

Sunday Reading

The Caller and His Wife.

One of the first things visitors observed when they passed through the colliery were the numbers chalked on the green painted doors. These could not be mistaken for the numbers of the houses. These latter had been painted by the colliery painter in bright red. Obviously, the chalk characters were the handiwork of amateurs. It was noted that only three numerals were used—2, 3 and 5. On some of the doors one of these figures appeared; on others two of them were to be seen; while there were a few with the three white figures conspicuous. The question was asked by every stranger, 'What is the meaning of these figures in chalk?'

If any one had been astir between the hours of two and five A. M., they would have met a little old man, with a lighted lantern in his hand, scanning the chalk figures and rapping at certain doors. After each rap he would wait a few seconds till he heard a tap at the upstairs window, and the usual response, 'Aye, Georgie!'

It was George Gilchrist, the caller. The deputies of the colliery had scrawled the figure 2 on their doors, for that was the hour when they had to get up to go to the pit. It was their business to see that everything underground was safe for the men and boys. At three o'clock the caller made a second tour of the streets and aroused the pitmen. At five o'clock he made a third circuit to awaken the lads.

George Gilchrist was conscious of the gravity of his profession. It was his boast that during his long term of office he had never made an error, never mistaken a figure, and never failed to make a sleeper respond.

A pleasing sight was Georgie, when he emerged from his house in 'The Pensioners' Terrace,' dressed in complete colliery regiments to go his rounds, with trousers cut off at the knees, thick blue worsted stockings, shoes fastened with brass clasps, a blue flannel shirt, a jacket with a double back, and a skull cap of polished leather. The caller was a partial snuffery, but he clung tenaciously to his accustomed pit attire.

He was one of the favorites of Blackerton. The sight of his kind but sad face was dear to every eye. He had lived his long life on the colliery, and not even the conceivers and circulators of scandals had dared to tamper with his name. He had lived the 'lovely and pleasant' life. He was a Christian, without the suspicion of guile.

When the Blackerton folks referred to the caller they invariably said, 'Poor Georgie! The adjective had no reference to the poverty of his finances. It was the common term of sympathy and sorrow, for Georgie's life had been embittered with shame and grief.

Roger Naisbitt had stepped into the cabin to gossip with the cleaner. The demagogue's face was terrible with anger. He had just seen the caller's wife was stealing to the back entrance of 'The Black Horse.'

'Tommy,' he exclaimed, 'if I'd a wife like Georgie Gilchrist, I'd hev killed her, I should. And when she was dead, I'd hev told God it was a mistake she was ever born. Georgie's the only man who'd hev put up with her gannins on these thirty years.'

'That's what our Martha told her one day,' replied Tommy. 'She vexed Martha w' somethin' she said about Georgie, an' my owid woman told her she could thank

her stars she was married to Georgie Gilchrist.'

There's nee doot about that,' Roger affirmed. 'She'd hev been a corpse long ago if she'd been mine.'

'Ah, weel,' said Tommy, 'ye didn't know. That's what you think. If our women folks had taken to drink, maybe we wadden't hav kilt them.'

Tommy's sage moralizings restrained the demagogue's wrath.

'Well then,' he persisted, 'I sho'll have sent her to the asylum, or some such place.'

'Maybe ye wad, an' maybe ye wadden't,' the lamp keeper slowly replied. 'Ye canna tell what ye wad dee. It would tak' all the county police to catch her. She'd be bad to catch, and worse to hold. You'll mind when she blacked the landlora's eye be cause he wadden't give her any more liquor. Tom Wainwright rushed to the door shouting 'police!' but the police couldn't be found. Abe Fletcher declared he saw the sergeant slipping to the pit hay to be out o' the way.'

The love of the Blackerton people for Georgie Gilchrist was strong, even as their hatred of his wife was intense. The shameless women she drank with despised Polly Gilchrist for her brutality to her man.

'There's that busy again,' the women would say, as they watched her, even by eight o'clock in the morning, searching apparently for her hen, but gradually approaching the public house, with her hand beneath her apron holding the jug.

'Did ye see that woman this morning, Fletcher?' said Ellen to the postman as he ate his breakfast.

'Aye, she made an early start to day,' was Abe's response.

'Fletcher,' Ellen went on, 'it would hev served her right if she'd got a man as bad as herself. He'd hev frightened her. But in this world somehow, the best and the worst get wedded.'

The caller was never known to have spoken to any one about his wife's behavior. Some, indeed, had attempted to draw him into conversation, but without avail. His visage was marred with sorrow, his hair whitened with grief, but no confession or complaint had escaped his lips.

One Saturday, shortly after our arrival at Blackerton, I had business with a book-seller in Bishopstown. Entering the shop, I found Robert Lamenby examining the books. Having made my purchases, we walked home together. On the highway we met the caller making his way to the town.

'Poor Georgie!' said Lamenby, when the caller had passed. 'He'll be going to bring her home. Every Saturday she goes to meet her mother in Bishopstown. Her mother now lives at Pittburn, five miles on the other side. They'll drink together till closing time. Poor Georgie! He thinks no one suspects why he goes to the town every Saturday. He'll wait outside the house till she comes out at eleven o'clock. Then, when she's reeling home, he'll overtake her as though by accident, carry her parcels and lead her home.'

'And does she never suspect that he follows her into town for that purpose?' I queried.

'I think not,' Lamenby rejoined. 'Georgie says he likes to see the shops and all the folks.'

It was the Fifth of November, and the Blackerton boys had built the bonfire in honor of Guy Fawkes. Tommy and Martha Gibson were standing on the back step to see the illuminations.

'Tommy,' said Martha in a quiet voice, 'd'ye remember what happened on this night thirty years ago?'

'Poor Georgie!' murmured Tommy, and the sympathetic exclamation was the proof of the vividness of Tommy's recollection.

The Fifth of November was the tragic date in the year's calendar to poor George Gilchrist. On the evening of that day the happiness of a good man's heart was killed, a great fear of a life's long misery clutched his soul. One hour before his face was bright with hope and radiant with peace. The incidents of a few minutes banished the joy and crushed the faith. Georgie looked at his young wife with terrible eyes. The veil had been torn from her false heart. He had married a traitress. She had pledged her vows to him, but her vows were lies. She had joined her life to his to ruin it.

It is certain that George Gilchrist never breathed the cruel secret to mortal soul; and, as the horror came when the young husband and wife were alone, the revelation must have come from the delinquent herself.

For fourteen weeks Georgie had been a proud and happy man. For fourteen weeks he had lived with Polly in their bright new home. Prior to his marriage he had been a member of the Temperance Society. When he began to court Polly Stevens, she also signed the pledge and attended the weekly meetings. For thirteen weeks

after their wedding day husband and wife answered to the roll call.

The meeting of the fourteenth week was on the fifth of November. Georgie was dressing for the service.

'Come, Polly,' he said; 'get ready.' 'I'm not going to-night! she said in cold tones.

'Not going to-night?' Georgie repeated in astonishment. 'Why?'

'Because I'm not!' she retorted, 'A nameless fear took possession of Georgie's soul. The foreboding of anguish rendered him speechless. His silence irritated the faithless woman.

'I'm not going to-night, and I'm not going again; so you needn't pay any more for me.'

There was fire in her eyes and battle voice.

With trembling limbs Georgie staggered to the table, and took therefrom a book. He opened it at the fly leaf and held the writing thereon before her eyes. It was 'The Guide of Life' the President of the Temperance Society had presented to them on their wedding day. On the fly leaf he had written this inscription:

'Presented to George Gilchrist and Polly Stevens on the occasion of their marriage, and in recognition of their membership in the Temperance Society with all good wishes and prayers for their future happiness and prosperity.'

Georgie stood with the book in his hand. His eyes were full of tears. With a passionate gesture she knocked the book from his nerveless fingers. She was on her feet blazing with anger. The stricken man cowered before her shameless and callous cruelty.

'I'm not going to your Temperance Society. I never would have gone at all if I hadn't wanted to marry ye. Ye may as well know, once for all, that I never was teetotal.'

The broken man stumbled to the stairs, and reached the room above. Falling on his knees, he wept his sorrow before God. His very soul was riven with anguish. The wretched man groaned in the travail of his desolation.

The woman sat in the room below. There was no pity, no relenting in her cruel heart, even when she heard the good man's cries and tears.

The long years had prolonged the tragedy of that dreadful night. The guilty woman had lost her soul. The mask once torn from her lying nature, her shame was exposed to the light. The cheerless heart of the outraged man had not even the comfort of an occasional caress or loving look. On his part, no word of anger had crossed his lips, though he had made tender appeals to his wife in her quieter moments.

'Poor Georgie!' said the kindly effectuated Blackerton people; and the ejaculation was expressive of their bitterness to the woman who had taken a good man's heart to wrong it, and indicative of their sympathy with the good man's grief.

One of the saddest events during the years of our residence on the colliery was the death of Tom Maddison. His decease was terrible in its suddenness. His wife having been an invalid for years, the affectionate man had taken the mother's place in many domestic duties. It was a Friday night, and Tom was taking the bairns to bed. The youngest was in his arms, a three year old boy was riding on his back, while Tommy, proud of his five years, hung on to his father's coat.

The father knelt with his children to pray. Having sung their hymn and recited the Psalm, they began to repeat the Lord's Prayer after their father.

'Our Father!' 'Our Father!' repeated the bairns. 'Who art in heaven?'

Women Need Not Suffer



DOAN'S KIDNEY PILLS

are daily proving themselves woman's greatest friend and benefactor.

Here is an instance:

Mrs. Harry Fleming, St. Mary's, N.B., says: 'The use of Doan's Kidney Pills restored me to complete health. The first symptoms I noticed in my case were severe pains in the small of my back and around the loins, together with general weakness and loss of appetite. I gradually became worse, until, hearing of Doan's Kidney Pills, I got a box from our druggist.'

'I am pleased to testify to their effectiveness in correcting the troubles from which I suffered.'

'Who art in heaven?'

The prayer ceased.

'Go on, father!' said Tommy, with his eyes closed.

There was silence in the room, save for the ticking of the old clock in the corner. 'Go on, father!' pleaded Tommy. 'Say "Hallowed be thy name!"'

There was no response.

The children opened their eyes and pulled their father's arms.

'Go on, father!'

The father's voice was hushed in death.

The human father had joined the Divine Father in heaven. Tom Maddison had gone to heaven on his knees, with his happy children kneeling beside him. The pathos and suddenness of Tom Maddison's decease appalled every heart on the colliery.

The next morning the caller made a mistake. It was three o'clock, and Georgie Gilchrist was hastily knocking up the new-er on Durham street.

'Another three!' said Georgie, as he read the chalked number in the light. Giving the familiar rap, he waited for the tap on the window and the usual answer. Receiving no reply, he was about to repeat the blow, when he remembered, with a pang, that he was standing at the dead man's door, and that the dread caller, Death had knocked at Tom's door the night before.

In the dark and silent street he fell upon his knees 'O God, forgive me!' he murmured. He thought of Tom's dead body, lying even then in the house, and the pain he had given to his widow by his cruel mistake and great tears of penitence streamed down his face.

His grief was inconsolable.

'Ye needn't tak' on see badly over that!' his wife exclaimed, when he had told her the facts; 'it was only a mistake!'

But he refused to be comforted.

Georgie's remorse was inexplicable to his wife. Thirty years of selfishness and drunkenness had shriveled up her woman's heart. The insight and humanness of her husband's regret was beyond the reach of her discernment.

Through the hours of that morning she watched him with stealthy eyes. He had gone to his bed, but sleep was impossible.

There were strange emotions struggling in the caller's wife. It was Saturday, and nearly three o'clock. She must hurry to meet her mother in Bishopstown. For the first time in thirty years there was a reluctance in her heart to leave him.

The evil conquered.

'I'll not be long, Georgie,' she said, with a suspicion of tenderness in her voice.

'Pass me the book, Polly, before you go, he said.

She handed him 'The Guide of Life.'

She dressed herself and departed.

The lonely old man turned to the fly-leaf. His sympathies with the invalid widow, whose griefs he had doubtless intensified by his blunder that morning, had revived the beggarly miseries of his own life.

In the silence he reviewed the years. At length sleep closed his eyes. His sleep was full of dreams, and the dreams were of love and comfort: the love of his wife when he took her to his heart, and the comfort of the home they had established together.

Polly Gilchrist never reached the town. She climbed the hill which led from the colliery. Turning on the summit, her eyes scanned the house where her man was lying. She deliberately descended the hill.

Unlocking the door, she climbed the steps to the room above. Georgie was asleep. She crept on tip toe to his bedside. His face was lit with love and words of endearment escaped his lips! 'Polly! Polly! My love! my wife!'

She trembled at the sound, of [the long lost] loved words. She dared not waken him. There was a hunger in her heart to hear the words again.

'Polly, my love!' the old man murmured. 'The thirty years of wretchedness were forgotten. Georgie was back in the sweet and happy home of the thirteen weeks of sacred bliss.'

The woman's heart was profoundly agitated.

She stooped to catch the whisper of the old man's dreams. On her bended knees she watched his face, and waited for his love-soliloquies.

That night Polly Gilchrist found her heart, and George Gilchrist found his wife. —The Christian Commonwealth.

Labelled Cattle.

In the Atlantic cattle trade, the large animals shipped alive to England are all marked with a queer label required by the authorities. This consists of a little brass plate stamped with a number, and made fast with a wire to the ear of the bullock, by means of a hole bored for the purpose. If a beast arrives at the English lairages with any signs of disease, its number can be traced by the American authorities first



It is
Chase & Sanborn's
Seal Brand Coffee,
reason enough why it is
popular.

to the shipper and then to the dealer, and last to the farmer who originally sold the animal for beef. Then the farmer has to answer for his misdeed with pains and penalties which will make him think twice before he sells any more diseased beef for shipment across the ocean to England.

THE DOCTOR'S WIFE.

A Four Years Cripple From Acute Rheumatism. South American Rheumatic Cure Was the True Physician.

Mrs. J. H. Harte, of 223 Church street, Toronto, wife of Dr. Harte, suffered severely from rheumatism for five years. For four years she could not walk without the use of a cane. At times the pains were intense, and she suffered tortures. No remedy or treatment gave any relief. She was induced to try South American Rheumatic Cure. She used four bottles and the day is free from pain, and she is as well as ever. Her testimony by saying: 'I am entirely cured and can move about as lightly as ever in my life.' Said by E. C. Brown and all druggists.

"Music in The Air."

The following is an exact copy of a letter received by a young lady who, possessing a piano and being about to move to a small country town, advertised for room and board with a family musically inclined:—

'Dear Miss, we think we kin suite you with room and board if you prefer to be where there is music. I play the fiddle, my wife the organ, my dotter Jule the accordion, my other dotter the bargo, my son Hu the bassoon, my son Jim the fife and drum, while all of us sing gospel him in which we would be glad to have you take part both vocal or instrumental if you play on anything. We play by ear, and when we all get started there is real music in the air. Let us know if you want to come here to board.'

Yellow or brown cottons or silks can be dyed black. Try Magnetic Dyes, black costs ten cents only.

A CARD.

We, the undersigned, do hereby agree to refund the money on a twenty-five cent bottle of Dr. Willis' English Pills, if, after using three-fourths of contents of bottle, they do not relieve Constipation and Headache. We also warrant that four bottles will permanently cure the most obstinate case of Constipation. Satisfaction or no pay when Willis' English Pills are used.

A. Chipman Smith & Co., Druggists, Charlotte St., St. John, N. B.
W. Hawker & Son, Druggists, 104 Prince William St., St. John, N. B.
Chas. McGregor, Druggist, 137 Charlotte St., St. John, N. B.
W. C. R. Allan, Druggist, King St., St. John, N. B.
E. J. Mahony, Druggist, Main St., St. John, N. B.
G. W. Hoben, Chemist, 357 Main St., St. John, N. B.
R. B. Travis, Chemist, St. John, N. B.
S. Watters, Druggist, St. John, West, N. B.
Wm. C. Wilson, Druggist, Cor. Union & Rodney Sts., St. John, N. B.
C. P. Clarke, Druggist, 100 King St., St. John, N. B.
S. H. Hawker, Druggist, Mill St., St. John, N. B.
N. B. Smith, Druggist, 24 Dock St., St. John, N. B.
G. A. Moore, Chemist, 109 Brussels St., St. John, N. B.
C. Fairweather, Druggist, 109 Union St., St. John, N. B.
Hastings & Fines, Druggists, 63 Charlotte St., St. John, N. B.

'Do you know anything about palmistry, Herbert?' she asked.

'Oh, not much,' he answered, with the air of modesty which is not intended to be implicitly believed in. 'Not a great deal, although I had an experience last night which might be considered a remarkable example of the art you allude to.'

'You don't mean it!'

'Yes, I happened to glance at the hand of a friend of mine, and I immediately predicted that he would presently become the possessor of a considerable sum of money. Before he left the room, he had £2 or £3 added to him.'

'And you told it just from his hand?'

'Yes. It had four aces in it.'

'How beautiful is the snow,' he said. 'So white, so pure, so universal. It falls alike on rich and poor; it turns the beggar's hovel into a dream of glistening beauty. It—' But just then a snow-ball caught him under the ear, and a hail of the same material fell from the cornice and lodged between the collar and his neck. And he spoke no more.

A little girl had been to church for the first time, and on her return home her mother asked her if she liked it.

'Yes,' said the little girl; 'but there is one thing I didn't think was fair.'

'What was that, dear?'

'Why, one man did all the work, and then another man came round and got all the money.'

'Timmons, do you know anything about literature?'

'No.'

'Know anything about art?'

'Nothing.'

'Know anything about music?'

'Not a rap.'

Good! Come over to my room, bring a pipe, and let's enjoy ourselves.'

CARTER'S LITTLE LIVER PILLS

SICK HEADACHE

Positively cured by these Little Pills.

They also relieve Distress from Dyspepsia, Indigestion and Too Heartly Eating. A perfect remedy for Dizziness, Nausea, Drowsiness, Bad Taste in the Mouth, Coated Tongue, Pain in the Side, TORPID LIVER. They Regulate the Bowels. Purely Vegetable.

Small Pill. Small Dose. Small Price.

Substitution

the fraud of the day.

See you get Carter's,

Ask for Carter's,

Insist and demand

Carter's Little Liver Pills.

Save Your MONEY.

To save your money, by getting more for it, ask your dealer in medicine to show you the new 50 cent size bottle of JOHNSON'S ANODYNE LINIMENT. It contains over three times as much as the old 25 cent style, which is a great saving to those who use this valuable family medicine. The superior quality of this old Anodyne has never been equalled.

JOHNSON'S ANODYNE LINIMENT

Fifty years ago this month, Dr. Johnson left with me some Johnson's Anodyne Liniment. I remember him distinctly, and could tell you just how he was dressed on that day. I have used Johnson's Liniment ever since. Can truly say it has maintained its high standard from that time to this. No medicine today possesses the confidence of the public to a greater extent. JOHN B. LANE, North Waterford, Me., Jan., 1891.

As a family remedy it has been used and endorsed for nearly a century. Every Mother should have it in the house for many common ailments, internal as much as External. Our book on INFLAMMATION free. Price 25 and 50c. L. S. JOHNSON & Co., Boston, Mass.