

"Or anywhere," he said, emphatically. "Ay, and she will be that dawdled by him. He's richt daft ower them a', forbye the bairns, the ducks and chickens." Almost unconsciously she had fallen into Mrs Campbell's way of speech.

"You have the gift of tongues, Beatrice," said he, absently.

"Being a Latin teacher—why not?"

He did not start, as she wished him to do; only leaned forward with an unbelieving smile.

"You—a Latin teacher!" he scoffed. "Yes, Mr. John," she cried, with a touch of temper, "Oh, I haven't degrees and letters and things like yours; but you never so much as asked me whether I knew Latin!"

"No," said he, slowly, "I didn't think it an important or interesting question."

"It is to you," she flashed.

"That's different."

"O-h!" she exclaimed in helpless anger. "I'll reconstruct my ideas, and begin to look upon you as very wise—" he began.

"Don't tease," she said.

"Am I teasing?" He laid his hand gently on her wrist, looking down into her eyes.

Her glance wavered away, and fell upon his forehead. Foolishly she began to mark how the fine, brown hair was wearing thin and gray at the temples; and, so doing, forgot to answer.

"Why did you come over here this summer?" he demanded, irrelevantly.

"I was dreadfully bored, and Mrs. Campbell's niece, whom I knew in New York, told me about this place. I wanted to get away from everybody!"

"Exactly. So did I. And we found each other. What a pity!" said he, gravely; and she had no reply.

"You are going back?"

"Yes."

"Soon?"

"Very."

"To teach Latin?"

"In a boarding-school."

"You like it?"

"Hate it!"

"Then why—?"

"One must live," said she, and developed little lines about the mouth.

"If things were different," said he, quietly, "and I intended to marry—as I do not—I might tell you about a certain house in London, which has only begun lately to think that it needs a mistress."

"What foolery!" she exclaimed, trying to withdraw her wrist.

"Of course. That is why I didn't say it."

"Your point of view is," said she with a slight quaver, "that nothing in life amounts to much, except Latin editions." She would not let him interrupt, but continued, "If they are so all-absorbing and all-important, I think I shall go in for them myself—if I know enough."

"I'll look you up some nice, dry chronicles, shall I?" said he, with a chuckle.

"Thank you—I may get to be a professor myself, some day," said she, rising. "That will be jolly," he assented; and as she reached the door he spoke her name.

"Well?"

"Do you suppose the precentor and his wife speculate about what is worth while?"

"No. They only quarrel—when he's had a drappie—and she's just home, wet from the cockle-gathering, and the fish are no cooked—whatever," said she, grimly, and went out into the twilight, now clear but windy.

He came out at once, and stood by her on the step. Her hair and cape blew fiercely about her. "I'm going to the shore," said she.

"Steady! I'll have to come to keep you from keeling over."

No more was said until they found shelter beneath an overhanging rock. The breakers thundered just below, with an occasional swish of spray past them.

"Dear," said he, suddenly, "we don't know how to live—you and I."

"Does anybody?" she began; but he sprang to his feet, his whole attention given to the sea.

She, turning with him, saw a fishing-boat rounding the point of rock opposite them in a little bay. It was driving swiftly shoreward; and the next moment Beatrice closed her eyes, faint, for the disaster had happened.

Harding clutched her arm.

"Mrs. Campbell—a rope—run!" said he, sharply, tearing off his coat.

When she stumbled down the rocks again, looking first along the shore, she saw him, drenched, clinging to the outermost rock, knee-deep in water, his eyes fixed steadily on a black object rising and falling with the frothy waves.

He caught the rope from her, without removing his gaze. She could look no more; but covered her face and heard him throw the rope again and again, shouting above the waves, in Gaelic and in English, "Rope there—catch!"

Presently, with averted face, she helped him pull ashore the body of a fisherman. He had managed to twist and knot the rope about himself, but now lay motionless on the shingle.

"Is he—?" she asked.

"Stunned—cut a bit on the head; rock perhaps—or in the wreck. It's the precentor," said Harding.

"A-h!" she breathed. And then they worked together until the fisherman was able, with their assistance, to stagger to the house. Only once did they exchange speech while she was helping him bind his handkerchief about the cut head.

"How did you get so wet? Did you swim out?"

"Waiting for you," she said, humbly. "I was wrong. The precentor knows."

"How to live? Other people might learn—if they tried," he observed.

"Do you know your bit lesson?" she asked, smiling a little. "Say it, and I'll see."

"Latin is good, Beatrice, but love is better—and best is—you!"

She slipped away to a second landing, and leaning over—he could see her hair softly outlined against the light of an open door—called down, half under her breath.

"You are wrong, John. Latin is only incidental, and love—love—love is very well; but best isn't I—it's—it's you!"

In this way began a new chapter in the lives of John and Beatrice Harding; even though, as to wooing—you see, there was none.

### Fellow Sufferers

As the commuter who always boarded the train at Paradise Hills seated himself, he was conscious that the young man next him looked at him with some curiosity as they exchanged good-mornings. For the

first few minutes neither one spoke. Then the young man broke the ice. "You have a delicate throat, I see," he said commiseratingly. "I used to be bothered that way myself."

The commuter hesitated. There was something about his seatmate which invited confidence.

"Have you been married long?" he asked with apparent irrelevance.

"Not so very," admitted the young man. "Why?"

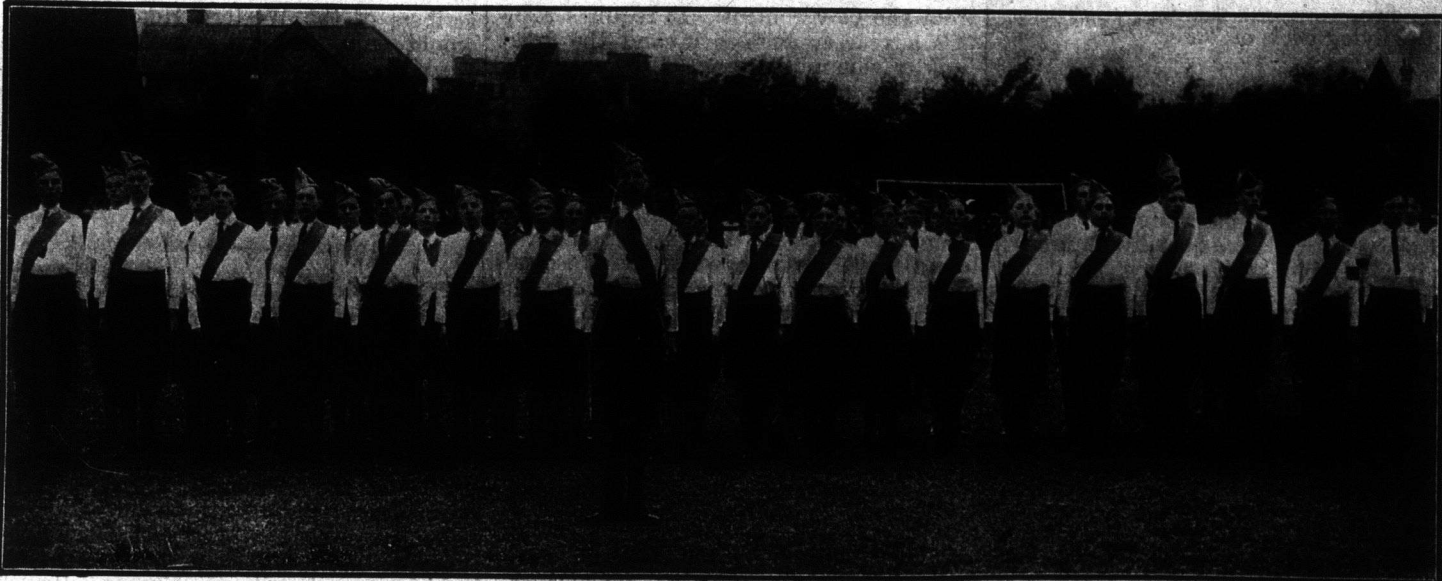
The commuter cautiously loosened the bandage round his throat and turning toward his companion, displayed an absurd looking, polka-dotted tie.

"We've been married less than a year," he muttered, "and she gave me six for Christmas."

The hand of his seatmate grasped his in a cordial, sympathetic grip.

"I thought so," he said. "It's only a year since I had my attack of throat trouble."

A new social class or a new name for an old one has been invented by the punster of the Washington Star.



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He nodded, "No use." Later, Beatrice peeped through the half-open hall-door into the lighted sitting-room. She saw the precentor, bandaged and swathed in blankets, but philosophical; saw good Mrs. Campbell busy with bottles and glasses and a steaming kettle; saw, in front of the fire, Harding, coatless, dishevelled, cheerful. A scrap of conversation came out to her.

"This one of your 'fine days,' Peter?" Harding asked.

"Dear, dear," said the fisherman, "the weather's no so bad, whatever; it will be the rope—she will be getting away from the sail."

"You were a fool to set out," said the other, bluntly.

"The storm it was ofer when I set out, and my wumman—she will be greeting aye—" He stopped and pulled his beard distressfully; and at this point Beatrice slipped away.

Harding, going upstairs a little later to change his clothes, found her in a heap on the dusky landing.

"What are you doing here?" he demanded.

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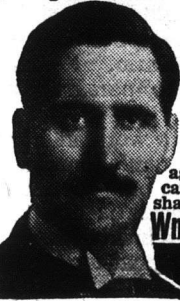
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