

## THE WIFE'S NEW STORY.

The story, ma'am! Why, really now, I haven't much to say; if you had come a year ago, and then again to-day.

No need of any word to tell, for your own eyes could see. Just what the friends of Temperance have done for John and me.

A year ago I hadn't flour to make a batch of bread, and many a night these little ones went hungry to their bed; just peep into the pantry, ma'am; there's sugar, flour, and tea;— That's what the friends of Temperance have done for John and me.

The pail that holds the butter he used to fill with beer; He hasn't spent a cent for drink for two months and a year; He pays his debts, he's well and strong, and kind as man can be;— That's what the friends of Temperance have done for John and me.

He used to sneak along the streets feeling so mean and low, And always felt ashamed to meet the folks he used to know; He looks the world now in the face, he steps off bold and free;— That's what the friends of Temperance have done for John and me.

Why, at the shop, the other day, when a job of work was done, The boss declared, of all his men the staidest one was John; "I used to be the worst, my wife," John told me, and says he— "That's what the friends of Temperance have done for John and me."

The children were afraid of him, his coming stopped their play; Now every night, when supper's done, and the table cleared away, The boys will frolic round his chair, the baby climb his knee;— That's what the friends of Temperance have done for John and me.

Oh, yes! the sad, sad times are gone, the sorrow and the pain; The children have their father back, and I my John again. Don't mind my crying, ma'am, indeed it's just for joy, to see. All that the friends of Temperance have done for John and me.

And mornings when he's gone to work, I kneel right down and say, "Father in Heaven, oh, help dear John to keep his pledge to-day!" And every night, before I sleep, thank God on bended knee For what the friends of Temperance have done for John and me.

—The Christian.

## HOW IT ALL CAME ROUND.

(L. T. Meade, in "Sunday Magazine.")

## CHAPTER XXVI.—HAD HE SEEN A GHOST?

At this time Jasper Harman was a very perplexed man. Unlike his brother John, he was troubled by remorse. Though so outwardly good-tempered and good-natured, his old heart was very hard; and though the arrows of past sins and past injustices might fly around him, they could not visit the inner shrine of that adamantine thing which he carried about instead of a heart of flesh within him.

There was an ugly secret in the back parts of these two brothers' lives; a secret which had seemed all these years safe and buried in the grave, but over which now little lights were beginning to pour. How could Jasper plaster up the crevices and restore the thing to its silent grave? Upon this problem he pondered from morning to night.

He did not like that growing anxiety of his brother's; he could not tell to what mad act it would lead him; he did not like a new look of fear which, since her father's fainting fit, he had seen on Char. He's smooth brow; he did not like Mrs. Home coming and boldly declaring that an injustice had been done; he felt that between them these foolish and miserable people would pull a disgraceful old secret out of its grave, unless

he, Jasper Harman, could outwit them. What a blessing that that other trustee was dead and buried, and that he, Jasper Harman, had really stood over his grave. Yes, the secret which he and his brother had guarded so faithfully for over twenty years might remain for ever undiscovered if only common sense, the tiniest bit of common sense, was exercised. Jasper paced his room as he thought of this. Yes, there could be no fear, unless—here he stood still, and a cold dew of sudden terror stole over him—suppose that young woman, that wronged young woman, Charlotte Home, should take it into her head to go and read her father's will. The will could not be put away. For the small sum of one shilling she might go and master the contents, and then the whole fraud would be laid bare. Was it likely that Mrs. Home would do this? Jasper had only seen her for a moment, but during that brief glance he read determination and fixity of purpose in her eyes and mouth. He must trust that this thought would not occur to her; but what a miserable uncertainty this was to live in! He did not know that the graver danger lay still nearer home, and that his own niece Charlotte was already putting the match to this mine full of gunpowder. No, clever as he thought himself, he was looking for the danger at the front door, when it was approaching him by the back.

After many days of most anxious thought he resolved to go and see the Homes, for something must be done, and he could feel his way better if he knew something of his opponents.

Getting Mr. Home's address in the Post-Office Directory, for he would not betray himself by questioning Charlotte, he started off one evening to walk to Kenish Town. He arrived in the dusk, and by good fortune or otherwise, as he liked best to term it, the curate was at home, and so far disengaged as to be able to give him a little leisure time.

Jasper sent in his card, and the little maid Anne showed him into the small parlor. There was a musty, unused smell in the dingy little room, for Mrs. Home was still at Torquay, and the curate during her absence mostly occupied his study. The maid however, turned on the gas, and as she did so a small girl of four slipped in behind her. She was a very pretty child, with gray eyes and black eye-lashes, and she stared in the full, frank manner of infancy at old Jasper. She was not a shy child, and felt no little fear of this good-natured, cherry-checked old man, that when Anne withdrew she still remained in the room.

Jasper had a surface love for children; he would not take any trouble about them, but they amused him, and he found pleasure in watching their unsophisticated ways. His good-natured, smiling face appealed to a certain part of Daisy Home, not a very high part certainly, but with the charming frankness of babyhood, the part appealed to gave utterance to his desire.

"Have you brought me a present?" she demanded, running up to old Jasper and laying her hand on his knee.

"No, my dear," he replied quickly. "I'm so sorry; I forgot it."

"Did you?" said Daisy, puckering her pretty brows; "then you're not like our pretty lady; she did not forget; she brought lots and lots and lots."

"I am very sorry," replied Jasper; "I will think of it next time." And then Mr. Home coming in, the two went into the little study.

"I am your wife's half-brother," said Jasper, introducing himself without preface, for he had marked out his line of action before he came.

"Indeed!" replied Mr. Home. He was not a man easily surprised, but this announcement, did bring a slight color into his face. "You are Mr. Harman," he repeated. "I am sorry my wife's away. She is staying at Torquay with our eldest boy, who has been ill. She has seen your daughter."

"Not my daughter, sir, my niece—a fine girl, but Quixotic, a little fanciful and apt to take up whims, but a fine girl for all that."

"I, too, have seen Miss Harman," answered Mr. Home. "I met her once in Regent's Park, and, without knowing anything about us, she was good to our children. You must pardon me, sir, if in expressing the same opinion about her we come to it by different roads. It seems to me that the fine traits in Miss Harman's

character are due to her Quixotic or unworlily spirit."

For a moment Jasper Harman felt puzzled, then he chuckled inwardly. "The man who says that is unworlily himself, therefore unpractical. So much the better for my purpose." Aloud he said, "Doubtless you put the case best, sir; but I will not take up your valuable time discussing my niece's virtues. I have come to talk to you on a little matter of business. Your wife has told you her story?"

"My wife has certainly concealed nothing from me," replied Mr. Home.

"She has mentioned her father's very curious will?"

"His very unjust will," corrected Mr. Home.

"Yes, sir, I agree with you, it was unjust. It is to talk to you about that will I have come to you to-night."

"Sit nearer to the fire," replied Mr. Home, poking up the handful in the grate into as cheerful a blaze as circumstances would permit.

"It was, as you say, an unjust will," proceeded old Jasper, peering hard with his short-sighted eyes at the curate, and trying to read some emotion, beneath his very grave exterior. Being unable to fathom the depths of a character which was absolutely above the love of money, he felt perplexed, he scarcely liked this great self-possession. Did this Home know too much? "It was an unjust will," he repeated, "and took my brother and myself considerably by surprise. Our father seemed fond of his young wife, and we fully expected that he would leave her and her child well provided for. However, my dear sir, the facts could not be disguised. Her name was not mentioned at all. The entire property was left principally to my elder brother John. He and I were partners in business. Our father's money was convenient, and enabled us to grow rich. At the time our father died we were very struggling. Perhaps the fact that the money was so necessary to us just then made us think less of the widow than we should otherwise have done. We did not, however, forget her. We made provision for her during her life. But for us she must have starved or earned her own living."

"The allowance you made was not very ample," replied Mr. Home, "and such as it was it ceased at her death."

"Yes, sir; and there I own we—my brother and I—were guilty of an act of injustice. I can only exonerate us on the plea of want of thought. Our father's widow was a young woman—y younger than either of us. This child was but a baby. The widow's death seemed a very far off contingent. We placed the money, we had agreed to allow her the interest on, in the hands of our solicitor. We absolutely forgot the matter. I went to Australia, my brother grew old at home. When, five or six years ago, we heard that Mrs. Harman was dead, and that our three thousand pounds could return to us, we had absolutely forgotten the child. In this I own we showed sad neglect. Your wife's visit to my niece, through a mere accident, has recalled her to our memory, and I come here to-night to say that we are willing, willing and anxious, to repay that neglect, and to settle on your wife the sum of three thousand pounds; that sum to be hers unconditionally, to do what she pleases with."

When Jasper ceased to speak, Mr. Home was quite silent for a moment, then he said, "My wife is away at present. I would rather not trouble her with money matters during her short holiday. When she returns I will tell her what you say and communicate to you the result."

There was neither exultation nor annoyance in the quiet manner in which these few words were spoken. Uncle Jasper found it impossible to understand this man. He spoke as indifferently as if three thousand pounds were nothing to him, and yet, to judge from appearances, his whole yearly income seemed hardly to represent the interest on so much capital. Did this quiet manner hide deep designs? Jasper Harman edged in his chair as this thought occurred to him.

"There is just one thing more to add," he said. "I will leave you my club address. Kindly communicate with me there. I should like while carrying out my elder brother's wish to act entirely on it without troubling him in any way. He is, I am sorry to say, very ill, so ill, that the least, the very least, agitation is dangerous to him."

He feels with me the unintentional injustice done to your wife, but he cannot bear the subject alluded to."

"Would it not rather be an ease to his mind to feel that what he looks on and perhaps dwells on as a sin has been expiated, as far as his own earthly act can expiate it?" inquired the clergyman gently.

"He shall know it, but from my lips. I should like him best to hear it from me," said Jasper Harman.

A few moments after, he went away, Mr. Home accompanying him to the hall door. The strong light of the gas lamp fell on his ruddy face and sandy hair. He bade his host good-bye and hurried down the street, never observing that a man, much larger and much rougher than himself, was bearing down upon him. It was raining, and the large man had an umbrella up. The two came full tilt against each other. Jasper felt his breath taken away, and could only gasp out a word of remonstrance and apology.

"But the other, in a full, round, cheery voice, replied, "I'm I one from the Colonies, stranger—you need not mention a tiff like that to me. Bless you! I guess you got the worst of it."

He passed on with a laugh, never noticing that he had left Jasper standing in the middle of the road, gasping indeed now, but from a different cause. He put his hand to his heart. He felt his breath come too fast for comfort. What had come to him? Had he seen a ghost?

## CHAPTER XXVII.—THE CHILDREN'S GREAT-UNCLE.

It was a very few days after this that, the morning being very bright and sunshiny, the little maid, Anne, determined to give Daisy and the baby a long morning in the park. Mrs. Home was expected back in a few days. Harold was very much better, and Anne, being a faithful and loving little soul, was extremely anxious that Daisy and the baby should show as rosy faces as possible to greet their mother's return. Hinton, who still occupied the drawing-rooms, was absent as usual for the day. Mr. Home would not come in until tea time. So Anne, putting some dinner for the children and herself in the back of the perambulator, and the house latch key in her pocket, started off to have what she called to Daisy a "picnic in the park."

The baby was now nearly ten months old. His beauty had increased with his growing months, and many people turned to look at the lovely little fellow as Anne gaily wheeled him along. He had a great deal of hair, which showed in soft golden rings under his cap, and his eyes, large and gentle as a gazelle's, looked calmly out of his innocent face. Daisy, too, was quite pretty enough to come in for her share of admiration, and Anne felt proud of both her little charges.

Reaching the park, she wheeled the perambulator under the shade of a great tree, and, sitting down herself on a bench, took little Angus in her arms. Daisy scampered about and enquired when her namesakes, the starchy daisies of the field, would be there for her to gather.

As the little child played and shouted with delight, and the baby and small maid looked on, a stout, florid-faced man of foreign appearance, passing slowly by, was attracted by the picturesque group. Daisy had flung off her shabby little hat. Her bright hair was in wild confusion. Her gray eyes looked black beneath their dark lashes. Running full tilt across the stranger's path, she suddenly stumbled and fell. He stooped to pick her up. She hardly thanked him, but flew back to Anne. The foreign-looking man, however, stood still. Daisy's piquant little face had caused him to start and change color.

"Good gracious! what a likeness," he exclaimed, and he turned and sat down on the bench beside Anne and the baby.

"I hope the little thing didn't get hurt by that fall," he said to the small maid.

Anne, who was accustomed to having all admiration bestowed on her baby, replied briefly that missy was right enough. As she spoke she turned baby Angus round so that the stranger might see his radiant little face. The dark eyes, however, of the pretty boy had no attraction for the man. He still watched Daisy, who had resumed her amusements at a little distance.

Anne, who perceived that Daisy had attracted the stranger's admiration, was determined to stay to watch the play out. She