

THE TOILER

ANDREWS OF THE APRIL FLOOD

By WM. H. OSBORNE

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Andrews rose from his seat and looked down upon the girl. He fumbled with his hat.

"I'm sorry," he faltered. "I thought it right to be different. I'm getting along so well over in town, and this spring I thought perhaps that we—that I—I might build somewhere around here and—"

"I'm sorry," he repeated. "I thought it right to be different. I'm getting along so well over in town, and this spring I thought perhaps that we—that I—I might build somewhere around here and—"

"I'm sorry," she replied in a tone that indicated that she was not so sorry as she seemed. Andrews started off. Suddenly he returned and once more looked down at her.

"Louise," he exclaimed impulsively, "tell me something. I can stand it, and I want to know. We've grown up together. You can afford to be frank with me. Is there anybody else?"

She slowly shook her head. "No one in particular," she said.

"What is it, then?" he persisted. She looked him full in the face.

"I'll tell you, Stephen Andrews," she said. "It is not your fault, but you are not my kind of a man. Oh, I know," she added hastily, "you are a college fellow and what these people call smart and all that"—She hesitated. "I don't know," she continued.

"Whether I have been reading too many novels in my time or not, but I—there must be something more in the man that I—I don't know just how to express it. I think you understand."

Andrews smiled in spite of himself. "You mean," he said, "that I wear spectacles and that I don't tan up quite so much as the other fellows in the summer. I am not impulsive. My name is not Ivanhoe. Is that it, Louise?"

The girl sighed and looked off toward the white hills. "It does look strong, muscular men," she admitted. She had no hesitation in saying this to Andrews, for she generally said to him just what she meant. Andrews smiled a grim smile. He had never told her that he held the record for boxing and wrestling in his college class, and he did not propose to tell her his head.

"Like John Duryea, for instance," he suggested. Again the girl flushed, for she sat there she had contrasted the two men, somewhat to the detriment of the man before her.

"As you please," she answered, a bit coldly. Suddenly she turned to him. "You said," she went on, "that I thought you were not impulsive. Tell me honestly, if this house were on fire, and I were upstairs, and you were down below, would you brave the danger that might exist and rush in to my rescue at the risk of your life? Would you do that?"

Andrews smiled again. "Would John Duryea?" he asked. The girl nodded.

"He would—I know he would," she answered. Andrews shook his head.

"It's a hard thing to answer," he replied. "Circumstances might alter cases. I should stop to think first, and then—"

"And then?" pursued the girl. "I can't tell," returned the man. "I would do the best I could. It's a nice question."

He said all this in an amused sort of way. The girl was serious. Andrews became serious again. He knew too well that the girl was uttering her thoughts—thoughts that with other girls exist, but remain unuttered. He realized with bitterness that the man who looks and acts like a hero in the man, after all, Duryea was such a man.

"I am sorry," he reiterated, and he went.

John Duryea was not a youth of intellect, but he had a kindling eye, and he had that appearance of animal courage and spirits that is so taking. Andrews envied him. He would have given up all his intelligence and experience, he would have relinquished all his lessons he had learned in youthful adversity and hard work to be in the shoes of this man Duryea.

The snow on the mountains melted in a day and a night. The river rose. It rose so much that the town talked of it. The roar of the waters could be heard afar off. Duryea called at the girl's house. "Come down and see the flood," he said. They had been down before, but it was at all times an interesting sight. They strolled toward the long bridge. The waters roared under this bridge like a cataract. The eye could detect clearly the trembling of its timbers.

"We'd better not go on the bridge," exclaimed the girl, halting just before they reached it. Duryea threw back his shoulders.

"Come on," he said, with an air of bravado. "I'll take care of you." The girl looked at him with admiration and laughed. They went. She shivered as she felt the timbers tremble beneath her feet. The man lightly put his arm about her. It was good to feel his strength. It gave confidence. Suddenly he pointed down the road. "Look!" he shouted to her ear. "Here comes Andrews!" The girl looked. Sure enough, it was Andrews, running and waving his hand. He was waving them off the bridge, but they waved lightly back to him. He reached the entrance and stood there. They beckoned him to come, but he shook his head. He was afraid.

A smile above the bridge something was coming down. It was nothing but a congenial little spring convocation of logs.

"Your friend Andrews is afraid," shouted Duryea to the girl. She nodded. At that moment something happened. With a roar and a crash like thunder and lightning a few of the logs struck one end of the bridge, and it went down. Duryea turned pale. He was impulsive. He was muscular and agile. And as a result in no time he had sprinted toward the other end and stood on terra firma. The girl was too dazed to move. The second edition of logs buried itself against the bridge.

In the middle of the bridge went down. On the shore two men watched. The girl had disappeared.

One man cast himself upon the ground and cried aloud in frenzy. He was a muscular chap. His name was Duryea. The other stood watching and thinking. He thought twice before he acted. Suddenly he caught a glimpse of a pale face and a few tresses of golden hair still untouched by the flood.

Then he did a queer thing. He darted down the side of the stream for a hundred yards until he caught up with this pale face and golden hair. When he was even with it he leaped far out into the stream and worked his way through the muddy torrent and over the impetuous logs to the place where he had seen the face of the girl he loved. The flood had claimed her for an instant, but as her face again appeared Andrews glimpsed her from the flood. And then the fight began. It was the forest and the stream, both raging mad, against one man and the girl he held within his arms.

By this time a crowd lined the shore. Andrews never knew what he did or how he did it. His iron muscles wrestled and fought and buffeted with odds that he had never met before. He fought like a wild man—fought to regain the shore, fought to regain life for the girl and for himself. Suddenly there was a shout. Some one had thrown a rope. Andrews caught it. Then the crowd held its breath. Then of a sudden there was a mighty shout. There was one man that did not hear it. It was Andrews—Andrews, who had staggered up out of the torrent, had staggered up out of the torrent, with his bride to be—Andrews, a man with a broken arm and a broken thigh. Slowly he opened his eyes and looked at the girl who bent over him. "My name is Ivanhoe," he groaned, with a weary smile.

Sheep or Swine? An example of the humor of the Puritan settlers in New England comes from old Newbury, a town which was incorporated so long ago as 1623. Although it was a staid community rather than a frivolous one, there was for many years an established town fest which was repeated in town meeting with unimpaired relish as often as its local officers were to be elected.

The lowest office in the gift of the people being that of town hog reeve, the person whose duty it is to herd and impound stray hogs, they had made it the custom to elect to that unenviable position the latest married resident of the place. It or unfit, willing or unwilling.

Once—there was an election in the special spirit of audacity rare at town meeting on that occasion—they even went so far as to elect the Rev. Dr. Leonard Withington, then newly settled over the parish, and a committee, acting in a spirit of mischief, yet perhaps with a dash of inspired trepidation, was sent to notify him of the honor, which, of course, it was expected he would not accept.

"Hog reeve," he repeated thoughtfully. "It is true I came to this place expecting to act as shepherd of a flock, but if my sheep have changed their character I see in that no reason to decline the office."

The reverend gentleman led, drove and exhorted his flock in the way they should go for the rest of his lifetime with notable success—Youth's Companion.

Another Moving Job. "Moving again, Fitz?" asked Pullet as Fitzgibbon came out of the gate with a washtub tightly clasped in his arms and trailing a mirror behind him.

"Yes," moaned the afflicted man, mopping his perspiring brow. "I'm going to leave this hole."

"What for? Don't you like the neighbors?"

"Oh, no, not that; the neighbors are all right."

"Water not good, maybe?"

"No better can be found."

"The rent hasn't been raised, has it?"

"No; that's the reason I'm going to seek another house."

"What?" exclaimed the surprised Pullet. "Moving from a place because the rent has not been raised! Surely you don't object to that, Fitz?"

"No, I do not," sadly replied Fitz as he started back for the kitchen set of furniture. "but the landlord does, you know."—London Answers.

Back Numbers. "William," said Mrs. Van Gelder to the man of all work. "I want you to clean out that large closet in the hall just outside the parlor. Burn all the old newspapers, waste paper and any other rubbish you may find there."

After a short time she met William in the hall carrying in his arms a huge pile of sheet music, the property of her eldest daughter.

"What are you going to do with Ma's music?" she asked.

"Why, burn it, sure, as you told me to. It was in the closet there with the other rubbish."

"But I didn't mean the music. Put it back at once!"

"Noting his mistress' displeasure, William inquired in surprise:

"Whar, hasn't she played it all?"—Lippincott's.

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WHEN THE LIGHT CAME

By William Walker Hines

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At last his excellency the governor was alone. The tide of office seekers, lobbyists and politicians had been turned from the executive wing of the statehouse, and the exodus of clerks and stenographers had begun. In the anteroom his private secretary awaited his dismissal for the day, impatient of the unusual delay. Down the tiled corridor echoed the footfalls of the janitor, master of all he surveyed.

All day the governor had longed for the moment, yet now he sat idle. His gaze wandered toward the window, and he found himself thinking that when the stant rays of the setting sun flashed into the room he would find light to continue his work. It was for a pitifully few moments only that the sunshine penetrated the governor's private office, with its subdued colorings, its massive furniture and its patriotic memorabilia.

His hand rested on the paper he had no need to read—"Senate bill No. 214."

It had passed both senate and house without serious discussion, and the vote had drawn party lines sharply. The governor's own party was responsible for the measure, and it had met with but slight opposition. Apparently no one considered the bill of any special importance.

The governor had not quite understood why he took the precaution, but some instinct advised him to probe beneath the surface of this innocent looking measure. This instinct, this indefinable suspicion, was confirmed in a way that appalled him.

The days of indecision which followed had not been pleasant ones for the state's chief executive. Secure in their position, the sponsors of the bill had not urged its immediate signing, and the governor had carefully weighed the question.

Now he realized that the hour for action had come. Either he must veto the measure in the interest of those whose votes had given him the highest office in the state and whose welfare he had sworn to protect or throw his influence and his signature with those who were conspiring to mulct their ingenuous constituency.

There could be no compromise. Either with the masses he must stand, or with their enemies. And their enemies were his lifelong friends, the men who had made him politically, the men whom he had known in boyhood, in ambitious young manhood, in ripe and successful middle age—the men with whom he had marched and sung and fought and bled during the mighty civil war. It seemed to him in this dark hour that he loved those men, every one of them. He knew their wives, their sons, their daughters. He had broken bread at their tables. He had rejoiced with them in their successes, sympathized with them when clouds had gathered. Political fetters of welded into friendship's fetters of steel. He brought his fist down on the mocking paper with a terrific crash. The men behind that bill were bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh, and yet—

Then came another thought, a thought purely selfish. If he turned against these men who had made him what he was, what did the future offer? An honest politician, he had never financial returns from a score of years given to his state's service. Part of his salary each year had gone to pay interest on the mortgage which had hung heavily on the old farm. His law practice had been scattered among many younger rivals. And he had passed that age when men can compete successfully with new blood.

There was his wife too. She had grown accustomed to the proportion of purple and the linen accruing to the governor's wife—and Marion. He remembered that very morning watching the girl, apple of his eye, mount her horse and canter down the driveway. Was it fair that he should dash the cup of pleasure she was just raising to her lips? He could almost feel the fresh, cool kiss of his cheek as she whispered:

"Father, dear, I am so happy, so happy!"

What she was happy if he took her back to the old farm, with its straggling buildings, its neglected land, to begin all over again?

He bent forward, one hand supporting his aching head. Then suddenly came the sunbeam, striking full and fair through the casement. It fell upon his great seal ring, bearing the state's coat of arms, and he pulled his hand back into the shadows.

The sun's ray traveled across the room, tilting upward, and in a whimsical mood he followed its course over the great fat topped desk with its fixtures, past the high backed carved chair straight to the mantel, and there it struck something that brought him to his feet.

It was an old painting of himself, life size and made from an old daguerrotype. He remembered the very day that faded little picture had been taken. He had worn his uniform, then bright and new. The painting was the gift of the men of his company, some of whom were numbered among the ranks of those supporting the bill which lay on ronder desk. Why had they followed him in those dark days of secession and civil strife? Why had they followed where he led? Why, if he was not stronger than they, why had they had followed him then, and now where was he leading them? No; he knew nothing, before a secessionist had taken the name of the state's leaders, thorough and honest, as he would do, but she would good taste and thorough appreciation not make any further inquiries, as he tion of beauty and com-

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