

thing better. A class in gymnastics has already been organized under the superintendence of Miss Powell. As far as instruction is concerned, the girls certainly have the advantage of the boys, for our elocutionist is both interested in her work and is able to inspire her classes with her own enthusiasm.

AT BREAKFAST.

MRS. SPRIGGINS, fat and flurried, but withal very affable, showed me to a seat at the breakfast table, and bustled about the room, adjusting the shutters, and flecking the dust from off the chairs with her generous gingham apron.

Meanwhile I, from my station by the table, watched my fellow-boarders, as, one by one, they dropped into their places. A hot, August morning is hardly the time for close, critical study, even though the subject be the fascinating one of new faces. So my few mental observations were somewhat sketchy in form, and disconnected.

Opposite me sat a lean, hungry eyed youth, possessed of manifold freckles, and a gorgeous, plaid neck-tie—a dry goods clerk, whom the boarders called the "Cadaver." His contributions to the table talk were few; indeed, his whole attention seemed rivetted upon the dishes before him. Yet, at rare intervals, and when least expected, the lantern jaws would fly open, set free a spasmodic utterance, and spring together again, with a quick, decided jerk.

But conversation did not languish, for the funny, little, old lady on my right chatted volubly with everyone, and asked me all my family history and pedigree, much to the amusement of the rest of the company. Finally, she wound up with the abrupt inquiry, "Be you a Baptist?" Her snapping, black eyes scanned me so sharply that I felt a little uncertain as to my fate, in case my answer should not please her. But fortune favored me, and my hesitating "No," met with the fervent ejaculation, "Glad on't! I tho't yer might be," she went on, "Yer look kinder sot-like round yer month. They're an awful lot. My brother Silas, he's one, and it used ter be pretty hard times livin' with him, fur he allus rantin' bout his views. But, at last, one day, says I ter him, 'Silas, I'm mighty glad yer be a Baptist.' Before he got over feeling pooty s'prised at this, I finished up, 'I'm mighty glad there be those as are willin' to be Baptists,' says I, and he colored up and looked kinder meachin, and's never peeped since, about Baptists, 'tis fur as I know." The wizened, little Anti-Baptist grinned with satisfaction at the thought and munching a biscuit with keen relish.

"Din't used to cold water, he ought not to mind.

a little damper like that," said the melancholy man on my left.

This gentleman interested me greatly. He was pale and care-worn, and had the saddest look which I have ever seen on human face. I wondered what hidden sorrow had thus early shadowed his life, for he was barely thirty. But when I learned that he edited the "funny column" of a city "Weekly," all was explained. The awful responsibility of being obliged, once in seven days, to grind out a column or two of would-be witticisms, wore upon him, and, I doubt not, had a similar effect upon his readers. At all events, I doubt if my nervous system ever recovers from the effects of that month's diet of incessant puns. His whole aspect reminded me of Saxe's sad lament:

"It's such a very serious thing,
To be a funny man"

I fell to musing over this couplet, but was soon interrupted.

"Mos' time fur Mis' Garfield to git down," piped the Anti-Baptist, adding cheerfully, "Shouldn't wonder if one o' those bad spells should carry her off some day."

"Heaven grant it!" piously murmured the Editor, "That is, that or some other vehicle."

"She's comin'—r'else—the Professor," jerked the Cadaver, and, wearied by the effort at conversation, retired into his coffee-cup for a season.

"Good morning, Mrs. Garfield," said Mrs. Spriggins, beaming upon the new-comer, from behind the huge coffee-pot.

I looked up, to see a faded, sallow woman, close-wrapped in a thick, worsted shawl, although the weather was of the warmest. She seated herself wearily, and faintly declared that she "never felt so bad before in her life." "I wanted to see you all once more, so I dragged myself down, but I know that I can't eat a mouthful."

"Regular programme, Act I," explained the Editor in a tragic whisper.

"Do try a bit of steak. You'll feel better for it," said Mrs. Spriggins cheerily. After a little more urging, which met with the plaintive refusals, the Invalid at length consented to "try and worry down the least, little bit, dear Mrs. Spriggins, of your nice omelette, though I know 'twill half kill me," and soon was eating with all earnestness.

"Act II. Will repeat, if desired," murmured the Editor sadly, and the Anti-Baptist sniffed audibly.

At this point a step was heard in the hall. "It's—the Professor," announced the youth of the gay neck-wear, the "Cadaver." "Please,—the butter—thanks!"

"Professor of what?" I asked. "Ger-ums," responded the "Cadaver" concisely, and fell to eating