

## A Case of Absent Treatment

### How One Wife Managed

**O**LD saying:—"What can't be cured must be endured."

New version:—"What can't be endured must needs be cured."

A very tired woman was Malvina Weeks, and she said she should never be rested again till she could have the house painted and shingled. Every shower that came over the hills brought hurry and worry with it, for she must take down everything hanging in the lean-to and set pails in a half-dozen places in the attic, and the carpet in the end room had already been taken up because the numerous wettings that it had received were spoiling it, and the brilliant colors were all running together in one indistinguishable blur.

The paint was all off the house in some places and was fast coming off in others, in fact, the cottage was in a state to peel all over. The neighbors had begun to speak about it, and say to Malvina, how nice it would look paint-

bors for fear of a sudden shower and no one at home to attend to it.

Now his last refusal was ringing in her ears, and poor woman, tired out with the numerous cares of a farmer's wife, she just sat down and cried. But if you think a woman's tears end the matter you are much mistaken. The tears are only the beginning.

When she wanted anything done, John was always ready to start for the poorhouse, and was quite sure that anything laid out on the house, inside or out, was only so many paving stones on the road to the great, roomy old farmhouse where the dozen or so poor and crippled ones of the town were cared for.

The first time she asked him timidly if he didn't think the house needed paint, he said, "Yes I do, but we should go to the poorhouse if we got everything we fancied."

When she wondered if he couldn't have the roof patched, he said, "No,

you can, I don't," was the concise answer.

When John came in at night his supper was ready, but his wife was not to be seen. He thought she would be in a moment, but after resting a while and no sign of her, he decided to eat, as she had probably been called to some one of the neighbors. On his plate lay a note.

Dear John:—"I have made arrangements with Widow Smith to come in three times a week and cook the victuals and clean up the house while I am away. "Good land, where's she got a while and no sign of her, he decided to eat, as she had probably been called to some one of the neighbors. On his plate lay a note.

I was lookin' at the poorhouse the other day from the Blue Hill pasture, and it did look so nice that I thought if I'd got to go there I might as well go now. It's just been painted, and I asked Goody Blake if it leaked, and she said no; and I'm going to ask Mis' Grove—she keeps it, you know, to let me keep the end room for you, for I s'pose it won't be many weeks before you'll come, too. That room looks right down on the meadow that leads to our back door, and I think if it's empty she'll keep it for you, for she's always been real accommodatin' to me.

Don't forget to take down the coats in the lean-to, and set the pails quick as you can, for it does come in like sixty when it begins. I shall work for my keep here, and if they allow paupers to go visitin', I shall come over when I ken.

Your affectionate wife,

MALVINA WEEKS.

"Wal, I never see the beat o' that."

He ate his meal in silence, trying to digest the fact that his wife had taken his frequent allusions to the poorhouse in earnest, and thought if she had to enter the house sometime she might as well take advantage of the condition of her own home and avail herself of its shelter at once. "Who'd a thought she would?" was a question he asked himself over and over as he took the pails and went out to milk.

As he came back he noticed the scaling paint and the bare sashes, and said to himself, "It looks wun't I thought 't did." Then he remembered his last remark to her, that she could go to the poorhouse if she wanted to, he didn't. She had taken him at his word.

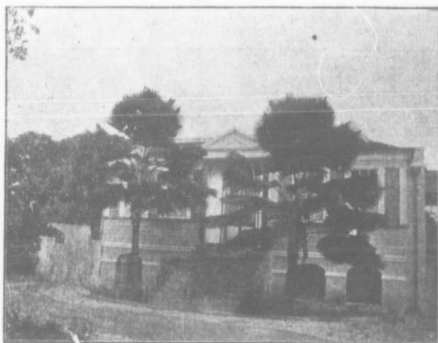
Just at dusk the keeper of the poorhouse drove up, and stopping before the house said to the man sitting on the doorstep, "Hello, Weeks, met with reverses?"

"No, not 'specially. Why?"

"Wal, Mis' Weeks she cum up an' talked with my wife alone, and asked if she might w'ay and help her a spell, an' my wife's real glad she's come, coz she does think your wife knows a leetle the most about doin' pickles an' things, of anybody round, an' she put her in the spare room an' sent me down to see you."

John chewed a straw vigorously while he wondered what Mr. Grove thought, and what excuse he, one of the largest tax-payers in town, could make for sending his wife to the poorhouse. He tried to seem perfectly easy as he said, "Wal, the fact is, I told her she could go. I'm goin' ter hev the house shingled and painted, an' I thought 's long's the smell o' paint makes her sick, I'd git her out the way, but I 'xpect she'll be some

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The Kind of Houses they have in the West Indies

ed in light colors. And down at the sewing circle, one lady had heard that she was going to have her house painted, and another asked if she'd got to hev paintin' done this fall.

When she returned from that meeting, she decided she would not attend another till the house was either painted or she could say with truth she expected it would be.

She had asked and asked John to have it done, and for two years she had lived in vain. First John must have a new barn, for a "merciful man is merciful to his beasts," an' then he must have a new binder, for "twould save half the time and he would need but one man.

In vain she told him the house leaked, in vain she bewailed the new rag carpet ruined by the dripping water, and how tired she was of setting pails, and how afraid even to go to the nearest neigh-

bor he couldn't lay out nothin' this year, fer that binder had jest about swamped him, an' he calk-lated he'd have ter go ter the poorhouse if he kep' on spendin' money."

She heard poorhouse till she was tired of it, and one day when she was out in the berry pasture, she sat down and looked at the building which could be seen in the distance just over the hill, and, with a queer feeling at her heart, she thought if she did have to go to the poorhouse it would not be such a bad place to stay in after all.

Next day she went about her work very quietly and stole away in the afternoon to Widow Smith's for a little while. The second day she made one more effort: "Don't you think you could have something done to the roof after you get the harvest out of the way, John?"

"If you want to go to the poorhouse

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