

from his sun-bath on the doorstep, and streaked down the path, the minute the stranger turned in at the gate.

"Prinney!" shrilled his mistress. "Watch out you!" The man was coming right in fearlessly, and she was amazed to see the dog suddenly circle off from the intruder, and presently stop growling. She looked with interest at the individual who could thus control the brute, and for the first time noticed the clerical cut of his coat.

"Miss Henny, I presume?" he inquired, lifting his straw hat. "Allow me—" and he handed her his card. "Fine dog you have there, madam."

Ann stared, then read the name again. It was the new minister, and he was on the far side of forty, and the dog was letting him stroke his head.

"I have just assumed my new duties as rector of your church here, and am making my initial round of calls, Miss Henny," said he. "It is rather trying, this becoming acquainted in a new parish, but I hope soon to know you all, and we will get along well together I am sure."

Ann was surprised to find herself smiling and nodding, but he was so polite and had such a nice way of including a person with the rest—"you all." The Hennys had always been so isolated from the community, that an unknown chord in Miss Ann's nature was strangely touched.

"Come up to the house an' rest a bit, Mr. Cox; it's terrible warm. Prinney Henny, get out o' this, you bad dog. It's an eternal marvel he didn't take a nip out o' you, sir; he once tore the boot clean off a tramp. Lib says we shouldn't keep such a vicious dog, but, bless me! there's odd 'ns in the world, an' Lib's one of 'm; she has notions, an'—you must come up an' see Lib. I guess she's pretty mussy for she's scrubbin' out the shed, but she can put on a clean aporn an' then you won't mind so much."

The minister came away that afternoon with the conviction that the Misses Henny were not as black as they were painted, and that their raspberry vinegar and cookies were the best he had ever tasted.

They both watched him through a hole in the window-blind till he disappeared, then Elizabeth sat down on a stool and looked at

Ann, and Ann sat down in a rocker and looked at Elizabeth.

"Well?" she asked.

"Well?" echoed Elizabeth.

"Lib, we can trust 'm if the dog can."

"Of course we can."

"Did you say he—a—wasn't married, Lib?"

"That's what Betsy Gillies said."

Sunday came, and a wonderful thing happened; the Misses Henny went to church for the first time since they had quarrelled with the former minister, eight years before. The village raised its eyebrows and wondered. But, if it was astonished to see the "old maids" in church, it was nothing short of amazed during the months that followed, for Elizabeth E. took to teaching in the Sunday-school, and won the hearts of the worst class of "young uns" there, while Ann C. F. actually helped at the annual tea-meeting. It was all so strange and sudden, that nobody could account for it. Some whispered that the new minister had something to do with it, for he had got into the habit of calling quite frequently at the Henny place.

The change in their lives meant a great deal to Elizabeth. She had always recognized the crabbedness of their former life, and lamented the dissensions that had estranged their family after their parents' death. She was far happier now in knowing that a few sick people and the children looked for her little attentions. Mr. Cox, too, appreciated any efforts that might be made to forward the church work, so that it was a real pleasure to help.

As for Ann—to her sister she had boldly confided that she was out after the minister's heart. She laid a deliberate plot to capture it. She sent away for complexion tonic, and medicated soap, and hair restorers. She hunted out an old French grammar, and memorized idioms until Elizabeth told her in disgust not to make a laughing-stock of herself. So confident was she of success, that, when the young people began to look forward to February the 14th, she could talk of nothing else than what kind of valentine Mr. Cox would send her.

Elizabeth laughed at her, but when the day did come around, and Ann ran in with a paper box under her arm, trembling with