WHEN THE MINISTER CAME TO TEA

(By Harriet Paullin Fenton, in C. E. World)

"We'll have to have the new minister to tea, of course," said Mrs. Saunderson with a tone of finality as she passed the rolls.

Pa Saunderson nodded acquiescence over the breakfast steak.

"Everybody'll be inviting him," continued Mrs. Saunderson, sagely; "so I'm set on having him among the first, before he gets tired going around to other folks' houses."

"You'd better ask him quick, then, ma," spoke up ten-year-old Henry. "I heard Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Simpson invitin' him right after church last Sunday."

"For the land's sakes!" Mrs. Saunders clicked the nickel coffee-pot down on its wooden stand. "I declare some people haven't a mite of sense in their heads!" she exclaimed. "Why, last Sunday was only his first Sunday here! I really thought more of Susan Brown and Maria Simpson than that," she finished in a tone of disapproval.

The forwardness of her two ambitious neighbors still preyed on Mrs. Saunderson's mind as she rode in silence by her husband's side in the old buggy that Amos Saunderson was one of the deacons, and never missed a prayer meeting.

In spite of their reputation for punctuality, the deacon and his wife were late for the service. They entered the church as quietly as possible, just as the young minister in the pulpit started to read the Scriptures. Richard Hilton's addresses were simple, clear, and earnest.

Mrs. Saunderson felt a fluttering in the cardiac region as she watched him.

"Just the one for Mary Ellen," she thought to herself. She looked around blushing as guiltily as the thought passed through her head, as if she had given voice to her reflections, and Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Simpson had heard. Fifteen minutes later Amos Saunderson helped his wife into the buggy.

"I've asked the minister, and he promised to come Wednesday," she announced triumphantly, as he tucked the carriage robe about her.

"To-morrow?" asked Amos.

"No, of course not," responded Mrs. Saunderson quickly, "a week from to-morrow. That'll give me time to 'red' things up a bit, and get ready for him. Besides, Mary Ellen 'll be home."

She gave a sigh and clasped her hands in her lap.

Amos turned his horse's head to the road on the right, and clucked to old Doll. Away in the distance a sharp whistle rent the air. The carriage rattled over the stony road to the foot of the hill, arriving at a small wooden station just as the headlight of a train showed around a curve. Amos helped his wife out, and tied the horse to the hitching post while the train slowed up with a shriek.

One passenger jumped lightly from the steps, while one trunk was thrown from the baggage car. A slight young lady in some kind of a well-fitting dark traveling suit threw herself joyfully upon the two old people.

"It's Mary Ellen!" cried the older woman, trembling in her pride as she pressed her daughter to her. "And she won't be going away from us any more."

"Now that you've got your 'decree,' you won't, will you, Ellen?" said Amos, patting the girl awkwardly on the shoulders.

"You mean my degree, father," laughed Ellen in joyful, musical tones. "No, not for some time, anyway. We're going to have great time together now."

Ellen was twenty. Her features were not handsome; but her intelligent, merry brown eyes and smiling mouth made her face attractive and interesting. She was rather tall for her build, but she had learned to move about with the careless, natural ease that only four years' training at a typical American college could give her. The constant mingling with girls of her own age, of equal mental gifts, had given her that polish, so indescribable and yet so effective, which is characteristic of college women who have lived dormitory lives. The old people had done a great deal of scrimping to give their daughter this opportunity; but, as she sat between them on the wide buggy seat, dainty, refined, radiant, and full of life, every sacrifice seemed to them well repaid. Mary Ellen was different from other girls. The children thought so, too.

"So the minister's coming to tea," said Ellen at the breakfast table the next morning, after the news about town had been told.

"And I've got so much to do before he comes that I don't know what to do," added Mrs. Saunders. "There's every room in the house to clean, to begin with. Then some of the chairs need new chintz covers. You can get some real pretty stuff at seven cents at the store. To-morrow, pa, you'll have the rugs, and mow the grass, and weed the flower beds. Oh, yes, before I forget it, remind me to get some new curtains for the front room. That's got to be all aired out. Mercy! I almost wish I had asked him two weeks ahead instead of one."

"Why, what's the matter with things as they are, mother?" spoke up Ellen. "I'm sure that everything looks as cheerful and homelike as it can be. I wouldn't do a thing if I were you."

"That's what I tell her," put in Amos. "There's no sense in women folks cleaning house so often that they rub the paint off it."

Mrs. Saunderson arose quickly, a flush on her face. Her wisdom as a housekeeper had been challenged!

"Have the minister come to tea and see a speck of dust or a hole or a darn or a tear or a worn spot in my house—never! Mary Ellen, but you are changed. I can remember the time when you nearly cried your eyes out when Elder Pierce first came here, because you had specked your new gingham dress, and you were afraid he would see it. As for you, Amos, I can't say as I expected much different from you, but, howsomever it may be, you must make up your mind to wear that new stand-up collar I bought you, your stiff-bosomed shirt, and your meeting suit. If you get scratched, there's plenty of cold cream in the house. They say the young parson has been a city fellow all his life, an accustomed to evening dress day and night both, I guess."

Ellen choked behind her napkin. Pa Saunderson glanced up mischievously.

"What are you planning to have, ma?" Mr. Saunderson inquired, mildly.

"Sliced ham and chicken," began Mrs. Saunderson; "perhaps a little tongue, too; it looks so well mixed in. Then of course I shall make some rhubarb and blackberry pies, fruit cake, sponge and lemon cake, hot biscuits and muffins. Then there'll be pickles, sliced tomatoes, radishes, lettuce, and currants, not speaking of apples, pears, and plums, and strawberry shortcake."

"Ma, let us sit up!" begged Johnny, and Henry in a chorus.

"Provided you don't ask for a second helping of things," responded their mother, quick to seize this opportunity to lay down the law in preparation for the coming event. "If there's any more for you, pa'll ask you to have some."

That very morning, preparation for the minister began at the Saunderson home. Mrs. Saunderson first opened up and aired out the parlor, grown misty from disuse, took down the curtains, and started to work with pail and water. Ellen, who had not forgotten the knack of housekeeping, to which she had been inured at an early age, accepted an equal portion of the cleaning, although she did not appreciate the necessity of so much preparation just because the person invited happened to be of the cloth of a minister.

"We'll just about get the room cleaned to-day," remarked Mrs. Saunderson about 3 o'clock that afternoon, as she leaned against the step-ladder to rest for a moment. "We won't stop to get much for supper.

"There's some cold things in the pantry. Amos won't mind a pick-up tea for once."

"Ma," said Johnny, from the doorway, where he stood rubbing one barefoot over the other, "I met the minister, and he said he was coming up to tea to-night."

Mrs. Saunderson started so that the cake of sapolio she held in her hand splashed into the bucket. She crossed the room, and grasped the boy by the shoulder.

"What did he say?" she demanded, nervously, giving him a little shake.

"He said that he believed he had the pleasure of dining with me to-night, and he said the 'to-night' as plain as could be," Johnny hastened to explain.

"He's made a mistake in the day, and I said as plain as could be a week from Wednesday, and not Wednesday. What shall we do?" exclaimed Mrs. Saunderson. "I haven't a thing in the house!" She sank down on the bottom step of the ladder.

"Send word to him not to come," advised Mary Ellen calmly, as she kept on wiping the paint.

"That would be dreadful," her mother almost wailed. "We couldn't do that. What would Sue Brown and Maria Simpson say? What shall I do?" she reiterated. "He'll be here in an hour, for I asked him at four, and there's not a mite of pie or cake made, nor anything. And I wanted everything to be particularly nice!"

"Don't worry," said Mary Ellen, soothingly. "If we've got to have him, let's make the best of it. We can slice the cold chicken in the pantry. We've plenty of lettuce, and I'll make an egg salad. The strawberries are ripe in the garden, and I'll whip some cream for them. Perhaps we can borrow a cake from one of the neighbors."

Mrs. Saunderson bounced up suddenly with determined lines around her mouth.

"Never!" she said, grimly. "I'll bake a sponge this minute. Johnny," she called sharply, as she hurried down the hall, "go out and pick some strawberries; and you, Henry, go out to the orchard and polish up the best dish of fruit you can find there; then both you come and get into your best clothes mighty quick!"

For the next few minutes she fairly flew around the sitting-room, for using the parlor was out of the question now. The chairs were put into their proper places, a tidy was carelessly thrown over a thin spot on the arm of the big rocker, and a pile of sofa-pillows completely hid the darn on the couch cover. The setting of the dining-room table was a more complicated matter. There was some consolation for her disappointment in the knowledge that neither Sue Brown nor Maria Simpson could boast of so fine china and silver as she possessed. As the clock struck the half-hour, she rushed to the kitchen where Mary Ellen was hastily preparing dishes for the table.

"We'll have to go up and get dressed now," she began excitedly. "He'll be here any minute now, with the house as dirty as it is. I should die of mortification if he should get a glimpse of the floor from the dining-room."

"I'll wash it, mother," announced Mary Ellen. "Run along and make yourself sweet."

"You!" exclaimed her mother, starting. "You have many things to dress yourself as it is."

"In a wink," laughed Ellen. [illegible]

"Now, Mrs. Saunderson [illegible] the nearest chair and put her hands over her face. "But I wanted you to meet him," she said faintly, making an effort to conceal her disappointment.

"Oh, I'll see him again," Ellen assured her [illegible]. "Now, hurry, mother."

"Everything's about ready, and the children are cleaned up."

Mrs. Saunderson allowed herself to be led to the foot of the back stairs, where she stood leaning against the door-jamb disconsolately.

"Lucy Dean is about your size," she began. "Can't you borrow a waist from her?" she added, hesitatingly.

[illegible] mother."

After she had bundled her parent upstairs Ellen returned to the kitchen, where she rolled up her sleeves, and enveloped herself in an old blue-checked apron. Next she brought from the laundry closet a pail, scrubbing-brush, cloth, and soap. A minute later she was down on her knees, vigorously applying soap suds to the brown oilcloth about her.

"What a fuss all for a minister!" she thought to herself contemptuously. "I wish people around this town would hurry up and find out that because a man belongs to the clergy it does not follow that he is an archangel." She laughed gaily. Just then her soliloquy was interrupted by a rap at the door.

"Come in," called out the young lady cheerfully. When neighbors ran in on one another in the little village, knocking was hardly considered necessary. Mary Ellen did not bother to change her position as she knelt, back to the door. The screen door opened and shut hesitatingly; and Ellen, looking under her right arm to survey the newcomer, saw something that made the pink flush her cheeks. It was nothing more or less than a pair of well-polished black shoes protruding from two immaculately creased gray trousers-legs. She waited for the stranger to speak.

"Er-er," came a faint burr from the door.

"Well, what is it?" snapped Ellen. She gave the cloth an impatient flap. It struck the wet cake of soap, which promptly took a slide in the very direction it shouldn't have. The next minute she saw a hand grasp it gingerly. Then three bold strides were taken toward her.

"Miss Mary Ellen Saunderson, allow me to make you a present of——"

Mary Ellen was on her feet in a minute.

"Richard Hilton, how in the world did you get here?" Her embarrassment of a few minutes previous disappeared as she gazed at the good-natured, freckled face before her. She calmly wiped her wet hands on her apron, while Rev. Richard Hilton, dropping the greasy cake, dabbed his dry on a silk pocket handkerchief.

"I'm one of the archangels you were speaking of," he answered, mischievously; "so perhaps I swooped down here rather suddenly." Then he laughed at the amazement depicted on her face.

"You don't mean to say you are a minister—the new minister here?"

"Minister I am called," he answered a little gravely, as he thought of his responsibilities. "You see I decided last fall on this profession, and they let me preach in a place like this after the first year in the theological school. But let me help you work while I tell you about it. Let's renew the old comp [illegible]. All pitch in and help!"

"There's a mop over in that closet," laughed Ellen, pointing to an old-fashioned cubby-hole.

When Mrs. Saunderson, stiffly erect in her best mohair, opened the kitchen door to see that everything for supper was ready, she came upon a scene which nearly took her breath away. Mary Ellen, with rumpled hair, water-soaked apron, and rolled-up sleeves, was calmly scrubbing one corner of the kitchen floor. That was no more than she expected. But over in the opposite corner, with his coat off and his trousers turned up, the Rev. Richard Hilton was applying the sopping mop with vigor.

It required a great deal of explanation to make things clear in Mrs. Saunderson's mind.

That the minister had come to the side door by mistake was plain enough, but not until she had apologized shamefacedly for the appearance of Mary Ellen (who evidently was not at all concerned about it) did she understand that the conventionality of dress was not a sensitive point with ex-campers, and that a man could be just as much a minister without a frock coat and a grave mien as with those accessories.

It was a merry party that gathered around the Saunderson table that night. Pa Saunderson, who had escaped the tortures of a high collar and the uncomfortableness of a Sunday suit, beamed upon the young clergyman. The boys, though they thought longingly of the promised strawberry shortcake, reflected that there had not been time to cram them full of table manners; so they pronounced him "bully" on the spot. As for Mrs. Saunderson, she felt that the last quiver of disappointment had vanished when the minister remarked, as he took his third helping of sponge cake, that he had never felt more at home in all his life. Then it was that she noticed with pride how young and girlish Ellen looked in the hastily donned gymnasium blouse.

After the minister had gone, much later than Elder Pierce's hour for departure, and Mary Ellen was putting the boys to bed, Mrs. Saunderson joined her husband on the old-fashioned porch.

"Well," she began, suggestively, as she took her place in the low rocker by his side.

Amos thumped the front legs of his chair down.

"That young preacher's all right. He's the very man we need, and he's got backbone enough to make that church move," he said [illegible].

There was a silence, while each seemed to read the other's thoughts. Suddenly Mrs. Saunderson leaned over and placed her hand on her husband's shoulder. She looked around nervously before she spoke in an anxious whisper.

"Amos, do you think Mary Ellen has a show?" she asked, hesitatingly.

Her husband looked quickly at her, and laughed.

"Show!" he exclaimed, amusedly. "It seems to me that she's the hull show."

DEFINITION OF A CHINESE.

(From Case and Comment.)

New Zealand found not long ago that the Chinese were doing a large proportion of the laundry work and had thrown out of employment the women workers in some of the laundries.

In New Zealand a laundry is a factory within the meaning of the factories act, [illegible]

An amendment was therefore drafted and printed [illegible] with the utmost seriousness and gone into the Crown [illegible] office for consideration; it contained a provision in these words: "For the purpose of this act (the factories act), a Chinaman shall be deemed to be a girl under eighteen years of age."

Lightning never strikes twice in the same place, in which respect Hard Luck can give lightning [illegible] and spades.

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For skin rashes, eruptions, eczema, etc., either in adults or children, there is nothing known to science which equals Zam-Buk in the quickness and certainty of its curative power. Mr. Raymond Webber, of Allanburg, Ont., writes: "I have tried Zam-Buk for many ailments, and every time have found it successful. Some time ago I had a bad rash all over my body. I tried home-made salves, bath salves, and various home-made preparations, and these proved of no use, but when I tried Zam-Buk I was cured in a quarter of the time that I had been experimenting in vain with other preparations.

"On another occasion I had one of my fingers crushed and in that case also Zam-Buk was the only remedy I used. It healed the wound splendidly.

"My boy had boils, and once again Zam-Buk brought about a complete cure. We have also used it as a household balm for the injuries and skin diseases which are common to every person, and can say that in our experience there is nothing to equal Zam-Buk."

Zam-Buk owes its unique healing power to certain herbal extracts it contains. Unlike most ointments, it contains no poisonous coloring matter, no animal fat, but is purely herbal. For eczema, piles, blood poison, varicose ulcers, cuts, burns, and all skin injuries and diseases, it is without equal and should be in every home. 50c box, all druggists and stores. Use also Zam-Buk Soap, 25c. tablet.

FIGHTING ALCOHOLISM IN FRANCE.

A great French National Anti-Alcohol League has been organized to meet the needs of the situation. One can only admire its courage, its intelligent methods of work, its zeal and, in the face of the horrors reported, its optimism. The last yearly statement describes its various activities.

In its active propaganda it has had the vigorous co-operation of the director of the Paris common schools, who, in a circular addressed to all teachers, urges the formation of temperance leagues among the school children. He says that girls as well as boys should take part in the fight.

"It is true that a woman is not as a rule endangered personally to the extent that a man is, but in view of her future influence in the family, she should have temperance education and instruction, and from youth up be taught to hate alcohol. The world is not too strong for alcohol, and later, if she has not learned to fight it, misery will come home, kill her love, degrade her and condemn her children to degradation and death."

As a result of his circular, hundreds of temperance societies were formed in Paris schools during the year.

The Minister of Public Instruction also issued an appeal in the same spirit to the teachers:

"You should use every opportunity to extend temperance societies in the primary and secondary grades. Other countries are setting us a good example. Thus in Belgium the number of school temperance societies is now 3,000, with 120,000 pupil members."

As a result of this state paper hundreds of new sections of the league have been formed in the teaching body. With 10,000 francs voted by the French Parliament to the society, 4,000 teachers [illegible] have been given a free subscription to the league's [illegible] paper [illegible].

Of the many forms of popular propaganda which the National League carries on, the distribution of [illegible] is most effective. [illegible] large co-operative society [illegible] alcohol been forbidden [illegible] been given to carry on the fight. The league [illegible] posters [illegible] its curative campaign.

[illegible] "Paysan."

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Dodd's Kidney Pills [illegible]

PAN PASSES.

[illegible]

ALL THAT IS NECESSARY.

"Glad to meet you [illegible] insists on marrying last evening [illegible] shall cut him off [illegible] can tell him [illegible]"

"The family lawyer [illegible]"

THE HORRORS OF WHITE SLAVERY

As Seen by United States Government Official.

Wiles by Which Innocent Girls Are Ruined.

No Women Wholly Safe Work of Vicious Men.

Louisville, Ky. [illegible] Stanley W. Finch, chief of the bureau of investigation of the Department of Justice, which for some time has been [illegible] white slave traffic, [illegible] World's Purity Congress. The congress is being [illegible] the World's Purity Federation, an international organization, for the purpose of [illegible]

[illegible]

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[illegible] (Signed) J. E. Holmes, [illegible] Toronto, [illegible] 1911.

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WHERE THE RUB CAME

[illegible]