

A SIMPLE ANNAL.

Old Jonathan Scott was meeting out various parcels of groceries to a group of customers on a Tuesday in July. Tuesday being the day on which Jonathan weekly received his stores from Brackminster.

It was growing dark in the stifling little shop, though dusk had scarcely set in out of doors, and a guttering tallow candle on the counter barely revealed the gnarled and twisted old face of the shopman, as it bent over the half pound of currants which he was packing for Bella Duke, with great knob-knuckled, broad-thumbed, trembling hands.

So that, in a short passage between the house door and the entrance into Jonathan's den, just behind the cluster of women in the shop and blocking the shop door the figure of a tall and handsome girl leaning against the wall was unnoticed.

"Aye, she be a peert un, I tell 'ee,"—it was old Bella's voice—"and he med think hisself lucky, that a med. Why, to say nowt of the farm and the stock, the du say she's eight hunder pund in Granne's bank. I know them parts wot she came from and I mind her grander well. Ah, close fist he was wuss even nor Jonathan here, wot he sayin' a precious deal!"

There was a laugh at the sudden sal, and some of the women nudged one another delightedly, for these rapid movements were characteristic of Bella's conversational strategy. As a victim said, "Yer don't know when she may fly at yer, an' she's a talkin' o' summat else."

As for Jonathan he only wagged his shaggy old head. He knew the utility of attempting to parry the lightning thrust of a rapier with a heavy spade, instruments which are fairly elementary of the relative talents for debate of Bella and himself.

But Mrs. Coskin, the landlady, a goggle-eyed woman in a drab sunbonnet, was bustling with curiosity. She had been tied to the washbasin since dawn of Monday morning by a special demand for all the Manor house linen, and had been very short of gossip. And her help, Janet Stubbs, was slightly deaf and a poor creature to look, who never knew what was going on.

"Yer a talkin' o' a young widdar up at Crotch's farm. But who, for goodness sake, did yer say her young man?" "Who?" echoed Bella Duke, with the contempt of full-fledged wisdom for callow ignorance. "Why, who but young Silas Croft? T' old Silas is son o' it, an' as for the lass, she's nothin' loth, and why should he?"

The girl in the passage covered as though she had been struck and was awaiting a second blow.

It came from old Jonathan, all unwitting of the pain he was giving. "Now yer mention it I mind ez how Silas Croft told me but an hour ago his lass was thinkin' o' leavin' her gig to see some kin o' her 'Other side o' Brackminster, an' he won't be back till to-morrow mornin' for the week, 'll choose the ring on the way."

Amid the breathless silence produced by this bit of news, a young man, dressed in a suit of the latest fashion, came in, a gentle voice with tears in it (it was that of Phoebe Stubbs, the charwoman) said, "Ah, but 'tis pity o' Patience Funnell!"

The words fell upon the ear of the owner of the name, who was sitting in the dark, as the death-knell of her earthly happiness and she blindly staggered to her feet and forth into the night.

The cool rush of the evening breeze upon her acted as a tonic, and she struck across the beach with rapid steps, her hands tightly clasped, her heart, as though to stifle her grief till she was beyond all human ken of it. And that dumb instinct of genius which years for solitude rather than any set purpose, led her to the most unrequited spot for her grief, the Fortunate Heath. It was a deep depression, probably a disused chalk hole—a cup lined with velvet sward, in the very heart of the heath.

Only a fortnight ago had he whispered in her ear the old story of "which keeps the earth young," which keeps the earth young.

True, he had told her of difficulties in their path. Silas senior was as hard and about as old-fashioned as a flint-axe, and being a wealthy man with a life would oppose his son's union with a penniless girl.

But don't ye be afraid, Patience, my lass! (the night wind crooned the words gently again into her ears.) "We'll win through yet, ye and me, an' my father, being as how he've neither wife nor daughter, will tek kindly to me yet, my bonnie bairn."

And now all was over. This fickle lover had been caught by the handsome face of the siren of Crotch's farm. And in the touching words of Holy Writ, "What good shall my life do me?" was the cry of Patience Funnell's heart.

Her moaning had by this time worn itself out. The soft mantle of the summer night wrapped her and her sorrow in its embrace. Gradually she began to listen to the various sounds which her quick country-side ear could recognize even at a long distance in the deep stillness, for the breeze had died away.

The quick alarm sounded by a cackling peasant to warn his hens of a fox prowling round, the distant bark of a dog which she knew to be Bingo, at Crotch's farm, and she thought with a bitter pang that never more would his friendly muzzle touch her hand; the hum of a belated cockchafer; the thud of a rabbit's forefoot stamping a signal; the tinkle of the brook (now but a thread of water) which bounded the beach on its southern side—all these were familiar to her. And presently there loomed upon the stagnant air the striking of the Brackminster clock miles away. She counted the strokes as the bell rolled each with deliberate unction of its iron tongue and was against at reaching it. But she thought that her old uncle was, as he told her, "agreed to roost" ere she started for her groceries, and she was settling down in her old attitude when a sound—strange at such an hour and amid such surroundings—caught her attention. It was unmistakably the rasping of a file on metal and it seemed to come from among the gorse bushes to the left which there grew to some height.

She had risen to her feet and was keenly listening when suddenly the filing ceased and a gruff voice uttered what it was possible—the very name which had been riding, like a stormy petrel, on the turmoil of her thoughts—Silas Croft! Or was it that her fancy had wrought the utterance into that name—that still loved name—as a chance

sound is intelligibly absorbed into a dream? With a vague sense of some intangible danger hovering over her, she took courage in both hands and crept noiselessly through the gorse, all of which she could have threaded blindfolded—till she got then waited, quiet as a hare, on its

Yet, prepared as she was, her heart thumped wildly, when the same voice uttered the word "and for the dorg."

"Teach yer granm," was the reply, and again the file went to work as though sharpening a tool. He was not though appeared to Patience again broke silence.

"Two or three bit o' luff to hev spotted the young un a goin' huff for a boutin' with his sweetheart," (Patience writhed behind the bushes), "and he's as easy to give him as to give a bottle to a baby. And I've heard ez how t' andy, and he be a warm un, you bet!"

"Wot hif t' old man, Silas, shows fight?" "Look 'ee 'ere, pard," growled the gruff voice with a fierce oath, "I bein' agoin' to stick at nothin' this 'ere night. I tell yer, and if so be as me, jes' yer say so an' cut yer stick right away! But Lord love 'ee," he was as easy to give him as to give a bottle to a baby. And I've heard ez how t' andy, and he be a warm un, you bet!"

But 'tis over early, mate, surely. "Aye! let's wait, say till 'bout twal o'clock. Then we'll do the job degen."

Patience thought this enough. The imminent danger of old Silas had utterly blotted from her mind all memory of wrong received from him or his. Her one absorbing thought was to put him on his guard, gathering her skirts tightly around her she turned to go. But in the act she trod on a dry twig.

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being a shrewd old man made Patience help him by holding the light and other little services, in the doing of which the girl gradually regained composure, as he meant she should.

"And now, my bonnie, can ye do nother bit job for me, or are ye wot out, poor maid?"

And he laid the hand caressingly on the brown hair.

"I'll do wot I can," Master Croft, an' willin'."

"Well, 'tis nowt save to come 'long o' me to this uncle's and then to get thee to bed. Then I'll rouse the neighbors and get this chap seen to, but first—"

And he stooped down and tied the man's legs tightly together.

He gave the girl his arm and supported her trembling steps with infinite tenderness. At her uncle's door he grasped her hand and his voice shook with emotion.

"Ye'll never want a frien' little maid, while old Silas Croft lives, for ye saved my life last night. As for young Silas, he'll likely have summat to say to ye on his own hook."

Patience, but so utterly weary was she that she sounded to her dumb brain as though it were a pleasant melody.

And no sooner was her head on the pillow than she sank into the dream-land of unconsciousness.

She woke next morning when the sun was climbing towards noon to find herself alone with her tangled thoughts, she stole out to help in her uncle's cherry tree.

It was as sweet to be up there amid the green leaves and glossy fruit, the ladder gently swaying under her south-western lullaby.

She espied her uncle's Duke bearing down upon her uncle's Dutch flat, beating to the harbor, and felt a very natural pleasure in depriving that lady of gossip she evidently meant to herself. Her visa-vis on the other ladder, old Simon Watt, looked up, and he said to her, "Ye're agoin' to mend yer, eh?"

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YOUNG FOLKS.

JACOB AND RUTH. Two little pets to the children belonged. Two little pigs, to tell you the truth—One white as the snow, one black as a crow. And their names were Jacob and Ruth.

Now Jacob, by some means or other grew lame. And went sadly limping around; And one more devoted in trouble than Ruth.

I am sure could never be found. In day time they wandered about at their will. As long as no trouble they made. And at night safe and warm, secure from all harm.

In a box in a shed they stayed. When poor little Jacob was gently put in. He would lie in a corner and wait for dear little Ruth, in her womanly way.

To tuck the soft straw round her mate. Sometimes when the children were going to school. Ruth would go with them down to the hill. Poor Jacob would follow part way, then turn round.

And with ear-piercing squeals so shrill. Would throw himself down in a passion because. He was left for a moment alone. Till Ruth would come hurrying back up the hill.

And try for her fun to atone. By being so gentle, so kind, and so good. His longing he soon would get over. And once more together they'd trot all around.

Amid the green grass and the clover. But Jacob grew well, and Jacob grew fat. And Ruth was a beauty to see. Two prettier pets than these little pigs.

I am sure there never could be. But when they had grown to be large and fat. As all pretty pigs will in time. Jacob sickened and died, and the children all cried.

And that is the end of my rhyme. FIFTY CENTS. Billy and Bobby Grant think that their father's farm is just the nicest place in the world. One reason why it is so pleasant is because it is full of all sorts of young creatures.

First, there are the little colts, with their stubby tails and big brown eyes, and the lovely Jersey calves, daintily as lawns; and then there are 20 young lambs that look so much alike that it is a wonder that their mothers can tell them apart, and a dozen wee pink pigs, and I don't know how many fluffy chickens, turkey ducks, and scrappy little turkeys, shaggy puppies, and soft woolly kittens.

That's not all, but that, there is a small, rose-colored baby sister, in the big cradle by the kitchen fire. And when Billy and Bobby see these pets would be always planning to get one more, a guinea-pig, or a rabbit, or a white mouse.

One day Billy ran home from school with the roughest of ill news. "Only 50 cents, Bobby!" he shouted. "With an awful bushy tail—and whiskers!"

"What? What?" Bobby cried, opening his eyes as wide as Billy's. "A pretty cat, a squirrel, that Johnny Baker has caught, and he will sell it to any body for half a dollar. How much money is there in our bank, Bobby?"

"The little bank was unceremoniously broken open, and the money rolled out on the kitchen floor. Billy and Bobby counted them, and put them in their pockets.

"Only 47," said Billy, shaking his head. "Mebbe Johnny will trust us for 3 cents," suggested Bobby.

"No, no, Bobby," said papa. "Don't begin thinkin' o' runnin' a debt. Better earn your money. I will give you a job."

The little fellows went into the field with papa, and picked out the stones that his plow turned up. It was pleasant work, following the long furrow, with the soft-plowed ground under their feet, and the warm spring sun on their faces.

A robin on the fence sang "Cheerily! cheerily!" to the little laborers, and a pair of blue jays, perched on a tall tree, looked on at their work.

But he was so nearly the same color as the sky that the children could not see him.

"That is enough work for to-day," said papa at last. "Here is a penny for each of you; now run home, for there is an April shower coming."

"Only one cent lacking!" said Bobby. "And mamma will pay us that if we find a dozen eggs for her."

They hunted all over the big barn, peeping into Bobbin's manger, looked into the old sleigh, and rummaged the mow till their hair was full of hayseed. The swallow mamma stretched her long white throats over the edge of their nests, and watched the children anxiously.

"Don't be afraid, Mrs. Swallow," said Bobby. "It isn't your eggs that we want."

But after they had searched everywhere they had only 11 eggs. "If we could only find one more!" said Billy and Bobby both at once.

They sat still a minute to think if they had forgotten any out-of-the-way corner where a cautious Biddy might have hidden her nest. But sitting still is hard work for Billy and Bobby, so they soon gave it up and began their favorite play of "avaiaiche" rolling over and over down the steep mow, and tumbling head over heels into the soft bed of hay at the bottom.

All at last they were out breath. The hay was so comfortable and the rain pattered so drowsily on the shingles of the roof that Biddy's squeals were winked down to his cheeks, and so did Billy's, and they were both fast asleep in a trice.

Outside, the shower dashed faster and faster, and the thunder growled a little, a good-natured, airy roar, and one little flash of lightning peeped in at the barn window, but it saw nothing there but two cozy little sleepers, curled up in their cozy nest of hay.

"Cut 'em out!" sang something not far away. Billy and Bobby started up.

"It's Biddy Topknot! She must have laid an egg! Oh, if we could only find it, now!" said Billy.

But the barn had grown very dark while they slept, and they saw they must wait till morning for the egg.

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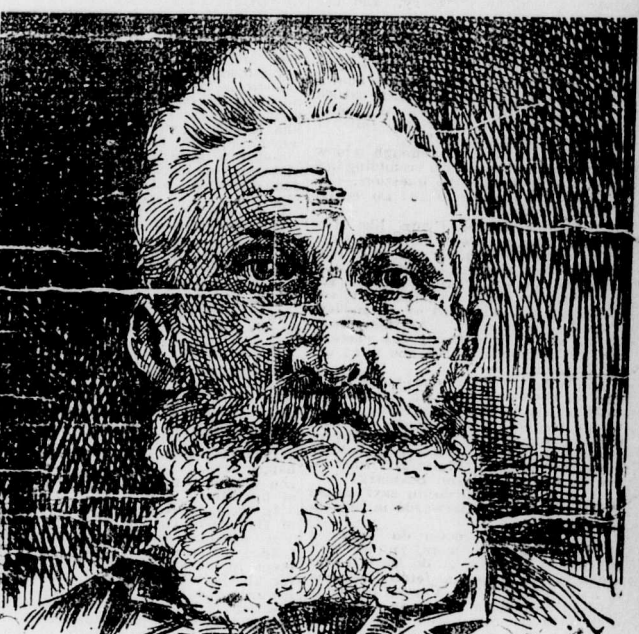
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TEN YEARS TROUBLED

With Liver Complaint and Dyspepsia--Suffered Greatly and Found No Relief in the Scores of Medicines Prescribed.

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Have Since Improved Rapidly, and Am Now Completely Cured--So says Mr. David Reid, of Chesley, Ont.



What ills come to humanity from a disordered liver! Henry Ward Beecher has said that it was impossible for a man to hold correct spiritual views if his liver was out of order. The liver is so important a part of the mechanism of man that when it ceases to work with ease the whole man is unable to do his work aright. Can we not appeal to thousands, nay, tens of thousands, for a verification of this fact? Certainly it is. That the enjoyment of life had been taken from him, through the unhealthy condition of his liver. For ten years he says he was troubled with liver complaint and dyspepsia. Employing his own language: At times my liver was so tender I could not bear it pressed or touched from the outside. Had tried a great many remedies without any benefit. Was compelled to drop my work, and being worse than usual, I decided as a final resort to try South American Nervine, which had been recommended to me by friends who had been cured by it. I got a bottle from A. S. Good, local druggist, and commenced taking according to directions. Before I had taken half a bottle I was able to go to work again, and I have improved steadily since. I can conscientiously recommend South American Nervine to any suffering from dyspepsia or liver complaint." This is Mr. Reid's story as he tells it in his own words. Were it thought necessary it could be corroborated by a host of witnesses to Nervine. This great discovery rises equal to the most trying conditions. Let it be indigestion, the most chronic liver trouble, as with Mr. Reid, nervous prostration, that makes life miserable with so many, sick headaches, that sap all the effort out of man or woman, Nervine measures the necessities of the case. It is a great medicine and thousands to-day in the nerve centers of the system from which emanate all life and healthfulness, or if disordered, sickness, even death. Nervine strikes promptly at the nerve center, hence, as with Mr. Reid, where ten years' use of other medicines had done no good, less than a bottle of Nervine brought about encouraging results, and a few bottles cured.

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