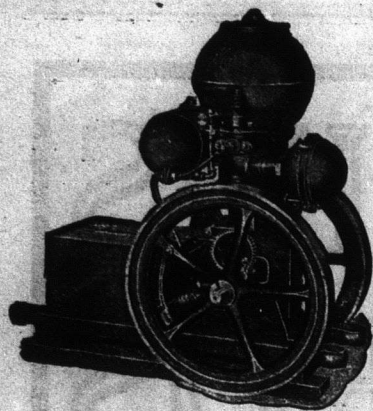




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voice lived on his ear. He always thought of her with a reflection of the tingling throb his heart gave him as she flew past straight into the path of that mountain of a man.

"Knew he'd bowl her over, but bound to save the baby!" thought Johnny, enthusiastically. "Oh, ain't she got sand! And she's a perfect lady, too."

After this incident, whenever they met she smiled and Johnny took off his cap. The second week he ventured to observe the road was bad for wheeling; or it was a warm day, merely in passing. He thought about her a great deal; and he thought more about his mother and his father than he had in a long time. He consulted a carpenter of his acquaintance in regard to the price of houses. At the lodge of the association, during the social half hour after the business session, he made one of the most vigorous speeches ever there made, on the subject of steel men wasting their wages in riotous good times. As Johnny, while never known to be visibly under the influence of that which biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder, had prided himself on the hardness of his head rather than on keeping out of temptation and, indeed, had been nicknamed "the tank" by less capable and envious drinkers, this austerity drew much talk. Johnny, himself felt that he had burned his festive bridges behind him.

right to marry unless he can give his wife a house of their own."

If his voice would not roll up like a ball in his throat he could say more, a great deal more; but how could he talk when he had to keep swallowing? He essayed a smile—at Mrs. Heller; and he felt the drops rolling down his neck and wilting his beautiful white collar.

"That's awful good wages," said Mrs. Heller, cordially.

"I should say!" Miss Glenn agreed. Again today he felt the glow of her bright dark eyes on him; and his heart bounded.

"You must be high up, Johnny," said Mrs. Heller, "rougher or heater—you'd never get that much, finishing."

"Sure," said Johnny, modestly, "I'm heater for the twelve-inch—"

"My! but you're young to be a heater, Johnny! Wasn't you scared first day you went on? You know Heller was a heater, and he told me he was dreadfully scared the first week lest he'd burn the breast out of the furnace or some sech awful thing."

"Well, I was too," admitted Johnny. "I guess I ain't all over being scared, yet; you see there are so many bad things you can do, to the furnace or the iron."

"That's so," the heater's widow assented, shaking her head; "you're jest like your pa, Johnny, so conscientious." Johnny, in an access of gratitude,

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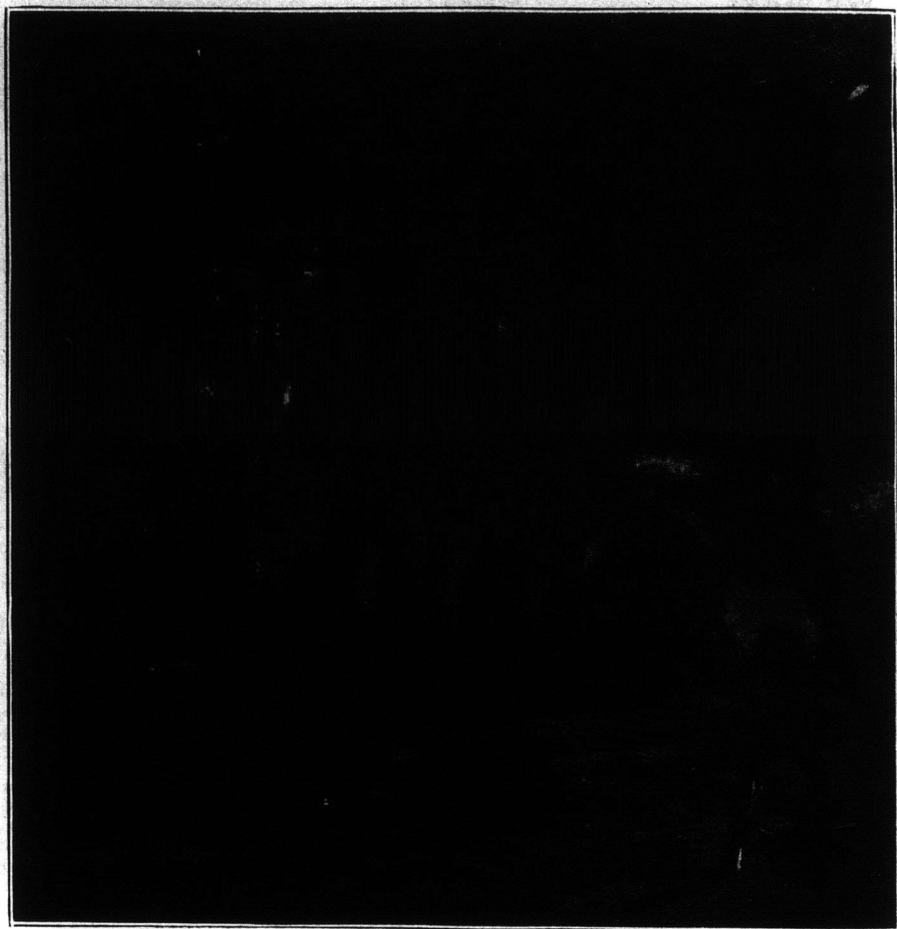
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"I was bathing him with it," Johnny explained, promptly.

The following week he had two photographs taken (in his uniform as a Knight of Pythias, his hand on his sword-hilt). Saturday night he put the best two of the dozen in his pocket and after an hour of scrubbing and dressing, took his way to the Heller's.

It was a June night; and Miss Glenn might be sitting out on the piazza with the family. So in truth it fell out. Miss Glenn was rocking beside Mrs. Heller.

They both rose to greet him. He had never seen her except on her wheel or beside it. Her trailing, shimmering black skirt made her look very tall and there was a dainty air about her pink shirt-waist and snowy lawn tie. "She's an elegant appearing lady!" thought Johnny, making his best bow to the accomplishment of Mrs. Heller's introduction.

"So you ain't married yet?" says Mrs. Heller, by way of setting every one at ease.

"No, ma'am; but I'm thinking of it," says Johnny, forcing his eyes up to, Miss Glenn's face and turning scarlet. It seemed to him that he had almost made her an offer of his hand. He cleared his husky voice and plunged ahead. "I'm getting six and seven dollars a day; and I hope to make more when I get used to heating. I've got a hundred and twenty-two dollars in the bank. I don't think a man has got any

pulled out the photographs and asked her if she could give them house-room. He remembered with a thrill how Miss Glenn's graceful brown head looked, bent over the pictures. He remembered how he lost his constraint and waxed fluent explaining the objects of the Knights of Pythias. But he could not master daring enough to offer her one of the pictures. Instead, out of his grateful heart, he asked Mrs. Heller, her daughter, and her little son (too young to be left at home) and Miss Glenn to go driving Sunday afternoon; and he took them in a surrey with two handsome horses that the clerk of the livery-stable told him were never allowed to go without a stable-driver; but he said that for a dollar extra he, Johnny, being known to be a careful man, should be given the fiery steeds. Johnny did not find them fiery; but he had the pleasure of passing over the clerk's cautions to Mrs. Heller; and she sat on the back seat with her children, clasping them in her arms and calling "whoa!" loudly every time one of the horses lashed a fly; and Miss Dora was on the front seat with him; and the gates of paradise swung open.

But the days went by without his adventuring any further confusion. Twice he rode in the park with her, once on Saturday evening, once on Sunday afternoon. He told her of his parents, of his hopes, of his ambitions, he