

April 27, 1911.

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PHONE pities him that's in the snare,
Who, warned before, would not beware.—Herrick

The Road to Providence

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MARIA THOMPSON DAVIES

(Continued from last week.)

SYNOPSIS OF "THE ROAD TO PROVIDENCE."

Mrs. Mayberry, a country physician's widow, has taken into her home Eliza Wingate, a famous singer, who has mysteriously lost her voice. Mrs. Mayberry is much loved throughout the countryside. Her son, Tom, is a rising doctor in the city, but among the home neighbors there is a humorous preference for "Mother Mayberry's remedies. Miss Wingate becomes happier than she has been at any time since the loss of her voice. Mother Mayberry takes into her home Martin Luther Hathaway, the little son of a poor missionary. Miss Wingate discovers she is coming to care for Tom Mayberry, and he realizes that his strong desire is to be able to restore her power to sing. Dr. Mayberry is told by Miss Wingate upon one occasion that she is so happy, it does not matter if she should never sing again; and upon hearing this Dr. Mayberry tells her that although he does not know why he knows, he is going to give her back her voice. Many calls for Mother Mayberry's remedies are made, but she is always up and ready to respond to them. The sewing circle meets with Mother Mayberry, whose table and philosophic kindness are as usual heartily served to her guests. Early in the morning without letting Miss Wingate know, every one in the Providence neighborhood attends the wedding of pretty Bettie Pratt, the preparations for which were supervised by Mother Mayberry.

"ONCE, not long ago, I was in your room with Mrs. Mayberry, hunting for the kittens that the yellow cat had hidden in the house and I caught a glimpse of a most beautiful frock coat—it made me feel parried then, and I thought of the rose gown I have never worn—and—" she paused to let that much sink in well. "I thought I would ask you," she ended in a pensive tone, as she kept her eyes fixed on the rose determinedly.

"You don't have to ask me things just tell me!" he answered with an exquisite hint of something in his voice which he quickly controlled. "The frock coat let it be—and shall we say the rose gown? Then the high gods protect Providence when it be held!" he added with a laugh.

"Oh, will you really?" she asked, overwhelmed with the ease with which the battle had been won.

"I will," he answered, "only don't let Mother tease me, please!"

At which pathetically ingenuous demand the conquering singer lady tossed him the rose and laughed long and merrily.

"You and your Mother are delighted dimples, when Mother May-

berry herself stood in the doorway with well concealed eagerness as to the outcome of the mission in her face.

"Well," she observed with a laugh. "I'm glad to see somebody that has time to stand-around, set-around, passing the news of the day. Did you all know that Bettie Pratt were going to get married in about two hours and a half?"

"We did," answered her son as he drew her a chair close to that of Miss Wingate. "We were just discussing in what garb we could best grace the occasion. Did you succeed in getting Mrs. Tutt to change her mind about honoring the festivities?"

"Oh, yes, she just wanted to be persuaded some. It's a mighty dried up mind that can't leap out in a change once in a while and it's mostly men folks that take a notion, then pettify to stone in it. But you all oughter to see what is a-going on down the Road."

"What?" they both demanded of her at the same second.

"It's that 'Liza Pike again. Just as soon as that child hatches a idea the whole town takes to helping her feather it out. She got Miss Bostick's bed moved to the front window, and

then found that Nath Mosbey's fence kept her from seeing the Road where the procession are a-going into the Meeting-house yard. But that didn't down her none at all, for when I left way a-knocking down the two panels of fence, and leaving Miss Bostick a clean sweep of view. Did you ever?" the small sister's triumph over what to the rest of Providence would have seemed an insurmountable obstacle.

"It's just like her, the darling!" exclaimed the singer lady appreciatively.

"And she have got the Deacon all tucked out until he is a sight to behold. She have made Miss' Peavey starch his white tie until it sets out on both sides like cat whiskers, and have pinned a bokay on his coat all most as big as the bride's. Then she have roached his forelock up on his head so he looks like Martin Luther. And she have got him a-settin' down, so as not to get out of gear none. Miss' Bostick is a-wearing a little white rose pinned on her nightgown, and they is honeysuckle trailed all over the bed. But here am I a-chay-ering with you all, with time a-flyin' and no chance of putting salt on tail this day. Please, Tom Mayberry, go down to the store and buy a nickel's worth of starch, and I'll make of your business how I want to use it. I'm in'ine to look a surprise for you myself before sundown."

"Well, how did you get along with him, honey-bird?" she asked eagerly, as they ascended the front steps together, while the Doctor strode down the Road on his errand.

"Beautifully!" exclaimed the singer lady with enthusiasm and the very faintest of blushes.

"I thought so from his looks," answered the beguiled young Doctor's witty mother. "A man always do have that satisfied martyr-smile when he thinks he are doing something just to please a woman. Now, honey-child you ain't got nothing to do but fill out your own sweet self; and make a job of it while you are about it." With which command Mother Mayberry dismissed Miss Wingate up the stairs to her dormer-window room.

And it is safe to say that no such teeming hours ever floated their seconds away on Providence Road as did those ensuing.

The whole village almost buzzed and hummed and swarmed and out from house to house like a colony of clover-drunk bees on an August afternoon. Laughter flouted on the air and mingled with banter and song, while the aroma of flesh-pots and fine spices drifted from huzzar waters being hurriedly carried from down and up the Road and into the Pratt gate. The wedding supper was being laid on improvised tables in Bettie's side yard, with Judy Pike in command, seconded by Mrs. Peavey, with her skirts tucked up out of possible harm and her mind on the wilting of the jelly mould to a sad

streak in the bride's cake, baked by the bride herself with perfectly happy confidence.

Then on the heels of the excitement came a quiet half-hour devoted to the completing of all toilets behind closed family doors. A shrill squeal issuing now and then from an open window told its tale of tortures being undergone, and a smothered masculine ejaculation added a like testimony.

At exactly a quarter to five, Miss Wingate issued from her room after a completely satisfactory seance with her mirror, and from the front steps looked down in dismay upon a scene of rebellion, that threatened at any moment to become riot.

On the grass beside the porch stood a group of little girls all starched, frilled, curled and beribboned, until they resembled a large bouquet of cabbage roses themselves. Each one clasped carefully a gaily decorated basket filled with roses, and from each sparks of rage, aimed at a huddled company of small boys who were turning their indignation back, sullying their polished freckled faces. Half way up the grassy slope, a girl, Eliza Pike, a glorified Eliza, from a halo of curls to brand new small shoes. She had evidently been carrying on a losing series of negotiations, for her usually sane face had an expression of utter hopelessness, tinged with some of the other's feminine indignation.

"Miss Ellinory," she exclaimed as the singer lady came to the edge of the porch, "I don't know what to make of the boys; they never did this way before!"

"Why, what is the matter?" asked Miss Wingate, something of Eliza's panic communicating itself to her own face and voice.

The boys all suddenly found interest in their own feet or the cracks in the pavement, so Eliza as usual became the spokesman for the occasion.

"They say they just won't carry baskets of flowers, because it makes them look silly like girls. They will march with us if you make 'em do but, but they won't carry no baskets for nobody. I don't want Miss' Pratt to find out how they is a-acting, for three of 'em are hers and five Hoovers, and it is their own wedding. Eliza's voice almost became a wail in which Miss Wingate felt inclined to join.

At this juncture Martin Luther took upon himself to create a further diversion and to add fuel to the flame. By a mistake, and through a determination to follow instructions, he had clung to little Bettie's hand, and when she picked up one of the tiny baskets proffered by the two tots, so he had, he, and thus he found himself humiliatingly equipped and on the wrong side of the yard and question. Disengaging himself from the wide-eyed Bettie, he marched to the center of the middle ground and cast the despised basket upon the grass.

(To be continued)

THE COO

Recipe for public inquires regarding the same, please apply to the Household Editor, Peterboro, Ont.

ICEING

Instead of beating stiff froth, as is usual, take four tablespoons egg, and stir through with cake; it will iceing than beating.

COCAOA
One cup butter, sugar, one cup milk, sifted flour, white light, three even.

Friend baking powder; grated; do even nut; mix and bake.

MUFFINS

Three eggs, one spoonful of good table-spoon sugar, beating 'teaspoon' Powder, flour enough; bake in mud; most done moisten a feather dipped

MINI AD

Soak three cups over night in water, slightly, then let and a half in two molasses; add two sugar, one cup of butter, one of flour enough to make in a quick

CRE

Boil nearly one take two small starch beaten with this add two eggs boiled, stir this scant teap of two of butter, two Cakes: Three egg sugar, one and of teaspoon of Cook powder, mix it in spoons of cold water pans in a quick while hot, and spin

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