

and thoughtfully scratched his grizzled head.

"Queer, isn't it, Jim! But I didn't see that they gave any more than usual."

"I didn't, either," the son replied, but there was a glow of satisfaction on both faces, and Robbie, an interested onlooker, felt his little heart swell almost to bursting. He scampered into the orchard and stood on his head, and, as Ann would have said, "cut all sorts of queer capers."

That afternoon, like a bolt from the blue, came word to the McCallum home that their milk had been watered, and they were summoned to face the charge. Blankly they looked in each others' faces mystified. Was it only a huge joke, or had someone done this dastardly deed, unknown to them?

The charge was no joke. The water was there, and they could not prove their innocence. It would have been impossible for a stranger to enter the yard without arousing the household, for their old Collie was watchful and alert, and always heralded a stranger's coming by loud barking; so both had testified. Jim had been out until late. He had not gone directly into the house on returning. Thus a damaging chain of circumstantial evidence was thrown around him, and for the first time the good old name McCallum was blotted with shame.

So Robert McCallum paid a heavy fine, and gloom settled down on the once happy home. They were strangely reserved about the matter, never speaking of it except in an undertone, so poor little Robbie knew nothing of the matter. Forbidden to play about the well, he never dared to repeat the experiment, luckily for the McCallums.

Expecting sympathy, Jim had gone straight to Nettie. She had met him with tears, and told him of her belief in his innocence; but on his second coming he was met by her father, and forbidden the daughter's company until he could clear his name of the stain upon it. Then, indeed, did dark days come to their little household; days of deep trouble when many held proudly aloof; days when Jim McCallum's heart was sore, and his pride touched to the quick; and days when the old people's gray hair grew white, and their steps prematurely feeble.

So the summer and autumn passed, and winter spread her snowy cloak over the earth.

It was the last day of the old year, and Jim McCallum sat alone in the cozy sitting-room, his face buried in his hand, and dejection showing in every line of his big form. His mother entered. She was busy preparing for the morrow's dinner, but at sight of him she paused. "Jim, lad, don't take it so hard. Brighter days will come."

He raised a face gray with sorrow, and shook his head. "No, mother, I can't stand it any longer. I am going away from here. Somewhere, surely I can be free from the shame that clings to our name. Nettie promised to give me her answer to-day, and I had every reason to believe it would be what I have always wished for. Now her father forbids her to see me until I can prove that I did not put that water in our milk. God knows I am innocent, but how can I make him believe it!"

Neither of them saw the door softly open and a frightened-faced boy standing there; neither of them saw him slip quietly out again.

Poor Robbie! He had stopped short when Jim had declared his intention of going away, then had tried to draw back and not listen, for his sense of honor was great. It seemed as if some force held him there and he had heard all.

In a flash he understood. The gloom and sadness of the last few months had been explained. Jim had been blamed, and Mr. Brown and Nettie believed him guilty. Oh, what could he do to make things right! Tell Jim and his mother? He dare not, and again the "Home" loomed up before the frightened boy.

He would tell Nettie, and she would know what to do. Why had he not known it was wrong to do such a thing!

Quick as thought he pulled on his woollen toque and gay red mittens, slipped quietly out of the house, and raced down the road.

He could scarcely see where he was

going, for the tears flooded his eyes and ran down his cheeks.

It was terribly hard to tell, but his love for Jim kept him from faltering.

Nettie herself opened the door for him, and through the mist of tears, Robbie saw that Mr. Brown was also in the room.

"Why, Robbie, what is the matter?" asked Nettie kindly. And then, in spite of his fear and his wildly-beating heart, he sobbed out, "Oh, Nettie, Jim is going away, and he never did it at all, and he says you think he did."

At the first words, Nettie had gone white, and she stood trembling and looked at Robbie as if dazed. Not so Mr. Brown. Shaking the boy roughly by the arm, he asked, "What do you mean, boy? What is it Jim never did?"

"Put that water in the milk, sir? 'Twas me did it, for I wanted to see him beat that Parker man... I didn't know it was any harm."

For a moment Mr. Brown gazed blankly at his daughter. "Oh, father, how you have wronged poor Jim!" and she burst into tears; then, pitying the woe-begone-looking little fellow, she hugged him tight, and tried to dry his tears, all unmindful of her own.

"Oh, don't let him go, and don't let them send me back," he wailed. "They can beat me all they like, but I'll die if they send me back."

"Well, I guess they won't send you back, dear. Don't worry over that. Come, I'll go back with you, and so will Dad."

Jim sat almost as Robbie had left him, when they entered without knocking, Robbie leading the way. Looking up at the sound of footsteps, he sprang to his feet in amazement.

Mr. Brown was the first to speak. Greeting Jim's hand, he said, "Jim, lad, I've wronged you terribly, and I ask your forgiveness for believing you guilty of such a shameful act." Then, as Jim still looked at him, not understanding, he added, "I'll just leave Nettie to explain to you, and Robbie and I will tell the others."

Just how that explanation was made, no one ever knew, but we fancy it was done quite satisfactorily.

I will say this much, however, Nettie's pale face had color enough just then, and she strove in vain to smooth her hair, which, in some unaccountable way, had become badly rumpled.

The New Year brought great happiness to two homes that year, and to two people in particular.

As for Robbie, he stayed.

When, however, Joe Parker heard the news, he showed himself a wise young man, laughing good-naturedly and remarking it was the first milk-and-water affair he ever knew to end that way.

### Papa's String is Pulled.

"You know, dear," said the young man nervously to the pretty girl, "I'm really frightened about speaking to your father; he's so awfully sure of himself, you know."

"Is that all that's causing the delay?" inquired the modern miss drily. "If that's so, just leave it to me. I'll manage father."

Accordingly next morning she approached paterfamilias as he potted plants to the accompaniment of a choice Havana and carpet slippers.

"Papa," she gurgled, with feigned mirth, as she took his arm, "what do you think? That young fool Perkins has proposed to me! Just fancy!" And the lady doubled up in incoherent joy.

But papa shook himself free, and turned with the fury of a baited bull as he stormed:

"What! Refused young Perkins—that estimable young man? Why, I'm ashamed of you! You modern girls never know when you're lucky! You'll make it up with him at once—at once. I say,—and don't let me have any nonsense!"

And papa never knew the reason for the peals of laughter which issued from the drawing-room that same evening, when Mr. Edwin Perkins ecstatically greeted the dainty Clara.

## News of the Week

One hundred Canadian doctors arrived in France on November 27th to establish a Canadian hospital and make preparations for taking care of the sick and wounded.

General Lessard, who is in charge of the Canadian troops in Toronto, has given orders that no drinking must take place among soldiers on leave in the city from Exhibition camp.

Shipbuilding is booming in English shipbuilding centers, where fifteen battle-ships are under construction.

Canadians are requested to send fruit, walnuts, jams, and preserved fruit, for the use of the British Navy.

Portugal has stated her readiness to place 10,000 men at the disposal of Great Britain. Sweden is also mobilizing, and it is hoped, will swing in favor of the Allies.

The British aviators who flew 120 miles into Germany last week and dropped bombs upon Friedrichshafen, report that they succeeded in doing considerable damage to the Zeppelin sheds. One of the three, whose aeroplane was brought down by a shot, was captured by the Germans.

Seventy-six thousand Turks, including 10,000 Bedouins, under Izzet Pasha and the Khedive, are en route to the Suez Canal, but their operations are likely to be much hampered by the impossibility of transporting heavy artillery over the desert. . . . British troops have landed at Jaffa to check the advance of Turks into Syria from Egypt. At Beirut and Jerusalem, anti-Christian riots are causing some anxiety, and may have to be dealt with.

During the past week little substantial news has come from the battle front in Europe. Taking advantage of the frozen roads, the Germans have been rapidly transporting heavy artillery through Belgium, and engagements have taken place about Ypres and Arras, without very definite result so far as authentic news can be obtained, notwithstanding the fact that the mightiest guns in the world's history, shooting at ranges of from 15 to 18 miles, have been in action. In the Eastern field, the earlier reports of the week stated emphatically that the Germans were in full flight through Poland, with the Russians in hot pursuit. It now appears that this was somewhat exaggerated, and that the Germans, have again concentrated and are making a stubborn stand at Lodz. At time of going to press, however, it is stated that the German army has been broken into three parts, in which case the advantage will be decidedly on the side of the Russians. In all parts of Europe the cold weather has somewhat affected the movements of the troops. Among the German prisoners taken near Lodz, many are said to have frozen feet.

### A Sweeping Assertion.

Mary was a fine young specimen of housemaid just over from the Emerald Isle, and imbued with a grim respect and silent fear for all modern conveniences and household inventions.

One sweeping-day Mary's mistress, returning from a walk, asked briskly: "Well, Mary, is the parlor swept yet?" "Shure, I don't know, ma'am," replied the girl, trembling. "I put that vacuum thing that you said would clane it up, inside the room two hours ago, and I'm that paralyzed of the long-tailed demon that I haven't dared look inside the door since to see how it's doing it's work."—Woman's Home Companion.

"What makes you so late?" asked his mother.

"The teacher kept me in because I couldn't find Moscow on the map of Europe," replied Johnnie.

Mother—"And no wonder you couldn't find Moscow. It was burned down in 1812. It's an outrage to treat a child that way."

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