

STORIES  
POETRY

## The Inglenook

SKETCHES  
TRAVEL

## THEIR POINT OF VIEW.

By Jean K. Baird.

## Chapter I.

Mrs. Hardy was entertaining the new minister's young wife with a description of the town.

Her talk was pithy and quite to the point, for her experience had been broad and she had never been slow to grasp new or difficult situations. She was far past middle age, and had been a widow for many years. She was well provided for financially and had leisure to devote much of her time to work in the church and the charities of the town.

"You will find Irwin's a cheap place to buy your groceries, Mrs. Cleaver," she said. "They sell staple articles all ways a cent or more cheaper than any other store in town. But—"

"Is that where you buy? They must be good, for I could not help noticing how lovely your berries were."

"No; I do not buy there. It does not seem to me to be the right thing for a church member to do. They sell cheap because they run a wet-end grocery. When we take advantage of this, we are reaping our profits from the business."

Mrs. Cleaver turned her large and luminous eyes toward her hostess. She had but lately come from a State further East, and did not grasp the significance of the term "wet-end."

"I'm afraid I do not understand you, Mrs. Hardy. Are groceries musty if they come from a wet-end grocery?"

"Scarcely. I had forgotten that you were new to our ways out here. A wet-end grocery sells liquors as well as their legitimate line of goods. At Irwin's store you'll see a line of children with pitchers and buckets. They carry home beer aale more frequently than they carry groceries."

"Really, Mrs. Hardy?" The speaker's eyes expressed a child-like surprise. She could not believe that such things could be.

"Yes, really. You will find that there is plenty of work to be done here. Irwin's is not alone. Smith Brothers' is the only grocery that is dry. I always buy there, although they are a trifle dearer. But they are strong advocates of temperance. I make it a principle to do my buying with those people who stand on the side of right."

"It is the right course to pursue," said Mrs. Cleaver. Then she wrinkled up her pretty little brows as though in perplexity.

"I was trying to remember something. I've met so many people, seen so many new faces, that I remember clearly very little. But some one advised me to buy at Irwin's because they were cheaper. I cannot remember who it was. I'm glad that you took the trouble to make the conditions clear to me. I wish to do what is right in the matter."

Mrs. Hardy laughed. "I know who has been talking to you. Dr. Hobart is such a hand for household economy. He would walk a square to save a penny. I have often wondered at his going to Irwin's. He's profiting from the sale of liquor—only a few dollars a year, perhaps, yet the principle is the same. He is so influential. He has been an elder in the church for years, and I'm sure no one can remember the time when he was not at the head of the Sunday-school. Coupled with these is the fact that he is city superintendent of schools. A man in his position should watch himself. He is before all eyes. His slightest act is commented upon. I have always felt sorry that he would countenance these wet-end groceries. If all the church people would refuse to buy from them they would be obliged to separate the two businesses. I have always regretted Dr. Hobart's action in the matter."

"Perhaps he has not realized the importance of his example. The question may not have come to him. Have you ever spoken to him on the matter?"

"No, indeed. I feel as though I would not dare. He's very genial when one meets him socially, but if one would seek to criticize him in person he would draw within his shell. I would be afraid to broach the subject. But for the sake of the church and the growing boys and girls who look up to him, I wish some one would."

## Chapter II.

Dr. Hobart, in an elegant turnout, with matched horses and a coachman, was taking his pastor and wife about the city.

"We are particularly fortunate in our business section," said he, as they were driving down Market street. "Fine fire-proof buildings. The store-rooms are commodious and well lighted. You see, we people in the Middle West are not crowded for room as you are in the East. We take time and room to build." He pointed to a substantial corner block of gray stone. "The finest offices I ever saw are in the third and fourth floors. It's a wholesale liquor house. The officers of the firm occupy the greater part of the third floor. It's the best business situation in the city."

"It is too bad that a more legitimate line of business does not control it," said Mr. Cleaver.

"They can afford to pay a big rent and they do. The building, by the way, is owned by one of our church people—Mrs. Hardy. You've already met her." "By Mrs. Hardy," asked Mrs. Cleaver. Her eyebrows puckered. Her expression was that of one who could not give credence to what had been heard.

"Are you surprised?" asked Dr. Hobart. "I do not wonder at it. Mrs. Hardy is an excellent woman. She is cultivated and liberal in her views. She stands high socially and in church affairs. That makes her attitude in this matter more deplorable. If she were other than what she is, we could not reasonably expect her to take the radical course in ethical matters. For her own sake and the sake of the young people, who look up to her, I regret that she profits by the sale of liquor."

"Have you never spoken to her concerning the matter? It may be that the subject has never presented itself to her as it has to you." A suppressed smile came on the speaker's lips, and a twinkle to her eyes. She was not without a sense of humor. The situation presented possibilities to her.

Dr. Hobart shrugged his shoulders. "You do not know Mrs. Hardy. She is all that is excellent; but she would not allow her dearest friend to dictate to her."

"Why not merely suggest?"

"Impossible for me. You might be able to do so, for women have more tact than men."

He looked at her inquiringly, as though awaiting her promise. She smiled in answer, but did not commit herself to words.

## Chapter III.

A few weeks later, Dr. Hobart, with his wife and Mrs. Hardy, were guests at the parsonage.

The hostess, with subtle tact, kept the conversation to light and airy trifles until dinner had been served, and she sat with her guests on the broad, veranda overlooking a well-kept lawn.

"You have a pretty place here," said Mrs. Hardy, complacently, seating herself and looking about her. "With the exception of State street, this is the prettiest in town. Have you been down in that part of the city yet?"

"But once. I was delighted with it. Dr. Hobart was kind enough to take

us driving. We saw the best part of the town. The business blocks are particularly fine. Your building of gray stone is quite imposing, Mrs. Hardy." The hostess was young. Her innocent expression spoke of a heart without guile. Dr. Hobart sniffed the air like a war-horse scenting battle.

"It is considered a very fine building," said Mrs. Hardy.

"It would be considered finer if it were put to a different use," snorted Dr. Hobart.

The hostess and Mrs. Hobart were beyond hearing. Mrs. Cleaver had remembered an instant before that Mrs. Hobart was interested in fancy work and had taken her into the house to show her some fine embroidery. The time for both Dr. Hobart and Mrs. Hardy to be spoken to about their short comings was propitious.

At the former's remark, Mrs. Hardy looked at him in surprise.

"What was that you said?" she asked, as though she could not have heard aright.

"That it would be finer if put to better use. And, now while we're on the subject, I'll express myself in a way that I've long wanted to. I cannot understand how an educated Christian woman as you are, can rent to the class of tenants you do. You are temperance and yet you profit by the sale of liquors. I cannot understand it. I feel deeply on the subject."

Mrs. Hardy was angry, but she controlled herself. Smiling, calm and serene, she replied: "I can sympathize with you. I have been in that same maze myself. It has long been a question to me, why a cultivated Christian gentleman as you, for the sake of saving a half-cent a pound on sugar, would encourage trade which is growing fat on its sale of liquor. Because these people make 10 per cent. on the wet-end business, they are willing to make but 2 per cent. on the dry. I cannot understand such things. I assure you that I feel deeply on the subject."

Dr. Hobart met her argument. She answered him back with a logic as good as his own. The hostess and Mrs. Hobart were detained over the needle-work for a full half hour. The charges and counter-charges were still going on when they appeared. But at their appearance their conversation changed.

Mrs. Cleaver smiled placidly to herself. From the few scraps of conversation which she had overheard, she knew that Dr. Hobart and Mrs. Hardy both had a new point of view. She wrinkled her youthful brows at the thought that her youthful wait until results would tell her if her strategy was wasted.

## A CLEVER BOY.

Near the end of the season our boy announced the height of our tall maple tree to be thirty-three feet.

"Why, how do you know?" was the general question.

"Measured it."

"How?"

"Foot rule and yardstick."

"You didn't climb that tall tree?" his mother asked anxiously.

"No'm; I just found the length of the shadow and measured that."

"But the length of the shadow changes."

"Yes'm; but twice a day the shadows are just as long as the things themselves. I've been trying it all summer. I drove a stick into the ground, and when its shadow was just as long as the stick I knew that the shadow of the tree would be just as long as the tree, and that's thirty-three feet."