

'Billy,' sobbed Bess, 'you'r as good—as good as a bear!'

Then they all laughed together and forgot what they had been cross about.—New York Tribune.

'Bray's Got to be Killed.'

'Please, Mr. Joynes, there's a little boy at the back gate to see you.'

'At the back gate? Bring him in, Peter.'

'He won't come in, sir; says he's awful busy, and hasn't got time.'

'How big is he?'

'About as big as my fist, sir,' said Peter.

The good-natured gentleman went out to the back gate. 'Well, countryman,' he said pleasantly, 'what can I do for you?'

The small boy—he was a very small boy—took off a soft dirty hat and held it behind him. 'I've come to tell you, sir, that Bray's got to be killed.'

'Bray, my Newfoundland dog? And who sent you here with that information?' asked the gentleman, losing his pleasant looks.

'Nobody sent me,' answered the boy, stoutly; 'I've come here by myself. Bray has runned my sheep free days. He's got to be killed.'

'Where did you get any sheep?' asked Mr. Joynes.

'My sheep are Mr. Ransom's. He gives me fifteen cents a week for watching 'em.'

'Did you tell Mr. Ransom that Bray had been running them?'

'No, sir; I telled you.'

'Ah, that is well. I don't want to kill Bray. Suppose I give you fifteen cents a week for not telling Mr. Ransom when Bray runs his sheep. How would that do?'

As soon as the little shepherd got the idea into his head, he scornfully rejected it. That 'ud be paying me for a lie,' he said indignantly. 'I wouldn't tell lies for all the money in the world.'

When he said this, Mr. Joynes took off his own hat, and reached down and took the small, dirty hand in his. 'Hurrah, herdsman!' 'I beg your pardon for offering you a bribe. Now I know that the keeper of Mr. Ransom's sheep is not afraid of a man four times his size, but that he is afraid to tell a lie. Hurrah for you! I am going to tell Mr. Ransom that if he doesn't raise your wages, I shall offer you twice fifteen cents and take you into my service. Meantime, Bray shall be shut up while your sheep are on my side of the hill. Will that do? All right, then. Good morning, countryman.'—English Magazine.

Man'el Hodge's Courtship.

A Professor and His Pupil.
(Mark Guy Pearse, in the 'Methodist Times'.)
(Continued.)

III.

Man'el Manages Without a Teacher.

How it came about Man'el could never tell, not even think. It seemed to him that it had all come of itself—with no word spoken, and nothing done.

He had never gone to take lessons, had never been put up to any methods, and yet there it was—the man who did not understand, the man awkward in word and ways, the man to whom all women were as much alike as a flock of sheep, Man'el was going to be married!

It may have been quite accidentally that Mrs. Gundry happened to be passing Man'el's house, and stayed to have a word with him as he was digging in his garden.

'Mornin', Man'el,' she began, 'you got some fine leeks, there, I see.'

'Well, iss'—and Man'el lifted himself and rested on the spade, 'I s'pose they be.'

'Fine things for a pie, Man'el, and healthy, too, they say.'

'Iss, if you do know how to make it,' sighed Man'el, for whom a deaf old slatternly woman came in to do the cooking and whose chief concern was to save herself any trouble.

'Will 'ee have some, Mrs. Gundry?'

'Well, I'll take 'ee, Man'el. I'll take some home, and Kitty shall make a leekie pie, and you come down to supper, will 'ee?'

'Tis very good of 'ee, I'm sure. I'll come.'

'Well, say about six o'clock, shall us, if that will suit 'ee. Good-bye for the present.'

'Good-bye and thank 'ee, Mrs. Gundry.'

Ah, who can tell as it should be told the charms of a leekie pie. The crust all crisp and shiny-brown, the gravy of a milky richness, the succulent and juicy vegetable, the tender bits of bacon here and there. If the leeks for which the Israelites lusted were put into a pie, he will find it hard to blame them greatly who after a day's hard work shall sit at such a supper as that which waited at Mrs. Gundry's house for Man'el Hodge.

Man'el thought he had never enjoyed anything so much in his life. The feeling of an infinite relief was still upon him—that he had not to consider his words and his ways. That was all gone for ever, and now the very soul of him was flung with glad abandonment into the pleasure of the evening. The stupendous undertaking of trying to get a wife was at an end.

It was with the blessedness of a great freedom that Man'el sat in the cheery kitchen, where all was so bright and clean, and the very brasses and tins were polished like mirrors. It was a contrast with his own house that he could not but feel, yet he was too happy to trouble himself as to the cause of that contrast. About him were six merry maidens whose laughter was infectious and over all was the cheery presence of the motherly old soul at the head of the table.

Man'el had relished the first plateful with evident relish.

'Have a bit more, Man'el?' said Mrs. Gundry, rising and cutting a crisp slice of the crust. 'You're very welcome.'

'Well, thank 'ee, Mrs. Gundry, I b'lieve I will. I never tasted nothing so good since mother died—she was a fine hand for pastry.'

'Iss, your dear mother, she was that, Man'el. Kitty made this here, she's a good cook is Kitty; that one next to 'ee 'tis.'

Kitty of the black curly hair and the merry black eyes blushed as Man'el turned to look at her.

'Well, mother herself couldn't do it better—and I can't say more than that.'

It was still daylight on that autumn evening when, the supper ended, they strolled to the garden in front of the house.

The roses have got a lovely smell, to be sure,' said Man'el, drawing down a heavy spray to enjoy the fragrance more fully.

'Will 'ee have some?' asked Mrs. Gundry; 'you're welcome, Man'el. Put one in his buttonhole, Kitty, if he don't mind.'

Pretty Kitty! with a roguish laugh, picked one and held it. 'Perhaps Man'el wouldn't like it?'

'Aw, I don't mind,' said Man'el; 'they do smell lovely.'

'Shall I pin it in for 'ee?' said Kitty, coming nearer.

'I don't mind,' said Man'el.

'Man'el likes leeks better, I b'lieve,' laughed Kitty.

'Well,' drawled Man'el slowly, 'come to think about it, I b'lieve I do. But I must be going home long.'

'We're fine and glad to see 'ee, Man'el.'

'You'm wonderful good, I'm sure.' And Man'el was gone.

The mother and the maidens were busy clearing up the dishes and putting things away, when he came back and thrust his head in at the door 'I'll give 'ee some more leeks if you mind to, Mrs. Grundy.'

'Thank 'ee, Man'el, and Kitty shall make 'ee another pie.'

'Take care of the rose,' laughed Kitty.

'Aw, I forgot about that. Good night.'

So Man'el went home under the sunset sky, blessing Zachy again that the terrible lessons were done with. 'I sha'n't never try to learn that any more—I ar'n't made for it.' And Man'el shut the door for the night and bolted it.

It was but a few days after that Man'el came down to Mrs. Gundry's, and having knocked at the door he opened it and walked boldly in.

'Anybody about, is there?' he called.

'Yes, I am down here.' It was Kitty's merry voice that called from the cool dairy with its slabs of slate where stood the pans of scalded cream. Here with her sleeves rolled back over her arms she was busy making the butter.

'I've a-brought some more leeks,' said Man'el, putting the basket on the floor.

'Tis very good of you, I'm sure. You'll come to supper, of course, and we will have another pie,' and Kitty's pretty face was turned towards him over her shoulder as she spoke.

It was a charming picture. The black hair that would break out in little whisps and curls about her face and neck, a face full of kindly humor, and a mouth that seemed made for rippling laughter; the pink cotton gown that she wore, protected for her work by a big white apron. The cool air of the place was fragrant with the sweetness of the milk and the cream. Everything was deliciously clean. Man'el could not but feel the charm of the place though unconscious, perhaps, of what made it. It was rather the charm of an atmosphere than of anything he could define.

'Your sister can make a lovely pie,' Man'el began in his awkward way.

'Sister!' laughed Kitty, 'why, 'tis me!'

'Aw, dear, dear! Women is all alike to me,' groaned Man'el.

'Well, now, Man'el, take a good look at me, and then you'll remember me,' and Kitty's merry eyes were turned towards him as she looked over her shoulder—so now you know.'

'I shan't know 'ee again, I'm sure! 'tis terrible awkward,' sighed Man'el. Then, as if that were not of the slightest matter he looked about the dairy. 'What a pretty place you've got here, to be sure, and how nice you do keep it. I wish mine was like it.'

'Why don't you get somebody to look after it, then?'

(To be continued.)

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