

appearance. He looked sharply around the bare, orderly room, opened drawers and bins, scrutinized the small black heap in the coal-box, and asked a lot more questions, all of which Kitty insisted on answering outside the little ramshackle house lest "himself" should hear, and finally gave Kitty a yellow ticket which she was to present for "single rations."

It is the first step that counts. Kitty found her second deception less difficult than her first. She had sed with Nora the previous day. She had not gone to market. Yes, Mary Ellen was quite recovered. And now, sure she must be off if they were to have a bite of Thanksgiving dinner at all, at all!

"Ye won't be extravagant, Kitty?" he again implored. "We can't have over much left in the bank. A bit o' bacon now—"

"'Twas meself was thinkin' a bit o' bacon 'ud be rale tasty!" she agreed eagerly. "Turkey's that ondigestible!"

"'Tis now. An it's never meself cud get to likin' them sour cranberries. A biled potaty an' a bit o' cabbage—"

"Sure, what more cud the Prince o' Wales ask?" demanded Kitty Malone.

That day she duly presented her yellow ticket at the window marked "South-West." She too received her coal-check, and the "single rations" which were her due. Could she carry them all home? The flour was unwieldy. She had made a public demand—she had asked for and received charity for the first time in all her cheerful, uncomplaining, hard-working, heroic old life. And the knowledge stung her. Her thin cheek was crimson. Her faded eyes had a strange glitter. She had begged—she! And she knew if it were to save Dennis from suffering she would do it again. What would her children say if they knew! Thomas, who was mail-carrier; Nora of the scant possessions and tender heart; Delia, who was a credit to the family when she came to see them, wearing her best clothes; Malachi, who would give if he had it—to any one, for the matter of that; and Rody—the baby of the family, "the best of the bunch!" as Dennis put it. She—their mother—had disgraced them all! A rush of tears blinded her.

"Look out!" "Get out of there!" "Hi!" "You'll be—" "There—she's down!"

She was crossing the street when the shrill Babel of crisis assailed her. Startled, confused, she stood still. The delay was fatal. The next instant the speeding street-car had caught the skirt of her gown. She fell—rolled over—over. A dense crowd gathered instantly. An angry shout went up. Kitty was helped to her feet. Rice, soap, flour, coffee—all that she had striven so hard to procure, lay scattered on the half-frozen ground. But Kitty, bruised, shocked, quivering with nervous fright, was not seriously hurt.

"Don't say anythin' to the man, gentlemen!" she pleaded. "'Twas me own fault. I do get romancin' when I'm alone. I wasn't lookin' out when I ought! 'Twas plannin' how I'd stuff the turkey for Thanksgiving I was, when I got in the way. Sure," as some one expressed regret for her loss, "what's the vally of a few trifles like that same!"

She would not give her name and address. She permitted herself, however, to be helped on the car she mentioned. She rode home in penniless, coffeeless, beanless state. And all the time, quite unconsciously, she gripped the bit of yellow pasteboard in her fingers.

The sight of a crowd gathered before her little shanty sent her reeling onward with a cry—faint, ineffective, quavering.

Dennis! Something had happened to Dennis! Dennis had learned of her deception and the truth had killed him!

It was Patsy Heffernan who reassured her—Patsy capering around, and yelling like an Indian. "There's a sojer—a sojer—a rale sojer in there!" he screamed.

A path was made for the tottering old figure. She got to the door. It was opened. The blackness which had descended the day previous again came before her. This time it was lit by dancing flecks of flame. She staggered—fell forward.

"Mother!" The word sounded from a vast distance. "She's coming to—mother!" Strong arms were around her. A man's face bent over her—a brave, good face, brown and rugged, with straight mouth, square chin, and eyes full of loving solicitude.

"I didn't think my surprising you would give you such a turn, mother! I was wounded a while back. I got

leave with some others. I wanted to be with you and father for Thanksgiving. I got most of my back pay saved. Here, drink this wine Tim Comisky sent over. Mrs Comisky is cooking supper. She came in with a basket just before I got here. I had Mary Alice Ryan buy our Thanksgiving dinner. I told her to get the like for Larry and herself while she was about it. What—what are you looking for?"

Their eyes met. "'Tis yourself is a skeleton, mother," he said. "We've got to get you good and hearty again." He had looked away. He kept his face turned from her. She put her arms about his neck—drew his head down to her breast.

"Rody, you—you know!" "Oh, mother!" He could get no farther. He crushed a bit of cardboard in her hand. "Mother, if—if I hadn't come—"

"'Tis your mother's gettin' gay, Rody!" cried Dennis. "Visitin' yesterday! Gallavantin' again today!" He cackled joyously. "I was thinkin' she'd use all our money on carfare. Then, mabbe," laughing again at his own joke, "we might have to go to the county for help—Kitty an' me!" "No fear of that," Rody laughed back at him. He was holding in his

fond and faithful grasp the nervous hands which held some torn scraps of yellow paper. "No fear—eh, mother?"

"No—glory be to God!" cried Kitty Malone. "Glory, an'—"

Her soldier son bowed his head.

"Thanksgiving!" he said.

Will He Find You Ready.

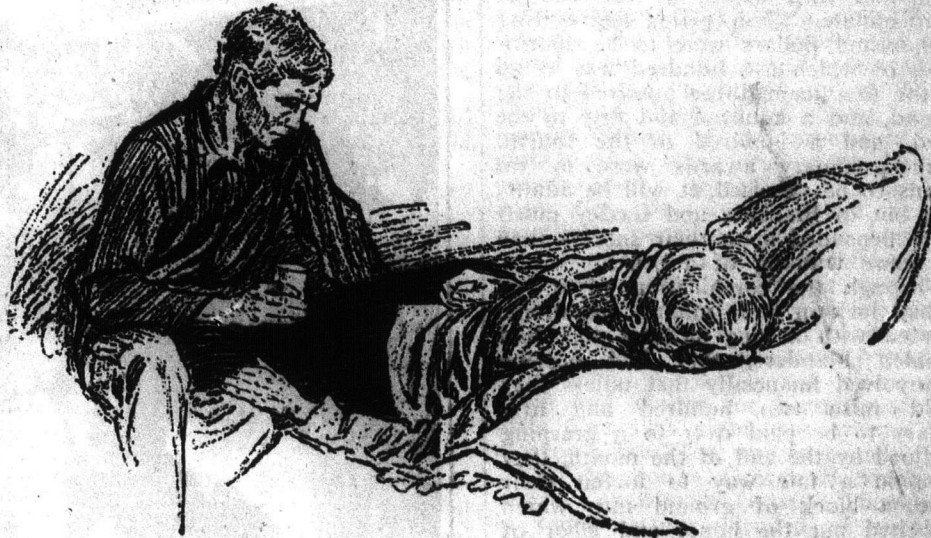
Father, I scarcely dare to pray
So clear I see now it is done,
That I have wasted half my day,
And left my work but just begun.

So clear I see that things I thought
Were right or harmless were a sin;
So clear I see that I have sought,
Unconscious, selfish aims to win.

So clear I see that I have hurt
The souls I might have helped to
save,
That I have slothful been, inert,
Deaf to the calls the leaders gave.

In outskirts of Thy Kingdom vast,
Father, the humbler spot give me,
Set me the lowliest task thou hast,
Let me repentant work for Thee.

— Helen Jackson.



Song of the Pine-Trees.

List to the song of the pine-trees, dearest,
Sit for a while on the heather and fern;
Watch yonder gambols of sweet furry creatures;
Many a lesson from Nature we'll learn.
Blue skies above us—beneath us the heather
Purple, as robes of the mightiest King;
Gently the breezes caress the dark branches;
List to the song which the pine-trees now sing.

Listen! a mother is crooning a ballad;
Hush! 'tis a lullaby sung to her child.
Do you not hear the soft beat of the cradle?
Can you not see her with eyes soft and mild?
Yet, whilst we listen the strain seems to alter,
Is it a sob from some poor, broken heart?
Is it the tearful good-bye of fond lovers
Forced by cruel Fate, or convention to part?

Surely this sound is the tramping of armies,
Louder it grows, whilst the drum and the fife
Rival each other. The wind sinks to silence.
Hark! 'tis the wail of the new-widowed wife.
List! 'tis the cry of the orphaned and homeless;
Sobbing and wailing the sound sinks to rest.
Once more the pine-trees begin their soft
murmur—

This is the song that I love far the best.

Hush-a-bye, baby, the stars are above thee,
Hush-a-bye, baby, and close thy blue eyes.
Sweet be thy slumbers, and peaceful thy dream-
ing.

Mother is with thee to sing hush-a-byes.
Rock, little babe, in thy sweet linden cradle,
Never shall danger or sorrow come nigh.
Hush! did you hear that soft whisper, my dar-
ling?

Surely the pine-trees are singing "Good-bye."
—By Keryl Kennard.



"She found the fire out and Dennis asleep."