

how good it was, and how it had given her back her strength. And without one thought of what she was doing she lifted the pot of porter and took one little reminiscent sip—two little reminiscent sips—and became aware of her utter fall and defeat. She blushed now as she had never blushed before, put the pot down, closed the window, and fled to her bed like a deer to the woods.

When the porter arrived the next night, bearing the simple appeal—

*Don't be afraid of it
drink it all*

the little seamstress arose, grasped the pot firmly by the handle, and poured its contents over the earth around her largest geranium. She poured the contents out to the last drop, and then she dropped the pot, and ran back and sat on her bed and cried, with her face hid in her hands.

"Now," she said to herself, "you've done it! And you're just as nasty and hard-hearted and suspicious and mean as—as anything!"

And she wept to think of her hardness of heart.

"He will never give me a chance to say I am sorry," she thought. And, really, she might have spoken kindly to the poor man, and told him that she was much obliged to him, but that he really mustn't ask her to drink porter with him. "But it's all over and done now," she said to herself as she sat at her window on Saturday night. And then she looked at the cornice, and saw the faithful little pewter pot travelling slowly towards her.

She was conquered. This act of Christian forbearance was too much for her kindly spirit. She read the inscription on the paper—

*poeter is good Flours
but better for Folks*

and she lifted the pot to her lips, which were not half so red as her cheeks, and took a good, hearty, graceful draught.

She sipped in thoughtful silence after the first plunge, and presently she was surprised to find the bottom of the pot in full view.

On the table at her side a few pearl buttons were screwed up in a bit of white paper. She untwisted the paper and smoothed it out, and wrote in a tremulous hand—she *could* write a very neat hand—

Thanks.

This she laid on the top of the pot, and in a moment the bent two-footed rule appeared and drew the mail-carriage home. Then she sat still, enjoying the warm glow of the porter, which seemed to have permeated her entire being with a heat that was not at all like the unpleasant and oppressive heat of the atmosphere, an atmosphere heavy with the spring damp. A gritting on the tin aroused her. A piece of paper lay under her eyes.

*fine growing weather
Smith*

it said.

Now it is unlikely that in the whole round and range of conversational commonplace there was one other greeting that could have induced the seamstress to continue the exchange of communications. But this simple and homely phrase touched her country heart. What did "*growing weather*" matter to the toilers in this waste of brick and mortar? This stranger must be, like herself, a country-bred soul, longing for the new green and the upturned brown mould of the country fields. She took up the paper, and wrote the first message—

Pine

But that seemed curt; *for* she added, "*for*" what? She did not know. At last, in desperation, she put down *potatoes*. The piece of paper was withdrawn, and came back with an addition—

Too mist for potatoes.

And when the little seamstress had read this, and grasped the fact that *m-i-s-t* represented the writer's pronunciation of "moist," she laughed softly to herself. A man whose mind at such a time

(CONCLUDED ON PAGE 10.)

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