TWO

PRETTY MISS NEVILLE "The same as every man you know, nyself included-make a fool of him.

BY B. M. CROKER CHAPTER XLII

THE PROPOSAL "For I'll believe 1 have his heart, as much a

The wetting I got coming hom from the picnic resulted in a severe cold, and I was confined to bed for more than a week. Very dull and feverish and stupid I felt, in spite of feverish and stupid 1 feit, in spite of constant visits from Mrs. Vane, who, seated on the foot of my bed, daily unbosomed herself of all the news she could gather for my edification. She had been down at the A. B. C. Ground, and had had three sets of tennis, played with a very so so parter, and been beaten. Captain Beresford and Miss Ross were playing, too; and she was not much either. Or, she had met Captain Beresford and Miss Ross riding. Or, she had seen them sitting together in the library, or walking the Government Garden. All the rest of her news fell on unheeding ears. The most startling current ears. The most starting current "gup," the most unlikely engage-ments, the most killing jokes were lost on me. But the above casual remarks, dropped in the course of conversation, were just so many sore stabs, and after she had left me to rest, in perfect innocence of heart, I would lie awake nearly all night, trying to staunch these all but mortal wounds with the lint of common sense. No wonder that the doctor was surprised at my pale and languid appearance, and asked auntie very mysteriously if there was consump.

tien in our family. At last, after ten weary days in bed, I was promoted to the sofa in the drawing room ; every one made a great fuss about me, notably Colonel ane, who half lived on the road to the library, changing my books, and who loaded me with all kinds of deli cate attentions in the shape of fruit and flowers. I always got on with elderly people, and my friend's husband, a smart, daper, spruce little man, and one of the most delightful companions I ever met, was no exception to the general rule.

"The way-the barefaced way-that you and George flirt is really scandelous," Mrs. Vane would say; I really shall have to send him to the club-to board him out! I de clare it will come to that. He has sent off to Bombay for all the new songs for you. I told you " (trium-phantly) "you would like my old man, did I not? You would never compare him to Major Per-"

Don't name him," I interrupted, fretfully. "Well, then, I won't vex you, my

poor, sick Nora. By the way, do you know that your Cousin Maurice has been here nearly every day this week; he was closeted with Uncle Jim for nearly an hour yesterday. Shall nearly an hour yesterday. Shall I tell you the reason?" she said, com-ing over and kneeling beside me. "Shall I tell you?" "If you like," I replied, wearily. What did it matter to me now? "I had such a long talk with him the pight before last at the Marri

the night before last, at the Morrisons' dance, and I told him the whole history about Major Percival He had never heard the rights of it be-

"Well ?" I asked, eagerly. "Well,my dear child, he was simply furious. Those people with dark gray eyes, can look angry if you like. He eyes, can look angry in you the? He was in kind of white, cool, polite passion, and asked me who had horsewhipped your *fiance*. Did you ever hear of such a joke? I referred him to your uncle, and I have no

to be sure.' "Be quiet, George, this is no joking matter. For once, your sweet, clever, prefty little wife"—laying her hands on his shoulders, and looking him full in the face—"did you hear me, sir ?—your sweet, pretty, clever little wife is completely up a tree !" There were three days' racing at oby, or rather, at the Pykara road, three miles away. The first day it poured, and spoiled the sport, people's good dresses, and people's good tem-pers. It is not conducive to merry mend the he attuding under an unit mood to be standing under an um-brella (and receiving the drippings of about four others) in sheets of rain, with your favorite boots in a puddle and your smartest frock becoming every moment further advanced on the road to ruin. Even with a com-panion-a pleasant companionunder the same silken shelter (cottor or alpaca parapluies don't exist, even in my imagination), even with these ahead of us caused me to start. extenuating circumstances, I deny that a wetday's racing is either pleas-ant or profitable. The last day of was riding past: ant or pronable. The last day of the races was fine; crowds ventured forth in their second best. Uncle and I rode, and auntie and Mrs. Vane went in a large, hired open carriage. Mrs. Vane and I shared the box on the course, and had a splendid view. The start was downhill ; certainly it was a most uninviting piece of ground ; but, considering everything, was wonderfully flat for the hills. Maurice won a hurdle-race, and Rody

was a good second for the "Planter's Cup." Altogether I had been ex-tremely interested, and had lost a pair of spectacles to Uncle Jim and won a pair of riding gloves from Mrs. Vane.

"They are getting up a race for 'ladies' horses — horses here on the course, to be ridden by gentlemen nominated by the owners," said Rody, swinging himself up on the fore wheel beside me. "Beresford wants to know, Nora, if you'd like him to ride your horse ? He won't have halt a bad chance !"

"Are you going to enter Cavalier ?" inquired Maurice, coming up at this moment. "because if you care about

it, I'll ride him. There are five entries already, but only one of them has any turn of speed, and I think Cavalier could show him the way." Yes, and that conceited little beggar. Tommy Pim, is going to steer im, and he is swaggering all over the place, telling the ladies to put the gloves on and back his mount. If you beat him, Beresford, I shall

skip like a young lamb," cried Rody, encouragingly. "Well, Nora, have you made up

your mind? The stewards are giving a very handsome bracelet. It is ac-tually here on the ground. You may as well have a shot for it as any one else," said Maurice. "Am I to enter Miss Neville's Cavalier?" "Yes. I should like it very much," I replied, hesitatingly; "but, you know, Rody can ride for me. You

will have to ride for Miss Ross ! Why should he ride for 'Bosh

Miss Ross ?" interrupted Rody, rudely. "Anyway, her 'gee' is no good "Very well then. Maurice, if you will ride for me, I shall be very much

obliged to you." "All right," he returned ; "there's no time to be lost. Come along, French;" and the two young men hurried off at once in quest of Cavalier, who, half asleep, nodding his head over his squatting syce, little dreamed of the treat and honor that were in store for him. There were six competitors alto-

doubt that they mutually enjoyed a grand letting off of steam. Any way, you are not quite so much in his holding on by Mrs. Vane, and literally quivering with excitement as they tore down the hill close by. Cavalier third. Round the sweep at the bottom he was pulling up fast ; and face and hair. "Where am I?" I said, coming to, it was evident that he and a very "Where am 1," "What is the with a long sigh. "What is the matter ?" I cried endeavoring to matter ?" Oh !" as recollection tert up. "Oh !" as recollection handsome gray Arab had the race be tween them. It was nearly a dead heat as they ran into the straightstart up. "Oh !" as recollection came, "oh !" I said, covering my face almost locked together ; but, thanks to Maurice's superior jockeyship Cavalier won by a head !

THE CATHOLIC RECORD

hurt, but the horse was killed, and the dog-cart lay 150 feet below the road, smashed to atoms. Rody had As we drove out of the enclosure As we drove out of the enclosure we were passed at a rapid pace by Rody, Maurice, and a hare brained Irish boy, in a very high dog cart, with a very high stepping steed. scaped with a few bruises. Barney had occupied the back seat, and got "Good by," cried Rody, sportively saluting us with his whip," I'll let

off scott free, having jumped out when he felt the horse rising to the bank. "Faith," he said naively, "when I saw that the beast was inthem know you are coming. I suppose you'll be in to breakfast to more row." This was a cruel gibe at our hired horses, who were certainly any clined to kill himself and us, says to myself, 'I'll be no party to the trans thing but free goers. It seemed to me that Rody was a most rash and action,' and I made myself scarce." Maurice had been entangled in the he flourished his whip about, and whirled round corners. It was all a gentle slope down hill now, and our horses' heads being set toward home, they trotted along at a good nace and nace reins, and had come off worst ; but by some miracle the second roll over reed him, and he was lucky enough to escape with a few cuts and bruises and a sprained wrist ; he had been hey trotted along at a good pace and stunned at first, and seeing him held their own well. After we had gone about a mile we found the road lying so pale and motionless, and gathering a hint from the excited crowd—always prepared to make the blocked in front, and subsided to slow jog. I was seated with my back to the horses, of course, as became my youth. As I sat nursing my braceworst of a similar catastrophe—our stranger acquaintance had brought us the bad news post-haste. As we passed the scene of the late disaster let and indulging in a brown study, shout and a loud crash on the road

I could not restrain a shudder as I saw the broken bank, the torn up "Hallo !" cried a gentleman who as riding past : "I say, that's a bad ground, and far away down below the red wheels of the dog cart, and a brown inanimate mass "You thought I was killed did you

"What is it ?" I inquired, jump-Nora?" said Maurice, with an odd ing up and looking over the coach-box. I shall never forget the sight kind of tremble in his usually steady voice. "Of course I did," I answered

that met my eyes. I saw the horse and dog-cart that Maurice and Rody were driving rolling down the steep "kud," or precipice, at the side of rather crossly. "How did it happen ? tell us all about it," said Mrs. Vane, impatientthe road—a fall of more than one hundred feet. Over and over it went

ly. "I don't such a fright." saw it turn over three times, and could look no longer. "The horse took fright and shied, and jumped over the bank!" explained "Oh, it was partly Rody's fault ; he drives like 'Jehu, the son of Nimshi,' and in a happy go-lucky the stranger, with a pallid face. "I'll go on and see if I can lend any assist-

nce," he added, cantering ahead. I looked at auntie and Mrs. Vane. and then made a movement to spring out of the carriage after him. "Stay where you are, child," said

auntie, seizing my arm; "it may not be so bad as it looks." But, in spite of her reassuring speech, her face was as pale as death,

"They were all thrown out on the road, I'm sure," said Mrs. Vane, taking both my hands in hers and squeezing wheels. them tightly. We were four carriages away from the scene, and the road was now quite jammed with horses and people on foot running past excitedly.

'I must go, I will go !" I said, struggling ; " anything is better than this awful suspense." "You will only be in the way," exself.

claimed auntie ; " have patience, the gentleman will bring us word im-' have patience, the mediately. You may be sure your incle is there. Now Nora, I insist,'

holding me back. olding me back. Patience ! It was easy to say patience " when every second

seemed a year of agony. At last the stranger returned ; his florid face was ashy white, and his lips were working nervously as he moved his horse close up to the carriage

Well ?" we all said in a breath, what has happened ? Is any one hurt? 'It is a bad business." he replied.

gravely; "two of the fellows are not much the worse, but the third, a fel-low called Beresford, who was caught in the reins-' Yes, what of him ?" asked Mrs.

Vane, in a voice that seemed far away. He has been killed stone dead."

I cannot say, but when I came to my-self I was lying on a carriage rug on the grass at the side of the road. The time passed like five minutes in-the grass at the side of the road. The time passed like five minutes in-the grass at the side of the road. The time passed like five minutes in-the grass at the side of the road.

"No, indeed, it was not. 'Naught was never in danger," I replied rash-

come on Beresford's account! Phew!" and he gave a long, shrill, ear-piercing whistle. "Sits the wind in that quarter? Well, there's nothing like beginning with a little aversion—or, indeed, a good deal. I leave him in your hands with the You can avenge utmost confidence. us of that loft business when you are married to him, Nora! I've neve

forgiven him to this day." "Rody," I exclaimed, reddening,

"You would like to box my ears, just as you did in the good old times now, wouldn't you ? But hark ! He comes! as they say in the play. Enter the hero of the piece — *excunt* " (waving his hands) " all minor characters-hero and heroine-love scen tableau !

Hush, hush. Do be quiet, you horrid boy !" said Mrs. Vane to the irrepressible youth, as at that moment and Maurice walked into the

I only remained long enough to give them each a cup of tea, and then, with an excuse of the vaguest descrip tion, I effected my exit. Rody, with Maurice in the room, was a good deal more than I could stand ; so I fied to my own snuggery, and looked at my finery for the evening.

Drugo had already spread my ball-'I don't know when I got dress on the bed ; it was a combina tion of black tulle and black satin. and large ox eye daisies, and was both beautiful and new; my long black gloves and satin shoes reposed side by side with my fan and handkerchief, Aliment, and in a happy goards, fashion. I only wonder we were not upset before. I never saw such a reckless whip. He thought he was driving the twig, I dare say, he added, looking at me. "Anyway, and my bouquet stood on the dress ing table in a tumbler of water. Noth ing was left for me to do. I dared added, looking at me. "Anyway when we came to a block in the road, he tried to pull up sharp, and to settle the matter, gave the horse a cut of the whip. He made one bound, broke the reins, and, feeling the van in all the mirth. They were his head free, turned sharp round and jumped the ditch in a second. evidently enjoying themselves very much, I thought regretfully ; but to I shall not easily forget the sen quizzed about Maurice before his very sation of going across the country or

> durance. TO BE CONTINUED

dog-cart and the carcass of the horse. Unfortunately, both were borrowed. Barney Magee had only 'the lend of the loan of them' him-

"And Rody will have to pay for them ?" I cried in dismay, "and he has not a rupee left. He told me he had drawn his month's pay in ad-vance. Wretched boy, what will he do ?'

And where is Rody now ?" asked

"Looking after the remains of the

auntie, very sternly.

"We will all pay," said Maurice carelessly. "For having your necks nearly

broken by that wild boy ?" cried auntie, who was extremely wroth with Rody. "It was altogether an accident,

Mrs. Neville. Indeed, you must not be angry with Rody. "Well, thank God that none

you were killed. It's not his fault that you were not." "We had an extraordinary escape

When I look down the place we went over I can hardly understand how we live to tell the tale. 1 was silent nearly all the

home. I felt tired and sick, and altogether upset. Mrs. Vane, Maurice, and auntie chatted away I heard no more. There came a store dead." I heard no more. There came a store dead." Strange rushing and buzzing in my together, just like old times. His software as high as ever this evening, and he seemed bent on re-thow long I remained in this state

"Then you must have been over

"you are unbearable. Your rude-ness and vulgarity are intolerable."

veranda.

not return to the drawing-room ; it opened on the same veranda as my room, and I could distinctly hear Rody's loud, hilarious laugh leading return to brave Rody, and to be

> face; was beyond the limits of my enshe did not heed it. The scene or the floor below her was too dismaying. Without guessing in the least what horror threatened them, cus-

THE LITTLE GIRL WHO STAYED

Gardner Hunting

and struggled, all the frightened for being hindered. In the bargain notion department in the basement of the Bon Ton store Dorry Cayle wrapped packages. She was lome. Her business hours were spent in an open-top, imitation mahogany cupboard, high up behind the bargain notion counter. She crawled into it and out of it by means of a hole about the size of a hat box Her duties were to receive from the aisle nearest the notion salegirls each small article that scores of women scurried past Dorry's old, with the sale check and the ourchaser's money; to wrap up the article: to send the check and the noney through the pneumatic tube to the cashier, and to return to the proper clerk the package and the aside.

hange. From her cupboard Dorry could She stood, gripping the edge of her high shelf, and staring in utter see all that was going on. She could also see that the place was a fire-trap. fright. People were being jammed But then, everybody knew that.

The owners of the Bon Ton store permitted dangerous conditions that night be remedied, and spent money for things that were merely to attrac custom. For example, it would have been easy to cut aisles across the long counters through the middle of the room, to separate the stairways

get out.

It occurred to no one that moving in a big new steel safe for the manager's office on the third floor In a big manager's office on the third floor could be summoned or information could possibly threaten the lives of help be summoned or information all the people in the store and make given when every exit was blocked by the panic stricken people and the stricken people and the stricken people and the stricken people and the panic stricken people and the stricken pe who was to move the safe across the

stair landing on the third floor would get drunk at noon, and consequently neglect to shore up the floor properly. Now under the basement landing lay the big gas main that supplied gas for all the uses of the store, from the gas stoves in the hardware department to the drop lights in the lamp department, and that had once supplied many store lights before electricity was used. So when the insufficiently supported landing on the third floor gave way, and the huge safe suddenly plunged down

through it, and through the second floor and through the first floor, and through the basement landing, it struck the big gas pipe and broke it as a falling brick might break a glass By wonderful good fortune no one

happened to be caught on the stair-way landings, but the moment after the successive crashes many nevertheless, in terrible danger. From the broken main flowed a huge volume of choking, deadly gas, not only into the basement itself, but into the elevator shafts and stairways. And every spark of fire in the buildng became a possible source of fearful danger.

Dorry was in her high cupboard. The tremendous crash of the break. ing stair landing frightened her erribly, as, indeed, it also frightened

counter

every one. The little girl heard the couragement. screams of women and children: she saw the lights in the Welshbach counter close by sink and go almost You can do it easily. The girl heard her and looked up. out; she saw a great cloud of dus puff gustily up the stairway, and a man-the elevator starter-run out of it and shout to warn people back.

Whether she heard the word gas or reached the top, and disappeared. not, she never knew, but she quickly

guessed the truth. In an incredibly short time she struggle, reached the top. Dorry detected the smell of gas, but at first cried out to a third, who came from somewhere at the rear of the store. This woman watched the climber and in a moment was leading three

cries brought so many others flocko'clock in the afternoon-a little ing to the spot that soon the same panic that was spoiling other early for the greatest press of shoppers; but it was afterward estimated that over four hundred chances, of escape was spoiling this. Two women again tried the ascent, persons were caught in the baseand fell, to be remorsel ssly pushed back to the floor by the sliding steps. The stairways leading to the street were jammed at once. In the

While Dorry watched, gas came sweeping into her face in heavy volume. It made her dizzy; but help-less to escape herself, she thought of outlook, from one exit to another, frightened and crying. Men, running in every direction, shouted unintelnothing but to stick to her post of observation and do what she could. ligibly. Children clung to scared mothers or were rudely knocked She shouted to the struggling women to go slower. Then she wondered suddenly why the machinery in the store had not been stopped. If the Dorry also felt the thrill of fear. stairway were only stationary, it would furnish escape for scores of beople. Oh, why did it not stop? Where was the engineer, that he against the counters. Down in front of her a woman, caught in the press, screamed in fear and pain. Dorry became quite as much afraid of the crowd as of any other danger. lid not bring the escalators to standstill?

Suddenly it occurred to Dorry that Then the first sickening puff of since the escalators were still run ning, probably all the other machingas blew into her face. Her eyes erv of the store was running alsoturned instinctively to the low burn even the pneumatic tubes!

ing lights at the next counter. No-Putting out her hand quickly she had thought to turn them out; opened the valve of the sending side in the exhibition row of lamps little in the pneumatic cash carrier. The hiss of sucking air responded. Here yellow spot within each mantle. Any one of them might fire this horrid If only the girls in the cashier's cage on the second floor were still at their post! They were not near to the elevator shafts; perhaps they might not have been driven away.

be summoned, the street stairway could be cleared; perhaps the gas could be shut off. But how could

of descent only. A man was helping an old woman across from the front of the room to the rear, where a freight elevator was hopelessly over-loaded and blocked. Another man was climbing up on the cases behind a counter, in an effort to reach a high ventilating window, but he could not reach it. Still another was running along on top of a counter beside one packed aisle, and shout-ing at the mob, who paid no attention to him. Another puff of gas struck Dorry

in the face. This time it was almost suffocating. It made her cough and choke; and she suddenly became conscious that she was trembling all over and crying helplessly. But she realized, too, that in the midst of all this panic she was standing idle. Was there not something that she could do? Across the nearest aisle, by the cases in the shoe department was the lower end of the escalator. In the midst of all the riot, its machinery was grinding steadily on; stair after stair came over the edge of the floor above and, sliding down under the guard wall, disappearing in the floor below. Dorry had seen several people run toward it, look and turn away. A young girl, about her own age, who came rushing across the floor, stopped beside the moving stairway. When she saw that the steps were sliding down-ward, she turned from it in dis-coursement.

Instantly Dorry, remembering Joe's joke, screamed, "Oh, try it, try it)

Then turning she ran swiftly up the stairs. She gained on them,

A woman, passing, saw her, and followed. She too, after a painful

others to the place. Absorbed, Dorry watched their eftomers and clerks alike fled from it when, half way up, the woman who led the party stumbled, fell, and in-They ran back and away from the puffing dust. Jamming into groups and knots at corners, they, strove more stantly dragged them all back to the loor. The time was between 1 and

No one of them was hurt, but their

black books as you were, for he did think that the blow-up was all your fault. Give a dog a bad name, you nodding her head.

It is not much matter what he thinks-now," I added to myself faintly, turning my face away from the light, and imitating Mrs. Roper's maneuver with my fan.

maneuver with my fan. "Don't talk nonsense, Noah! I have a presentiment that you will marry your cousin in spite of all your ill doings; you will be the hand-somest couple in the Presidency, and tabel done of how and disc." I shall dance at your wedding," she added, with decision. "You don't know what you are

saying, Violet," I exclaimed, sitting up and pushing back my heavy hair. "Never think of such a thing. Maurice is engaged."

Maurice is engaged." "If you mean to Miss Ross, I do not believe it. They are on far too easy, friendly terms. There is not an atom of love between them. He is as much engaged to her as I am," she concluded emphatically, " no more in love with her than the man in the mean." contemptatively.

in love with her tuan the man in the moon," contemptuously. "Perhaps you know best," I an-swered, ironically; "all I can say is, that I had my information from Maurice himself; he *ought* to know." "From himself?" she repeated, with a very blank face, collapsing at

once into a sitting posture on the floor, embracing her knees and look. ing at me with widely opened, in-credulous eyes; "when did you hear

this ?" I answered, "At the picnic," I answered, shortly, once more sinking back among my pillows. "Weil," she said, jumping up, and

Well," she shut, jumping up, and beginning to walk up and down the room with great energy; "I am sur-prised! I am amazed; I am con-founded! I don't know what to make of him." he declined.

What to make of whom, madam!" inquired Colonel Vane, entering the room in dinner garb.

"What to make of Nora's cousin, "What to make of "she replied, pass everythi Captain Beresford," she replied, in Ooty befor walking up to her husband, and in Ooty befor Robinson." sticking a rose in his button hole.

with my hands and shuddering with "Hoorosh ! hooray !" cried Rody horror, " I remember all." Nora, my dear child," said auntie, who had also shared the box-seat-" it was not as bad as you thought. and almost upset me twice. "Ire-land forever!" he shouted exultant-He is not—" "Not killed ?" I gasped, removing ly, as he leaped down, and dashed

into the crowd. "That boy will certainly have to be consigned to a lunatic asylum yet,"

exclaimed Mrs. Vane, as she shut up her parasol. "'Hoorosh, hooray, inher parasol. "'Hoorosh, hooray, deed ! He has carried off half

lace frilling at the bottom of my dress, and nearly knocked me down !"

Many of our friends came up to the carriage and congratulated me on my success; and, after a little, Maurice, uncle, and Rody arrived—a

triumphant trio. "There's your bracelet, Nora," said Maurice, tossing up the case into my

lap. It was certainly very handsome and I was immediately beset by a There was no doubt that I had disconsiderable crowd, thirsting to the prize. Auntie and Mrs. Vane

the most open and notorious manner on the high road. And here he was! were in ecstacies with it, and Rody actually tried to clasp it on his sun alive, and looking at me with grave burned wrist. When I turned to make my acknowledgments to Maurand anxious eyes ! What would he think of me ? What

ice, he was gone. "The ladies' race" was the last could he think of me ? Well, at any event of the day, and soon heavily laden carriages commenced to leave

rate, merely as my cousin, I had a right to faint for him ; he was a near the course. Uncle insisted on my driving home, and in a short time relative and an old friend. I hoped he would consider that and not think -and not think-what ? I did not were also under way, having previously offered a seat to Rody, which choose to mention the other alterna-

tive, even to myself. I made a rapid recovery, and, assisted by auntie and Barney Magee is going to drive me hon's and Beresford too; Barney has a nailing good horse, and I'm uncle, resumed my hat and staggered to the carriage, feeling most fearfully

going to drive; you see if I don't pass everything on the road. I'll be ashamed of myself. Maurice was before you can say 'Jack

one hand and Mrs. Vane the other, us at the gate. He shook hands I felt very cold and wet about my lastly, with me. Holding my hand lastly, with me. Holding my hand "Nora. I hope you in his, he said :

will be all right to morrow, and able to come to the club ball. Keep a dance for me," he whispered, in a lower tone, as the carriage moved on, and he disappeared.

"Keep a dance for me ; keep a dance for me," kept lingering in my ears till it lost all sense and meaning. I tried to understand what it meant — what Maurice' meant;

Maurice, who treated me with the my hands and looking at her with gravest, most frozen politeness on intense anxiety. "I'm as good as two dead men yet, Nora," said a voice beside me, and every occasion. And now he said, 'Keep a dance for me.'' A good

night's rest, a long, long sleep, rethere, unless my eyes deceived me, stood Maurice, with concern and stored me completely ; and the next morning I was quite myself once amazement plainly depicted in his more. Of course the races and the face. He was bleeding from a cut in accident were abundantly discussed the temple; his arm was bound up in an impromptu sling; his face was pale, and his coat all torn and covered and talked about, and many were the visitors who came to see th bracelet and hear about the upset. with earth, but, nevertheless, he was As we dawdled over our five o'clock most palpably alive. Oh, the relief of that moment ! Oh, the long, long breath I took ! The revulsion of tea. Rody presented himself, and en desvored to carry off the accident with a high hand. But it was of no feeling was such that I very nearly fainted for a second time—with joy. use. We scolded him well, and did our utmost to terrify him with pros There was no doubt that I had the graced myself. I had thought that Maurice was dead, and had fainted in maurice was dead, and had fainted in "Oh, that's all right," he said with "Oh, that's all right," he said with pect of an enormous bill for damages and perhaps a law suit into the bar

a knowing grin, totally unmoved by our apprehension on his behalf. "Why, you know you haven't four

annas, much less fourteen hundred rupees," I cried in ind gnant amazement.

Never you mind, Miss Curiosity it's not going to come out of your pocket. It's going to be all right and the dog cart can be mended." "The fact was, that Maurice was to pay, as I afterward discovered. Maurice had reasons of his own for

humor. "And so you fainted!" observed offered, and accepted, a seat home; and now the whole particulars of the accident were told. Noone was much

Auntie, with anxious face, was chafing clined to come in, and took leave of each side. But instead of doing ing, tipped each jet, or showed as a these things, the firm spent thousands of dollars on an escalator, or gas the moment that it became thick moving stairway. "If fire ever starts between us and enough to burn!

Slipping from her cupboard down the main stairway down here," Dorry through the tiny door, Dorry limped along behind the counter to the had once heard a notion clerk say 'some of us'll get scorched before we lights. Turning each cock, she shut

The stairs leading to the street off the flickering sparks completely. were nearly always stacked half full of goods on display. Sometimes Dorry, looking about her, imagined what might happen if a hundred and A man near her was trying to use the telephone, but was getting no reply. She wondered at his anger as he dashed the instrument aside. Then, hardly knowing why, she crept promptly back and climbed up

floor.

the cries were not all of fear.

fifty flame-driven clerks, to say nothing of customers, should try to escape from the place. There were eight elevators, which could carry toherplace. This was not attempting escape, certainly. But she knew that a lame little girl would have small chance just now, and besides, she possibly ten persons each at a trip There was the main staircase, which necessity of seeing things. fifty or sixty people might use at a felt the As she stood looking down again

time. There were the street en trances, each of which a dozen panic on the wild disorder about her, her stricken people might block; and thoughts went swiftly to the store there were two freight elevators, which, if they were working, might help a score of people out at a time. above. In the basement there were no more open lights, but there were many on the upperfloors. No one up there could yet know accurately what Yes, there were exits enough, perhad happened. The man at the tele-phone came to her mind, and with a haps, for the employes, if they moved out coolly. But what if one or two hundred customers should be there? start, she realized that the connec tion was broken. A few people were "Why, there's the escalator," said escaping at the street doors, but they Joe Edmunds, the stock boy, to whom Dorry talked one day about it. would hardly notify at once any one who could control the situation. If of us could run up that."

Joe intended that as a joke, and

also as a slightly sarcastic comment on the firm's attitude toward the moving stairway. It was much advertised. It served all the floors

of the building. Separate sections ran both upward and downward, except in the top story and in the base

ment, where, doubtless for the sake of economy, the stairs ran in one direction only. To be sure, it was quite possible to run up the downward-moving escalator if your legs were nimble and your wind good. There were twenty four steps in the descending basement section, and they moved at a rate that sent three

If she could only make them turn back and wait, or go slow! How past any given point in every two seconds. So, even if you were young quickly they might all escape. if they and strong, you could not make very fast time running up the escalator.

Dorry seized a small piece of wrap-

"Cashier—The gas main in the basement was broken by the falling safe. There's a panic down here. Tell them to shut off all lights in the store at once, or there'll be an explo-sion. Stop the escalator! - Dora Cayle."

She folded the sheet of paper, stuffed it into the spool shaped car-rier, and slipped the carrier into the tube. Instantly it was gone. Dorry wondered whether the

cashier's cage would still be occupied and whether any one would heed an arriving cash carrier. She was chok-ing and coughing in the gas now; it was nauseating her. She thought that some current must be carrying it heavenly in her direction. remembered the man who had tried to climb up to the ventilators at the front of the store. If they could be opened from the outside it would help clear the air. Besides, they were above the pavement; ladders might even be let down through them. the gas mounted as fast as it spread, it

In a moment she was writing an might very soon make an explosive mixture with the air in an upper other message; in another moment it was gone. And then she sank

No one was trying to escape by the down, overcome with a weariness main stairway or the elevators how; over there in the haze of dust Dorry that was hard to combat. gas all the time now, she was very dizzy. Still she could see that th could see no figure moving. Doubt less the stairs were crushed; doubtstairway had not stopped its slow. awful grind, and still less the gas was already too strong in the shaft to permit the use of the that the gas was growing denser and cars. All the central portion denser.

of the room was clear now; every one was trying for the outer doors. People were being hurt Once more she wrote :

"Please, please stop the escalator ! Break in the front basement ventila tors and put in ladders. People will be dying here soon.-DORRY CAYLE.

Away went this message after "he others. There was LO sign that the would only give themselves the others had been received, but the chance! If outside help could only little girl was getting too sick to

being in an unusually generous