

**The Lender's "Last Straw."**

BY ANNIE L. JACK.

It was a quiet, drowsy afternoon, and Grandma Longly sat on the doorstep of the tidy kitchen, too weary at the moment to do any more work. The midsummer day had been very warm, without a breeze, and a forenoon of making jam, with dinner getting for Ezra and the three hired men, who were sure to be on hand when twelve o'clock struck, had left her in a frame of mind, and weariness of body, not enviable, to say the least. She must begin the socks in a few minutes, there was such a heap, and then Asa Bilge's girl looked 'round the corner.

"Marm wants to get the lend of yer soap kettle."

"Take it, Sarah, it's out on the stones," she said good naturedly, and then reached for her basket of socks just as her favorite grandchild crossed the street and stood beside the door-post.

"Grandma," he said plaintively, "I ain't got any twine to make a kite string; can you lend me a little of that ball I saw in your table drawer?"

"Yes, dearie, go and take some, only mind don't tangle it," The little fellow ran off in high glee, and her thoughts went back to the past, to the early years of her married life, when she used to think life would be easier after the children grew up. Now her sons had married and moved west. Ezra had bought a farm with the money she had helped him to save. Her only girl was married and lived opposite; heaven be thanked she stayed near her, but here, at sixty years old, she was working—always working—three meals a day, and a house to keep clean, and no chance of anything better now, though she used to think—

"Can you lend me Mister Longley's hay sieve?" said a gruff voice at her elbow, and leaving the mending basket she climbed rather stiffly into the loft of the granary, and searched for the fine sieve, to oblige neighbor Barnes. Then it was time to put on the tea kettle, and while doing so, Mrs. Tompkins came in to borrow a "pickle tea." She had no "idea" she was so near out of it when the girls went down to the provision store that morning. The tea was soon poured out of the cannister into a torn newspaper, and peace reigned once more. But before the kettle boiled, Mrs. Simmonds' twins came in, hand in hand.

"Please, ma'am, will you lend mother your biggest bread pan," said Myra. "Yes, the biggest bread pan," echoed Maggie. The children's innocent looks and pretty speech disarmed Grandma Longley's rising wrath, and she meekly sought the article in question, bestowing at the same time a molasses cookie and a smile upon each of the gentle borrowers. And just as they skipped out, pretty Hettie Janson opened the door. She had on a new dress of a gay pattern, a dark ground where roses gracefully meandered, a large silvered locket on a chain of the same was around her neck, and bangles shook on her arms. Grandma had just taken up the weekly rural paper, that always lay on the window sill beside the mending basket, and was busy putting on her glasses, as the new-comer proffered her request. A gleam, a flash passed through them.

"Want my paper, do you? Why, it cost me

six dozen of Speckle's eggs to buy it for a year. If you'd sell that locket you could get half-a-dozen. I'm tired of people saying they can't afford to take a paper when they have new feathers on their hats. If it's true 'them that borrow sup sorrow,' there's a heap of it for supper in this village to-night." She smiled grimly at the poor pun, and held up the paper. "It's worn to a rag now—been to Tompkins', and they do have a sight of dirt on their hands."

Then Hetty broke in softly—"I didn't come to borrow, to read, only to get the name of the publisher; for Uncle Jan sent me a gold dollar, and I thought I would get a paper of my own with it."

Then Grandma Longley was struck with remorse, and folding up the paper as she handed it to the young girl, said, "I'm very sorry I said so much, Hetty, but your patience would give out too, if you had spent the whole of this hot afternoon, as I have, pestered with borrowers, one after another."

**A Critical Moment.**

Two easy chairs, a veranda wide,  
A corner hid from the light inside;  
Rare Roses around—

And he holds her hand;  
With perfumed zephyr her cheeks are fanned,  
All honeyed words are the words she hears.  
"Will he, to-night?" and she hopes and fears,  
Then all is still, and old Time is fleet;  
All that she hears is her own heart beat,  
As the lights go out in the deserted halls,  
Gently a head on a shoulder falls,  
Gently an arm steals round a waist,  
A look and a ringlet are misplaced.  
"He'll surely speak, oh, that little word!"  
He willing soul with a thrill is stirred.  
"Are you fond of codfish ball?" said he.  
"I never attended one," said she.

**"Advantages of Edgukashion."**

The editor of a Boston newspaper received the following letter one day not long ago:—

"Deere Sir,

"I wright this for a naybor of mine hoo is afeerd he kan't wright an spell an punkshoo-ate good enuff to address a editor! He is a good man but his edgukashunal advantageous has ben somewhat limited? He wants to kno if there wood be enny sho for him to git a gob of work in yure town? he is a kapable an kompetent man, an can turn his hand to most enny thing in the way of days works,

"If you shud heer of ennything he kin to please rite to me an I will let him kno as I read and rite letters for everybody most round heer as I am bout the only man with enny edgukashion to speak of.

"So no more from SIMON G. GALT.

"P. S.—Pleese ancer back."

Blackberry cordial is one of those home-made medicines that used to win renown for our grandmothers. This was considered a most excellent remedy for diseases of the summer. Cook half a bushel blackberries until the juice seems to be all extracted, then put the berries and juice into a flannel bag, squeeze and press all the juice out; put it in a preserving kettle. Make a little muslin bag in which to put the spices, one quarter of a pound of allspice, two ounces of cinnamon bark broken in bits, two grated or broken nutmegs, and two ounces of

cloves are required. To one quart of juice allow one pound of sugar. Cook very slowly; let it become heated gradually, then boil for from ten to fifteen minutes. After this has cooled, add the purest brandy you can buy in the proportion of one pint to three pints of juice. Put into bottles and seal. It is ready for use immediately, though age improves it.

**The Four Truths.**

There was once an old monk who was walking through a forest with a scholar by his side. The old man suddenly stopped and pointed to four plants that were close at hand. The first was just beginning to peep above the ground, the second had rooted itself pretty well into the earth, the third was a small shrub, while the fourth and last was a full-sized tree.

Then the monk said to his young companion: "Pull up the first."

The boy easily pulled it up with his fingers.

"Now pull up the second."

The youth obeyed, but not so easily.

"And the third."

The boy had to put forth all his strength and use both his arms before he succeeded in uprooting it.

"And now," said the master, "try your hand upon the fourth."

But lo! the trunk of the tall tree, grasped in the arms of the youth, scarcely shook its leaves, and the little fellow found it impossible to tear the roots from the earth. Then the wise old monk explained to his scholar the meaning of the four trials.

This, my son, is just what happens with our passions. When they are very young and weak one may, by a little watchfulness over self and the help of a little self-denial easily tear them up; but if we let them cast their roots deep down into our souls, then no human power can uproot them—the almighty hand of the Creator alone can pluck them out. For this reason, my child, watch well your first impulses."

A bad and wicked person seeks companionship with such. A good person seeks fellowship with the good. There is no better test of the character than companionship. It is an unfailing guide. Tell me who is my friend, and you have the index to myself.

**Notes on Prettifying.**

A beautiful tidy for the back of a large chair is made of a square piece of cloth about ten inches each way; on this is sewed patchwork of plush and velvet in the form of a wide-spread fan. The corners of the block are of black velvet, and on the top, drooping over the fan, is a spray from a moss-rose bush, in ribbon embroidery. The edge is finished with lace. This design is pretty for a block in a quilt or sofa-pillow.

A pretty way to fix a palm-leaf fan is to paint it. Mix some ultra-marine of Prussian blue with a little silver white paint, and make it quite thin with boiled linseed oil. Paint the fan on both sides, handle and all, with it. If you choose to decorate it, paint a poppy or some buds and stems on it; tie a blue ribbon around the handle and hang it in a convenient place. If you prefer to make it pink, use crimson or madder lake and white in the same way.