

Idyls of Travel.

(Effie Kelly Price.)

Nearly all the world loves an athlete, especially when he is a college man, and plays football. So, although I had told my friends from the window that I had the parlor coach all to myself, and they had congratulated me on being so pleasantly ensconced, I was only slightly annoyed when at the next station a football eleven came trooping in. They were in field costume, these young Knights of the Pigskin. They were covered with mud, their hair hung wildly about their flushed faces, and some of them were limping. One fellow had his arm in a sling. Evidently they were straight from the game. Without ceremony, and without being at all abashed by the presence of a fellow traveller, they took possession of the coach. Lolling comfortably upon the roomy chairs, they discussed the merits of the game at the top of their voices. I could not be accused of eavesdropping; the precautions of Ulysses against the songs of the sirens would have been necessary, had I wished to shut out the animated conversation of these strong-lunged young gentlemen. So I listened with much interest. They had not won the game, it seemed. But its loss was not at all the fault of poor play on their part, as they demonstrated elaborately to one another. Then followed gay talk of the hospitality of their college hosts and hostesses, and much jolly chaffing. And then came the call, 'Twenty minutes for supper,' and out they went to the supper room in the station, giving a stentorian college yell as everybody good-naturedly made way for them.

Sitting in solitary state at the supper table, I watched them from afar as they stood at ease around the lunch counter. At the last moment they came on the train. 'I tell you what, fellows,' said a lad behind me, 'I haven't had enough. Two more sandwiches and an apple and another glass of milk, and I'd have been fixed.'

This was too much for me. Under my chair was a long luncheon box, concerning whose contents I felt very guilty. What would my hospitable aunt think if she knew that her carefully prepared luncheon was untouched, because her capricious niece happened to prefer, when the time came, a hot supper? With a feeling of real relief I turned abruptly to the lad who had spoken, and said hesitatingly: 'There's a box of luncheon under my chair.'

'Oh yes, madam,' he replied politely, and made a movement to get it for me.

'No, thank you,' I said. 'I didn't mean that. My luncheon hasn't been touched, and you're welcome to it, if you'll accept it. I had a hot supper at the station.'

He was so astonished that his thanks were somewhat incoherent. But he took the box; and while I tried to be absorbed in my book, I was conscious of a delighted group behind me.

'Where'd you get it?' said a voice in surprise.

I felt through the back of my chair a finger pointing significantly at me. A low whistle followed, and then a silence, which was broken by one youth saying solemnly: 'The only thing the matter with us is that people are too good to us.'

This mild exchange of courtesies would undoubtedly have ended here had not something occurred ten minutes later that broke conventionalities to bits, and made us all in a moment, Brothers of Pity. A large, elderly woman, who had come on at the last station, and who was sitting in the forward end of the coach, suddenly fell over heavily in a dead faint. The boys made a rush for her as she swayed towards the aisle, and had her in their strong arms before she reached the floor. Gently and carefully they carried her

to the narrow couch at the end of the coach. One ran for a pillow, another brought my travelling rug, and a tall, fair-haired fellow whom they called 'Doc,' and who had an air of quiet authority, bent over the woman with his hand on her pulse.

'It's all right, madam. Doc is a medical student, and he'll know what to do,' said one of them to me, quietly.

The entire eleven were standing about with serious faces, towering above me in a grave semi-circle, as I knelt beside the couch. It was a long fifteen minutes before she came back to consciousness. Then, at a look from the young physician, the boys fell back.

'Don't be troubled,' he said cheerily to the sick woman. 'Our boys look rather rough in their football suits, but they are gentlemen, and they only want to help you. We'll take good care of you.'

Fortunately she was not very ill, and we found out that her destination, two hours distant, was the very town which was the seat of — University. So she would have chivalrous care until she reached her home.

I was gaily installed as head nurse, and the boys were permitted by 'Doc' to come up in sympathetic groups, from time to time, and make warm-hearted inquiries. They all wanted to do something to help; and while our patient was resting, the head nurse was entertained by an account of the recent game.

'You see,' said the captain, 'our president wasn't going to allow us to play the team, and when I finally persuaded him to let us go we had to start off at two o'clock in the morning. The passengers on the sleeper were pretty mad when we gave our yell, but we felt so good we couldn't help it.'

The frank interest with which this was received led to an enthusiastic recital, in subdued tones, of the history of the team's play; and for two hours the head nurse listened to thrilling tales of stiff training, of remarkable 'runs' and 'tackles,' of 'moving accidents by flood and field.'

My last view of the team was from my window, as I sat alone in the coach once more.

Our patient was walking slowly along the station platform, leaning on the arm of the young medical student. The stalwart figure of the centre rush supported her on the other side, and behind her were the rest of the team, gallantly lifting their caps to me in farewell.—'Christian Intelligencer.'

The Two Jacks.

They were just beginning life in the same house of business, the great house of Graham & Co., of Coalville, in the north country. They were sons of two brothers named Field, who had for many years lived a long distance away from each other. Each Mr. Field had named his son Jack, not knowing that his brother had done the same, for 'Jack' had been the name of their own father. While they lived far away from each other, the name mattered little, but now they were living near together, it caused confusion, as no one knew which 'Jack Field' was meant, so it was arranged that the older boy should be called 'John' and his cousin 'Jack.' They were in different departments of the great iron house of business, but frequently met during the day, but had no opportunity to exchange a word, it being a strict rule with Graham that none of their clerks or warehousemen should speak to each other except actually on the business of the firm.

The two lads, therefore, were kept apart during business hours, but were for a long while always in each other's company of an evening. But after a time the elder—John

—observed a good deal of difference in his cousin's ways. 'He keeps quite clear of me now,' he said to himself more than once. 'There's something wrong with him. I wonder what it is.' Having become very much attached to his young cousin, it was not long before the elder lad, by means of a few careful enquiries, and by means, too, of closely noticing his cousin's companions and ways, found it was the old story of the downfall of many a youth, drink, debt, gambling. He tried by every means in his power to persuade Jack to give up his evil companions, but in vain. Somehow they had got a strong hold upon him, and he met his cousin's persuasions by angry speeches. 'There's more behind this,' said the elder lad to himself, 'suppose'—and he stopped, half afraid to put his own thought into words—'Suppose the accounts were wrong! Suppose Jack has taken the money of the firm!' He started from his seat as the thought came to him; 'I wish he'd come in,' he said, 'I'd speak to him now,' and he looked round the room in which he had been sitting alone reading, as if he expected his cousin to appear. But the younger Jack was far away seeking by mad gambling to make up his losses, and seeking in vain. The elder lad, resolving to wait up and speak to him that very night—for he was just then staying at his cousin's house—settled back to his book. There came a knock at the street door, and Jack knowing the servants were upstairs, went himself.

A policeman stood there. 'Is this Mr. Field's?' he asked.

'Yes,' said Jack. 'What is it?' The policeman stepped inside.

'You are Jack Field!' he said.

'Yes, that's my name.'

'Then I arrest you,' said the officer, touching his shoulder, 'on a charge of being concerned in a robbery at Messrs. Graham's.'

It all flashed on Jack in a moment.

The policeman new to the neighborhood, mistook him, the elder Jack, for the real culprit, their names being the same. His mind was made up. 'I'm ready' he said quietly, 'but we may as well go in a cab, and I should like to take one of two things from my room. You can come up.' But the policeman halted at the landing, a little surprised at the coolness of so young an offender. Jack darted not into his own room, but into his cousin's, and scrawled on a loose envelope on the dressing table the words, 'You will hear what has happened. Tell your father all, it's your only chance.' Then catching up a handkerchief and gloves as an excuse, he rejoined the officer, and spent the rest of the evening at the station house. When late that night the real culprit came slinking home, his pockets empty, his head burning, his mind distressed, he was confronted by his father and uncle. The servants had told them what had happened, and the slip of paper on the dressing table had explained the rest. 'Tell us all,' said the father sternly. And having still some sense left, the lad told all, hiding nothing.

'You may thank your cousin's shrewdness, and his kindness too,' said Mr. Field when the sad tale was told, 'for your escape this time. He knew his own accounts were quite right, and he knew also through my influence with Mr. Graham that your offence would be more likely to be passed over if the firm arrested him by mistake in the first place, than if they had secured the real offender, yourself. Your father will repay the money took, and so the matter will end. Let it warn you, Jack, through all your future life to avoid the evil habits and companions that have brought this shame upon you now.'—R. Stansby Williams.