#### FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH.

The snow was falling thick and fast, and to him who sat by the fire within that lonely room, every flake was hurry-ing relentlessly down to cover a new-made grave. It was twilight, the hour she was ever wont to sit beside when she was ever wont to sit beside him, in summer upon the porch, and in this sort of weather, on the other side of the open grate where the empty chair stood now. The funeral had taken place that afternoon; friends were kind, very kind; old comrades had pleaded with him to come to their homes or to let one of them stay with him. But with gentle resistance, he had refused all their well-meant companionship, and was according to his desire, alone. What his plans for the future might be did not matter; for to-night no one should intrude upon his sacred communing. It had happened. Hardly did he realize it yet, and being a man of slow perception and deliberate action, he needed time and solitude to adjust himself to changed circumstances.

Besides, he was not lonely; no storm of grief had as yet rent his being. It may be that he had not felt aright, but true it was, that not even when they brought her in from the street dead had a tear rolled down his cheek Dead! Why should he say that word? Why, there she was in her chair on the other side of the blazing logs: he could see her knitting in the dusk and hear her say, "Yes, John dear, I think it is time to make tea." Was not that she now, moving about in the next room, now, moving about in the next room, tinkling china. The kettle was singing upon the stove; was it not awaiting her too? Yes, and she was coming; he could tell her step in a million; it was scarce heavier than forty years ago. Forty years ago! The half-burnt log gave a sudden lurch and he stooped to fix it. Forty years ago! Why that was way back before the war-yes, he remembered now. It was when she wore that lilac dimity, when her curls were sunny brown. A mere slip of a girl she was then, and slender and frail lways. And his daily prayer had ever been that he should be spared to protect her, that Martha might never be left alone. Plants are different, some stand strongly by themselves, others are of a twining nature. She was of the cling-ing kind always. Yes, he had prayed that Martha be never left alone without him. That was the way he had put the request, but what the granting of might mean to him, he had never dared formulate. And he never suspected that her secret supplication was a simar concern for him

Never overstrong, for some time back Martha's heart had fluttered like a frightened bird, too much and too frequently. Still, only three days ago, in the afternoon, seemingly as well as ever she had put on her little bonnet with the soft lavender velvet bow, and fur coat, preparatory to going down town He had protested, for it was bitter co d and a wind was coming up. But Martha was laughingly rebellious and would have her own way, refusing even to let

m accompany her.
"Why, I'm sixty years young," she exclaimed with an echo of the old youthful ring to her voice. Can't I go down street alone and do a little shop-

And she kissed him and called him : great follow ca', and was off. He could see her now as she went through the doorway; he had watched her admirbly and anxiously to the end of the street where she stepped upon the car Why had he let her go? Why had he not kept her with him while he could? Perhaps it was better not—he would try to think so—lest Martha should ome day be left alone. And having een her take the car safely, he returned to his chair by the fire, wonder az what her little surprise was now. He ad forgotten that it was his birthday, and he did not think of it even now. It was not till he brought her back brough the same doorway and laid her upon the old horse-hair sofa—dead. Dead! Was it really so? Martha dead and he alone by the fire?

He would not remember his birthday hen, but they gave him a small parcel that had been clasped in her arms when she fell. It was a daintly colored photograph in a gilt frame, the picture of a ghing girl with sunny brown hair It must have been made from that old guerreotype of her, taken a few years before the war, a likeness that they had mehow mislaid and had not been able find for many years back. She must have come upon it recently and kept the discovery a secret to birthday surprise.

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Then many things happened in which he had no part. People came and went, did things and said things; but he only new that she laid there cold and still with her pale face gentle as ever, her hair soft and silvery, wearing the black satin dress that he had bought her for their silver-wedding day. Only this afternoon they had taken her away, and

The face of the girl with sunny-brown peeking out at him from the oval frame had br night back many scenes of the mist long-ago, and to-night would live them all through again. No wonder Dick Heaton loved her! Any man well might, and Richard was a good man, too, good man graches and the state of the state good and generous; he proved it afterward. But Martha never loved Dick; she never loved anyone but him, comon, ordinary John Reynolds, with only a pair of stalwart shoulders and a good heart and soul to recommend him. Nothing of cleverness was there in his makewhy had Martha Hadley loved him Impossible to tell: it might have been because her people did not wish her to; they were determined that she should marry Richard Heaton. Dick was a good fellow, but Martha did not So much was sure. But she was a child of strong and righteous inheriting traits of self-denial and forbearance reared in the spirit of setting aside desire for duty. She had, all her life, yielded unquestioning obedience to stern parents, and when they had persisted a sufficiently long time in opposition to John Reynolds, she

did not know that. Afterward, she blushed at the hypocrite he must have thought her when she smiled upon him daily and suffered his caresses. How should she know that he had discerned the truth when his manner remained unchanged? Poor artless girl! The unwonted dissimulation was beginning tell upon her; John Reynolds knew it, for he saw her from time to time as she went here and there to the village gatherings with her husband. And his honest face burned and his good heart ched that she should suffer the most of all. He hushed his own cry of pain, and even hoped that she might forget him, for her own sake, and stamp out his memory from her heart.

He pitied Richard Heaton, too, for something told him that the man must one day awaken to the truth. He would far rather be in his own position, beloved as he knew bimself to be, than in Dick's although Heaton was her husband. Some blessings are twofold in value when doubled in quantity, but such is not true of all good things. That woman is indeed rich who possesses the love of an honest man; Martha, with the love of two, might as well, or better, suffer a dearth of affection. The lilac gown faded and was hung away, and the pretty timid face faded, too, as both John Reynolds and Dick Heaton observed; but neither remarked it except in his own heart. The gilt-framed picture of the brown-haired girl had brought it all back to-night.

The log on the fire was crumbling away. He went to get another, and as he did so, staggered a little. It might have been from the rigidity of his long position, he thought; it could not be from weakness, for he was a strong man. He had never been ill in his life, save after the waynd at Cett. after the wound at Gettysburg, and one again a few months ago, when he had suffered a sort of shock It was that last sickness of his that had made Martha's heart palpitate so badly. He had not been just exactly as spry a usual since. But he was a strong man and not seventy yet. The fresh log crackled and sent out sparks. He set the screen in front of it, for the sparks might set fire to Martha's dress. Martha! Where was she? He leaned forward and placed this hand upon the vacant chair. Then he remembered that she was not there, but in the oval gilt frame, wearing a lilac dimity and sunnybrown curls just as in the days before she was Richard Heaton's wife. And a good wife she was, too, and meant to be always-always.

Dick was the best of husbands, but hen the war broke out, of course he had to go; Heatons had fought for centuries back and their blood through his veins. He was made captain of the vilage company in which John Reynolds ble for a boy that's goin to propose an was a private. And at least one woman's prayerful benediction followed both into battle. Reynolds saw her on the street in the midst of others watching as they tramped away. Sie saw him, too, at the same moment: that was all. Both were full sure that they should never meet again on this side of shound never meet again on this side of the shadowy border; each sent up a spontaneous prayer to God for the keep-ing of the other. What were the feel-ings of the other onlookers and soldiers e know not, but these three hearts eemed to beat a death march as Capt.

Heaton led his company away. Southern skies were hor, the marshes ckening and fever-laden. Forced marches, battles, retreats, thundering cannon, shot and shell; wounds, groans and death were all about him, yet he was spared, he who might be better dead. Why was he not taken instead of that brave one falling at his side, whose last breath was a prayer for wife and children, whose death meant another widow and more fatherless children in the world? It was not until the last day at Gettysburg that he fell, and strange to say, it was not until that same day that the gallant young cap-tain was wounded also—wounded unto

could live but a few days at best, and could live but a few days at best, and that Richard Heaton, with a serious but mortal, wound was close by in the same hospital, and a source of great comfort to him. Such an easy thing to do, to slip in one name where the other ought to be, when the writer knew not the personality or the whereabouts of either! It was at Heaton's abouts of either! It was at Heaton's request and wholly unknown to Reynolds that she wrote, and may God forgive the pale young wife if, when the letter came to her New England cottage, there was a single traitorous or rebellious thought, a spirit, even transitory, other than that of renunciation! She had been loyal to her husband, devoted and been loyal to her husband, devoted and true; she would remain so, faithful for a life time. But he was dying. Was it wrong that she flew there fast as trains could take her, fuming with unwonted impatience at every delay and obstacle. praying God to spare him breath until her arrival. What she had renounced for a life time might she not indulge for a moment? Only to place her hand upon the brow, and look into the eves she loved once more! Then, it would be over all for ever.

Small wonder if John Reynolds concluded that he must have been suddenly taken with some sort of illusioning fever, when, as sitting with great effort—for his own wound was painful enough, by the cot of Richard Heaton, trying to solace him whose life had all but gone, he discerned advancing the one loved face and form that was always present in his waking and sleeping dreams. Could Dick see it, too, and was it a vision sent to solace his dying moment? Could it be that he was awake and heard aright when the nurse was telling Richard Heaton that his wife had arrived and was then waiting outside the door for the announcement to be gradually and gently made? It was succumbed, and locking her Rose of Joy tightly within her heart, consented to marry Richard Heaton.

And she did so. But to do justice to Heaton, he did not know—not then.

She, poor child, thought it impossible to keep her secret forever, and smile and be dutiful to her chosen husband. Keep such a secret a lifetime! What a task! Of course he guessed it, but she did not know that. Afterward, she ways to give husband and wife privacy. away to give husband and wife Heaton's feeble hand was raised detain-

ingly.
"Do not go, John," he said, the words bo not go, John," he said, the words coming between struggling gasps, "I—have—something to say. I want you to take care of Martha when I am gone. She loves you—I was blinded—did not know—until too late. She has been true and kind to me—will be to you. Sorry I kept you apart so long. Take Sorry I kept you apart so long. Take her now John; Martha, give him your hand and promise me."

It seemed as if every word he uttered shortened his life a space; the struggle was painful to him and them. The pledge given, he had no more to say save, "Comfort her!" when he saw his wife's slight frame shaking violently

And John Reynolds had wept with her too if there were any comforting in that. Wept. He was weeping now, in the lonely room before a lightless grate. His own great sobs aroused him; he was cold and numb; his arm had that "needles-and-pins" sensation which he first experienced a few months ago. Well, he would sit there a bit longer and finish his dream. Since the war was over, since—since then—until three days ago when he saw her tie on the little bonnet with the soft lavender velvet bow, he had not been from her side a single day. Why had he not gone with her-it was so cold-when she alone laughing and saying that she was sixty years young! She came back—they brought her back—her and the lilac-dimity girl in the gilt-frame—and both were with him still. One had silver curls and the other sunny both smiled and smiled and beckoned -he smiled back through his tears and answered that he would come.

In the morning his nearest neighbor. who came in early to be sure that he had some breakfast, found him in the chair before a fireless grate. She called in and began to wash herself with her paws after the manner of the feline scious, who pronounced him to be suffer-ing with a stroke, due probably to shock and grief. In a few days, they laid him to rest beside Martha, whose secret prayer had been that John should never be left alone.—Rosemary Hoar in The Springfield Republican.

# WIT AND HUMOR.

A LITTLE WOMAN.

"I want to get a mitten, please," the litle girl, "if it don't cost too much."
"Oh! you mean a pair of mittens,

don't you, my child ?" replied the shopkeeper. No, just only one ; one that's suita-

be rejected.'

MR. DOOLEY ON ATHLETES.

"Were ye iver an athlete?" asked Hinnissy. "I was wanst," said Mr. Dooley, "an' a grand wan, too. But th' more me intellect an' me waist developed th' slower become me feet, an' I give i up. Sure, an' what's th' use iv it all? It's a good thing to be able to run fast, an' I'm as good a practical runner as annybody ye iver seen in th' face iv danger. All other things bein' equal like courage an' shoes, I cud get out iv throuble quicker thin that young fellow that won th' eight hundred meters. We will niver know who's th' fastest runner v th' wurruld onfil we have where ivry man will be dhressed suita ble f'r th' occasion whin he is pursooed be an insane man with a gun. heerd iv a man throwin' a hammer sixty feet except at a circus? If he car throw it two feet accurately at a horse shoe he's doin' something f'r th' wurruld. Maybe these here spoorts are good f'r th' young fellows. They must be or they wudden't be at thim all th' time. But ye can bet that whin ye hear a man that's lived to be over sivinty tell ye But in the letter which the kind young lady wrote to Martha, there was a mistake. It told her that John Reynolds was hopelessly shatter.

## A REASONABLE DOUBT.

Not long ago an Irishman whose hand had been badly mangled in an accident entered the Boston City Hospital Relief entered the basical Cut.
Station in a great hurry. He stepped
up to the man in charge, and inquired:
"Is this the Relief Station, sir?"

"Yes. What is your name?"
"Patrick O'Connor, sir."
"Are you married?" questioned the

"Yis, sor, but is this the Relief Sta-tion?" He was nursing his band in He was nursing his hand in "Of course it is. How many children

have you?"
"Eight, sir. But sure, this is the

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"Yes, it is," replied the official, growing a little angry at the man's persist-

"Well," said Patrick, " sure, an' I was beginning to think that it might be the pumping-station!"

"DO HOGS PAY ?"

A Georgia editor was asked: "Do hogs pay?" He replied: "A good many do not. They take the paper for several years and then have the postmaster to mark it 'refused' or 'removed and present address unknown.'"

THE BISHOP AND THE BOY. Bishop McFaul is fond of children and he prides himself on knowing many of the school children of his cathedral parish. He was formerly curate of the parish where he now resides as Bishop and his boast extends to two genera-

The Bishop tells the story on himself. The dishop tells the story on himsel.

The other day he was passing through the school yard, when he met a fine, manly youngster. "What is your name?" asked the prelate. "Jimmy name?" asked the prelate. "Jimmy Reilly," answered the lad with composure. "And who am I," continued the good Bishop. "I don't know," replied Jimmy. "Well, I am the Bishop, Bishop McFaul," said His Lordship, "and how is you don't know me?" "How is it you didn't know me?" came the quick response, as the Bishop hurried on, laughing heartily. ing heartily.

Some time ago a little West Philadel phia girl went to Tioga to spend the day with her aunt, and while they were

"Look, Bessie," said the aunt, pointing to the cat; "pussy is washing her face."
"No, she isn't," stoutly asserted little

"Why, Bessie," returned the aunt in a surprised tone, "what is she doing then ?

"She is washing her feet and wiping them on her face," was the prompt re-ply of the youngster.

#### WHEN THE DEVIL WAS FOOLED.

Once upon a time there was a Catho ic young man who had been to a good college. At the end of his course there his professors for a whole year brought under the young man's notice the anti-religious opinions of Mill and Spencer, and—oh, ever so many others, from the redoubtable Professors Tyndall and Huxley down to a smaller person whom the young man thought rightly called Bain.

It was, as has been said, a good college to which the young man went, and everybody there, especially the profess-ors of philosophy, knew that the teach-ing of some of these much-quoted people is about as valuable in itself as the Esquimaux language.

But even Esquimaux is handy when

you want to talk to people who live in snow houses, as so many do at present, shut out from the warmth and light of the house of God.

So our young man was shown the Es quimaux grammar books and found that they wouldn't parse or analyze, and vere altogether very nasty.

But he was taught to repeat the 'Adoro Te' by heart in the original Latin as St. Thomas wrote it. And he knew that Sir Thomas was a greater philosopher than all the Mills, the Spencers, the Huxleys and the Tyndalls that ever were, to say nothing of Bains upon Bains "in solid phalanx rolled," or the book-writing people who referred to him curtly in foot-notes as "Aquinas." This last, he always thought, was like

their cheek.

One fine summer morning, after this young man had been out in the world and earning his living for about ten years, he found himself at early Mass without a prayer book, So, having the free run of the organ gallery because he was a member of the choir he quietwas a member of the choir ne quietly left his seat at the back of the church
and stole upstairs just before the offertory to get one of the penny prayer
books used by the choir boys.

I am really obliged to add that he

gave something to the collector at the foot of the stairs, or you would think that he meant to dodge the plate.

Upstairs the young man found him-elf (but not the prayer books, which were under lock and key) extremely comfortable in the cool and empty choice loft, and decided to remain there til the end of Mass. Still bookless, he said the beads till the Elevation, and from that onwards began very slowly to repeat the "Adoro Te," adding at the end of each verse of St. Thomas the lovely refrain of some other holy poet:

"Ave. Jesu, Pastor fidelium, Adauge fidem omnium in Te speranti

Liturgical writers-a fierce race-say at it is naughty to make this addition. But that is only their rubrical fun. In rivate devotions they use it them

elves. Now when a young man—our young man, or any other—is occupied thus, the devil is hurt very much. He is annoyed; he is vexed. And God sometimes lets him signify the same in his result means. usual manner.

Thus it was this particular bright summer's morning with the young man when he reached the triumphant coup

"Credo quidquid dixit Dei Filius, Nil hoc Verbo Veritatis verius."





Hitherto he had felt as well as believed that our Lord was within twenty paces of him. And then, click! clack! without a second's warning, the devil turned his cinematograph upon the oung man's brain.

course, then and there, he ceased

Of course, then and there, he ceased to feel that he believed. But he had not been trained in vain. He took no notice of that.

It was annoying, though, when, "nolens volens," the young man was forced to become aware that the devil's impudent gas was a vary to the took of the training that the devil's impudent gas was training to the training that the training that the training training the training train dent game was to disturb his faith the Blessed Sacrament. Films, terrible films, were reeled off at lightning speed, showing scoffing pictures of great world ly-wise materialists, scorning the young man as one in more evil case than the hopeless lunatic in Bedlam.

What cannot be cured must needs be What cannot be cured must needs be endured. The young man bore the torture stolidly, if ruefully. He had a certain consciousness, too, born of the graces in the past, that it could not last much nger. It was too swift, too furiou

How he wished that he had brought his prayer book with him! How acutely the devil had noted his empty hands ocket! He was praying; praying. But book is a help.

"A thousand difficulties do not make a single doubt." The great Cardinal's words cannot be cited too often, so profoundly true they are. But a single difficulty will sometimes raise a thousand gibbering phantoms. The devil plied the young man well with difficulties; those that have been raised in books, as well as others too foolish for words. The young man know the coverable. oung man knew the answers, but was so wary to argue in the middle of a ght. He hit out with Hail Marys instead, and signed for a prayer book—a big one, with colored pictures in it.

The devil played a ding-dong game—hostile Locke to the one hand, friendly Leibnitz to the other, in an un-shut-out-

able gallanty show. Throughout it all audible and clear,

the devil's voice was whispering:

"You say you believe, but do you be-lieve? Does your 'sub-conscious self' believe? You say you believe, but do you believe?" . . . and so on, drearily da capo.

The young man saw on the floor a

couple of leaves that had fallen there from some ill-bound hymn book. He picked them up with avidity. The topost thumb-worn leaf began Faber's pleading lines:

" Mother Mary, to thy keeping

He went over this verse many times reathing rather than humming the win ome air to which it was sung at college. This did him good. Since the days of David and Saul, the evil one hates holy ong when he wants to instill gloom. So the young man, in football phrase, began to get his second wind. The "Do

ou believe ?" went on, but it hurt less nd he could ask our Lady to look mer cifully upon his badgered imagination and make it behave itself. Shortly all went well. Then he became aware that people were going to Holy Communion. He could not see them from where he sat without standing up, but he heard their footsteps approaching the altar. At the first "Corpus Domini nostri Jesu Christi" he bowed his head and made a

spiritual Communion.

The next moment he found himself on his feet, quivering in every limb and gazing anxiously at the sanctuary. stumble, and the faint clink of metal.

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God again! But one of those present still feels his nerves a-tingle in their deepest centers now that they have ceased to

It is the young man in the organ gallery as he kneels down to thank God and our Lady from his heart for showing him that his faith is deep rooted. For men without faith do not quiver like startled deer when a cupful

of bread is like to fall on the floor.

Reaction told for a while, and he wept a little. Then he dried his eyes as the congregation left the church and

as the congregation left the church and smiled to himself.

"For a subtle fiend," he said, "the devil is an awful fool!"—John Kevin Magner in The Magnificat.

We should try to impart to the atmosphere of our earthly homes some trace of that heavenly home where our Father





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