

KITTY CRAIG.

(CONTINUED.)

Of the cost of such a dress, and the time and trouble to get it up, he knew nothing. He only thought Kitty should have one, and put a fifty dollar bill in his pocket for the emergency, and went home half an hour earlier than usual to tell Kitty of the honor in store for her.

And Kitty was pleased, too, and her face flushed a little as she said she guessed the old black silk would have to do duty again, as a new one, such as he had in his mind, was far beyond her means.

"When is it?" she asked, and then John felt again a little twinge he had experienced when Mrs. Steele mentioned Sunday as the most convenient time for getting "all the family," as she termed them, together.

"Sunday, at six o'clock," she had said, adding, when she saw the questioning look on John's face: "You know it is dark now at six, and the Sabbath ends at sundown; besides that, I mean to have some sacred music in the evening, so be prepared, please."

John would rather the dinner had been on some other day, but what people like the Guilees and Steeles did must be right, and he had not a thought that Kitty would object. But she did—firmly and decidedly.

"God never meant that His day should be remembered by giving dinner parties," she said. "That was not keeping it holy, and she could not go to Mrs. Steele's, much as she would like to."

"And to this decision she stood firm; and when John met Mr. Steele next day in the office, he told him to say to Mrs. Steele that he regretted it exceedingly, but he must decline her kind invitation to dinner."

"The fact is," he said, "my wife was brought up in New England, where I guess they were more strict about some things than the people of New York, and she thinks so."

John hesitated as if fearful that to give Kitty's reason would sound too much like a reproach, but Mr. Steele understood him and said, "She does not believe in Sunday dinner parties; that is what you mean. Well, well, I've seen the day when I did not, but that time seems to me ages and ages ago. Somehow here in New York first we knew we got to things which once we would not have done for the world, and Sunday visiting is one of them. I'll tell Lottie. She will be terribly disappointed, for she wanted you badly, but I guess your wife is right. I'm sure she is. Remember the Sabbath—I've most forgotten how it goes, though I used to say it the best of any of them, when I was a boy at home; and folding his hands behind him, Amasa Steele walked up and down his office, thinking of the summers years ago, when he sat in the old-fashioned pew in that little church at the foot of the mountain, and saw the sunshine lighting up the cross behind the chancel, and felt upon his cheek the air sweet with the fragrance of the hay cut yesterday in the meadow by the woods, and said his catechism to the white-haired rector, whose home was now in heaven.

"That time seemed long, long ago—aye, was long ago, before he was the city millionaire and husband of the dashing, self-willed Lottie, who, while professing to believe just what Kitty did, practised a far different creed. All the tithes of anise, and mint and cummin she brought, but she neglected the weightier matters, and her dark eyes flashed angrily for a moment when she heard Kitty's reason for declining her Sunday dinner."

"As if she were so much better than anybody else," she said, "and she was going on to say more when her husband cut her short with, 'I suppose she does not feel like going straight from the altar to a dinner party. Isn't it communion next Sunday in your church?'"

Yes, it was, but Lottie had forgotten that, and her face flushed as her husband thus reminded her of it. The two did not seem to be wholly congruous, and so she stayed home next Sunday, and felt a strange feeling of disquiet, and thought more of Kitty Craig, and how she would look with that expression of peace on her face when she turned away from the altar than she did of the grand dinner which was being prepared in her kitchen, and which, though pronounced a success by those of her guests who cared nothing for the fourth commandment, seemed to her a failure. Nothing suited her; everything was wrong, from the color of the gravy to the flower in her step-mother's hair, and the fit of Mrs. Orr's dress; and when all was over, and the company gone, and she was alone with her thoughts and the Bible she tried to read, and which by some chance she opened at the words, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," she said to herself, "I don't believe I'll ever try to have another dinner party on Sunday."

She went to see Kitty the next day and chided her for her absence, and called her a little Methodist and a Puritan, and asked how she came to be so strict-locked, and ended with: "But I believe you are right after all, only here in the city people do differently, and you will be like us in time."

"I trust I never may forget that God is in the city as well as in the country," was Kitty's reply, which Lottie pondered long in her heart, and which at last bore the fruit which ripens on the everlasting hills of glory.

It is two years since the night of the musicale, and more than one carriage with servants in livery and ladies gayly dressed has stopped at Kitty's door, and Kitty has the *entree* to many fashionable houses. But having tasted the once coveted apple and found how unsatisfying it was, she has put it from her and sees but little of the *beau monde* save such as she sometimes meets at the house of Lottie Steele, who is now her best friend, and whose carriage stands at her door on the night of which we write.

There was a message from Mr. Steele to John and Kitty Craig, telling them to come immediately, for Lottie, he feared, was dying.

There were tears in Kitty's eyes, and a throb of pain in her heart, as she read the note, and then prepared for a drive. There was a hushed air about the house as if death had already entered there, and the servant who opened the door spoke in a low whisper, as in reply to Kitty's questions she said, "Very low, and asking for you. Will you go up now?"

Without waiting to throw aside her wrappings Kitty followed up the stairs, past the room where Lottie's week-old baby girl was sleeping, and on to the chamber where the young mother lay. There was the pallor of death on her face, and her eyes seemed larger and bluer than ever. They lighted up suddenly and her white cheek flushed when she saw Kitty come in.

"Oh, Mrs. Craig, I am so glad. I wanted to tell you how much I owe you, and that but for you I could not be as happy lying here right in the face of death—for I am going to die, I know it, and I feel it—but first I want to see baby baptized, and you and your husband must be her sponsors. Please, Am, tell them to bring her in."

The child was brought, and the clergyman, who had been waiting for the Craig, was summoned from the parlor below.

"I would call her Kitty," Lottie said, as she laid her hand on the silken curls of the little one, "but Am wants her named for me. Poor Am! I didn't think he'd care so much. I'm sorry I have not done better," she continued, looking up into the face of her husband, who gave one great choking sob as he whispered: "Don't Lottie, don't. You have done well; then taking the little girl in his arms he held it so low that Lottie's hand rested as in blessing on its head all through the first of the service, until the clergyman took the little one himself and baptized it 'Charlotte Maude.'"

Then, when all was over and the clergyman gone, Lottie said, "Hold me, Am; raise me up and let me lay my head on your arm while I talk to Mrs. Craig and tell her how much good she has done me, and how her speaking the truth so frankly that night of the musicale, and her refusing to come to my dinner on Sunday, set me to thinking that she possessed something which I did not; and the more I thought about it, and the more I saw of her consistent life, the more I was convinced that my heart had never been touched. I had been confirmed, it is true, but I did not know what for, except that it was the proper thing to do, and was expected of me. There is too much of that kind of thing done, and young people need more instruction, more personal talk than they get oftentimes, and so the church is harmed. I meant to do right, and I kept all the fasts and holidays, and denied myself many things in Lent, and thought I was a saint to do it, and all the while was just as selfish and proud as I could be, and felt above everybody, and was bad to Am—"

"No, Lottie, never bad," and Mr. Steele pressed the hand he held in his, while Kitty wondered to see this grave, quiet man, so tender and loving when she had heretofore thought him cold and indifferent.

"Yes, I was bad," Lottie said. "I've never been the wife I ought to have been, and I'm so sorry now, and when I'm gone I want you to think as kindly of me as you can, and bring baby up to be just such a woman as Kitty Craig. Not fashionable, Am, though she might be even that and a good woman, too. There are many such, I know, but do not let her put fashion before God. Don't let her be what I have been. Mrs. Craig will see to her and tell her of her mother, who was a better woman before she died; for I do believe I am, and has forgiven even me. I'd like to live for baby's sake, and show Am that I could be good, but I am willing to die, and ready, I trust; and maybe if I got well I should be bad again; so it is right and Heaven knows best. Lay me down now, husband, and let Kitty Craig kiss me good-by, and tell me she forgives the cruel words I said when I first saw her, and my neglect after that."

She seemed like a little child in her weakness and contrition, and Kitty's tears fell like rain as she gave the face

well kiss and said that she had long ago forgotten the insult offered her.

"Now go: I breathe better when there is no one here but Am," Lottie said. "And when you come again, maybe I shall be gone, but I hope I shall be at peace where there is no more pain or temptation to be had."

So John and Kitty went out together, and left her alone with her husband, who drew the covering about her, and smoothing her tumbled pillow, bade her sleep if she could. And Lottie slept at last while her husband watched beside her with his eyes fixed upon her white face, and a heavy crushing pain in his heart as he thought of losing her now, just as he had a glimpse of what she might be to him, and, as he hoped, just as she was beginning to love him.

He had always loved her in his quiet, awkward way—always been proud of her; and though her frivolities and inconsistencies had roused his temper at times, and made him say harsh things to her and of the religion she professed, he had through all been fond of her and believed in God—that is, believed in the God he had learned about in the New England Sunday school at the foot of the mountain, and he thought of Him now, and for the first time in years his lips moved with the precious words:

"Our Father."

That prayer had once been so familiar to him, and as he said it now the past came back again, and he was a boy once more, with all the fervour of youth, and Lottie was to him all she had been when he first called her his wife, only he seemed to love her more; and with a choking sob he cried:

"I can't let Lottie die. Oh, Father, save her for me, and I'll be a better man."

Softly he kissed the white hand he held, and his tears dropped upon it, and then a feeble voice said, in some surprise:

"Am, are you crying, or was it a dream? and did you pray for me, and do you love me sure, and want me to get well?"

"Yes, darling, I do," and the soba were loud now, and the strong man's tears fell fast upon the face turned so wonderfully and joyfully towards him.

"Then I will get well," Lottie said; "or at least I'll try. I really thought you would be happier without me. I've been such a bother, and it was not worth while to make an effort, but if you do love me and want me, it's different, and I feel better already. Kiss me, Am, and if I live we'll both start new and be good—won't we?"

Lottie did not die, and when Kitty went to enquire for her next morning she found her better and brighter, with an expression of happiness on her face which she had never seen before.

"I almost went over the river," she said; "and felt sure I was dying when Am's voice called me back. Dear old Am, do you think he actually prayed for me, that I might get well, and I thought once he did not believe in praying. Any way he used sometimes to say that my prayers were all humbug, and I guess they were; some of those long ones I used to make when I came from a dancing-party at two in the morning, and he was tired and sleepy, and wanted me to turn off the gas. But he is different now, and says he loves me after all I've done. Why, I never gave him a speck of love, or kissed him of my own accord. But I'm going to do better, and I guess God will let me live to prove to Am that there is really in our church as well as in others. He says he believes in the Methodist—his grandmother was one—and when we were first married he used to want me to play those funny hymns about 'Travelling Home,' and 'Bound for the Land of Canaan,'—and he helped a little in the Presbyterians, and some in the Baptists, but not a bit in the Episcopalians—that is, he didn't till he knew you, he thinks, are most as good as a Methodist; and I am going to try and convince him that I am sincere and mean to do right and care for something besides fashion and dress. I am glad, for when the spring bonnets and styles come out, my head might be turned again, for I dote on lace and French flowers. Do you think I ought to wear a mop cap and a serge dress to mortify myself?"

Kitty did not think so; and when two months later she met, down in one of the miserable alleys in the city where want and misery, and vice reigned supreme, a love of a French chip hat, trimmed with a bunch of exquisite panache and blonde lace, she did not believe that the kindness paid to the poor old paralytic woman who died with her shrivelled hand clasped in Lottie Steele's, and her lips whispering the prayer Lottie had taught her was less acceptable to God than it would have been had Lottie's face and form been disfigured by the garb with which some well-meaning women make perfect frights of themselves.

Lottie's heart was right at last, and Amasa never mattered now nor swore if he could not find his slippers while she was saying her prayers. On the contrary he said them with her, and tried to be a better man, just as he said he would, and at last one morning in June, when

the heated city seemed to laugh in the glorious summer sunshine, he knelt before the altar and himself received the rite of which he had once thought so lightly.

"We are so happy now," Lottie said to Kitty one day. "And I am so proud of Maude, though I did not believe in babies once; and Am is just like a young lover, and I'd rather have him than all the men in the world if he were fifty his last birthday, and I am twenty-five; and do you know I charge it all to you, who have influenced me for good ever since I first saw you, and made that atrocious speech."

"Let us rather both ascribe to Heaven every aspiration after a holier, better life which we may have," was Kitty's reply, but her heart was very happy that day, as she felt she might perhaps have been an instrument of good to one household at least, and that to have been so infinitely of more value and productive more of real happiness than getting into society, which she had once thought so desirable, and which, now that she was or could be in it if she chose, seemed so utterly worthless and unsatisfactory.

THE END.

The Liberty of the Press.

"We haven't any further need of your services," said the managing editor of a city daily to a reporter who had been at work only a week.

"That's rather sudden, ain't it?" replied the startled reporter. "Haven't I done all I had to do?"

"You have done the work, but not properly, sir."

"What's wrong?"

"Well, you wrote up Mrs. Parvenu's ball, and there wasn't a word about it being a brilliant affair."

"That's just what it wasn't."

"The lady, sir, takes several copies of this paper, and her husband has his printing done in our office, and ordinary common sense should teach you to understand your duties under the circumstances."

"But—"

"No excuse is necessary, sir. Then you brought in an article on the arrest of young Mr. Fresh for drunkenness. His father is one of our patrons, and we have a sufficient independence to disregard the wishes of the curious public to get an item of news when our patrons are interested in its suppression."

"I understand—"

"No you don't, for you wrote Mr. Jones' obituary without saying he was a distinguished citizen, of large influence, and a man of great goodness of heart."

"I thought he was another kind of a man."

"You mustn't think. The independent spirit of the press is not to be governed by reportorial thought, sir. Did you think when you wrote of Miss Angeline Shoddy's departure to the seaside without referring to her as the charming and accomplished daughter of one of our most select families?"

"Who said she was the—"

"Do you have to hear what other people say in order to know your business? Who told you that Mr. Bottle, the councilman, was a rough? Don't you know his influence is worth money to the paper?"

"I wasn't aware that—"

"Of course you were not aware of anything. If you were, you might be useful to us. No air; you are not the kind of a man we need. We want a man not to know what he knows, and knew what he does not know. The liberty of the press is not to be trifled with by irresponsible reporters who think, not in its freedom to be restricted by young men who let the actual facts in a case interfere with the requirements of the occasion. You can get your pay, sir, by calling at the front office."—[Ex.]

Crushed by the Cars.

A little son of John Spinks, Toronto, had his foot crushed by a G. T. R. express train some time ago. Two doctors attended him without benefit, and amputation was proposed, but Hayward's Yellow Oil was tried, which effected a speedy cure, even removing all stiffness of the joint.

Keating Man?

Stop and think. What you are to be will depend upon what you do. Your words and thoughts and deeds are not fragile and perishable, but permanent and enduring. Do no wrong. Battle for the right. Help and bless humanity. Honor and obey the Author of your being and your blessings.

Be not an idler. Work and win. It is not genius but toil that is the creator of utilities. Great characters in history are all great miracles of industry. Butler put twenty years on his 'Analogy,' and the work is immortal. Rittenhouse, who began to calculate eclipses on his plow handles, could not fall of eminence. To-morrow is the day in which idle men work and fools reform. Let your theater and time of action be to-day.

Seek to be an intelligent worker. Read books and papers. Cultivate and discipline the mind. Seek the society of thinkers. Aim at eminence in the arts and sciences. The paths along which Franklin walked, or Webster or Henry Clay, are still open to willing feet. Enter and walk therein. Advance to the front. Be an intelligent toiler in the world's great work-shops. You are in life's spring time. If you do not sow and plant now, you cannot expect a rich harvest by-and-by. Up and be doing. Sow good seed. Keep the weeds down. Be patient and workful, and the future will not be without hope and blessedness.

A Noble Benefit.

James Moore, a prominent resident of Leamington, writes that he cured himself of dyspepsia of a year's duration by one bottle of Burdock Blood Bitters, and two bottles cured his wife who had been for years a sufferer from the same disease. He conscientiously recommends it to all suffering from similar troubles. 2

Club Rates.

We have made arrangements to club THE SIGNAL with city papers at the rates given below:—

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" " Weekly Globe ..... 2.25  
" " Mail ..... 2.25  
" " Advertiser ..... 2.25

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The finest healing compound under the sun is McGregor & Parke's Carbolic Ointment. There is no sore but will succumb to its wonderful healing properties. It is an invaluable dressing for scalds, fevers, etc. Price 25 cents at G. Rhymer's drug store.

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SOLD BY F. JORDAN Jan. 10th, 1884. 1883-84

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Rev. Father Wilds' EXPERIENCE.

The Rev. F. Wilds, well-known city missionary in New York, and brother of the late eminent Judge Wilds, of the Massachusetts Supreme Court, writes as follows: "At 54th St., New York, May 10, 1882. Messrs. J. C. Ayer & Co., Gentlemen: Last winter I was troubled with a most uncomfortable burning humor affecting more especially my limbs, which I tried to inhale as at night, and burned so intensely, that I could scarcely bear any clothing over them. I was also a sufferer from a severe catarrh and catarrhal cough; my appetite was poor, and my system a good deal run down. Knowing the value of AYER'S SARSAPARILLA, by observation of many other cases, and from personal use in former years, I began taking it for the above-named disorder. My appetite improved almost from the first dose. After a short time the fever and itching were allayed, and all signs of irritation of the skin disappeared. My catarrh and cough were also cured by the same means, and my general health greatly improved. Until it is now excellent. I feel a hundred per cent stronger, and I attribute these results to the use of the SARSAPARILLA, which I recommended with all confidence as the best blood medicine ever devised. I took it in small doses, three times a day, and used, in all, less than two bottles. I place these facts at your service, hoping their publication may do good."

Yours respectfully, Z. P. WILDS.

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