

The Merry Creelings.

'Well, sir, I've rented the house,' said the agent, smiling at Mr. Reese with the good news at once as he entered the office. The house had been on the agent's list for several months and had become an item of despair, though no one could have said why the comfortable little place had been so hard to rent.

'About time,' observed Mr. Reese somewhat ungraciously. But he showed pleasure a moment later by saying: 'Now you are through with all my houses for at least a year. Who's the tenant?'

'The agent looked a trifle uneasy. 'She's a very nice looking little widow—pretty, in fact, and decidedly refined. Looks neat and trim, would keep things up, I'm sure. Extraordinary name—Creeling. Mrs. Stephen R. Creeling,' he said.

'I couldn't get references as to her care of property, because she moved here from Utica, but as I say, she doesn't look like one that would let it run down, and her financial references are first-class. Considering that the house has been on our lists for a year and a half I thought we were perfectly justified in accepting a reference for financial responsibilities only.'

'What's the out to it, Dickson?' demanded the landlord, who had learned his agent's ways. 'There's an out to it somehow; what's wrong with this woman?'

'Nothing, not one thing, I'm sure of it,' said the agent earnestly. 'She's all right. But you know you are opposed to children, Mr. Reese.'

'And she has them?' interrupted his employer. 'I surely am opposed to children—more destructive than flood or earthquake, not so desirable as fire, because that destroys and you get insurance.'

'But, Mr. Reese, there are so many things—respectability, responsibility, honesty, cleanliness, to consider,' demonstrated the agent. 'And the house has been lying idle seventeen months, running down for the last ten of them—pipes burst, mice and rats got in, general downward course of a tenement house. And I'm sure it is no exaggeration to say that Mrs. Creeling will restore it to order again.'

'But she has children,' said Mr. Reese. 'How many?'

'How many?'

'The agent coughed slightly, what might be called a modified cough, preceding his statement. 'Six I understand, Mr. Reese,' he then said.

'Six?' thundered Mr. Reese, clapping on his hat. 'You gave them a lease, with my power of attorney? It has been vacant so long; I know you were getting anxious,' pleaded the agent.

'You were getting anxious for your commission, you mean,' retorted his employer. 'Very well; I shall go straight around there and tell this woman to vacate. Your lease is not binding till I sign it also. You have power to lease only with my ultimate approval. It will be a great nuisance to get her out if she shows fight, but I think I can intimidate her. I don't propose turning that house into an orphan asylum. Now there's no one saying anything! I'm going there to get rid of her!'

'He stalked away and the agent sat crestfallen and angry. 'If he's such a Herod at thirty what on earth will he be at sixty? Unless he falls into the hands of a sweet woman and has children of his own to teach him something—then heaven help the sweet woman,' he soliloquized.

In the meantime Mr. Reese stalked rapidly toward his newly tenanted house. Going up to its front door, he pressed the button; the electric bell did not ring, for the long vacancy of the house had made the wires sag and they had not been repaired for use. So the landlord knocked resoundingly.

A slender girlish figure answered the summons. Her eyes were so smiling that Mr. Reese modified the tone which was prepared to correspond with his knock, as he said: 'Mrs. Creeling, I am your landlord.'

'O, please come in, Mr. Reese, said the youthful person. 'Mother will be glad to meet you. I am not Mrs. Creeling, I am her eldest daughter, Eleanor Creeling.'

Mr. Reese entered, already at a disadvantage from his double surprise, first that Mrs. Creeling was so young, then that she was old enough to have a grown-up daughter—he learned later that Eleanor was more grown than grown up, being not quite seventeen. When Mrs. Creeling appeared in response to Eleanor's muted call he had another shock, for the tiny little lady with the pretty, merry face and the girlish air looked an incredible mother for tall Eleanor.

'Very glad to meet you, Mr. Reese,' she said, and her face dimpled when she smiled, just as her daughter's did. 'We're so comfortable and happy in this house! We are not going to ask for one of the repairs Mr. Dickson suggested you were ready to make.'

A small girl tilted into the room, a tiffin's bow standing so erect on her sunny yellow hair that it hid the effect of furthering her progress, like a sail. She dashed at Eleanor

All Stuffed Up

That's the condition of many sufferers from catarrh, especially in the morning. Great difficulty is experienced in clearing the head and throat.

No wonder catarrh causes headache, impairs the taste, smell and hearing, pollutes the breath, deranges the stomach and affects the appetite.

To cure catarrh, treatment must be constitutional—alterative and tonic. 'I was ill for four months with catarrh in the head and throat. Had a bad cough and raised blood. Had become discouraged when my husband bought a bottle of Hood's Sarsaparilla and persuaded me to try it. I advise all to take it. It has cured and built me up.' Mrs. H. W. Roberts, West Lincoln, N. S.

Hood's Sarsaparilla Cures catarrh—It soothes and strengthens the mucous membrane and builds up the whole system.

and the girl sought her up and hugged her as if she had been restored from immediate danger. Then the child looked at Mr. Reese from under her dark lashes and giggled in a friendly way.

'Say good morning to Mr. Reese properly,' said Eleanor, and the beautiful child got down and offered him her dimpled hand with certainty of being welcome.

'That is the baby,' explained Mrs. Creeling. 'I have four other children, Hugo, my big boy, has gone out, but I want you to see the other three. She opened the door. 'Nan, Polley, Ned, come here, dear,' she called, and her voice had the same musical gurgle that Eleanor's had. 'I have six healthy, happy children, Mr. Reese,' Mrs. Creeling continued, turning back to her guest. 'They are overflowing with fun—they need to call us the merry Creelings in Utica—but they are all good, obedient, and the greatest comfort to me. When my husband died everybody wondered how I could get on with such a family, and no one to help me train them. Little Margaret here, whom we call Poppet, was only two months old. But I couldn't have got on if I hadn't had them, all six of them. Such comfort as children are! But perhaps you have children of your own?'

'No, I'm not married,' said Mr. Reese. 'The truth is, Mrs. Creeling, I had told Mr. Dickson—'

The door opened and the three children entered. There was a boy of, perhaps twelve, slightly in advance of his sisters, and two pretty little girls of ten and seven years old. The boy's face was a sort of rounding square, with an upturned nose on which the sun had dropped polka dots of freckles. His eyes were running over with laughter, his lips curved upwards—there was something about his manly, merry face that no one could help trusting and liking. Mr. Reese felt his eye drawn under this sunny boy's straightforward friendliness, as he marched up to him and offered his brown, square hand with a smile that positively beamed, as if he and his landlord shared a joke. Indeed Ned Creeling thought life such a glorious thing that he felt it a common joy with each and every one sharing it with him. Nan and Polley came up and shook hands also without a trace of shyness, still less of pertness. All the Creelings had the same way of looking into one's eyes, heads back and lips curving, entire trust and trustworthiness written all over their jolly and pretty faces. It was not hard to see why these were called the merry Creelings.

'We like it here very well, sir,' said Ned, volunteering the information before Mr. Reese had asked for it, quite sure that their landlord wanted to hear it.

'Ned likes most things, people and places,' said his mother. 'He is the liveliest of all this lively little crowd—he's a great trial!' She put out her hand to Ned as she said it, with a smile that the boy responded to by patting her on the shoulder; evidently there was no danger of his thinking she meant what she said. 'The only waking time in which Ned is quiet is at the daily Mass which he serves—he has not begun here, but he will; he always served in Utica.'

'Are you Catholics?' exclaimed Mr. Reese.

'Yes, are you?' returned Mrs. Creeling.

'Well, I'm not anything else. My mother was a mighty good one. I've been occupied a good deal of late years, and sort of drifted off, but I'm still a Catholic if respect and— and, I guess liking for it is the word, count.'

'O, surely they count!' cried Mrs. Creeling hopefully. 'The Church is just like any human mother, ready to welcome as when we come home again, as a good mother's son generally does.'

'There was a slight pause that threatened to become awkward. Mr. Reese found it impossible to tell a tiny woman who had just spoken in this way that he had come to dispossess her. He was wondering

what he should say, casting about in his mind for a way to lead up to his errand—or else to retreat, and he discovered a strong desire in himself to retreat. Ned saved the situation by saying:

'Mother, I'd like to show Mr. Reese the upper floor and ask him if he minded Hugo and me putting in the contraptions we want there; may I? You see, sir,' Ned went on, as his mother nodded, 'my older brother and I want to rig up a theatre in the top floor. Eleanor writes plays for us and we all act 'em. Would you care if we fixed up some flies and things—we'd take 'em all out and put everything as it is now if we ever move out? Would you mind coming upstairs and looking at it? Ned smiled and his eyes laughed, and his nose wrinkled under its freckles. Somehow, to his own boundless amazement, Mr. Reese found himself not only going with the lad, but going with so much satisfaction that his hand had dropped on Ned's shoulder. And a thrill went all up his left arm, into his heart, warming it with an entirely new sensation as little Poppet slipped her soft hand into his and hopped along beside him, stinging under her breath in a sweet little voice that seemed to be a Creeling inheritance. The stern landlord glanced around to make sure that Eleanor was following, and she was, quite as a matter of course, with Nan and Polley effectually dragging her down, one little sister wreathed and looped on each arm. 'The Merry Creelings' were not only merry, but wonderfully affectionate—now was their merriest the outcome of their lovingness? Mr. Reese resolved to postpone business till another time and then—plainly it would be too late, for they would be established in their new home! He blushed, realizing how little they suspected that he had come to them, an ogre in disguise, prepared to cast little children out into exterior homelessness.

'He had no idea they were such grown children,' he told himself, shamelessly ignoring Poppet, who looked like a large doll, and holding his thoughts to Eleanor and Ned, for Nan and Polley were undoubtedly little girls. 'They surely won't harm property at their age,' he said to himself, thereby abandoning his original position.

Upstairs, in the top story of the house, Mr. Reese listened with scant attention to Ned's valuable explanation of the theatrical arrangements he desired to make. Tall, fair Eleanor stood by the window, leaning against the broad sill on which Poppet stood, resting her faxen head against her sister's brown one, her arms around her neck, holding her fast. The sun streamed in over them. Mr. Reese thought that he had never seen so lovely a picture. It suggested some fair young madonna by a greater artist than Raphael. Sweetly unconscious, the young girl stood, listening attentively, with visible pride in him, to Ned's plans. 'Any man would be devout with such a girl in his house!' thought the landlord, and said, 'yes, where Ned's remark required a 'no,' to the boy's sensitive chagrin.

'I'm afraid I bore you, Mr. Reese,' he said, stopping short.

'Indeed you don't, Ned,' said Mr. Reese truthfully. 'I am greatly interested, but something else came into my mind that moment. I beg your pardon. I'll tell you what it is, though: You go ahead and do exactly what you want to do, and it will be all right to me, you can't tell exactly what will arise. There's no use trying to tell me all about it. I'm not afraid of you burning the house. Do whatever you please, lad; I'll trust you.'

'Gee, Mr. Reese, that's the way to talk to a fellow!' cried Ned appreciatively. 'Honest, I won't do one thing that mother doesn't approve of, and I'll set it all back, or at least Hugo and I will, when we move out.'

'I'm sure I hope you will stay here a long time,' said the landlord, his eyes on sweet Eleanor. She smiled at him with the family merriest of eyes softened by her gracious misanthropy.

'We are going to stay until you expect us,' he said, 'the house so much,' he said, Ned detected something in his landlord's manner that unconsciously Eleanor missed.

'We'll invite you to our shows, Mr. Reese,' he said. 'Eleanor is great at acting.'

Mr. Reese departed shortly, promising to call again in response to Mrs. Creeling's cordial invitation, seconded by Eleanor's frank urging. Both the mother and daughter, like the dear souls they were, hoped this son of a Catholic mother would be helped to follow her footsteps through the atmosphere of their sweet home life. When he had shut the door behind him the merry Creelings crowded him with their praises, a sextette of various notes, for even little Poppet joined in it. He had won golden opinions from them all. Just what till old Hugo gets home! triumphed Ned. 'Won't he think it's great when he hears we may do precisely as we please upstairs and it will be all right to our landlord?'

He swung Nan and Polley around in a circle, whooping. They were more noisily the merry Creelings than they had been during their landlord's call.

'He is as nice as he can be—rather young, too,' said Eleanor thoughtfully.

'To think of our getting such a landlord, when so many are disagreeable, and object to children!' cried Mrs. Creeling happily. 'We will ask him to tea soon, Eleanor. I like him.'

Mr. Reese went on his way back to his office. Before him went a slender, girlish figure, the sunlight resting on its forehead.

The agent looked up as he entered but only said: 'Well?'

'You get the commission, Dickson,' said Mr. Reese. Marion Ames Taggart, in Benzie's Magazine.

Important Work of a Benedictine.

Father Antonio Staerk, monk of the Benedictine Monastery at Oberkloster, at present serving in the Oberhof of St. Stanislaus, 9 Malia Masterskita, has nearly completed his important work—the reproduction of the original texts of St. Jerome, which are in the Russian Imperial library.

This work contains several manuscripts of great interest to Englishmen, especially those on the ecclesiastical history of the Venerable Bede and his commentaries on Holy Scripture. Others are on the famous code of four Gospels in old Irish writing of the eighth century by Fridergo. There are also several old manuscripts of the school of Bobbio (a foundation of St. Columbanus). The scientific academies could not undertake the production of such an expensive work, but Father Staerk has carried it out free of debt, thanks to the liberal help he has received from all, Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant. It will form a magnificent volume, and will contain about a third more than was promised in the prospectus. Nearly all the principal libraries of the Continent, England and America, are on the list of subscribers. The texts, many of which have never been reproduced, will be of great value in the revision of the Vulgate. Everybody connected with the work, publishers, printers and photographers, have co-operated heartily with Father Staerk, and it is through the kindness of the Russian authorities that these valuable manuscripts will be given to the world. It is not too much to say that the book will be the most remarkable one of the coming year.—Catholic Bulletin.

The Adeste Fidelis.

As the Adeste Fidelis is sung until Candlemas Day, February 2nd, and this word about its origin will be interesting. Individual authorship the Adeste Fidelis may not have had. The atmosphere of the monastic scriptorium breathes, however, through its melodious strophes. It is in many respects unique in Christian hymnology. More than any other church song it blends prophecy, history, prayer, exaltation and praise. If there printed side by side with the Nicene Creed it would be found an astonishing verification of that august prose.

Every line of the Adeste is a casket of faith and love. Upon its cadence many hours must have been spent for the crystallization of sublime truth into crisp and dazzling syllables. Adeste: approach; fides: ye faithful; laeti: joyful; triumphantes: victorious; venite: come; adoremus: let us adore; Dominus: the Lord.

The hymn in the Latin form is so musical that it is memorized almost without effort. It is found continuously from the middle of the seventh century. It is believed that in many centers of devotion it was made also a recitation as of an oratorio. Plays drawn from Holy Writ were in vogue during the same period and the Adeste Fidelis would have been a congruous incident in either a Passion play, or a Madonna play.—Exchange.

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The rapid increase of land values in certain districts of New York is revealed in the application of the Ancient Order of Hibernians to Supreme Court Justice Amund for permission to sell its property at 175th street and Fifth avenue, New York City. The land was bought in 1902 for \$80,000. The Order has now received an offer of \$180,000 for it in America.

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New Store MacLellan Bros., Bank of Commerce Building Tailors and Gents' Furnishers.

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Have you been giving your money away to a poor tailor for clothes that did not satisfy you? or worse still have you, thinking you were saving two or three dollars on your suit, paid your good money for a "Ready-Made"—a suit that stays good only until you wear it, and instead of adding to your appearance, will by its bad fitting qualities make you appear poorly dressed. Have you ever thought that one "Ready-Made" was the most expensive suit you could buy. Do you know that a good Tailor-Made Suit at \$20.00 to \$25.00 will outwear any two Ready-Made at \$15.00, and that the made-to-order suit will hold its shape and its good looks until \$15.00, and that the Ready Made will only look good for a short time. Isn't it cheaper for you to invest \$25.00 for a good suit once a year, than to invest \$15.00 for a poor one, twice in that period? You will agree with us in that, won't you? Then our proposition is this: We keep a stock of all the best cloths made—we have Worsteds, we have Tweeds, in all the leading shades; we have Serges and Vercuis in blue and black—in fact we have everything that's made for men's clothes. We have expert cutters, men who have spent years in studying the art of designing men's clothes, and we have a staff of workmen trained in every branch of the trade, men who put into a job work of the highest order.



You can select a suit at any price from \$18.00 to \$30.00. We will make it to your individual measure, we will put the best of trimmings into it, and we give you good style and the best of workmanship. In short, your money is not ours until you are satisfied with the suit in every particular.

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