

I should have so little trouble about speaking without notes. It just seems to come natural to me."

"It was wonderful," breathed the girl rapturously—"wonderful! I felt the tears in my eyes all the time—and when I thought how you were suffering every minute from toothache I—"

There was another silence. Then the young minister spoke again.

"You know how worried I have been about arranging the heating plant of that old house we're going to use as parish-house? Well, it was the funniest thing—all the while this old man was talking I kept turning it over in my mind—it's really been making me lose my appetite; I thought I was no good, and not fit to be the leader of a parish because I couldn't solve that problem—and finally an inspiration about a straight pipe up from the old kitchen came to me from a figure he was drawing idly on the dust with his cane." He paused and laughed a little with a boyish mischief. "I hope it wasn't deceiving and un-Christian, but I just couldn't keep the joke to myself, and when I said good-night to my old sermonizer I told him he never could know how he had helped me. He never will, either!"

The girl laughed with him, a tinkling gush of amusement and admiration that disappeared before the sudden severity of her sweetheart's voice as he went on, "But, if he is a clergyman as he claims, he has the most extraordinary ideas on theology. Really, Helen," he spoke with a youthfully solemn condemnation—"I really shouldn't think him quite safe." He lowered his voice to a greater hush, "Honestly, he didn't sound quite—quite orthodox to me!"

There is a limit to all things. At this the Reverend Dr. Michael Burke sprang from his bed, and, rushing across the room with an agility he had not suspected to be in him, he slammed the window down, banging it so that an echo resounded through the house.

But he was Irish for other things than quick sympathies, and before he reached his bed again he was shaken by a laughter that seemed to tear him away from all his old moorings. He buried his face in his pillows to stifle the sound of his noisy peals of mirth—he felt overwhelmed, drowned, as wave after wave of hilarity swept over him. His tired nerves reacted from their tense strain of a few moments before into a wild jangle of hysterical realization of the joke on him. It seemed to him that he could never stop laughing.



"I meant to be kind to him"

Every time he recalled the scene under the pine tree he burst into guffaws and beat his hands upon the pillow. He thought of his last meditation before the dialogue outside began, "No matter about me—it is an immortal soul to be saved," and his piqued vanity was fairly annihilated by his sense of the inimitable irony of the situation. The same quality in him that made him an instrument exquisitely responsive to emotion made him lie alone in the darkened room and plunge from one depth of uncontrollable mirth to another. As fast as a convulsion of laughter subsided into faint, breathless chuckles, odd phrases of his exhortation floated across his brain—"the joy of realizing one's final insignificance in the world," "how cheerful it made middle-age to know that youth always ludicrously exaggerated its own importance," and he lay back on his pillows, shouting and crowing hysterically until his breath gave out and he shook in noiseless giggles.

Finally he realized that he was dog-tired, and at the same time he felt dimly that he was relaxed and unstrained as he had not been for many months, . . . but before he could stop to philosophize on this he fell suddenly asleep like a little child.

When he awoke the sun was shining brightly, and the house was noisy with active life. He reached for his watch and looked at it credulously. It pointed to twenty minutes to twelve. He had slept almost half the day. The fourteen-year-old son of his landlord passed the open window and he called him in. "Don't you want to go fishing with me to-day?" he asked, yawning happily as he sat up and rubbed his eyes. "I'm going fishing the rest of the time I'm here. Come along."

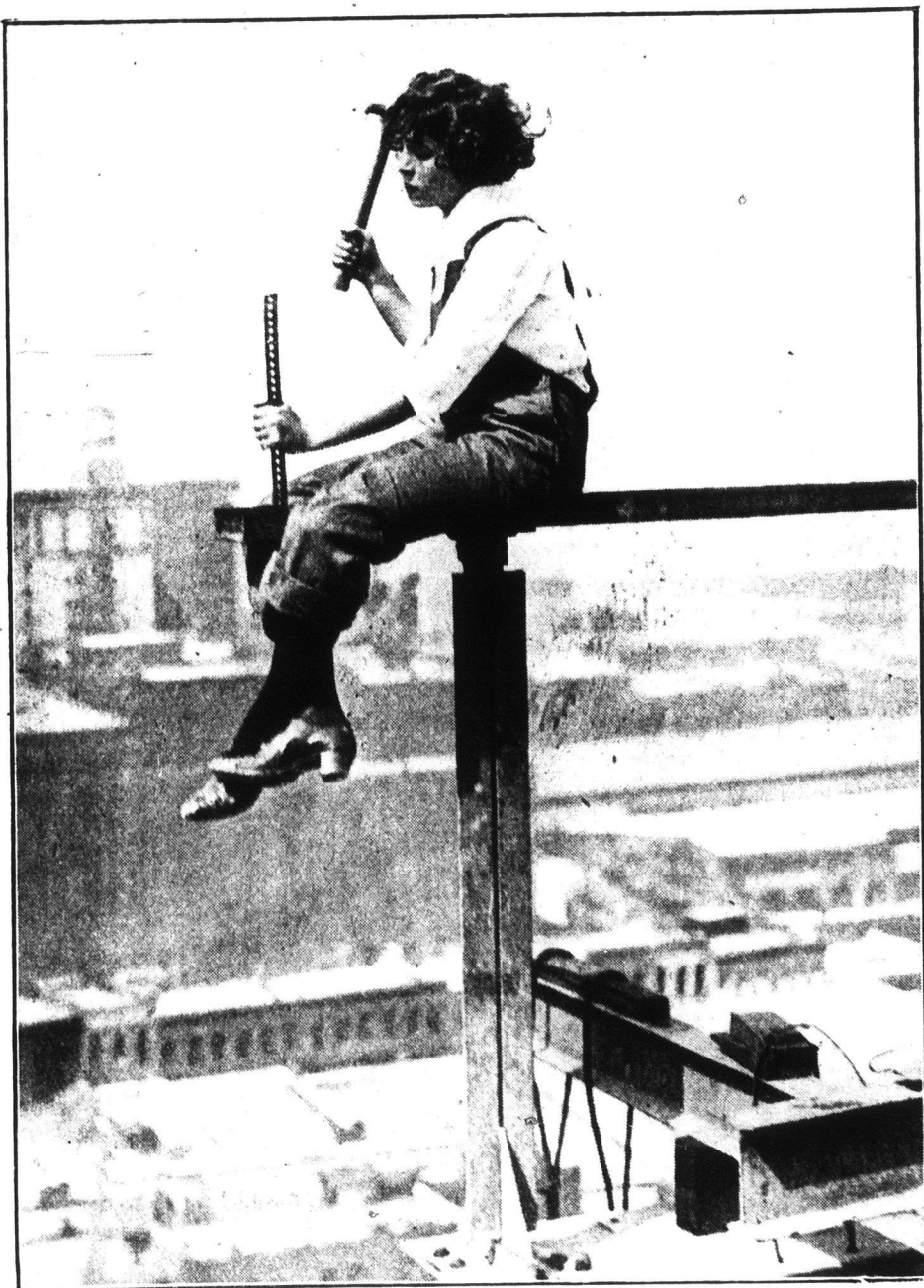
After the boy had gone he rose and went to the mirror. On the way, a belated and passing spasm of laughter overtook him, and when he looked at himself he hardly recognized the healthily flushed and smiling face which greeted him. He surveyed this care-free image complacently for some time, and finally, with a freakish return to his boyhood, he stuck out his tongue and shook a jocular fist at the looking-glass. "Sure, an' 'tis not you that can iver say it does a man no good to lave his own parish a bit!" he cried, assuming his broadest brogue, and then, "Och, faith! an' I wish Lulu could see me just now!"

AURORA BOREALIS

By Elsa Barker

Even as the glory of the northern lights
On some still winter midnight strikes the soul
Spellbound with visions, and the boreal pole
Becomes a flaming ladder that unites
Heaven and earth; so, Love, your beauty smites
My spirit dumb with wonder, and the whole
Sky of my life burns with the aureole
Of your strange being blazing on the heights.

Love is no less a mystery to me
Than the aurora of the northern sky.
'Twas the cold midnight of my destiny,
When from the void you came to glorify
My firmament with unknown ecstasy;
Yea, and I know not whence you came nor why!



"IT'S A DIZZY LIFE, BUT AN AIRY ONE," SAYS GIRL WHO TRIED IT.

After finding the bricklaying business too full of ups and downs, this amazing young girl decided to take a shot at iron grinding for a change. She is Miss "Collier" Collier, a reporter for the Chicago Herald-Examiner. Miss Collier, whose bump of curiosity is pronounced, was struck with the idea of experiencing the thrills of being a day laborer. She went to a local agency, just fifteen minutes of which was enough to give her all the information she wanted. She next hit the cement job, but the men on the job cursed too much for her. At this point, she hit the iron grinders on top of the new Shuman Hotel building in Chicago. Without any trace of fear, this slip of a girl mounted in the