy?"

"No."

"You promised to help him?"

"What I said was, 'We are going to do something for you, Isaac'"

"Something! That commits us to nothing in particular. Was it your idea, Mary Jane, to make him an allowance?"

"Yes."

"There you cut into our insufficient income again. I don't see how we can afford it with all these expenses heaping up on us; really I don't."

"But we must give him something; I promised it."

George thought a moment and then said:

"This is the end of September and I sha'nt want this straw hat that I have been wearing all summer. Suppose you give him that. A good straw hat is 'something.'"

"You remember Mrs. Clausen, George?"

"Have we got to load up with her, too?"

"Let me explain. You recall that I told her I would try to make her comfortable, and when I found that our circumstances were going to be really straitened, I sent her my red flannel petticoat with my love, for I know she can be comfortable in that."

"Of course she can."

"So this afternoon when I came up from the city she got out of the train with me and I felt so half- [Pg 1687]
ashamed of the gift that I pretended not to see her and hurried out to the carriage and drove quickly up the hill. She is afraid of horses, anyhow."

"Always was," said George.

"But, George, I don't feel quite right about it yet; the gift of a petticoat is rather stingy, isn't it?"

"No, I don't think so."

"And, George, to be perfectly honest with ourselves now, don't you think we are a little bit meaner than we were, say, last June?"

George cleared his throat and hesitated, and then he said:

"I admit nothing, excepting that the only people who are fit to have money are the people who know how to take care of it." [Pg 1688]

OUR POLITE PARENTS

BY CAROLYN WELLS

SEDATE MAMMA

When guests were present, dear little Mabel
Climbed right up on the dinner-table
And naughtily stood upon her head!
"I wouldn't do that, dear," Mamma said.

Merry Moses

Merry, funny little Moses
Burnt off both his brothers' noses;
And it made them look so queer
Mamma said, "Why, Moses, dear!"

JOHNNY'S FUN

Johnny climbed up on the bed,
And hammered nails in Mamma's head.
Though the child was much elated,
Mamma felt quite irritated.

A Merry Game

Betty and Belinda Ames
Had the pleasantest of games;
'Twas to hide from one another
Marmaduke, their baby brother. [Pg 1689]

Once Belinda, little love,
Hid the baby in the stove;
Such a joke! for little Bet
Hasn't found the baby yet.

Tom and Grandpa

From his toes up to his shins
Tom stuck Grandpa full of pins;
Although Tom the fun enjoyed,
Grandpapa was quite annoyed.

Baby's Looks

Bobby with the nursery shears
Cut off both the baby's ears;
At the baby, so unsightly,
Mamma raised her eyebrows slightly.

Jeanette's Pranks

One night, Jeanette, a roguish little lass,
Sneaked in the guest room and turned on the gas;
When morning dawned the guest was dead in bed,
But "Children will be children," Mamma said.

[Pg 1690]

A BALLADE OF PING-PONG

BY ALDEN CHARLES NOBLE

She wears a rosebud in her hair
  To mock me as it tosses free;
Were I more wise and she less fair
  I fear that I should never be
  A victim to such witchery;
For at her wiles and lovely arts
  I'm fain to laugh with her, while she
Plays ping-pong with my heart of hearts.

The play's the thing; I wonder where,
  What courtier with what courtesy
First played it, with what lady fair,
  To music of what minstrelsy?
  I wonder did he seem to see
Such eyes wherein a sunbeam starts,
  And did he love (as I) while she
Played ping-pong with his heart of hearts?

For battledore they called it, there
  In courts of gilded chivalry;
No gallant ever lived to dare
  To doubt its airy potency;
  But now, that all the pageantry
Of those dead emperors departs,
  I dream that she in memory
Plays ping-pong with my heart of hearts.

[Pg 1691]

L'ENVOI

Ah, maiden, I must sail a sea
  Whereof there are no maps or charts;
Wilt thou sail too, and there with me

Play ping-pong with my heart of hearts?

[Pg 1692]

BUDGE AND TODDIE

BY JOHN HABBERTON

My Sunday dinner was unexceptional in point of quantity and quality, and a bottle of my brother-in-law's claret proved to be most excellent; yet a certain uneasiness of mind prevented my enjoying the meal as thoroughly as under other circumstances I might have done. My uneasiness came of a mingled sense of responsibility and ignorance. I felt that it was the proper thing for me to see that my nephews spent the day with some sense of the requirements and duties of the Sabbath; but how I was to bring it about, I hardly knew. The boys were too small to have Bible-lessons administered to them, and they were too lively to be kept quiet by any ordinary means. After a great deal of thought, I determined to consult the children themselves, and try to learn what their parents' custom had been.

"Budge," said I, "what do you do Sundays when your papa and mama are home? What do they read to you,—what do they talk about?"

"Oh, they swing us—lots!" said Budge, with brightening eyes.

"An' zey takes us to get jacks," observed Toddie.

"Oh, yes!" exclaimed Budge; "jacks-in-the-pulpit—don't you know?"

"Hum—ye—es; I do remember some such thing in my youthful days. They grow where there's plenty of mud, don't they?" [Pg 1693]

"Yes, an' there's a brook there, an' ferns, an' birch-bark, an' if you don't look out you'll tumble into the brook when you go to get birch."

"An' we goes to Hawksnest Rock," piped Toddie, "an' papa carries us up on his back when we gets tired."

"An' he makes us whistles," said Budge.

"Budge," said I, rather hastily, "enough. In the language of the poet

"'These earthly pleasures I resign,'

and I'm rather astonished that your papa hasn't taught you to do likewise. Don't he ever read to you?"

"Oh, yes," cried Budge, clapping his hands, as a happy thought struck him. "He gets down the Bible—the great *big* Bible, you know—an' we all lay on the floor, an' he reads us stories out of it. There's David, an' Noah, an' when Christ was a little boy, an' Joseph, an' turnbackPharo'sarmyhallelujah—"

"And what?"

"TurnbackPharo'sarmyhallelujah," repeated Budge. "Don't you know how Moses held out his cane over the Red Sea, an' the water went way up one side, an' way up the other side, and all the Isrulites went across? It's just the same thing as *drown*oldPharo'sarmyhallelujah—don't you know?"

"Budge," said I, "I suspect you of having heard the Jubilee Singers."

"Oh, and papa and mama sings us all those Jubilee songs—there's 'Swing Low,' an' 'Roll Jordan,' an' 'Steal Away,' an' 'My Way's Cloudy,' an' 'Get on Board, Childuns,' an' lots. An' you can sing us every one of 'em." [Pg 1694]

"An' papa takes us in the woods, an' makesh us canes," said Toddie.

"Yes," said Budge, "and where there's new houses buildin', he takes us up ladders."

"Has he any way of putting an extension on the afternoon?" I asked.

"I don't know what that is," said Budge, "but he puts an India-rubber blanket on the grass, and then we all lie down an' make b'lieve we're soldiers asleep. Only sometimes when we wake up papa stays asleep, an' mama won't let us wake him. I don't think that's a very nice play."

"Well, I think Bible stories are nicer than anything else, don't you?"

Budge seemed somewhat in doubt. "I think swingin' is nicer," said he—"oh, no;—let's get some jacks—*I'll* tell you what!—make us whistles, an' we can blow on 'em while we're goin' to get the jacks. Toddie, dear, wouldn't *you* like jacks and whistles?"

"Yesh—an' swingin'—an' birch—an' wantsh to go to Hawksnesh Rock," answered Toddie.

"Let's have Bible stories first," said I. "The Lord mightn't like it if you didn't learn anything good

to-day."

"Well," said Budge, with the regulation religious-matter-of-duty face, "let's. I guess I like 'bout Joseph best."

"Tell us 'bout Bliaff," suggested Toddie.

"Oh, no, Tod," remonstrated Budge; "Joseph's coat was just as bloody as Goliath's head was." Then Budge turned to me and explained that "all Tod likes Goliath for is 'cause when his head was cut off it was all bloody." And then Toddie—the airy sprite whom his mother described as being irresistibly drawn to whatever was beautiful—Toddie glared upon me as a butcher's apprentice might stare at a doomed lamb, and remarked: [Pg 1695]

"Bliaff's head was all bluggy, an' David's sword was all bluggy—bluggy as everyfing."

I hastily breathed a small prayer, opened the Bible, turned to the story of Joseph, and audibly condensed it as I read:

"Joseph was a good little boy whose papa loved him very dearly. But his brothers didn't like him. And they sold him, to go to Egypt. And he was very smart, and told the people what their dreams meant, and he got to be a great man. And his brothers went to Egypt to buy corn, and Joseph sold them some, and then he let them know who he was. And he sent them home to bring their papa to Egypt, and then they all lived there together."

"That's ain't it," remarked Toddie, with the air of a man who felt himself to be unjustly treated. "Is it, Budge?"

"Oh, no," said Budge, "you didn't read it good a bit; *I'll* tell you how it is. Once there was a little boy named Joseph, an' he had eleven budders—they was *awful* eleven budders. An' his papa gave him a new coat, an' his budders hadn't nothin' but their old jackets to wear. An' one day he was carryin' 'em their dinner, an' they put him in a deep, dark hole, but they didn't put his nice new coat in—they killed a kid, an' dipped the coat—just think of doin' that to a nice new coat—they dipped it in the kid's blood, an' made it all bloody."

"All bluggy," echoed Toddy, with ferocious emphasis. Budge continued:

"But there were some Ishmalites comin' along that way, and the awful eleven budders took him out of the deep, dark hole, an' sold him to the Ishmalites, and they sold him away down in Egypt. An' his poor old papa cried, an' cried, 'cause he thought a big lion ate Joseph up; but he wasn't ate up a bit; but there wasn't no post-office nor choo-choos,[1] nor stages in Egypt, an' there [Pg 1696] wasn't any telegraphs, so Joseph couldn't let his papa know where he was; an' he got so smart an' so good that the king of Egypt let him sell all the corn an' take care of the money; an' one day some men came to buy some corn, an' Joseph looked at 'em an' there they was his own budders! An' he scared 'em like everything; *I'd* have *slapped* 'em all if *I'd* been Joseph, but he just scared 'em, an' then he let 'em know who he was, an' he kissed 'em an' he didn't whip 'em, or make 'em go without their breakfast, or stand in a corner, nor none of them things; an' then he sent 'em back for their papa, an' when he saw his papa comin', he ran like everything, and gave him a great big hug and a kiss. Joseph was too big to ask his papa if he'd brought him any candy, but he was awful glad to see him. An' the king gave Joseph's papa a nice farm, an' they all had real good times after that."

"And they dipped the coat in the blood, an' made it all bluggy," reiterated Toddie.

"Uncle Harry," said Budge, "what do you think *my* papa would do if he thought I was all ate up by a lion? I guess he'd cry *awful*, don't you? Now tell us another story—oh, *I'll* tell you—read us 'bout —"

"'Bout Bliaff," interrupted Toddie.

"*You* tell *me* about him, Toddie," said I.

"Why," said Toddie, "Bliaff was a brate bid man, an' Dave was brate little man, an' Bliaff said, 'Come over here'n an' I'll eat you up,' an' Dave said, '*I* ain't fyaid of you.' So Dave put five little stones in a sling an' asked de Lord to help him, an' let ze sling go bang into bequeen Bliaff's eyes an' knocked him down dead, an' Dave took Bliaff's sword an' sworded Bliaff's head off, an' made it all bluggy, an' Bliaff runned away." This short narration was accompanied by more spirited and [Pg 1697] unexpected gestures than Mr. Gough ever puts into a long lecture.

"I don't like 'bout Goliath at all," remarked Budge. "*I'd* like to hear 'bout Ferus."

"Who?"

"Ferus; don't you know?"

"Never heard of him, Budge."

"Why—y—y—!" exclaimed Budge; "didn't you have no papa when you was a little boy?"

"Yes, but he never told me about any one named Ferus; there's no such person named in Anthon's Classical Dictionary, either. What sort of a man was he?"

"Why, once there was a man, an' his name was Ferus—*Off*erus, an' he went about fightin' for

kings, but when any king got afraid of anybody, he wouldn't fight for him no more. An' one day he couldn't find no kings that wasn't afraid of nobody. An' the people told him the Lord was the biggest king in the world, an' he wasn't afraid of nobody or nothing. An' he asked 'em where he could find the Lord, an' they said he was way up in heaven so nobody couldn't see him but the angels, but he liked folks to *work* for him instead of fight. So Ferus wanted to know what kind of work he could do, an' the people said there was a river not far off, where there wasn't no ferry-boats, cos the water run so fast, an' they guessed if he'd carry folks across, the Lord would like it. So Ferus went there, an' he cut him a good, strong cane, an' whenever anybody wanted to go across the river he'd carry 'em on his back.

"One night he was sittin' in his little house by the fire, an' smokin' his pipe an' readin' the paper, an' 'twas rainin' an' blowin' an' hailin' an' stormin', an' he was so glad there wasn't anybody wantin' to go 'cross the river, when he heard somebody call one 'Ferus!' An' he looked out the [Pg 1698] window, but he couldn't see nobody, so he sat down again. Then somebody called 'Ferus!' again, and he opened the door again, an' there was a little bit of a boy, 'bout as big as Toddie. An' Ferus said, 'Hello, young fellow, does your mother know you're out?' An' the little boy said, 'I want to go 'cross the river.'—'Well,' says Ferus, 'you're a mighty little fellow to be travelin' alone, but hop up.' So the little boy jumped up on Ferus's back, and Ferus walked into the water. Oh, my —*wasn't* it cold? An' every step he took that little boy got heavier, so Ferus nearly tumbled down an' they liked to both got drownded. An' when they got across the river Ferus said, 'Well, you *are* the heaviest small fry I ever carried,' and he turned around to look at him, an' 'twasn't no little boy at all—'twas a big man—'twas Christ. An' Christ said, 'Ferus, I heard you was tryin' to work for me, so I thought I'd come down an' see you, an' not let you know who I was. An' now you shall have a new name; you shall be called *Christ*offerus, cos that means Christ-carrier.' An' everybody called him Christofferus after that, an' when he died they called him *Saint* Christopher, cos Saint is what they called good people when they're dead."

Budge himself had the face of a rapt saint as he told this story, but my contemplation of his countenance was suddenly arrested by Toddie, who, disapproving of the unexciting nature of his brother's recital, had strayed into the garden, investigated a hornet's nest, been stung, and set up a piercing shriek. He ran in to me, and as I hastily picked him up, he sobbed:

"Want to be wocked.[2] Want 'Toddie one boy day.'"

I rocked him violently, and petted him tenderly, but again he sobbed: [Pg 1699]

"Want 'Toddie one boy day.'"

"What *does* the child mean?" I exclaimed.

"He wants you to sing to him about 'Charley boy one day,'" said Budge. "He always wants mama to sing that when he's hurt, an' then he stops crying."

"I don't know it," said I. "Won't 'Roll, Jordan,' do, Toddie?"

"*I'll* tell you how it goes," said Budge, and forthwith the youth sang the following song, a line at a time, I following him in words and air:

"Where is my little bastik[3] gone?"
  Said Charley boy one day;
"I guess some little boy or girl
  Has taken it away.

"An' kittie, too—where *ish* she gone?
  Oh, dear, what I shall do?
I wish I could my bastik find,
  An' little kittie, too.

"I'll go to mamma's room an' look;
  Perhaps she may be there;
For kittie likes to take a nap
  In mamma's easy chair.

"O mamma, mamma, come an' look?
  See what a little heap!
Here's kittie in the bastik here,
  All cuddled down to sleep."

Where the applicability of this poem to my nephew's peculiar trouble appeared, I could not see, but as I finished it, his sobs gave place to a sigh of relief.

"Toddie," said I, "do you love your Uncle Harry?"

"Esh, I *do* love you."

"Then tell me how that ridiculous song comforts you?"

"Makes me feel good, an' all nicey," replied Toddie. [Pg 1700]

"Wouldn't you feel just as good if I sang, 'Plunged in a gulf of dark despair?'"

"No, don't like dokdishpairs; if a dokdishpair done anyfing to me, I'd knock it right down dead."

With this extremely lucid remark, our conversation on this particular subject ended; but I wondered, during a few uneasy moments, whether the temporary mental aberration which had once afflicted Helen's grandfather and mine was not reappearing in this, his youngest descendant. My wondering was cut short by Budge, who remarked, in a confident tone:

"Now, Uncle Harry, we'll have the whistles, I guess."

I acted upon the suggestion, and led the way to the woods. I had not had occasion to seek a hickory sapling before for years; not since the war, in fact, when I learned how hot a fire small hickory sticks would make. I had not sought wood for whistles since—gracious, nearly a quarter of a century ago! The dissimilar associations called up by these recollections threatened to put me in a frame of mind which might have resulted in a bad poem, had not my nephews kept up a lively succession of questions such as no one but children can ask. The whistles completed, I was marched, with music, to the place where the "Jacks" grew. It was just such a place as boys instinctively delight in—low, damp, and boggy, with a brook hiding treacherously away under overhanging ferns and grasses. The children knew by sight the plant which bore the "Jacks," and every discovery was announced by a piercing shriek of delight. At first I looked hurriedly toward the brook as each yell clove the air; but, as I became accustomed to it, my attention was diverted by some exquisite ferns. Suddenly, however, a succession of shrieks announced that something was wrong, and across a large fern I saw a small face in a great deal of agony. Budge was [Pg 1701] hurrying to the relief of his brother, and was soon as deeply imbedded as Toddie was in the rich black mud, at the bottom of the brook. I dashed to the rescue, stood astride the brook, and offered a hand to each boy, when a treacherous tuft of grass gave way, and, with a glorious splash, I went in myself. This accident turned Toddie's sorrow to laughter, but I can't say I made light of my misfortune on that account. To fall into *clean* water is not pleasant, even when one is trout-fishing; but to be clad in white pants, and suddenly drop nearly knee-deep in the lap of mother Earth is quite a different thing. I hastily picked up the children, and threw them upon the bank, and then wrathfully strode out myself, and tried to shake myself as I have seen a Newfoundland dog do. The shake was not a success—it caused my trouser-leg to flap dismally about my ankles, and sent the streams of loathsome ooze trickling down into my shoes. My hat, of drab felt, had fallen off by the brookside, and been plentifully spattered as I got out. I looked at my youngest nephew with speechless indignation.

"Uncle Harry," said Budge, "'twas real good of the Lord to let you be with us, else Toddie might have been drownded."

"Yes," said I, "and I shouldn't have much—"

"Ocken Hawwy," cried Toddie, running impetuously toward me, pulling me down, and patting my cheek with his muddy black hand, "I *loves* you for takin' me out de water."

"I accept your apology," said I, "but let's hurry home." There was but one residence to pass, and that, thank fortune, was so densely screened by shrubbery that the inmates could not see the road. To be sure, we were on a favorite driving road, but we could reach home in five minutes, [Pg 1702] and we might dodge into the woods if we heard a carriage coming. Ha! There came a carriage already, and we—was there ever a sorrier-looking group? There were ladies in the carriage, too—could it be—of course it was—did the evil spirit, which guided those children always, send an attendant for Miss Mayton before he began operations? There she was, anyway—cool, neat, dainty, trying to look collected, but severely flushed by the attempt. It was of no use to drop my eyes, for she had already recognized me; so I turned to her a face which I think must have been just the one—unless more defiant—that I carried into two or three cavalry charges.

"You seem to have been having a real good time together," said she, with a conventional smile, as the carriage passed. "Remember, you're all going to call on me to-morrow afternoon." [Pg 1703]

A REFLECTIVE RETROSPECT

BY JOHN G. SAXE

'Tis twenty years, and something more,
  Since, all athirst for useful knowledge,
I took some draughts of classic lore,
  Drawn very mild, at ——rd College;
Yet I remember all that one
  Could wish to hold in recollection;
The boys, the joys, the noise, the fun;
  But not a single Conic Section.

I recollect those harsh affairs,
  The morning bells that gave us panics;
I recollect the formal prayers,
  That seemed like lessons in Mechanics;

I recollect the drowsy way
  In which the students listened to them,
As clearly, in my wig, to-day,
  As when, a boy, I slumbered through them.

I recollect the tutors all
  As freshly now, if I may say so,
As any chapter I recall
  In Homer or Ovidius Naso.
I recollect, extremely well,
  "Old Hugh," the mildest of fanatics;
I well remember Matthew Bell,
  But very faintly, Mathematics. [Pg 1704]

I recollect the prizes paid
For lessons fathomed to the bottom;
(Alas that pencil-marks should fade!)
I recollect the chaps who got 'em,—
The light equestrians who soared
O'er every passage reckoned stony;
And took the chalks,—but never scored
A single honor to the pony!

Ah me! what changes Time has wrought,
And how predictions have miscarried!
A few have reached the goal they sought,
And some are dead, and some are married!
And some in city journals war;
And some as politicians bicker;
And some are pleading at the bar—
For jury-verdicts, or for liquor!

And some on Trade and Commerce wait;
And some in schools with dunces battle;
And some the Gospel propagate;
And some the choicest breeds of cattle;
And some are living at their ease;
And some were wrecked in "the revulsion;"
Some served the State for handsome fees,
And one, I hear, upon compulsion!

Lamont, who, in his college days,
Thought e'en a cross a moral scandal,
Has left his Puritanic ways,
And worships now with bell and candle;
And Mann, who mourned the negro's fate,
And held the slave as most unlucky,
Now holds him, at the market rate,
On a plantation in Kentucky! [Pg 1705]

Tom Knox—who swore in such a tone
It fairly might be doubted whether
It really was himself alone,
Or *Knox* and Erebus together—
Has grown a very altered man,
And, changing oaths for mild entreaty,
Now recommends the Christian plan
To savages in Otaheite!

Alas for young ambition's vow!
How envious Fate may overthrow it!—
Poor Harvey is in Congress now,
Who struggled long to be a poet;
Smith carves (quite well) memorial stones,
Who tried in vain to make the law go;
Hall deals in hides; and "Pious Jones"
Is dealing faro in Chicago!

And, sadder still, the brilliant Hays,
Once honest, manly, and ambitious,
Has taken latterly to ways
Extremely profligate and vicious;
By slow degrees—I can't tell how—
He's reached at last the very groundsel,
And in New York he figures now,

A member of the Common Council!

[Pg 1706]

"HULLO!"

BY SAM WALTER FOSS

W'en you see a man in woe,
Walk right up and say "hullo!"
Say "hullo," an' "how d'ye do!"
"How's the world a usin' you?"
Slap the fellow on his back,
Bring your han' down with a whack;
Waltz right up, an' don't go slow,
Grin an' shake an' say "hullo!"

Is he clothed in rags? O sho!
Walk right up an' say "hullo!"
Rags is but a cotton roll
Jest for wrappin' up a soul;
An' a soul is worth a true
Hale an' hearty "how d'ye do!"
Don't wait for the crowd to go,
Walk right up an' say "hullo!"

W'en big vessels meet, they say,
They saloot an' sail away.
Jest the same are you an' me,
Lonesome ships upon a sea;
Each one sailing his own jog
For a port beyond the fog.
Let your speakin' trumpet blow,
Lift your horn an' cry "hullo!"

[Pg 1707]

Say "hullo," an' "how d'ye do!"
Other folks are good as you.
W'en you leave your house of clay,
Wanderin' in the Far-Away,
W'en you travel through the strange
Country t'other side the range,
Then the souls you've cheered will know
Who you be, an' say "hullo!"

[Pg 1708]

THE WARRIOR

BY EUGENE FIELD

Under the window is a man,
  Playing an organ all the day,
Grinding as only a cripple can,
  In a moody, vague, uncertain way.

His coat is blue and upon his face
  Is a look of highborn, restless pride,
There is somewhat about him of martial grace
  And an empty sleeve hangs at his side.

"Tell me, warrior bold and true,
  In what carnage, night or day,
Came the merciless shot to you,
  Bearing your good, right arm away?"

Fire dies out in the patriot's eye,
  Changed my warrior's tone and mien,
Choked by emotion he makes reply,
  "Kansas—harvest—threshing machine!"

[Pg 1709]

THE TALE OF THE TANGLED TELEGRAM

BY WILBUR D. NESBIT

James Trottingham Minton had a cousin who lived in St. Louis. "Cousin Mary," Lucy Putnam discovered by a process of elimination, was the one topic on which the reticent Mr. Minton could become talkative. Mary was his ideal, almost. Let a girl broach the weather, he grew halt of speech; should she bring up literature, his replies were almost inane; let her seek to show that she kept abreast of the times, and talk of politics—then Jimmy seemed to harbor a great fear in his own soul. But give him the chance to make a few remarks about his cousin Mary and he approached eloquence. For this reason Lucy Putnam was wise enough to ask him something about Mary every so often.

Now, the question arises: Why should Lucy Putnam, or any other girl, take any interest in a man who was so thoroughly bashful that his trembling efforts to converse made the light quivering aspen look like a ten-ton obelisk for calmness? The reason was, and is, that woman has the same eye for babies and men. The more helpless these objects, the more interested are the women. The man who makes the highest appeal to a woman is he whose tongue cleaves to the roof of his mouth and who does not know what to do with his hands in her presence. She must be a princess, he a slave. Each knows this premise is unsupported by facts, yet it is a joyous fiction while it lasts. James Trottingham Minton was not a whit bashful when with men. No. He called on Mr. [Pg 1710] Putnam at his office, and with the calmness of an agent collecting rent, asked him for the hand of his daughter.

"Why, Jimmy," Mr. Putnam said good-naturedly, "of course I haven't any objections to make. Seems to me that's a matter to be settled between you and Lucy."

Jimmy smiled confidentially.

"I suppose you're right, Mr. Putnam. But, you see, I've never had the nerve to say anything about it to her."

"Tut, tut. Nothing to be scared of. Nothing at all. What's the matter with you, young man? In my day, if a fellow wanted to marry a girl he wouldn't go and tell her father. He'd marry her first and then ask the old man where they should live."

Mr. Putnam chuckled heavily. Mr. Putnam was possessed of a striking fund of reminiscences of how young men used to do.

"Of course, Mr. Putnam," Jimmy said. "But the girls nowadays are different, and a fel—"

"Not a bit of it. No, sir. Women haven't changed since Eve's time. You mustn't get woman mixed up with dry goods stores, Jimmy. Don't you know there's lots of fellows nowadays that fall in love with the fall styles? Ha, ha!"

It was not all clear to Minton, but he laughed dutifully. His was a diplomatic errand, and the half of diplomacy is making the victim think you are in agreement with him.

"Yes, sir," Putnam chuckled on, "I'll bet that silk and ruffles and pink shades over the lamp have caused more proposals than all the dimples and bright eyes in the world. Eh, Jimmy? But you haven't proposed yet?"

"I did. You gave your consent."

"But you're not going to marry me. You want Lucy. You'll have to speak to her about it." [Pg 1711]

"Now look, Mr. Putnam, I can come to you and ask you for her, and it's the same thing."

"Not by a hundred miles, my boy. If I told Lucy you had said that, she wouldn't be at home next time you called. The trouble with you is that you don't understand women. You've got to talk direct to them."

Jimmy looked hopelessly out of the window.

"No; what you say to me and what I say to you hasn't any more to do with you and Lucy than if you were selling me a bill of goods. I like you, Jimmy, and I've watched your career so far with interest, and I look for great things from you in the future, and that's why I say to you to go ahead and get Lucy, and good luck to you both."

Mr. Putnam took up some papers from his desk and pretended to be studying them, but from the tail of his eye he gathered the gloom that was settling over Jimmy's face. The elder man enjoyed the situation.

"Well, Mr. Putnam," Jimmy asked, "why can't you just tell Lucy for me that I have asked you, and that you say it's all right? Then when I go to see her next time, it'll all be arranged and understood."

"Le' me see. Didn't I read a poem or something at school about some one who hadn't sand enough to propose to a girl and who got another man to ask her? But it wasn't her own father. Why, Jimmy, if you haven't courage enough to propose to a girl, what do you suppose will be your finish if she marries you? A married man has to have spunk."

"I've got the spunk all right, but you understand how I feel."

"Sure! Let me give you some advice. When you propose to a girl, you don't have to come right out and ask her to marry you." [Pg 1712]

Jimmy caught at the straw.

"You don't?" he asked.

"Certainly not. There's half a dozen ways of letting her know that you want her. Usually—always, I may say—she knows it anyway, and unless she wants you she'll not let you tell her so. But if I wanted a short, sharp 'No' from a girl, I'd get her father to ask her to marry me."

"Then you mean that I've got to ask her myself?"

"To be sure."

"I can't do it, Mr. Putnam; I can't."

"Write it."

"Why, I'd feel as if the postman and everybody else knew it."

"Telephone."

"Worse yet."

"Jim Minton, I'm disgusted with you. I thought you were a young man with some enterprise, but if you lose your courage over such an every-day affair as proposing to a girl—"

"But men don't propose every day."

"Somebody is proposing to somebody every day. It goes on all the time. No, sir; I wash my hands of it. I'll not withdraw my consent, and you have my moral support and encouragement, but getting married is the same as getting into trouble—you have to handle your own case."

"But, Mr. Putnam—"

"You'll only go over the same ground again. Good morning. I don't want to hear any more of this until it is settled one way or the other. I'll not help and I'll not hinder. It—It's up to you."

With this colloquial farewell Mr. Putnam waved his hand and turned to his papers. Jimmy accumulated his hat and stick, and left, barren of hope.

That night he took Lucy to see "Romeo and Juliet." The confidence and enthusiasm of *Romeo* merely threw him into a deeper despair of his own ability as a suitor, and made him even more taciturn and stumbling of speech than ever. His silence grew heavier and heavier, until at last Lucy threw out her never-failing life-line. She asked him about his cousin Mary. [Pg 1713]

"By the way," he said, brightening up, "Cousin Mary is going through here one day next week."

"Is she? How I should like to know her. If she is anything like you she must be very agreeable."

"She isn't like me, but she is agreeable. Won't you let me try to bring you two together—at lunch down-town, or something like that?"

"It would be fine."

"I'll do it. I'll arrange it just as soon as I see her."

Then silence, pall-like, fell again upon them. Jimmy thought of *Romeo*, and Lucy thought of —*Romeo*, let us say. When a young man and a young woman, who are the least bit inclined one to another, witness Shakespeare's great educative effort, the young woman can not help imagining herself leaning over the balcony watching the attempts of the young man to clamber up the rope ladder.

After he had gone that night, Lucy sat down for a soul communion with herself. Pity the woman who does not have soul communions. She who can sit side by side with herself and make herself believe that she is perfectly right and proper in thinking and believing as she does, is happy. The first question Lucy Putnam put to her subliminal self was: "Do I love Jimmy?" Subliminal self, true to sex, equivocated. It said: "I am not sure." Whereupon Lucy asked: "Why do I love him?" Then ensued the debate. Subliminal self said it was because he was a clean, good-hearted, manly fellow. Lucy responded that he was too bashful. "He is handsome," retorted subliminal self. "But [Pg 1714] there are times when he grows so abashed that he is awkward." Subliminal self said he would outgrow that. "But there are other men who are just as nice, just as handsome, and just as clever, who are not so overwhelmingly shy," argued Lucy. Whereat subliminal self drew itself up proudly and demanded: "Name one!" And Lucy was like the person who can remember faces, but has no memory at all for names.

II

Cousin Mary came to town as she had promised, and she made Cousin Jimmy drop his work and follow her through the shops half the morning. Cousin Mary was all that Cousin Jimmy had ever said of her. She was pretty and she was genial. When these attributes are combined in a cousin

they invite confidences.

The two were standing on a corner, waiting for a swirl of foot passengers, carriages and street-cars, to be untangled, when Mary heard Jimmy making some remark about "Miss Putnam."

"So, she's the one, is she, Jimmy?"

"Well—er—I—I don't know. You see—"

"Certainly I see. Who wouldn't? Is she pretty, Jimmy?"

Jimmy saw a pathway through the crowd and led his cousin to the farther curb before answering:

"Yes, she is very pretty."

"Tell me all about her. How long have you known her? How did you meet her? Is she tall or short? Is she dark or fair? Is she musical? Oh, I am just dying to know all about her!"

All the way down State Street Jimmy talked. All the way down State Street he was urged on and aided and abetted by the questions and comments of Cousin Mary, and when they had buffeted [Pg 1715] their way over Jackson to Michigan Avenue and found breathing room, she turned to him and asked pointedly:

"When is it to be?"

"When is what to be?"

"The wedding."

"Whose wedding?" Jimmy's tone was utterly innocent.

"Whose? Yours and Lucy's, to be sure."

"Mine and Lucy's? Why? Mary, I've never asked her yet."

"You've never asked her! Do you mean to tell me that when you can talk about her for seven or eight blocks, as you have, you have not even asked her to marry you? Why, James Trottingham Minton, you ought to be ashamed of yourself! Where does this paragon of women live? Take me to see her. I want to apologize for you."

"Won't it be better to get her to come in and lunch with us? She lives so far out you'd miss your train east this afternoon."

"The very thing. Would she come?"

"Why, yes. I asked her the other night and she said she would."

"Then, why have you waited so long to tell me. Where are we to meet her?"

"Well, I didn't know for sure what day you would be here, so I didn't make any definite arrangement. I'm to let her know."

"Oh, Jimmy! Jimmy! You need a guardian, and not a guardian angel, either. You need the other sort. You deserve hours of punishment for your thoughtlessness. Now go right away and send her word that I am here and dying to meet her."

"All right. We'll have lunch here at the Annex. You'll excuse me just a moment, and I'll send her a [Pg 1716] telegram and ask her to come in."

"Yes, but hurry. You should have told her yesterday. When will you ever learn how to be nice to a girl?"

Jimmy, feeling somehow that he had been guilty of a breach of courtesy that should fill him with remorse, hastened to the telegraph desk and scribbled a message to Lucy. It read:

"Please meet me and Mary at Annex at 2 o'clock."

"Rush that," he said to the operator.

The operator glanced over the message and grinned.

"Certainly, sir," he said. "This sort of a message always goes rush. Wish you luck, sir."

The operator has not yet completely gathered the reason for the reproving stare Jimmy gave him. In part it has been explained to him. But, as Jimmy has said since, the man deserved censure for drawing an erroneous conclusion from another's mistake.

It was then noon, so Jimmy and Mary, at Mary's suggestion, got an appetite by making another tour of the shops. In the meantime a snail-paced messenger boy was climbing the Putnam steps with the telegram in his hand.

III

Lucy took the telegram from the boy and told him to wait until she saw if there should be an answer. She tore off the envelope, unfolded the yellow slip of paper, read the message, gasped,

blushed and turned and left the patient boy on the steps.

Into the house she rushed, calling to her mother. She thrust the telegram into her hands, exclaiming:

"Read that! Isn't it what we might have expected?"

"Mercy! What is it? Who's dead?" [Pg 1717]

"Nobody! It's better than that," was Lucy's astonishing reply.

Mrs. Putnam read the telegram, and then beamingly drew her daughter to her and kissed her. The two then wrote a message, after much counting of words, to be sent to Jimmy. It read:

"Of course. Mama will come with me. Telephone to papa."

When this reached Jimmy he was nonplused. He rubbed his forehead, studied the message, reread it, and then handed it to Mary with the suggestion:

"Maybe you can make it out. I can't."

Mary knitted her brows and studied the message in turn. At length she handed it back.

"It is simple," she decided. "She is a nice, sweet girl, and she wants me to meet her mama and papa. Or maybe she wants us to be chaperoned."

So Jimmy and Mary waited in the hotel parlor until Lucy should arrive. Reminded by Mary, Jimmy went to the 'phone and told Mr. Putnam that Lucy was coming to lunch with him.

"Well, that's all right, isn't it, Jimmy?" Mr. Putnam asked.

"Yes. But she told me to telephone you."

"Why?"

"I don't know. But won't you join us?"

"Is that other matter arranged, Jimmy?"

"N-no. Not yet."

"I told you I didn't want to see you until it was. As soon as you wake up, let me know. Good-by."

Jimmy, red, returned to the parlor, and there was confronted by a vision of white, with shining eyes and pink cheeks, who rushed up to him and kissed him and called him a dear old thing and said he was the cleverest, most unconventional man that ever was. [Pg 1718]

Limp, astounded, but delighted, James Trottingham Minton drew back a pace from Lucy Putnam, who, in her dainty white dress and her white hat and filmy white veil, was a delectable sight.

"I want you to meet Cousin Mary," he said.

"Is she to attend?"

"Of course," he answered.

They walked toward the end of the long parlor where Mary was sitting, but half way down the room they were stopped by Mrs. Putnam. She put both hands on Jimmy's shoulders, gave him a motherly kiss on one cheek, and sighed:

"Jimmy, you will be kind to my little girl?"

Jimmy looked from mother to daughter in dumb bewilderment. Certainly this was the most remarkable conduct he ever had dreamed of. Yet, Mrs. Putnam's smile was so affectionate and kind, her eyes met his with such a tender look that he intuitively felt that all was right as right should be. And yet—why should they act as they did?

Into the midst of his reflections burst Lucy's chum, Alice Jordan.

"I've a notion to kiss him, too!" she cried.

Jimmy stonily held himself in readiness to be kissed. If kissing went by favor he was pre-eminently a favored one. But Lucy clutched his arm with a pretty air of ownership and forbade Alice.

"Indeed, you will not. It wouldn't be good form now. After—afterward, you may. Just once. Isn't that right, Jimmy?"

"Perfectly," he replied, his mind still whirling in an effort to adjust actualities to his conception of what realities should be.

The four had formed a little group to themselves in the center of the parlor, Lucy clinging to [Pg 1719] Jimmy's arm, Mrs. Putnam eying them both with a happy expression, and Alice fluttering from one to the other, assuring them that they were the handsomest couple she ever had seen, that they ought to be proud of each other, and that Mrs. Putnam ought to be proud of them, and that she was sure nobody in all the world ever, ever could be as sublimely, beatifically happy as they

would be, and that they must be sure to let her come to visit them.

"And," she cried, admiringly, stopping to pat Jimmy on his unclutched arm, "I just think your idea of proposing by telegraph was the brightest thing I ever heard of!"

It is to be written to the everlasting credit of James Trottingham Minton that he restrained himself from uttering the obvious remark on hearing this. Two words from him would have wrecked the house of cards. Instead, he blushed and smiled modestly. Slowly it was filtering into his brain that by some unusual, unexpected, unprecedented freak of fortune his difficulties had been overcome; that some way or other he had proposed and had been accepted.

"I shall always cherish that telegram," Lucy declared, leaning more affectionately toward Jimmy. "If that grimy-faced messenger boy had not gone away so quickly with my answer I should have kissed him!"

"I've got the telegram here, dear," said Mrs. Putnam.

"Oh, let's see it again," Alice begged. "I always wanted to hear a proposal, but it is some satisfaction to see one."

Mrs. Putnam opened her hand satchel, took out the telegram, unfolded it slowly, and they all looked at it, Jimmy gulping down a great choke of joy as he read:

"Please meet me and marry at Annex at two o'clock."

His bashfulness fell from him as a garment. He took the message, saying he would keep it, so that it might not be lost. Then he piloted the two girls and Mrs. Putnam to the spot where Mary had been waiting patiently and wonderingly. [Pg 1720]

"Mary," he said boldly, without a tremor in his voice, "I want you to meet the future Mrs. Minton, and my future mother-in-law, Mrs. Putnam, and my future—what are you to me, anyhow, Alice?"

"I'm a combination flower girl, maid of honor and sixteen bridesmaids chanting the wedding march," she laughed.

"And when," Mary gasped, "when is this to be?"

"At two o'clock," Lucy answered.

"Oh, Jimmy! You wretch! You never told me a word about it. But never mind. I bought the very thing for a wedding gift this morning."

Jimmy tore himself away from the excited laughter and chatter, ran to the telephone and got Mr. Putnam on the wire.

"This is Minton," he said.

"Who? Oh! Jimmy? Well?"

"Well, I've fixed that up."

"Good. And when is it to be?"

"Right away. Here at the Annex. I want you to go and get the license for me on your way over."

"Come, come, Jimmy. Don't be in such precipitate haste."

"You told me that was the only way to arrange these matters."

"Humph! Did I? Well, I'll get the license for you—"

"Good-by, then. I've got to telephone for a minister."

The minister was impressed at once with the value of haste in coming, and on his way back to the wedding party Jimmy stopped long enough to hand a five-dollar bill to the telegraph operator. [Pg 1721]

"Thank you, sir," said the astonished man. "I have been worrying for fear I had made a mistake about your message."

"You did. You made the greatest mistake of your life. Thank you!" [Pg 1722]

NATURAL PHILOSOPHY

BY WILLIAM HENRY DRUMMOND

Very offen I be t'inkin' of de queer folks goin' roun',
  And way dey kip a-talkin' of de hard tam get along—
May have plaintee money, too, an' de healt' be good an' soun'—
  But you'll fin' dere's alway somet'ing goin' wrong—
'Course dere may be many reason w'y some feller ought to fret—
  But me, I'm alway singin' de only song I know—

'Tisn't long enough for music, an' so short you can't forget,
   But it drive away de lonesome, an' dis is how she go,
"Jus' tak' your chance, an' try your luck."

Funny feller's w'at dey call me—"so diff'ren' from de res',"
   But ev'rybody got hees fault, as far as I can see—
An' all de t'ing I'm doin', I do it for de bes',
   Dough w'en I'm bettin' on a race, dat's offen loss for me—
"Oho!" I say, "Alphonse, ma frien', to-day is not your day,
   For more you got your money up, de less your trotter go—
But never min' an' don't lie down," dat's w'at I alway say, [Pg 1723]
   An' sing de sam' ole song some more, mebbe a leetle slow—
"Jus' tak' your chance, an' try your luck."

S'pose ma uncle die an' lef me honder dollar, mebbe two—
   An' I don't tak' hees advice—me—for put heem on de bank—
'Stead o' dat, some lot'rie ticket, to see w'at I can do,
   An' purty soon I'm findin' put dey're w'at you call de blank—
Wall! de bank she might bus' up dere—somet'ing might go wrong—
   Dem feller, w'en dey get it, mebbe skip before de night—
Can't tell—den w'ere's your money? So I sing ma leetle song
   An' don't boder wit' de w'isky, an' again I feel all right.
"Jus' tak' your chance, an' try your luck."

If you're goin' to mak' de marry, kip a look out on de eye,
   But no matter how you're careful, it was risky anyhow—
An' if you're too unlucky, jus' remember how you try
   For gettin' dat poor woman, dough she may have got you now—
All de sam', it sometam happen dat your wife will pass away—
   No use cryin', you can't help it—dere's your duty to you'se'f—
You don't need to ax de neighbor, dey will tell you ev'ry day
   Start again lak hones' feller, for dere's plaintee woman lef'—
"Jus' tak' your chance, an' try your luck." [Pg 1724]

Poor man lak me, I'm not'ing: only w'en election's dere,
   An' ev'rybody's waitin' to ketch you by de t'roat—
De money I be makin' den, wall! dot was mon affaire—
   An' affer all w'at diff'rence how de poor man mak' de vote?
So I do ma very bes'—me—wit' de wife an' familee—
   On de church door Sunday morning, you can see us all parade—
Len' a frien' a half a dollar, an' never go on spree—
   So w'en I'm comin' die—me—no use to be afraid—
"Jus' tak' your chance, an' try your luck."

[Pg 1725]

HOW I SPOKE THE WORD

FRANK L. STANTON

The snow come down in sheets of white
   An' made the pine trees shiver;
'Peared like the world had said good night
   An' crawled beneath the kiver.

The river's shiny trail wuz gone—
   The winds sung out a warnin';
The mountains put their nightcaps on
   An' said: "Good-by till mornin'!"

'Twuz jest the night in fiel' an' wood
   When cabin homes look cozy,
An' fine oak fires feel mighty good,
   An' women's cheeks look rosy.

An' that remin's me. We wuz four,
   A-settin' by the fire;
But still it 'peared ten mile or more
   Betwixt me an' Maria!

"No, sir!" (I caught that eye of his,
   An' then I fit and floundered!)
"The thing I want to tell you is—"

Says he: "The old mare's *foundered*?" [Pg 1726]

"No, sir! it ain't about no hoss!"
(My throat begin to rattle!)
"I see," he said, "another loss
In them fine Jersey cattle!"

An' then I lost my patience! Then
I hollered high and higher
(You could 'a' heard me down the glen):
"*No, sir! I want Maria!*"

"An' now," says I, "the shaft'll strike:
He'll let *that* statement stay so!"
He looked at me astonished-like,
Then yelled: "*Why didn't you say so?*"

[Pg 1727]

THE UNIVERSITY INTELLIGENCE OFFICE

BY JOHN KENDRICK BANGS

"Mr. Brief," said the Idiot the other morning as the family of Mrs. Smithers-Pedagog gathered at the breakfast table, "don't you want to be let in on the ground floor of a sure thing?"

"I do if there's no cellar under it to fall into when the bottom drops out," smiled Mr. Brief. "What's up? You going into partnership with Mr. Rockefeller?"

"No," said the Idiot. "There isn't any money in that."

"What?" cried the Bibliomaniac. "No money in a partnership with Rockefeller?"

"Not a cent," said the Idiot. "After paying Mr. Rockefeller his dividend of 105 per cent. of the gross receipts and deducting expenses from what's left, you'd find you owed him money. My scheme is to start an entirely new business—one that's never been thought of before apparently—incorporate it at $100,000, of which I am to receive $51,000 in stock for the idea, $24,000 worth of shares to go to Mr. Brief for legal services and the balance to be put on the market at 45."

"That sounds rich," said Mr. Brief. "I might devote an hour of my time to your scheme some rainy Sunday afternoon when there is nothing else to do, for that amount of stock, provided, of course, your scheme has no State's Prison string tied to it."

"There isn't even a county jail at the end of it," observed the Idiot. "It's clean, clear and straight. It will fill a long felt want, and, as I see it, ought to pay fifty percent dividends the first year. They [Pg 1728] say figures don't lie, and I am in possession of some that tell me I've got a bonanza in my University Intelligence Office Company."

"The title sounds respectable," said Mr. Whitechoker. "What is it, Mr. Idiot—a sort of University Settlement Scheme?"

"Well—yes," said the Idiot. "It is designed to get University graduates settled, if you can call that a University Settlement Scheme. To put it briefly, it's an Intelligence Office for College graduates where they may go for the purpose of getting a job, just as our cooks, and butlers and valets and the rest do. If there's money in securing a place at good wages for the ladies who burn our steaks and promote indigestion for us, and for the gentlemen who keep our trousers pressed and wear out our linen, I don't see why there wouldn't be money in an institution which did the same thing for the struggling young bachelor of arts who is thrown out of the arms of Alma Mater on to the hands of a cold and unappreciative world."

"At last!" cried the Doctor. "At last I find sanity in one of your suggestions. That idea of yours, Mr. Idiot, is worthy of a genius. I have a nephew just out of college and what on earth to do with him nobody in the family can imagine. He doesn't seem to be good for anything except sitting around and letting his hair grow long."

"That isn't much of a profession, is it," said the Idiot. "What does he want to do?"

"That's the irritating part of it," observed the Doctor. "When I asked him the other night what he intended to do for a living he said he hadn't made up his mind yet between becoming a motor-man or the Editor of the South American Review. That's a satisfactory kind of an answer, eh? Especially when the family income is hardly big enough to keep the modern youth in neckties." [Pg 1729]

"I don't believe any Intelligence Office in creation could do anything for a man like that," sneered the Bibliomaniac. "What that young man needs is a good sound spanking, and I'd like to give it to him."

"All right," said the Doctor with a laugh. "I'll see that you have the chance. If you'll go out to my sister's with me some time next week I'll introduce you to Bill and you can begin."

"Why don't you do it yourself, Doctor?" asked the Idiot, noting the twinkle in the Doctor's eye.

"I'm too busy," laughed the Doctor. "Besides I only weigh one hundred and twenty pounds and Bill is six feet two inches high and weighs two hundred and ten pounds stripped. I think if I were armed with a telegraph pole and Bill with only a tooth-pick as a weapon of defense he could thrash me with ease. However, if Mr. Bib wants to try it—"

"Send Bill to us, Doctor," said the Idiot. "I sort of like Bill and I'll bet the University Intelligence Office will get him a job in forty-eight hours. A man who is willing to mote or Edit has an adaptability that ought to locate him permanently somewhere."

"I don't quite see," said Mr. Brief, "just how you are going to work your scheme, Mr. Idiot. I must confess I should regard Bill as a pretty tough proposition."

"Not at all," said the Idiot. "The only trouble with Bill is that he hasn't found himself yet. He's probably one of those easy-going, popular youngsters who've devoted their college days to growing. Just at present he's got more vitality than brains. I imagine from his answer to the Doctor that he is a good-natured hulks who could get anything he wanted in college except a scholarship. I haven't any doubt that he was beloved of all his classmates and was known to his fellows as Old Hoss, or Beefy Bill or Blue-eyed Billie and could play any game from Muggins to [Pg 1730] Pit like a hero of a Bret Harte romance."

"You've sized Bill up all right," said the Doctor. "He is just that, but he has brains. The only trouble is he's been saving them up for a rainy day and now when the showers are beginning he doesn't know how to use 'em. How would you go about getting him a job, Mr. Idiot?"

"Bill ought to go into the publishing business," said the Idiot. "He was cut out for a book-agent. He has a physique which, to begin with, would command respectful attention for anything he might have to say concerning the wares he had to sell. He seems to have, from your brief description of him, that suavity of manner which would surely secure his admittance into the houses of the *elite*, and his sense of humor I judge to be sufficiently highly developed to enable him to make a sale wherever he felt there was the remotest chance. Is he handsome?"

"I am told he looks like me," said the Doctor, pleasantly.

"Oh, well," rejoined the Idiot, "good looks aren't essential after all. It would be better though if he were a man of fine presence. If he's big and genial, as you suggest, he can carry off his deficiencies in personal pulchritude."

The Doctor flushed a trifle. "Oh, Bill isn't so plain," he observed airily. "There's none of your sissy beauty about Bill, I grant you, but—oh, well"—here the Doctor twirled his mustache complacently.

"I should think the place for Bill would be on the trolley," sneered the Bibliomaniac.

"No, sir," returned the Idiot. "Never. Geniality never goes on the trolley. In the first place it isn't appreciated by the Management and in the second place it is a dangerous gift for a motor-man. I [Pg 1731] had a friend once—a college graduate of very much Bill's kind—who went on the trolley as a Conductor at seven dollars a week and, by Jingo, would you believe it, all his friends waited for his car and of course he never asked any of 'em for their fare. Gentlemen, he used to say, welcome to my car. This is on me."

"Swindled the Company by letting his friends ride free, eh?" said the Bibliomaniac.

"Never," said the Idiot. "Pete was honest and he rung 'em up same as anybody and of course had to settle with the Treasurer at the end of the trip. On his first month he was nine dollars out. Then he couldn't bring himself to ask a lady for money, and if a passenger looked like a sport Pete would offer to match him for his fare—double or quits. Consequence was he lost money steadily. All the hard luck people used to ride with him, too, and one night—it was a bitter night in December and everybody in the car was pretty near frozen—Pete stopped his car in front of the Fifth Avenue Hotel and invited everybody on board to come in and have a wee nippy. All except two old ladies and a Chinaman accepted and of course the reporters got hold of it, told the story in the papers and Pete was bounced. I don't think the average college graduate is quite suited by temperament for the trolley service."

"All of which is intensely interesting," observed the Bibliomaniac, "but I don't see how it helps to make your University Intelligence Office Company convincing."

"It helps in this way," explained the Idiot. "We shall have a Board of Inspectors made up of men with some knowledge of human nature who will put these thousands of young graduates through a cross-examination to find out just what they can do. Few of 'em have the slightest idea of that [Pg 1732] and they'll gladly pay for the assistance we propose to give them when they have discovered that they have taken the first real step toward securing a useful and profitable occupation. If a Valedictorian comes into the University Intelligence Office and applies for a job we'll put him through a third degree examination and if we discover in him those restful qualities which go to the making of a good plumber, we'll set about finding him a job in a plumbing establishment. If a Greek Salutatorian in search of a position has the sweep of arm and general uplift of manner that indicates a useful career as a window-washer, we will put him in communication with those who need just such a person."

"How about the coldly supercilious young man who knows it all and wishes to lead a life of elegant leisure, yet must have wages?" asked the Bibliomaniac. "Our Colleges are turning out many such."

"He's the easiest proposition in the bunch," replied the Idiot. "If they were all like that our fortunes would be established in a week."

"In what way?" persisted the Bibliomaniac.

"In two ways," replied the Idiot. "Such persons are constantly in demand as Janitors of cheap apartment houses which are going up with marvelous rapidity on all sides of us, and as Editors of ten-cent magazines, of which on the average there are, I believe, five new ones started every day of the year, including Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays."

"I say, Mr. Idiot," said the Doctor later. "That was a bully idea of yours about the University Intelligence Office. It would be a lot of help to the thousands of youngsters who are graduated every year—but I don't think it's practicable just yet. What I wanted to ask you is if you could help me with Bill?" [Pg 1733]

"Certainly I can," said the Idiot.

"Really?" cried the Doctor.

"Yes, indeed," said the Idiot. "I can help you a lot."

"How? What shall I do?" asked the Doctor.

"Take my advice," whispered the Idiot. "Let Bill alone. He'll find himself. You can tell that by his answer."

"Oh!" said the Doctor, lapsing into solemnity. "I thought you could give me a material suggestion as to what to do with the boy."

"Ah! You want something specific, eh?" said the Idiot.

"Yes," said the Doctor.

"Well—get him a job as a Campaign Speaker. This is a great year for the stump," said the Idiot.

"That isn't bad," said the Doctor. "Which side?"

"Either," said the Idiot. "Or both. Bill has adaptability and, between you and me, from what I hear on the street *both* sides are going to win this year. If they do, Bill's fortune is made." [Pg 1734]

THE COUNTRY SCHOOL

ANONYMOUS

Put to the door—the school's begun—
Stand in your places every one,—
Attend,——

Read in the Bible,—tell the place,—
Job twentieth and the seventeenth varse—
Caleb, begin. *And—he—shall—suck—*
Sir,—Moses got a pin and stuck—
Silence,—stop Caleb—Moses! here!
What's this complaint? *I didn't, Sir,*—
Hold up your hand,—What, is't a pin?
O dear, I won't do so again.
Read on. *The increase of his h-h-horse—*
Hold: H,O,U,S,E, spells house.
Sir, what's this word? for I can't tell it.
Can't you indeed! Why, spell it. *Spell it.*
Begin yourself, I say. *Who, I?*
Yes, try. Sure you can spell it. *Try.*
Go, take your seats and primers, go,
You sha'n't abuse the Bible so.

Will pray Sir Master mend my pen?
Say, Master, that's enough.—Here Ben,
Is this your copy? Can't you tell?
Set all your letters parallel. [Pg 1735]
I've done my sum—'tis just a groat—

Let's see it.—*Master, m' I g' out?*
Yes, bring some wood in—What's that noise?
It isn't I, Sir, it's them boys.—

Come, Billy, read—What's that? *That's A*—
Sir, Jim has snatch'd my rule away—
Return it, James.—Here rule with this—
Billy, read on,—*That's crooked S.*
Read in the spelling-book—Begin—
The boys are out—Then call them in—
My nose bleeds, mayn't I get some ice,
And hold it in my breeches?—Yes.
John, keep your seat. *My sum is more*—
Then do't again—Divide by four,
By twelve, and twenty—Mind the rule.
Now speak, Manasseh, and spell tool.
I can't—Well try—T,W,L.
Not wash'd your hands yet, booby, ha?
You had your orders yesterday.
Give me the ferule, hold your hand.
Oh! Oh! There,—mind my next command.

The grammar read. Tell where the place is.
C sounds like K in cat and cases.
My book is torn. The next—*Here not*—
E final makes it long—say note.
What are the stops and marks, Susannah?
Small points, Sir.—And how many, Hannah?
Four, Sir. How many, George? *You look:*
Here's more than fifty in my book.
How's this? Just come, Sam? *Why, I've been*—
Who knocks? *I don't know, Sir.* Come in.
"Your most obedient, Sir?" and yours.
Sit down, Sir. Sam, put to the doors. [Pg 1736]

What do you bring to tell that's new!
"Nothing that's either strange or true.
What a prodigious school! I'm sure
You've got a hundred here, or more.
A word, Sir, if you please." I will—
You girls, till I come in be still.

"Come, we can dance to-night—so you
Dismiss your brain-distracting crew,
And come—for all the girls are there,
We'll have a fiddle and a player."
Well, mind and have the sleigh-bells sent,
I'll soon dismiss my regiment.

Silence! The second class must read.
As quick as possible—proceed.
Not found your book yet? Stand—be fix'd—
The next read, stop—the next—the next.
You need not read again, 'tis well.
Come, Tom and Dick, choose sides to spell.
Will this word do? Yes, Tom spell dunce.
Sit still there all you little ones.
"*I've got a word,*—Well, name it. *Gizzard.*
You spell it, Sampson—*G,I,Z.*
Spell conscience, Jack. *K,O,N,*
S,H,U,N,T,S.—Well done!
Put out the next—*Mine is folks.*
Tim, spell it—*P,H,O,U,X.*
O shocking. Have you all tried? *No.*
Say Master, but no matter, go—
Lay by your books—and you, Josiah,
Help Jed to make the morning fire.

[Pg 1737]

EVAN ANDERSON'S POKER PARTY

BY BENJAMIN STEVENSON

"Evan Anderson called you up this afternoon," said Mrs. Tom Porter, laying down the evening paper. "Is his wife still away?"

"Yes, I think she is. What did he want?"

"He did not say, but he said for you to call him as soon as you came home. I forgot to tell you." Mrs. Porter paused and fingered her paper with embarrassment. "Tom," she began again, "if it is another of those men parties he has been having since his wife has been away, I wish you wouldn't go."

"Why not, dear?"

"I don't think they are very nice. Don't they drink a good deal?"

"Some men will drink a good deal any way—any time, but those that don't want to do not."

"Tom, do they"—Mrs. Porter's eyes were on the paper in her lap—"do they play—play poker?"

"Why what made you ask me that question?" Tom answered with some embarrassment.

"Mrs. Bob Miller said her husband told her they did."

"Nobody but Mrs. Miller would believe all that Bob says."

"But you know it is wicked to gamble?"

"Of course it is, to gamble for any amount, but just a little game for amusement, that's not bad."

"How much does any one win or lose?"

"Oh, just a few dollars." [Pg 1738]

"That would buy a dinner for several poor families that need it; but the worst of it is the principle; it is gambling, no matter how little is lost or won."

"But, dear, you brought home a ten-dollar plate from a card party the other afternoon."

"That is different. One is euchre, the other is poker."

"I see there is a difference; but wouldn't the plate have bought a few dinners?"

"Yes, but if I had not won it some one else would. And it was too late to spend it for charity. I don't believe it cost ten dollars anyway."

"You said then it would."

"But I have looked it over since and do not believe it is genuine. I should think any one would be *ashamed* to give an imitation," she added with something like a flash in her blue eyes.

"It was a shame," Tom admitted, "a ten-dollar strain for a two-dollar plate."

But Mrs. Porter merely raised her eyebrows at this rather mean remark.

"The Tad-Wallington dance is to-night, isn't it? Do you want to go to that?" Tom asked.

"No, I'm not going."

"If you do," Tom went on, "I will take you and cut out whatever Evan wants."

"No, I don't care to," she repeated. "You can go to the other if you want to. I am not going to say any more on the subject. I do not ask you to humor my little whims, but I wanted to say what I did before you telephoned."

Mrs. Porter looked at her husband with such a wistful, pathetic little smile that Tom came over and kissed her on the cheek.

"I'll not *go*," he exclaimed, "if that *is* what he wants. I'll stay at home with you." [Pg 1739]

"You are too good, Tom. I suspect I am silly, but it seems so wicked. Now you had better call him up."

When Tom got upstairs, he placed the receiver to his ear.

Telephone: ("Number?")

Tom: "Give me seven-eleven, please."

("Seven-double-one?")

"Yes, please." Tom whistled while he waited.

Telephone: ("Hello.")

"Is that you, Evan?"

("Yes. Hello, Tom. Say, Tom, I am going to have a little bunch around here after a bit to see if we can't make our books balance, and I want you to come. And say, bring around that forty-five you took away with you last time. We want it. We are after you. We are going to strip you. Perhaps

you had better bring an extra suit in a case.")

"I am sorry, old man, but I can't come."

("Can't what?")

"Can't come."

("'Y, you tight wad. You'd better come.")

"Can't do it, Andy. I'm sorry."

("Are you going to the Tad-Wallington dance?")

"No, not that. Mis'es doesn't want to go, but I simply can't come."

Sarcastically. ("I guess the Mis'es shut down on this, too.")

"No, I'm tired."

("Well, maybe we're not tired—of you taking money away from us. And now when we've all got a hunch that you are going to lose you get cold feet.")

"No, I'd like to, but I *just can't*."

("Well, admit, like a man, it's the Mis'es said no and I'll let you off.") [Pg 1740]

"Are you a mind-reader?"

("No, but I'm married.")

"You win."

("Well, I'm sorry you can't be with us. Christmas will be coming along bye and bye, and you will need the money.")

"I expect."

("Mis'es will want a present, and she ought to let you get a little more ahead.")

"That's true."

("Well, so long. Toast your feet before you go to bed. And you'd better put a cloth around your neck.")

"Here, don't rub it in. It hurts me worse than you."

("All right. I know you are as sorry as we are. I know how it is. My Mis'es will be at home next week and this will be the last one, so I wanted you to come. Good-by.")

"Good-by. Oh, say! Wait a minute. I've got an idea."

("Good; use it.")

"Wait now. Wait now, I am thinking." Tom was trying to recall if he had closed the parlor door when he came upstairs. "Yes, I think I did."

("Think you did what?")

"Nothing. I wasn't talking to you. I was thinking. Say, put your ear close to the telephone. I've got to talk low."

("Why, I have got the thing right against my ear anyway. What are you talking about?")

"Listen. This is the scheme. I'll come if I can," he whispered into the receiver. "I don't think the Mis'es wants to go to the Tad-Wallington dance, and I'll work it so that I shall go alone. If I succeed I'll be with you."

("What? What's that?")

"I say," he repeated more distinctly, "if Mrs. P. doesn't want to go to the dance I'll try to go by myself and shall be with you." [Pg 1741]

("You say that you and Mrs. P. are going to the dance.")

"Oh, you deaf fool! No! I say that if she *doesn't* go to the dance maybe I shall—*be—with—you*."

("Oh, I understand you. Good. If you are as clever as you are at getting every one in against a pat full-house you will succeed. Come early. Luck to you. Good-by.")

If Tom were right in thinking he had closed the parlor door he was considerably surprised and flustered to find it ajar when he came down stairs. But Mrs. Porter was still reading the evening paper and did not look as if she had been disturbed by the telephoning. There was a slight flush on her cheeks, however, that he had not noticed before, but that may have been caused by the noble sacrifice of his own wishes for hers.

"I am glad, Tom, you told him you could not come," Mrs. Porter said, looking at him affectionately. "It is so good of you to give up to my little whims."

Tom said mentally: "I guess she did not hear it all, at least."

"I know," she went on, "that I was brought up on a narrow plane, and any sort of gambling seems wicked."

"But at first you would not play cards at all, and then you learned euchre. All games of cards look alike to me."

"I suppose they do, but euchre is a simple, interesting pastime; whist is a scientific—a—a—mental—exercise, developing the mind, and so forth, while poker cheats people out of their money,—at least, they lose money they ought to use other ways,—or else they win some and then have ill-gotten gains, which is worse."

"But poker is a great nerve developer," Tom protested feebly.

"But it's gambling."

"Well, how about playing euchre for a prize?" [Pg 1742]

"Oh we settled that a while ago," Mrs. Porter exclaimed. "I showed you the difference between the two, didn't I?"

"I believe you did. But don't you want to go to the Tad-Wallington dance?"

"No." Mrs. Porter said shortly.

"Did you send cards?"

"No."

"You should have done so, shouldn't you?"

"I suppose so, but I don't care."

"Why don't you want to go?"

"I don't like Mrs. Tad-Wallington. She wears her dresses too low."

"Maybe she does, but I think we should be polite to her."

"I don't care very much whether we are or not."

"*I* think we ought to go. Or else," he added in an afterthought with the expression of a martyr, "or else *I* ought to go and take your regrets."

"Well, why don't you do that?" Mrs. Porter exclaimed brightly.

"All right, I will!" he almost shouted. "I'll *do* it. I think it's the decent thing to do. I'll get ready right away."

"Right now? Why, it's entirely too early. It's only half-past seven. You can stay here until ten, then go for a few minutes and be back by eleven."

"No, no, that would not be nice. That's not the way to treat people who have gone to the expense of giving a dance. Everybody should go early and stay late."

"Oh, absurd."

"No, it's decent. I think I had better go early anyway, and then I can get back earlier. I don't want to stay up too late." [Pg 1743]

"Well, if you insist, go on."

Tom went upstairs and began dressing hurriedly. He knew he would not feel safe until he was a square away from the house. If this was to be the last of these bully, bachelor, poker parties he did not want to miss it. His wife was the sweetest little woman on earth, and he delighted in being with her, and humoring her, but then a woman's view of life and things is often so different that there is a joyous relaxation in a man party. If he could dress and get away before his wife changed her mind all would be well. He put his clothes on feverishly, but before he had half finished he heard her running up the stairs, and his heart sank. She came with the step that indicated something important on her mind. He knew as well how she looked as if he could see her coming. She was humped over slightly, her head was down, both hands grasping her skirts in front, and her feet fairly glimmering at the speed she was coming.

She burst into the room. "Tom, I think I will go with you. It is mean of me to make you go alone."

"You think what? You can't, it's a men's party. Oh, you—'Y, no, it's not mean. I don't mind it a bit. I like to go alone—that is, I don't mind it, and I won't hear to your putting yourself out on my account. And then you know, Mrs. Tad-Wallington wears her dresses so disgustingly low."

"That's it, Tom. That's why I think I ought to go."

"Oh, pshaw. You know I despise her. I never dance with her. No, I can't think of letting you go on my account. And I don't want my wife even to be seen at the party of a woman who wears such dresses as she does. No! positively, I can't permit it."

"Well, it's as bad for you to go."

"But one of us has to go to be decent. It would be rude not to, and we can not afford to be rude even to the commonest people." [Pg 1744]

"I don't want you to go unless I go with you," she said pettishly.

"But I never dance with her."

"It is not that so much. I do not want us to recognize her at all."

"I am not going to even *speak* to her. I will snub her. I will walk by her and not see her. I will let her know that my little wife doesn't belong to her class. I'll show her."

"But, Tom, wouldn't that be ruder than not going at all?"

"Oh, no. I don't think so. By going and snubbing her, it shows that you are conforming to all the *laws* of politeness without conceding anything to wanton impropriety. Don't you see?"

"Hardly."

"Well, it does. And I have to go for business reasons. I have her husband's law business, and can't afford to lose it by not going."

"Wouldn't it make her husband angry for you to snub her?"

"Oh, no, it would rather please him. He is inclined to be jealous, and likes the men better who don't have anything to do with her. It would strengthen our business relations immensely."

"Maybe you are right," she added with resignation. "You lawyers have such peculiar arguments that I can't understand them."

"Yes, I know. Law is the science of reasoning—of getting at the fine, subtile points which other people can not see."

"Well, go, if you really think it's best," she said at last. [Pg 1745]

Tom tied a black bow around his collar and put on his tuxedo.

"Oh, Tom, what do you mean? You surely do not intend to wear your tuxedo and a black tie. I heard you say it was the worst of form at anything but a men's party."

"Oh, ah, did I? Well, maybe I did. I had forgotten. I became a little confused by our long argument. I am always confused after an argument. Would you believe it, the other day after an argument in court I put on the judge's overcoat when I came away and did not notice it until I got to the office? You think I had better wear a long coat and white tie?"

"Of course. I want you to be the best-dressed man there. I don't want you to look as if you were at a smoker."

Tom wheeled toward his wife, but she was digging in a drawer for his white tie and may not have meant anything.

"Now don't tell me you have none. Here is one fresh and crisp. You would not disgrace us by going to a dance dressed that way?" she pleaded.

"I will do whatever you say, dear," Tom answered, with a trace of suspicion still in his eye.

He put on his long coat and the tie, and when he kissed his wife adieu she patted him affectionately on the cheek.

"It is good of you to go to this old dance and let me stay at home," she said, smiling sweetly at him. "Have as good a time as you can and be sure to see what Mrs. Harris wears."

When Tom got into the street he drew a long breath of fresh air, and then lighted a cigarette to quiet his nerves.

"I've got to go to that party for a few minutes," he said to himself, "or I may get caught when I come to take my examination to-morrow morning. I can't possibly make up a whole lot about dresses. And then some woman may tell Ruth that I was not there. Let's see," he looked at his watch, "it's nearly nine. Some people will be there. I can look them over and then take a few notes about the dressing-room as I come away." [Pg 1746]

Tom paused but a moment in the dressing-room, where a few oldish men waited for their fat, rejuvenated wives, and some young stags smoked cigarettes until the buds could get up to the hall.

The young Mrs. Tad-Wallington received him with a gracious smile and inquired for Mrs. Porter.

"A blinding headache," said Tom. "She was determined to come until the last minute, but then had to give it up."

The old Mr. Tad-Wallington took one hand from behind his back to give it to Tom, and for a moment almost lost that tired, married-to-a-young-woman look.

"How a' you, Tom?" he said. "Did you find out anything about that Barnesville business? Can you

levy on Harmon's property?"

"I haven't looked any further, but I still think you can."

"Call me up as soon as you find out."

Tom was pushed away by a large wife with a little husband whom the hostess was presenting to Mr. Tad-Wallington, and this couple was followed by an extremely tall man who had apparently become stoop-shouldered talking to his very small wife. Tom sidled around where he could see the people as they came, and began making mental notes.

"Mrs. Tad-Wallington, dressed in a kind of silverish flowered—brocaded, I guess—stuff, with a bunch of white carnations—no, little roses. Blond hair done up with a kind of a roach that lops [Pg 1747] over at one side of her forehead." "There are our namesakes, the John Porters. Mrs. John has a banana colored dress with a sort of mosquito netting all over it. She's got one red rose pinned on in front." "There are the three Long sisters, one pink, one white, and one blue. Pink and white are fluffy goods. But Ruth'll not care how girls are dressed. It's the women." "Here's a queen in black. Who is it? Oh, Lord! I am sorry I saw her face. It's Mrs. May ——, the Irish washerwoman, as Ruth calls her. And who's the Cleopatra with the silver snake around her arm, and the silver do-funnies around her waist? Oh, Bess Smith! I am getting so many details I'll have 'em all mixed up the first thing I know. Let me see, who had on the red dress? Ding, I've forgotten. I'd better write them down."

He got a card from his pocket and began writing abbreviated descriptions on it. "Mrs. R. strp. slk." "Mrs. J. J. white; h. of a long train." "Sm. Small brt. Mrs. Jones, wid." He filled up two cards and then slipped to the dressing-room and away.

"Solomon could not beat that trick. I can tell Sweetheart more than she could have found out herself if she had come. Now for something that's a little more fun." He chuckled at his cleverness as he stepped on a car to go the faster to his more fascinating party.

And he chuckled the following morning as he dressed.

"They were going to strip me, were they," he said to himself, as he pulled a small roll of bills from the vest pocket of his dress suit. "Well, not quite. Let me see. I had nineteen dollars with me. Now I have five, ten, and ten are twenty, and five are twenty-five, twenty-six, twenty-seven, twenty-eight, and two are thirty, thirty-one. And some change. That's not stripping, anyway." [Pg 1748]

He laughed again as he pulled two cards from his pocket and saw his memoranda of dresses.

"Good thought. I'd better read them over, for the morning paper may contain some description, and I'd like to make good. 'Mrs. Paton, wht. slk.' white silk. 'Mrs. Mull, d. t.' d. t.? What does d. t. stand for? d. t.? I can't think of anything but delirium tremens, but that's not it. D. t. Dark—dark what? Dark trous—No. Dark tresses? Not that, either. Dark—trousseau? Hardly that. She's just married, but she didn't have her whole trousseau on. Dark—? Search me, I don't know. 'Mrs. B.' Mrs. Brown, 'l. d.' Long dress? Lawn dress? No, lavender dress, I remember. This cipher is worse than the one in the 'Gold Bug.' I wish I had written it out."

Some of the things he could interpret and some he could not, but he could remember none when he took his eyes away from the card.

He found his wife waiting for him in the breakfast room, dressed in a blue tea-gown, and she looked so charming that he could not refrain from taking two kisses from her red lips. She put her arms around his neck and took one of them back again.

"How are you this morning? Did you have a good time at the dance?"

"Oh, so-so," Tom answered. "I've had better."

"Breakfast is ready. Now tell me all about it while we eat."

"Well, it was just like all others. Same people there, dressed about the same. I was in hopes you would read about it in the morning paper and let me off. That would give you a better account of it than I can."

"But I want to hear about it from your point of view. Did anything of any special importance happen? Whom did you dance with?" [Pg 1749]

There was a sharp questioning look in Mrs. Porter's eyes, that Tom, if he noticed it at all, took in a masculine way to indicate a touch of jealousy.

"No, nothing of any note. I danced with about the same people I do usually. Mrs. DeBruler, I think."

"You think? That's complimentary to her. How was she dressed?"

"Oh, ah; (mentally) 'bl. slk.' Blue silk or black silk, which was it? (Aloud) Blue silk, I think."

"Blue silk! My, she oughtn't to wear blue. What's that card you have in your hand, your program?"

"Yes, I wanted to see whom else I danced with."

"Oh, let me see," Mrs. Porter exclaimed.

"Well, it is—that is, I was just looking for my program. I can't find it. I must have lost it."

"Oh, that is too bad. I wanted to see it. Did you dance many dances?"

"No, not many. Just a few people we are under obligations to."

"How late did you stay?" Mrs. Porter asked, as she passed him his second cup of coffee.

"About midnight, I think."

"Oh, where were you after that? You didn't get home until after one."

"M'm, my, this coffee's hot! One? Did you say one? The clock must have been striking half-past eleven."

"No, I am sure it was after one, because I laid awake for a while and heard it strike two."

"May be you are right. I did not look. But lots of people were still there when I left. Do you like the two-step better than the waltz?"

"Yes, I do. But that was on Sunday—after twelve o'clock. Weren't you ashamed to dance on Sunday?"

"I think I like the waltz better. The waltz is to the two-step what the minuet is to the jig. Don't you think so now? Young Mrs. Black is a splendid waltzer. Next to you, she is about the best." [Pg 1750]

"Well, I do not care to be compared with her. And I hope you didn't dance with her. She, divorced and married again, and not twenty-four yet!"

"I don't see as much harm in a young woman being divorced as an old one."

"I do. They ought to live together long enough to know if their troubles are real."

"Hers were."

"I always thought Mr. Hughes was real nice. Did you find your program?"

"No, I must have lost it."

They rose from the breakfast table and went, arm in arm, to the sitting-room. They divided the morning paper and sat in silence for a while. Tom went over the first page, read the prospects for war between Russia and Japan, then the European despatches, and then came to the page with the city news. He glanced carelessly over it, seeing little to attract him. By and by his eyes returned to a column that he had passed because calamities did not interest him, something about an explosion. When he came to it the second time his eyes fell on one of the subheadings and it made him catch his breath. He read the headlines from the top.

"Great Heavens!" he said to himself, and shot a glance at his wife from the corners of his eyes. "Lord, I am in for it."

The heading that he saw was:

Terrific Explosion at a Ball.
Panic Barely Averted.
Mrs. Tad-Wallington's Dance Interrupted.
Fire Ensued, but no Great Damage Done.
Many of the Women Fainted.

[Pg 1751]

He then read the article through to see if there was any loop-hole, but found that the explosion had occurred, perhaps, before he was five squares away—about a quarter of ten, in fact. And he had admitted to his wife that he had stayed there until late at night!

"She mustn't see this page," he said to himself. "I must get it out of here and burn it."

He glanced at his wife again. She was reading her sheet interestedly. He separated the part that contained the city news and was preparing to smuggle it from the room under his coat.

"Here is the account of the dance," she exclaimed, looking up, "and you need not tell me any more—"

"The what!"

"The dance, and I can read all—"

"Did we get two papers this morning?" Tom stammered, feeling cold about the heart.

"No, I have the society sheet, and it tells what everybody wore—Why, what is the matter with you, Tom? You look sick. You are not sick, are you, Tom?" she asked, rising and coming over to him.

"No, no, I am not sick. I am all right. Go on and read the description of the dresses; that will relieve me more than anything else. I'll not have to think it all up."

"Oh, but you look sick."

"I am not; I am—I never was so well. See how strong I am. I can crush that piece of paper up into a very small ball with my bare hands. I am awfully strong."

"Oh, don't do that. There may be something in it that I want to read."

"No, there isn't. There's nothing in it. I read it through. I have an idea. I'll tell you what let's do. Let's burn the paper and I'll tell you what the women wore. These society notes are written beforehand and are not authentic. The only way is to have it from an eye-witness. Let's do it, will you?" [Pg 1752]

"No, I would rather read it. Aren't you sick, Tom? What makes your brow so damp?"

"It's so hot, it's infernally hot in here."

"I thought it was rather cold. I saw you shiver a moment ago. Tom, you *are* sick. You must have eaten too much salad last night. You know you can't eat salad."

"I didn't touch any salad. I only ate a frankfurter and drank a high-ball—"

"A frankfurter and a high-ball! Why, what sort of refreshments did they have?"

"I didn't mean that. I meant a canary-bird sandwich and a glass of water."

"I know what it is then, Tom. You inhaled a lot of the smoke."

Tom took a long hard look at his wife. "What!" he almost screamed at last.

"I say you have inhaled too much smoke. You have been smoking too much."

"Oh, that. Yes, I expect I have."

She looked at him with a twinkle in her eye as she sat on the arm of his chair, holding to the back with her hands.

"Tom, I'll bet you are a great hero."

"I'll bet I'm not."

"I'll bet you are, and are too modest to admit it."

"Too modest to admit what?"

"Too modest to admit the heroic things you have done."

"I never did any."

"Yes, you did. I know you saved two or three people's lives at the risk of your own."

"I haven't any medals." [Pg 1753]

"But you must have done something brave, and that's why you didn't tell me about the explosion."

Tom did not answer. The machinery of his voice would not turn. The power ran through his throat like cogwheels out of gear.

"My dear, sweet, brave, modest husband."

"I—I'm not all of that."

"Yes you are. You were the bravest man there. How many fainting women did you rescue?"

"Oh, not many. I think only five or six."

"Did you inhale much of the flame and smoke?"

"Yes, I think I must have inhaled some, but I did not notice it until now."

"Was the smoke very thick?"

"Awfully thick in places."

"And you walked right into it?"

"I had to. There wasn't any way to ride."

"Ride?"

"I mean I walked into the smoke. I don't know what I am saying. You must be right. I am sick."

"How brave my husband is. How proud I am of him. And not only brave but skilful. How did you manage to go through the smoke and flame and get no odor of smoke on your clothes, nor smut the front of your shirt?"

"I don't know, dear. I did not have time to notice. I was too busy."

"Ah, my hero! I am proud of you. Did you win or lose?"

"Did I what?"

"Did you win or lose?"

Tom took another look into her innocent blue eyes.

"Which?" she repeated.

"Ruth, what have you been doing to me?"

"Aren't you ashamed of yourself?"

"Don't I look it?" [Pg 1754]

A THRENODY

BY GEORGE THOMAS LANIGAN

What, what, what,
  What's the news from Swat?
    Sad news,
    Bad news,
Comes by the cable led
Through the Indian Ocean's bed,
Through the Persian Gulf, the Red
Sea and the Med-
Iterranean—he's dead;
The Ahkoond is dead!

For the Ahkoond I mourn,
  Who wouldn't?
He strove to disregard the message stern,
  But he Ahkoodn't.
Dead, dead, dead;
    (Sorrow Swats!)
Swats wha hae wi' Ahkoond bled,
Swats whom he hath often led
Onward to a gory bed,
  Or to victory,
  As the case might be,
    Sorrow Swats!
Tears shed,
  Shed tears like water,
Your great Ahkoond is dead!
  That Swats the matter! [Pg 1755]
Mourn, city of Swat!
Your great Ahkoond is not,
But lain 'mid worms to rot.
His mortal part alone, his soul was caught
  (Because he was a good Ahkoond)
  Up to the bosom of Mahound.
Though earthy walls his frame surround
(Forever hallowed be the ground!)
And skeptics mock the lowly mound
And say, "He's now of no Ahkoond!"
  His soul is in the skies,—
The azure skies that bend above his loved
    Metropolis of Swat.
  He sees with larger, other eyes,
  Athwart all earthly mysteries—
    He knows what's Swat.

Let Swat bury the great Ahkoond
  With a noise of mourning and of lamentation!
Let Swat bury the great Ahkoond
  With the noise of the mourning of the
    Swattish nation!

  Fallen is at length
  Its tower of strength,
Its sun is dimmed ere it had nooned;
Dead lies the great Ahkoond,
  The great Ahkoond of Swat
  Is not!

[Pg 1756]

THE CONSCIENTIOUS CURATE AND THE BEAUTEOUS BALLET GIRL

BY WILLIAM RUSSELL ROSE

Young William was a curate good,
Who to himself did say:
"I cawn't denounce the stage as vile
Until I've seen a play."

He was so con-sci-en-ti-ous
That, when the play he sought,
To grasp its entire wickedness
A front row seat he bought.

'Twas in the burlesque, you know, the burlesque of "Prince Prettypate, or the Fairy Muffin Ring," and when the ballet came on, that good young curate met his fate. She, too, was in the front row, and—

She danced like this, she danced like that,
Her feet seemed everywhere;
They scarcely touched the floor at all
But twinkled in the air.

She *entrechat*, her fairy *pas*
Filled William with delight;
She whirled around, his heart did bound—
'Twas true love at first sight. [Pg 1757]

He sought her out and married her;
Of course, she left the stage,
And in his daily parish work
With William did engage.

She helped him in his parish school,
Where ragged urchins go,
And all the places on the map
She'd point out with her toe.

And when William gently remonstrated with her, she only said: "William, when I married you I gave you my hand—my feet are still my own."

She'd point like this, she'd point like that,
The scholars she'd entrance—
"This, children, is America;
And this, you see, is France.

"A highland here, an island there,
'Round which the waters roll;
And this is Pa-ta-go-ni-ah,
And this is the frozen Pole."

Young William's bishop called one day,
But found the curate out,
And so he told the curate's wife
What he had come about

"Your merit William oft to me
Most highly doth extol;
I trust, my dear, you always try
To elevate the soul."

[Pg 1758]

Then William's wife made the bishop a neat little curtsey, and gently said: "Oh, yes, your Grace, I always do—in my own peculiar way."

She danced like this, she danced like that,
The bishop looked aghast;
He could not see her mazy skirts,
They switched around so fast.

She tripped it here, she skipped it there,
The bishop's eyes did roll—
"God bless me! 'tis a pleasant way
To elevate the sole!"

THE HOSS

BY JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

The hoss he is a splendud beast;
   He is man's friend, as heaven desined,
And, search the world from west to east,
   No honester you'll ever find!

Some calls the hoss "a pore dumb brute,"
   And yit, like Him who died fer you,
I say, as I theyr charge refute,
   "'Fergive; they know not what they do!'"

No wiser animal makes tracks
   Upon these earthly shores, and hence
Arose the axium, true as facts,
   Extoled by all, as "Good hoss-sense!"

The hoss is strong, and knows his stren'th,—
   You hitch him up a time er two
And lash him, and he'll go his len'th
   And kick the dashboard out fer you!

But, treat him allus good and kind,
   And never strike him with a stick,
Ner aggervate him, and you'll find
   He'll never do a hostile trick.

A hoss whose master tends him right
   And worters him with daily care,
Will do your biddin' with delight,
   And act as docile as *you* air.

He'll paw and prance to hear your praise,
   Because he's learn't to love you well;
And, though you can't tell what he says,
   He'll nicker all he wants to tell.

He knows you when you slam the gate
   At early dawn, upon your way
Unto the barn, and snorts elate,
   To git his corn, er oats, er hay.

He knows you, as the orphant knows
   The folks that loves her like theyr own,
And raises her and "finds" her clothes,
   And "schools" her tel a womern-grown!

I claim no hoss will harm a man,
   Ner kick, ner run away, cavort,
Stump-suck, er balk, er "catamaran,"
   Ef you'll jest treat him as you ort.

But when I see the beast abused,
   And clubbed around as I've saw some,
I want to see his owner noosed,
   And jest yanked up like Absolum!

Of course they's differunce in stock,—
   A hoss that has a little yeer,
And slender build, and shaller hock,
   Can beat his shadder, mighty near!

Whilse one that's thick in neck and chist
   And big in leg and full in flank,
That tries to race, I still insist
   He'll have to take the second rank.

And I have jest laid back and laughed,
   And rolled and wallered in the grass
At fairs, to see some heavy-draft

Lead out at *first*, yit come in *last*!

Each hoss has his appinted place,—
The heavy hoss should plow the soil;—
The blooded racer, he must race,
And win big wages fer his toil.

I never bet—ner never wrought
Upon my feller-man to bet—
And yit, at times, I've often thought
Of my convictions with regret.

I bless the hoss from hoof to head—
From head to hoof, and tale to mane!—
I bless the hoss, as I have said,
From head to hoof, and back again!

I love my God the first of all,
Then Him that perished on the cross,
And next, my wife,—and then I fall
Down on my knees and love the hoss.

[Pg 1762]

WHEN DOCTORS DISAGREE

BY S. E. KISER

He looked at my tongue and he shook his head—
This was Doctor Smart—
He thumped on my chest, and then he said:
"Ah, there it is! Your heart!
You mustn't run—you mustn't hurry!
You mustn't work—you mustn't worry!
Just sit down and take it cool;
You may live for years, I can not say;
But, in the meantime, make it a rule
To take this medicine twice a day!"

He looked at my tongue, and he shook his head—
This was Doctor Wise—
"Your liver's a total wreck," he said,
"You must take more exercise!
You mustn't eat sweets.
You mustn't eat meats,
You must walk and leap, you must also run;
You mustn't sit down in the dull old way;
Get out with the boys and have some fun—
And take three doses of this a day!"

He looked at my tongue, and he shook his head—
This was Doctor Bright—
"I'm afraid your lungs are gone," he said,
"And your kidney isn't right.
A change of scene is what you need,
Your case is desperate, indeed,
And bread is a thing you mustn't eat—
Too much starch—but, by the way,
You must henceforth live on only meat—
And take six doses of this a day!"

[Pg 1763]

Perhaps they were right, and perhaps they knew,
It isn't for me to say;
Mayhap I erred when I madly threw
Their bitter stuff away;
But I'm living yet and I'm on my feet,
And grass isn't all I dare to eat,
And I walk and I run and I worry, too,
But, to save my life, I can not see
What some of the able doctors would do
If there were no fools like you and me.

[Pg 1764]

THE BOAT THAT AIN'T[4]

BY WALLACE IRWIN

A stout, fat boat for gailin'
  And a long, slim boat for squall;
But there isn't no fun in sailin'
  When you haven't no boat at all.

For what is the use o' calkin'
  A tub with a mustard pot—
And what is the use o' talkin'
  Of a boat that you haven't got?

[Pg 1765]

HOW JIMABOY FOUND HIMSELF

BY FRANCIS LYNDE

When Jimaboy began to live by his wits—otherwise, when he set up author and proposed to write for bread and meat—it was a time when the public appetite demanded names and *naïveté*. And since Jimaboy was fresh enough to satisfy both of these requirements, the editors looked with favor upon him, and his income, for a little while, exceeded the modest figure of the railroad clerkship upon which he had ventured to ask Isobel to marry him.

But afterward there came a time of dearth; a period in which the new name was no longer a thing to conjure with, and artlessness was a drug on the market. Cleverness was the name of the new requirement, and Jimaboy's gift was glaringly sentimental. When you open your magazine at "The Contusions of Peggy, by James Augustus Jimaboy," you are justly indignant when you find melodrama and predetermined pathos instead of the clever clowneries which the sheer absurdity of the author's signature predicts.

"Item," said Jimaboy, jotting it down in his notebook while Isobel hung over the back of his chair: "It's a perilous thing to make people cry when they are out for amusement. Did the postman remember us this morning?"

Isobel nodded mournfully.

"And the crop?" said Jimaboy. [Pg 1766]

"Three manuscripts; two from New York and one from Boston."

  "'So flee the works of men
  Back to the earth again,'"

quoted the sentimentalist, smiling from the teeth outward. "Is that all?"

"All you would care about. There were some fussy old bills."

"Whose, for instance?"

"Oh, the grocer's and the coal man's and the butcher's and the water company's, and some other little ones."

"'Some other little ones'," mused Jimaboy. "There's pathos for you. If I could ever get that into a story, with your intonation, it would be cheap at fifteen cents the word. We're up against it, Bella, dear."

"Well?" she said, with an arm around his neck.

"It isn't well; it's confoundedly ill. It begins to look as if it were 'back to the farm' for us."

She came around to sit on the arm of the chair.

"To the railroad office? Never! Jimmy, love. You are too good for that."

"Am I? That remains to be proved. And just at present the evidence is accumulating by the ream on the other side—reams of rejected MS."

"You haven't found yourself yet; that is all."

He forced a smile. "Let's offer a reward. 'Lost: the key to James and Isobel Jimaboy's success in life. Finder will be suitably recompensed on returning same to 506 Hayward Avenue, Cleland, Ohio.'"

She leaned over and planted a soft little kiss on the exact spot on his forehead where it would do the most good.

"I could take the city examination and teach, if you'd let me, Jimmy." [Pg 1767]

He shook his head definitely. That was ground which had been gone over before.

"Teach little babies their a b c's? I'm afraid that isn't your specialty, heart of mine. Now if you could teach other women the art of making a man believe that he has cornered the entire visible supply of ecstatic thrills in marrying the woman of his choice—by Jove, now! there's an idea!"

Now Jimaboy had no idea in particular; he never had an idea that he did not immediately coin it into words and try to sell it. But Isobel's eyes were suspiciously bright, and the situation had to be saved.

"I was just thinking: the thing to do successfully is the—er—the thing you do best, isn't it?"

She laughed, in spite of the unpaid bills.

"Why can't you put clever things like that into your stories, Jimmy, dear?"

"As if I didn't!" he retorted. "But don't step on my idea and squash it while it's in the soft-shell-crab stage. As I said, I was thinking: there is just one thing we can give the world odds on and beat it out of sight. And that thing is our long suit—our specialty."

"But you said you had an idea," said Isobel, whose private specialty was singleness of purpose.

"Oh—yes," said Jimaboy. Then he smote hard upon the anvil and forged one on the spur of the moment. "Suppose we call it The Post-Graduate School of W. B., Professor James Augustus Jimaboy, principal; Mrs. Isobel Jimaboy, assistant principal. How would that sound?"

"It would sound like the steam siren on the planing mill. But what is the 'W. B.'?"

"'Wedded Bliss,' of course. Here is the way it figures out. We've been married three years, and—" [Pg 1768]

"Three years, five months and fourteen days," she corrected.

"Excellent! That accuracy of yours would be worth a fortune on the faculty. But let me finish—during these three years, five months and fourteen days we have fought, bled and died on the literary battle-field; dined on bath-mitts and *café hydraulique*, walked past the opera-house entrance when our favorite play was on, and all that. But tell me, throb of my heart, have we ever gone shy on bliss?"

She met him half-way. It was the spirit in which they had faced the bill collector since the beginning of the period of leanness.

"Never, Jimmy, dear; not even hardly ever."

"There you are, then. Remains only for us to tell others how to do it; to found the Post-Graduate School of W. B. It's the one thing needful in a world of educational advantage; a world in which everything but the gentle art of being happy, though married, is taught by the postman. We have solved all the other problems, but there has been no renaissance in the art of matrimony. Think of the ten thousand divorces granted in a single state last year! My dear Isobel, we mustn't lose a day—an hour—a minute!"

She pretended to take him seriously.

"I don't know why we shouldn't do it, I'm sure," she mused. "They teach everything by mail nowadays. But who is going to die and leave us the endowment to start with?"

"That's the artistic beauty of the mail scheme," said Jimaboy, enthusiastically. "It doesn't require capitalizing; no buildings, no campus, no football team, no expensive university plant; nothing but an inspiration, a serviceable typewriter, and a little old postman to blow his whistle at the door." [Pg 1769]

"And the specialty," added Isobel, "though some of them don't seem to trouble themselves much about that. Oh, yes; and the advertising; that is where the endowment comes in, isn't it?"

But Jimaboy would not admit the obstacle.

"That is one of the things that grow by what they are fed upon: your ad. brings in the money, and then the money buys more ad. Now, there's Blicker, of the *Woman's Uplift*; he still owes us for that last story—we take it out in advertising space. Also Dormus, of the *Home World*, and Amory, of the *Storylovers*—same boat—more advertising space. Then the *Times* hasn't paid for that string of space-fillers on 'The Lovers of All Nations.' The *Times* has a job office, and we could take that out in prospectuses and application blanks."

By this time the situation was entirely saved and Isobel's eyes were dancing.

"Wouldn't it be glorious?" she murmured. "Think of the precious, precious letters we'd get; real letters like some of those pretended ones in Mr. Blicker's correspondence column. And we wouldn't tell them what the 'W. B.' meant until after they'd finished the course, and then we'd send them the degree of 'Master of Wedded Bliss,' and write it out in the diploma."

Jimaboy sat back in his chair and laughed uproariously. The most confirmed sentimentalist may have a saving sense of humor. Indeed, it is likely to go hard with him in the experimental years, if he has it not.

"It's perfectly feasible—perfectly," he chuckled. "It would be merely pounding sand into the traditional rat-hole with all the implements furnished—teaching our specialty to a world yearning

to know how. You could get up the lectures and question schedules for the men, and I could make some sort of a shift with the women." [Pg 1770]

"Yes; but the text-books. Don't these 'Fit-yourself-at-Home' schools have text-books?"

"Um, y-yes; I suppose they do. That would be a little difficult for us—just at the go-off. But we could get around that. For example, 'Dear Mrs. Blank: Replying to your application for membership in the Post-Graduate School of W. B., would say that your case is so peculiar'—that would flatter her immensely—'your case is so peculiar that the ordinary text-books cover it very inadequately. Therefore, with your approval, and for a small additional tuition fee of $2 the term, we shall place you in a special class to be instructed by electrographed lectures dictated personally by the principal.'"

Isobel clapped her hands. "Jimmy, love, you are simply great, when you are not trying to be. And, after a while, we could print the lectures and have our own text-books copyrighted. But don't you think we ought to take in the young people, as well?—have a—a collegiate department for beginners?"

"'Sh!" said Jimaboy, and he got up and closed the door with ostentatious caution. "Suppose somebody—Lantermann, for instance—should hear you say such things as that: 'take in the young people'! Shades of the Rosicrucians! we wouldn't 'take in' anybody. The very life of these mail things is the unshaken confidence of the people. But, as you suggest, we really ought to include the frying size."

It was delicious fooling, and Isobel found a sketch-block and dipped her pen.

"You do the letter-press for the 'collegiate' ad., and I'll make a picture for it," she said. "Hurry, or I'll beat you."

Jimaboy laughed and squared himself at the desk, and the race began. Isobel had a small gift and a large ambition: the gift was a cartoonist's facility in line drawing, and the ambition was to be able, in the dim and distant future, to illustrate Jimaboy's stories. Lantermann, the *Times* artist, whose rooms were just across the hall, had given her a few lessons in caricature and some little gruff, Teutonic encouragement. [Pg 1771]

"Time!" she called, tossing the sketch-block over to Jimaboy. It was a happy thought. On a modern davenport sat two young people, far apart; the youth twiddling his thumbs in an ecstasy of embarrassment; the maiden making rabbit's ears with her handkerchief. Jimaboy's note of appreciation was a guffaw.

"I couldn't rise to the expression on those faces in a hundred years!" he lamented. "Hear me creak:"

DON'T MARRY

until you have taken the Preparatory Course in the Post-Graduate School of W. B. Home-Study in the Science of Successful Heart-Throbs. Why earn only ten kisses a week when one hour a day will qualify you for the highest positions? Our Collegiate Department confers degree of B. B.; Post-Graduate Department that of M. W. B. Members of Faculty all certificated Post-Graduates.

A postal card brings Prospectus and application blank.

Address: The Post-Graduate School of W. B., 506 Hayward Avenue, Cleland, Ohio.

Isobel applauded loyally. "Why, that doesn't creak a little bit! Try it again; for the unhappy T. M.'s, this time. Ready? Play!"

Her picture was done while Jimaboy was still nibbling his pen and scowling over the scratch-pad. It was a drawing-room interior, with the wife in tears and the husband struggling into his overcoat. To them, running, an animated United States mail-bag, extending a huge envelope marked: "From the Post-Graduate School of W. B." [Pg 1772]

Jimaboy scratched out and rewrote, with the pen-drawing for an inspiration:

HEARTS DIVIDED
BECOME
HEARTS UNITED

when you have taken a Correspondence Course in Wedded Bliss. A Scholarship in the Post-Graduate School of W. B. is the most acceptable wedding gift or Christmas present for your friends. Curriculum includes Matrimony as a Fine Art, Post-Marriage Courtship, Elementary and Advanced Studies in Conjugal Harmony, Easy Lessons in the Gentle Craft of Eating Her Experimental Bread, Practical Analysis of the Club-Habit, with special course for wives in the Abstract Science of Honeyfugling Parsimonious Husbands. Diploma qualifies for highest positions. Our Gold Medalists are never idle.

The Post-Graduate School of W. B., 506 Hayward Avenue, Cleland, Ohio.

N. B.—Graphophone, with Model Conversations for Married Lovers, furnished free with lectures on Post-Marriage Courtship.

They pinned the pictures each to its "copy" and had their laugh over the conceit.

"Blest if I don't believe we could actually fake the thing through if we should try," said Jimaboy. "There are plenty of people in this world who would take it seriously."

"I don't doubt it," was Isobel's reply. "People are so ready to be gold-bricked—especially by mail. But it's twelve o'clock! Shall I light the stove for luncheon?—or can we stand Giuseppe's?" [Pg 1773]

Jimaboy consulted the purse.

"I guess we can afford stuffed macaroni, this one time more," he rejoined. "Let's go now, while we can get one of the side tables and be exclusive."

They had barely turned the corner in the corridor when Lantermann's door opened and the cartoonist sallied out, also luncheon-stirred. He was a big German, with fierce military mustaches and a droop in his left eye that had earned him the nickname of "Bismarck" on the *Times* force. He tapped at the Jimaboy door in passing, growling to himself in broken English.

"I like not dis light housegeeping for dese babies mit der wood. Dey starf von day und eat nottings der next. I choost take dem oud once und gif dem sauerkraut und wiener."

When there was no answer to his rap he pushed the door open and entered, being altogether on a brotherly footing with his fellow-lodgers. The pen-drawings with their pendant squibs were lying on Jimaboy's desk; and when Lantermann comprehended he sat down in Jimaboy's chair and dwelt upon them.

"*Himmel!*" he gurgled; "dot's some of de liddle voman's fooling. Goot, *sehr* goot! I mus' show dot to Hasbrouck." And when he went out, the copy for the two advertisements was in his pocket.

Jimaboy got a check from the *Storylovers* that afternoon, and in the hilarity consequent upon such sudden and unexpected prosperity the Post-Graduate School of W. B. was forgotten. But not permanently. Late in the evening, when Jimaboy was filing and scraping laboriously on another story,—he always worked hardest on the heels of a check,—Isobel thought of the pen-drawings and looked in vain for them. [Pg 1774]

"What did you do with the W. B. jokes, Jimmy?" she asked.

"I didn't do anything with them. Don't tell me they're lost!"—in mock concern.

"They seem to be; I can't find them anywhere."

"Oh, they'll turn up again all right," said Jimaboy; and he went on with his polishing.

They did turn up, most surprisingly. Three days later, Isobel was glancing through the thirty-odd pages of the swollen *Sunday Times*, and she gave a little shriek.

"Horrors!" she cried; "the *Times* has printed those ridiculous jokes of ours, *and run them as advertisements*!"

"What!" shouted Jimaboy.

"It's so; see here!"

It was so, indeed. On the "Wit and Humor" page, which was half reading matter and half advertising, the Post-Graduate School of W. B. figured as large as life, with very fair reproductions of Isobel's drawings heading the displays.

"Heavens!" ejaculated Jimaboy; and then his first thought was the jealous author's. "Isn't it the luckiest thing ever that the spirit didn't move me to sign those things?"

"You might as well have signed them," said Isobel. "You've given our street and number."

"My kingdom!" groaned Jimaboy. "Here—you lock the door behind me, while I go hunt Hasbrouck. It's a duel with siege guns at ten paces, or a suit for damages with him."

He was back again in something under the hour, and his face was haggard.

"We are lost!" he announced tragically. "There is nothing for it now but to run." [Pg 1775]

"How ever did it happen?" queried Isobel.

"Oh, just as simply and easily as rolling off a log—as such things always happen. Lantermann saw the things on the desk, and your sketches caught him. He took 'em down to show to Hasbrouck, and Hasbrouck, meaning to do us a good turn, marked the skits up for the 'Wit and Humor' page. The intelligent make-up foreman did the rest: says of course he took 'em for ads. and run 'em as ads."

"But what does Mr. Hasbrouck say?"

"He gave me the horse laugh; said he would see to it that the advertising department didn't send me a bill. When I began to pull off my coat he took it all back and said he was all kinds of sorry and would have the mistake explained in to-morrow's paper. But you know how that goes. Out of the hundred and fifty thousand people who will read those miserable squibs to-day, not five thousand will see the explanation to-morrow. Oh, we've got to run, I tell you; skip, fly, vanish into thin air!"

But sober second thought came after a while to relieve the panic pressure. 506 Hayward Avenue

was a small apartment-house, with a dozen or more tenants, lodgers, or light housekeepers, like the Jimaboys. All they would have to do would be to breathe softly and make no mention of the Post-Graduate School of W. B. Then the other tenants would never know, and the postman would never know. Of course, the non-delivery of the mail might bring troublesome inquiry upon the *Times* advertising department, but, as Jimaboy remarked maliciously, that was none of their funeral.

Accordingly, they breathed softly for a continuous week, and carefully avoided personal collisions with the postman. But temporary barricades are poor defenses at the best. One day as they were stealthily scurrying out to luncheon—they had acquired the stealthy habit to perfection by this time—they ran plump into the laden mail carrier in the lower hall. [Pg 1776]

"Hello!" said he; "you are just the people I've been looking for. I have a lot of letters and postal cards for The Post-Graduate School of something or other, 506 Hayward. Do you know anything about it?"

They exchanged glances. Isobel's said, "Are you going to make *me* tell the fib?" and Jimaboy's said, "Help!"

"I—er—I guess maybe they belong to us"—it was the man who weakened. "At least, it was our advertisement that brought them. Much obliged, I'm sure." And a breathless minute later they were back in their rooms with the fateful and fearfully bulky packet on the desk between them and such purely physical and routine things as luncheon quite forgotten.

"James Augustus Jimaboy! What have you done?" demanded the accusing angel.

"Well, somebody had to say something, and you wouldn't say it," retorted Jimaboy.

"Jimmy, did you want me to lie?"

"That's what you wanted me to do, wasn't it? But perhaps you think that one lie, more or less, wouldn't cut any figure in my case."

"Jimmy, dear, don't be horrid. You know perfectly well that your curiosity to see what is in those letters was too much for you."

Jimaboy walked to the window and shoved his hands deep into his pockets. It was their first quarrel, and being unfamiliar with the weapons of that warfare, he did not know which one to draw next. And the one he did draw was a tin dagger, crumpling under the blow.

"It has been my impression all along that curiosity was a feminine weakness," he observed to the windowpanes. [Pg 1777]

"James Jimaboy! You know better than that! You've Said a dozen times in your stories that it was just the other way about—you know you have. And, besides, I didn't let the cat out of the bag."

Here was where Jimaboy's sense of humor came in. He turned on her quickly. She was the picture of righteous indignation trembling to tears. Whereupon he took her in his arms, laughing over her as she might have wept over him.

"Isn't this rich!" he gasped. "We—we built this thing on our specialty, and here we are qualifying like cats and dogs for our great mission to a quarrelsome world. Listen, Bella, dear, and I'll tell you why I weakened. It wasn't curiosity, or just plain, every-day scare. There is sure to be money in some of these letters, and it must be returned. Also, the other people must be told that it was only a joke."

"B-but we've broken our record and qu-quarreled!" she sobbed.

"Never mind," he comforted; "maybe that was necessary, too. Now we can add another course to the curriculum and call it the Exquisite Art of Making Up. Let's get to work on these things and see what we are in for."

They settled down to it in grim determination, cutting out the down-town luncheon and munching crackers and cheese while they opened and read and wrote and returned money and explained and re-explained in deadly and wearisome repetition.

"My land!" said Jimaboy, stretching his arms over his head, when Isobel got up to light the lamps, "isn't the credulity of the race a beautiful thing to contemplate? Let's hope this furore will die down as suddenly as it jumped up. If it doesn't, I'm going to make Hasbrouck furnish us a stenographer and pay the postage." [Pg 1778]

But it did not die down. For a solid fortnight they did little else than write letters and postal cards to anxious applicants, and by the end of the two weeks Jimaboy was starting up in his bed of nights to rave out the threadbare formula of explanation: "Dear Madam: The ad. you saw in the *Sunday Times* was not an ad.; it was a joke. There is no Post-Graduate School of W. B. in all the world. Please don't waste your time and ours by writing any more letters."

The first rift in the cloud was due to the good offices of Hasbrouck. He saw matter of public interest in the swollen jest and threw the columns of the *Sunday Times* open to Jimaboy. Under the racking pressure, the sentimentalist fired volley upon volley of scathing ridicule into the massed ranks of anxious inquirers, and finally came to answering some of the choicest of the letters in print.

"Good!" said Hasbrouck, when the "Jimaboy Column" in the Sunday paper began to be commented on and quoted; and he made Jimaboy an offer that seemed like sudden affluence.

But the crowning triumph came still later, in a letter from the editor of one of the great magazines. Jimaboy got it at the *Times* office, and some premonition of its contents made him keep it until Isobel could share it.

"We have been watching your career with interest," wrote the great man, "and we are now casting about for some one to take charge of a humorous department to be called 'Bathos and Pathos,' which we shall, in the near future, add to the magazine. May we see more of your work, as well as some of Mrs. Jimaboy's sketches?

"O Jimmy, dear, you found yourself at last!"

But his smile was a grin. "No," said he; "we've just got our diplomas from the Post-Graduate School of W. B.—that's all." [Pg 1779]

A RULE OF THREE

BY WALLACE RICE

There is a rule to drink, I think,
A rule of three
That you'll agree
With me
Can not be beat
And tends our lives to sweeten:
Drink ere you eat,
And while you eat,
And after you have eaten!

[Pg 1780]

HOW THE MONEY GOES

BY JOHN G. SAXE

How goes the Money?—Well,
I'm sure it isn't hard to tell;
It goes for rent, and water-rates,
For bread and butter, coal and grates,
Hats, caps, and carpets, hoops and hose,—
And that's the way the Money goes!

How goes the Money?—Nay,
Don't everybody know the way?
It goes for bonnets, coats and capes,
Silks, satins, muslins, velvets, crapes,
Shawls, ribbons, furs, and furbelows,—
And that's the way the Money goes!

How goes the Money?—Sure,
I wish the ways were something fewer;
It goes for wages, taxes, debts;
It goes for presents, goes for bets,
For paint, *pommade*, and *eau de rose*,—
And that's the way the Money goes!

How goes the Money?—Now,
I've scarce begun to mention how;
It goes for laces, feathers, rings,
Toys, dolls—and other baby-things,
Whips, whistles, candies, bells and bows,—
And that's the way the Money goes! [Pg 1781]

How goes the Money?—Come,
I know it doesn't go for rum;
It goes for schools and sabbath chimes,
It goes for charity—sometimes;
For missions, and such things as those,—
And that's the way the Money goes!

How goes the Money?—There!
I'm out of patience, I declare;
It goes for plays, and diamond pins,
For public alms, and private sins,
For hollow shams, and silly shows,—
And that's the way the Money goes!

[Pg 1782]

A CAVALIER'S VALENTINE

(1644)

BY CLINTON SCOLLARD

The sky was like a mountain mere,
  The lilac buds were brown,
What time a war-worn cavalier
  Rode into Taunton-town.
He sighed and shook his head forlorn;
  "A sorry lot is mine,"
He said, "who have this merry morn
  Pale Want for Valentine."

His eyes, like heather-bells at dawn,
  Were blue and brave and bold;
Against his cheeks, now wan and drawn,
  His love-locks tossed their gold.
And as he rode, beyond a wall
  With ivy overrun,
His glance upon a maid did fall,
  A-sewing in the sun.

As sweet was she as wilding thyme,
  A boon, a bliss, a grace:
It made the heart blood beat in rhyme
  To look upon her face.
He bowed him low in courtesy,
  To her deep marvelling;
"Fair Mistress Puritan," said he,
  "It is forward spring."

[Pg 1783]

As when the sea-shell flush of morn
  Throws night in rose eclipse,
So sunshine smiles, that instant born,
  Brought brightness to her lips;
Her voice was modest, yet, forsooth,
  It had a roguish ring;
"*You*, sir, of all should know that truth—
  It *is* a forward spring!"

[Pg 1784]

A GREAT CELEBRATOR

BY BILL NYE

Being at large in Virginia, along in the latter part of last season, I visited Monticello, the former home of Thomas Jefferson, also his grave. Monticello is about an hour's ride from Charlottesville, by diligence. One rides over a road constructed of rip-raps and broken stone. It is called a macadamized road, and twenty miles of it will make the pelvis of a long-waisted man chafe against his ears. I have decided that the site for my grave shall be at the end of a trunk line somewhere, and I will endow a droska to carry passengers to and from said grave.

Whatever my life may have been, and however short I may have fallen in my great struggle for a generous recognition by the American people, I propose to place my grave within reach of all.

Monticello is reached by a circuitous route to the top of a beautiful hill, on the crest of which rests the brick house where Mr. Jefferson lived. You enter a lodge gate in charge of a venerable negro, to whom you pay two bits apiece for admission. This sum goes toward repairing the roads, according to the ticket which you get. It just goes toward it, however; it don't quite get there, I judge, for the roads are still appealing for aid. Perhaps the negro can tell how far it gets. Up through a neglected thicket of Virginia shrubs and ill-kempt trees you drive to the house. It is a

house that would readily command $750, with queer porches to it, and large, airy windows. The top of the whole hill was graded level, or terraced, and an enormous quantity of work must have [Pg 1785] been required to do it, but Jefferson did not care. He did not care for fatigue. With two hundred slaves of his own, and a dowry of three hundred more which was poured into his coffers by his marriage, Jeff did not care how much toil it took to polish off the top of a bluff or how much the sweat stood out on the brow of a hill.

Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence. He sent it to one of the magazines, but it was returned as not available, so he used it in Congress and afterward got it printed in the *Record*.

I saw the chair he wrote it in. It is a plain, old-fashioned wooden chair, with a kind of bosom-board on the right arm, upon which Jefferson used to rest his Declaration of Independence whenever he wanted to write it.

There is also an old gig stored in the house. In this gig Jefferson used to ride from Monticello to Washington in a day. This is untrue, but it goes with the place. It takes from 8:30 A. M. until noon to ride this distance on a fast train, and in a much more direct line than the old wagon road ran.

Mr. Jefferson was the father of the University of Virginia, one of the most historic piles I have ever clapped eyes on. It is now under the management of a classical janitor, who has a tinge of negro blood in his veins, mixed with the rich Castilian blood of somebody else.

He has been at the head of the University of Virginia for over forty years, bringing in the coals and exercising a general oversight over the curriculum and other furniture. He is a modest man, with a tendency toward the classical in his researches. He took us up on the roof, showed us the outlying country, and jarred our ear-drums with the big bell. Mr. Estes, who has general charge of Monticello—called Montechello—said that Mr. Jefferson used to sit on his front porch with a [Pg 1786] powerful glass, and watch the progress of the work on the University, and if the workmen undertook to smuggle in a soft brick, Mr. Jefferson, five or six miles away, detected it, and bounding lightly into his saddle, he rode down there to Charlottesville, and clubbed the bricklayers until they were glad to pull down the wall to that brick and take it out again.

This story is what made me speak of that section a few minutes ago as an outlying country.

The other day Charles L. Seigel told us the Confederate version of an attack on Fort Moultrie during the early days of the war, which has never been printed. Mr. Seigel was a German Confederate, and early in the fight was quartered, in company with others, at the Moultrie House, a seaside hotel, the guests having deserted the building.

Although large soft beds with curled hair mattresses were in each room, the department issued ticks or sacks to be filled with straw for the use of the soldiers, so that they would not forget that war was a serious matter. Nobody used them, but they were there all the same.

Attached to the Moultrie House, and wandering about the back-yard, there was a small orphan jackass, a sorrowful little light-blue mammal, with a tinge of bitter melancholy in his voice. He used to dwell on the past a good deal, and at night he would refer to it in tones that were choked with emotion.

The boys caught him one evening as the gloaming began to arrange itself, and threw him down on the green grass. They next pulled a straw bed over his head, and inserted him in it completely, cutting holes for his legs. Then they tied a string of sleigh-bells to his tail, and hit him a smart, stinging blow with a black snake. [Pg 1787]

Probably that was what suggested to him the idea of strolling down the beach, past the sentry, and on toward the fort. The darkness of the night, the rattle of hoofs, the clash of the bells, the quick challenge of the guard, the failure to give the countersign, the sharp volley of the sentinels, and the wild cry, "to arms," followed in rapid succession. The tocsin sounded, also the slogan. The culverin, ukase, and door-tender were all fired. Huge beacons of fat pine were lighted along the beach. The whole slumbering host sprang to arms, and the crack of the musket was heard through the intense darkness.

In the morning the enemy was found intrenched in a mud-hole, south of the fort, with his clean new straw tick spattered with clay, and a wildly disheveled tail.

On board the Richmond train not long ago a man lost his hat as we pulled out of Petersburg, and it fell by the side of the track. The train was just moving slowly away from the station, so he had a chance to jump off and run back after it. He got the hat, but not till we had placed seven or eight miles between us and him. We could not help feeling sorry for him, because very likely his hat had an embroidered hat band in it, presented by one dearer to him than life itself, and so we worked up quite a feeling for him, though of course he was very foolish to lose his train just for a hat, even if it did have the needle-work of his heart's idol in it.

Later I was surprised to see the same man in Columbia, South Carolina, and he then told me this sad story:

"I started out a month ago to take a little trip of a few weeks, and the first day was very, very happily spent in scrutinizing nature and scanning the faces of those I saw. On the second day out, I ran across a young man whom I had known slightly before, and who is engaged in the business of being a companionable fellow and the life of the party. That is about all the business he has. [Pg 1788] He knows a great many people, and his circle of acquaintances is getting larger all the time. He

is proud of the enormous quantity of friendship he has acquired. He says he can't get on a train or visit any town in the Union that he doesn't find a friend.

"He is full of stories and witticisms, and explains the plays to theater parties. He has seen a great deal of life and is a keen critic. He would have enjoyed criticizing the Apostle Paul and his elocutionary style if he had been one of the Ephesians. He would have criticized Paul's gestures, and said, 'Paul, I like your Epistles a heap better than I do your appearance on the platform. You express yourself well enough with your pen, but when you spoke for the Ephesian Y. M. C.nbsp;A. , we were disappointed in you and we lost money on you.'

"Well, he joined me, and finding out where I was going, he decided to go also. He went along to explain things to me, and talk to me when I wanted to sleep or read the newspaper. He introduced me to large numbers of people whom I did not want to meet, took me to see things I didn't want to see, read things to me that I didn't want to hear, and introduced to me people who didn't want to meet me. He multiplied misery by throwing uncongenial people together and then said: 'Wasn't it lucky that I could go along with you and make it pleasant for you?'

"Everywhere he met more new people with whom he had an acquaintance. He shook hands with them, and called them by their first names, and felt in their pockets for cigars. He was just bubbling over with mirth, and laughed all the time, being so offensively joyous, in fact, that when he went into a car, he attracted general attention, which suited him first-rate. He regarded himself as a universal favorite and all-around sunbeam. [Pg 1789]

"When we got to Washington, he took me up to see the President. He knew the President well—claimed to know lots of things about the President that made him more or less feared by the administration. He was acquainted with a thousand little vices of all our public men, which virtually placed them in his power. He knew how the President conducted himself at home, and was 'on to everything' in public life.

"Well, he shook hands with the President, and introduced me. I could see that the President was thinking about something else, though, and so I came away without really feeling that I knew him very well.

"Then we visited the departments, and I can see now that I hurt myself by being towed around by this man. He was so free, and so joyous, and so bubbling, that wherever we went I could hear the key grate in the lock after we passed out of the door.

"He started south with me. He was going to show me all the battle-fields, and introduce me into society. I bought some strychnine in Washington, and put it in his buckwheat cakes; but they got cold, and he sent them back. I did not know what to do, and was almost wild, for I was traveling entirely for pleasure, and not especially for his pleasure either.

"At Petersburg I was told that the train going the other way would meet us. As we started out, I dropped my hat from the window while looking at something. It was a desperate move, but I did it. Then I jumped off the train, and went back after it. As soon as I got around the curve I ran for Petersburg, where I took the other train. I presume you all felt sorry for me, but if you'd seen me fold myself in a long, passionate embrace after I had climbed on the other train, you would have changed your minds."

He then passed gently from my sight. [Pg 1790]

THE OLD-FASHIONED CHOIR

BY BENJAMIN F. TAYLOR

I have fancied, sometimes, the Bethel-bent beam
That trembled to earth in the patriarch's dream,
Was a ladder of song in that wilderness rest,
From the pillow of stone to the blue of the Blest,
And the angels descended to dwell with us here,
"Old Hundred," and "Corinth," and "China," and "Mear."
All the hearts are not dead, not under the sod,
That those breaths can blow open to Heaven and God!
Ah! "Silver Street" leads by a bright, golden road—
O! not to the hymns that in harmony flowed—
But to those sweet human psalms in the old-fashioned choir,
To the girls that sang alto, the girls that sang air!

"Let us sing to God's praise," the minister said,
  All the psalm-books at once fluttered open at "York,"
Sunned their long dotted wings in the words that he read,
While the leader leaped into the tune just ahead,
  And politely picked out the key note with a fork,
And the vicious old viol went growling along
At the heels of the girls in the rear of the song.

I need not a wing—bid no genii come,
With a wonderful web from Arabian loom, [Pg 1791]
To bear me again up the River of Time,
When the world was in rhythm, and life was its rhyme;
Where the streams of the year flowed so noiseless and narrow,
That across them there floated the song of a sparrow;
For a sprig of green caraway carries me there,
To the old village church and the old village choir,
When clear of the floor my feet slowly swung,
And timed the sweet praise of the songs as they sung,
Till the glory aslant of the afternoon sun
Seemed the rafters of gold in God's temple begun!

You may smile at the nasals of old Deacon Brown,
Who followed by scent till he ran the tune down;
And the dear sister Green, with more goodness than grace,
Rose and fell on the tunes as she stood in her place,
And where "Coronation" exultingly flows,
Tried to reach the high notes on the tips of her toes!
To the land of the leal they went with their song,
Where the choir and the chorus together belong;
O, be lifted, ye gates! Let me hear them again—
Blessed song, blessed Sabbath, forever, amen!

[Pg 1792]

WHEN THE LITTLE BOY RAN AWAY

BY FRANK L. STANTON

When the little boy ran away from home
  The birds in the treetops knew,
And they all sang "Stay!" But he wandered away
  Under the skies of blue.
And the Wind came whispering from the tree:
"Follow me—follow me!"
And it sang him a song that was soft and sweet,
And scattered the roses before his feet
  That day—that day
  When the little boy ran away.

The Violets whispered: "Your eyes are blue
  And lovely and bright to see;
And so are mine, and I'm kin to you,
  So dwell in the light with me!"
But the little boy laughed, while the Wind in glee
Said: "Follow me—follow me!"
And the Wind called the clouds from their home in the skies
And said to the Violet: "Shut your eyes!"
  That day—that day
  When the little boy ran away.

Then the Wind played leap-frog over the hills
  And twisted each leaf and limb;
And all the rivers and all the rills
  Were foaming mad with him! [Pg 1793]
And 'twas dark as the darkest night could be,
But still came the Wind's voice: "Follow me!"
And over the mountain, and up from the hollow
Came echoing voices, with: "Follow him—follow!"
  That awful day
  When the little boy ran away!

Then the little boy cried: "Let me go—let me go!"
  For a scared—scared boy was he!
But the Thunder growled from a black cloud: "No!"
  And the Wind roared: "Follow me!"
And an old gray Owl from a treetop flew,
Saying: "Who are you-oo? Who are you-oo?"
And the little boy sobbed: "I'm lost away,
And I want to go home where my parents stay!"
  Oh, the awful day

When the little boy ran away!

Then the Moon looked out from a cloud and said:
"Are you sorry you ran away?
If I light you home to your trundle bed,
Will you stay, little boy, will you stay?"
And the little boy promised—and cried and cried—
He would never leave his mother's side;
And the Moonlight led him over the plain
And his mother welcomed him home again.
But oh, what a day
When the little boy ran away!

[Pg 1794]

HE WANTED TO KNOW

BY SAM WALTER FOSS

He wanted to know how God made the worl'
Out er nothin' at all,
W'y it wasn't made square, like a block or a brick,
Stid er roun', like a ball,
How it managed to stay held up in the air,
An' w'y it don't fall;
All such kin' er things, above an' below,
He wanted to know.

He wanted to know who Cain had for a wife,
An' if the two fit;
Who hit Billy Patterson over the head,
If he ever got hit;
An' where Moses wuz w'en the candle went out,
An' if others were lit;
If he couldn' fin' these out, w'y his cake wuz all dough,
An' he wanted to know.

An' he wanted to know 'bout original sin;
An' about Adam's fall;
If the snake hopped aroun' on the end of his tail
Before doomed to crawl,
An' w'at would hev happened if Adam hedn' et
The ol' apple at all;
These ere kind er things seemed ter fill him 'ith woe,
An' he wanted to know.

[Pg 1795]

An' he wanted to know w'y some folks wuz good,
An' some folks wuz mean,
W'y some folks wuz middlin' an' some folks wuz fat,
An' some folks wuz lean,
An' some folks were very learned an' wise,
An' some folks dern green;
All these kin' er things they troubled him so
That he wanted to know.

An' so' he fired conundrums aroun',
For he wanted to know;
An' his nice crop er taters 'ud rot in the groun',
An' his stuff wouldn't grow;
For it took so much time to ask questions like these,
He'd no time to hoe;
He wanted to know if these things were so,
Course he wanted know.

An' his cattle they died, an' his horses grew sick,
'Cause they didn't hev no hay;
An' his creditors pressed him to pay up his bills,
But he'd no time to pay,
For he had to go roun' askin' questions, you know,
By night an' by day;
He'd no time to work, for they troubled him so,
An' he wanted to know.

An' now in the poorhouse he travels aroun'
  In just the same way,
An' asks the same questions right over ag'in,
  By night an' by day;
But he haint foun' no feller can answer 'em yit,
  An' he's ol' an' he's gray,
But these same ol' conundrums they trouble him so,
  That he still wants to know.

[Pg 1796]

SOLDIER, REST!

BY ROBERT J. BURDETTE

A Russian sailed over the blue Black Sea,
  Just when the war was growing hot,
And he shouted, "I'm Tjalikavakeree-
  Karindabrolikanavandorot-
    Schipkadirova-
    Ivandiszstova-
      Sanilik-
      Danilik-
    Varagobhot!"

A Turk was standing upon the shore
  Right where the terrible Russian crossed;
And he cried, "Bismillah! I'm Abd el Kor-
  Bazaroukilgonautoskobrosk-
    Getzinpravadi-
    Kilgekosladji-
      Grivido-
      Blivido-
    Jenikodosk!"

So they stood like brave men, long and well,
  And they called each other their proper names,
Till the lock-jaw seized them, and where they fell
  They buried them both by the Irdosholames-
    Kalatalustchuk-
    Mischaribustchup-
      Bulgari-
      Dulgari-
    Sagharimainz.

[Pg 1797]

THE EXPERIENCES OF GENTLE JANE

BY CAROLYN WELLS

THE CARNIVOROUS BEAR

Gentle Jane went walking, where
  She espied a Grizzly Bear;
Flustered by the quadruped
  Gentle Jane just lost her head.

THE RUDE TRAIN

Last week, Tuesday, gentle Jane
  Met a passing railroad train;
"Ah, good afternoon," she said;
  But the train just cut her dead.

THE CARELESS NIECE

Once her brother's child, for fun,
  Pointed at her aunt a gun.
At this conduct of her niece's
  Gentle Jane went all to pieces.

THE NAUGHTY AUTOMOBILE

Gentle Jane went for a ride,

But the automobile shied;
Threw the party all about—
Somehow, Jane felt quite put out.

[Pg 1798]

THE COLD, HARD LAKE

Gentle Jane went out to skate;
She fell through at half-past eight.
Then the lake, with icy glare,
Said, "Such girls I can not bear."

THE CALM STEAM-ROLLER

In the big steam-roller's path
Gentle Jane expressed her wrath.
It passed over. After that
Gentle Jane looked rather flat.

A NEW EXPERIENCE

Much surprised was gentle Jane
When a bullet pierced her brain;
"Such a thing as that," she said,
"Never came into my head!"

THE BATTERING-RAM

"Ah!" said gentle Jane, "I am
Proud to meet a battering-ram."
Then, with shyness overcome,
Gentle Jane was just struck dumb.

[Pg 1799]

A FEW REFLECTIONS

BY BILL ARP

I rekon I've lived as much as most foaks accordin' to age, and I ain't tired of livin' yit. I like it. I've seen good times, and bad times, and hard times, and times that tired men's soles, but I never seed a time that I coulden't extrakt sum cumfort out of trubble. When I was a boy I was a lively little devil, and lost my edycashun bekaus I couldn't see enuf fun in the spellin' book to get thru it. I'm sorry for it now, for a blind man can see what a fool I am. The last skhoolin' I got was the day I run from John Norton, and there was so much fun in that my daddy sed he rekoned I'd got larnin' enuf. I had a bile on my back as big as a ginney egg, and it was mighty nigh ready to bust. We boys had got in a way of ringin' the bell before old Norton got there, and he sed that the first boy he kotched at it would ketch hail Kolumby. Shore enuf he slipped upon us one mornin', and before I knowed it he had me by the collar, and was layin' it on like killin' snakes. I hollered, "My bile, my bile, don't hit me on my bile," and just then he popped a center shot, and I jumped three feet in the atmosphere, and with a hoop and a beller I took to my heels. I run and hollered like the devil was after me, and shore enuf he was. His long legs gained on me at every jump, but just as he was about to grab me I made a double on him, and got a fresh start. I was aktiv as a cat, and so we had it over fences, thru the woods, and round the meetin' house, and all the boys was [Pg 1800] standin' on skool house hill a hollerin', "Go it, my Bill—go it, my Bill." As good luck would have it there was a grape vine a swingin' away ahead of me, and I ducked my head under it just as old Norton was about two jumps behind. He hadn't seen it, and it took him about the middle and throwed him the hardest summerset I ever seed a man git. He was tired, and I knowd it, and I stopped about three rods off and laffd at him as loud as I could ball. I forgot all about my bile. He never follered me another step, for he was plum giv out, but he set there bareheaded and shook his hickory at me, lookin' as mad and as miserable as possible. That lick on my bile was about the keenest pain I ever felt in my life, and like to have killed me. It busted as wide open as a soap trof, and let every drop of the juice out, but I've had a power of fun thinkin' about it for the last forty years.

But I didn't start to tell you about that.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] Railway cars.

[2] Rocked.

[3] Basket.

[4] From "Nautical Lays of a Landsman," by Wallace Irwin. Copyright, 1904, by Dodd, Mead & Co.

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