The Cap Fit.

The minister said last night, says he,
"Don't be afraid of givin',
If your life ain't worth nothin' to other folks
Why, what's the use of livin'?"
And that's what I say to my wife, says I,
There's Brown, the mis'rable sinner,
He'd sooner a beggar would starve than give
A cent towards buyin' a dinner.

I tell you our minister is prime, he is;
But I couldn't quite determine,
When I heard him a givin' it right and left,
Just who was hit by his sermon.
Of course there couldn't be no mistake
When he talked of long-winded prayin',
For Peters and Jonson they sot and scowled
At every word he was sayin'.

And the minister he went on to say,
"There's various kinds of cheatin',
And religion's as good for every day
As it is to bring to meetin'.
I don't think much of the man that gives
The loud amens at my preachin',
And spends his time the followin' week
In cheatin' and over-reachin'."

I guess that dose was bitter enough
For a man like Jones to swallow;
But I noticed he didn't open his mouth,
Not once, after that, to holler;
Hurrah, says I, for the minister—
Of course I said it quiet—
Give us some more of this open talk,
It's very refreshin' diet.

The minister hit 'em every time,
And when he spoke of fashion,
And riggin's out in bows and things,
And woman's rulin' passion,
And coming to church to see the styles,
I couldn't help a-winkin' [you,"
And a-nudgin' my wife, and says I, "That's
And I guess it sot her thinkin'.

Says I to myself, that sermon's pat,
But man is a queer creation,
And I'm much afraid that most of the folks
Won't take the application.
Now, if he had said a word about
My personal mode of sinnin',
I'd have gone to work to right myself,
And not set there a-grinnin'.

Just then the minister says, says he,
"And now I've come to the fellers
Who've lost this shower by usin' their friends
As a sort o' moral umbrellas.
Go home," says he, "and find your faults,
Instead of huntin' your brothers',
Go home," says he, "and wear the coats
You tried to fit for others."

My wife she nudged, and Brown he winked,
And there was lots o' smilin',
And lots o' lookin' at our pew,
It sot my blood a-bilin'.
Says I to myself, our minister
Is gettin' a little bitter.
I'll tell him, when the meetin's out, that I
Ain't at all that kind of a critter.

Selected Serial.

SHILOH:

OR,

WITHOUT AND WITHIN.

BY W. M. L. JAY.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE TRUTH AT LAST.

On the afternoon of the day of my return from New York, I met Mrs. Danforth at the Sewing Society. She soon took occasion to lead me into a room apart.

"Well!" she began, "I wrote to Pearl—or rather, to her mother—and she wrote back that Pearl was away visiting, and she had immediately forwarded the letter. Probably Pearl has received it by this time, and I shall soon here how she takes it. By the way, I hear that Rick Thorne is married, and that you had the honour of carrying home the unexpected bride. How does she look? Is she pretty?"

"Very pretty—a perfect little fairy."

"Where does she hail from?"

"Philadelphia."

Indeed! I have a large acquaintance there. What is—or what was—her name?"

"Daisy Dorn."

Mrs. Danforth gave me one look of unqualified amazement, then, she dropped into the nearest chair, and burst into a long, loud, ringing laugh, yet a laugh that I never quite like to hear, because much too broad and noisy for a woman.

"I do not see the joke," said I, rather severely.

"Don't you? My good gracious! it is too rich!—Daisy Dorn is"—and she went off into another peal.

I waited in silent disapproval.

"Is—is,"—she went on, catching her breath hysterically, "goodness alive! she is Pearl Danforth!"

"Impossible!" I exclaimed. "That child!"

"Child!" cried Mrs. Danforth, fairly screaming with mirth. "Bless your simple soul! she was of age two year ago; and she has the brain of a Machiavelli under those yellow curls of hers.

"But her name—Daisy Dorn."

"You persistent sceptic! Her name is Margaret; of course she is entitled to all its variations. Chester called her Pearl, because, as he said, he had picked her up on the seashore. She assumes the others as the fit takes her—Daisy, Madge, Greta, and I don't know what not; lately, too, she has taken a fancy to resume the name of Dorn—the name her father bore in Italy, and the only one Chester knew anything about; no wonder he never found her friends!"

"And it is the German for Thorne!" said I.

"Exactly; the affair grows clearer every moment, you see."

"And Rick will get the property after all!"

"Umph! that's as Pearl pleases! She is of age, you know; perhaps he will get as much of it as is good for him; he certainly will not get any more. He will find that his wife has a will of steel under her soft, cushiony exterior. By the way, I wonder what possessed her to marry him! I always thought her on the look-out for a rich husband—to be sure, she can afford to marry whom she pleases, now; but then, she did not know it when she did the deed! Can she really have fallen in love with his handsome face, and married him with her eyes shut to everything else, silly-girl fashion?"

Remembering a look she had given her husband, as he entered the depot, and another in the Bryer's parlour I averred that I thought she had.

"Then," said Mrs. Danforth, "I should not wonder if she made him an excellent wife; she has brains enough for both, and artfulness enough to keep his simple head from stumbling half the crooks and corners of hers; she will manage him wholly, without his knowing that she does it; she will seem as transparent as a meadow-brook, when she is as deep as the sea. The more she loves him, the less will she allow him to see her as she is—that is, until the softening influence of wifehood and motherhood have made her nearer to what she should be."

"And you call that an excellent wife! Poor Rick!"

Mrs. Danforth looked really abashed. "Miss Frost!" she exclaimed in a deprecating tone, "you surely know that I was not speaking abstractly, but relatively, for the present occasion. I do think that Frederick Thorne, with his temperament and characteristics, might have done much worse than to marry Pearl; for, after all, she is eccentric and secretive, rather than wicked; she is such a consummate actress by nature, that she cannot help playing a part; and, loving her husband, she will play that of a good wife to perfect on. Besides, I meant to imply, in the concluding clause of my unlucky speech, that I thought her likely to change very much for the better, in due time. But, my dear Miss Frost! pray do not think that I have no higher standard of womanhood than that!—none higher than I had when I came to Shiloh, three months ago! Is it possible that you do not see that I am trying to lead a little higher life myself, even though I do still talk—and perhaps act—carelessly—that being the 'natur of the critter,' as the farmers say?"

She ended "twixt a smile and a tear." My own eyes grew dim. I had seen the change in her—though far too subtle a thing to define in words—and rejoiced at it. I told her so, earnestly.

"As the angels in heaven do over a sinner that repenteth!" said she, with the same mixture of mirth and seriousness, which, I have learned, she uses instinctively as a mask to her deeper feelings. "Perhaps you'll never know, till you get there, how much you have had to do with it; Sunday teachings sometimes rebound from the children and hit the parents; seeing Gordon and Effie so earnestly trotting and tumbling heavenward, under your guidance, I could not well help asking myself whither my own ways tended. You may be sure that it has taken some of the conceit out of me, to find that what I did so unwillingly, as a great favour to you and a wonderful condescension to the Sunday School cause in Shiloh, turns out to have been, humanly speaking, the salvation of my children and myself. To be sure, I was a Church member before, and active enough in Church work, after my fashion; but I suspect I had as little of the Christian spirit as any Hottentot."

I was dumb. Never did I feel so humbled. It was so plain to me that it was not "I," weakly and wearily oscillating between Bona and Mala, but the grace of God, that had done it! Mrs. Danforth had been very far from my thoughts in my Sunday School work.

She wiped her eyes, and recurred to the preceding topic.

"I suppose I must go and call on Pearl," said she, "though she doesn't deserve it. To think that the little minx should have gone straight past my door with you, and not have stopped!—not even long enough for that sorely tried husband of hers to come up. But it is just like her! I know she enjoyed her sudden, single-handed descent upon those startled Bryers a great deal better than any more commonplace introduction. She fairly luxuriated in that absurd scene. Well! I will go and see her this evening, and tell her of her good fortune, if such it is to be called."

The next morning, Mrs. Danforth knocked at the open door of the out-room, where Ruth and I were seated at the piano.

"I thought I would just step in and tell you that I found only an empty nest," she said, as we shook hands. "The bird is flown."

"What—who!—" I asked, bewildered.

"Who? Pearl—Daisy—Mrs. Frederick Thorne. I have just come from the Bryers; I did not go up there last night, I had a sick headache. Meanwhile, Carrie had made Rick a statement of facts, as you requested her to do. He imparted them to his wife. The name of Chester Danforth made the whole thing clear to Pearl's very quick comprehension. *Finale:* She and Rick started for New Orleans at six o'clock this morning. *Bona voyage!*"

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE SUMMER'S WORK.

The summer is fast gliding by—a summer of some pleasure, of more labour, of multiplying interests, of much that has left a rich residuum of experience in the depths of my heart. It has made life's purpose and significance clearer to me. It has taught me that, as our nature is constituted, and under its present conditions, we are made more contented, as well as wiser, by a due admixture of sorrow and disappointment in our earthly cup. The life that is rightly lived grows richer by its losses and gladder through its tears. Not only "knowledge," but joy, "by suffering entereth." So long as we make earthly happiness an end, and seek it directly, we are certain to miss it, and to be continually chilled and soured and disappointed thereby; but as soon as we make up our minds to do without it, and put submission, usefulness, an earnest striving after holiness, in its place, we are apt to find it quietly waiting upon them, as their humble handmaiden.

So much of truth has the summer brought to me in its gliding by. Let us see what it has brought to others—for it has suffered none of the persons left behind by these chronicles to stand quite still.

Alice Prescott took to the study of Italian as a bird to the air. So far, the poet's dower is here—she has the gift of tongues.

Moreover, the readings long ago inaugurated have been quietly educating her taste, and deepening her thought. For her sake, I have made frequent selections from the poets, and accompanied the reading thereof with copious commentary, analysis, and criticism. I left these to their silent work. That they did it I knew well, not only by frequently surprising Alice with a pencil and a scrap of paper in her hands, and the pleasant trouble of poetic travail in her face; but by seeing the same scraps thrust silently and despondently into the kitchen fire. It was long ere I put forth a hand to save one of these from doom.

"I hope I have your permission to read this," said I when I had done so.

"If it were worth reading, I would have brought it to you unasked; do not mortify me by looking at it!"

"Is it lately written?"

"Oh, no; I wrote it more than a fortnight ago."

"Did it not seem worth reading to you, then?"

"Ah!—yes—everything does at first. But, in a few days, all the flavor, all the life had gone out of it. It is wishy-washy, and sickens me! It is cold and dead, and sickens me! I hasten to put it out of my sight."

"That is to say that the inevitable moment of doubt, discouragement, and disgust, which comes to every worker for Art, be it painter, sculptor, or poet, comes also to you. It may be that is the moment wherein his late standard, well-nigh reached, begins to mount higher; it may be the one which first reveals to him that the fairest, subtlest graces of his spiritual ideal are not to be embodied in color, marble, or rhythm. Still, that moment of disgust is not the time to judge fairly of the work done. Leave the decision to me whether this deserves the flames, or not."

"Not that," she exclaimed hurriedly; "let me bring you something I wrote this morning."

"Which has not yet lost its favour? No, thank you. My praise, if I have any to give, will seem fearfully cold to that birth-warm effusion; while my criticism will not hurt this one nearly so much."

Her reluctance continued, and seemed so disproportionate to the occasion, that I was first puzzled, then half-vexed. Seeing that, she yielded at once, and sat with a downcast face and deeply-suffused cheeks, awaiting the result.

Of course, I expected to see "Lines to—" something—summer, autumn, a cat, a flower, on the death of a friend, or some one of the hackneyed themes of youthful rhymers. What I actually saw, therefore, astonished me not a little. The verses had no title, and they ran thus:—

"I have locked my heart, and I give you the key.
Throw it, I pray you into the sea,
It's of no use to you, and still less to me.

"None shall come after you into that door—
None after you, and you enter no more!
Let the dust gather on ceiling and floor.

"Let the dim ghost of our dead love all night
Stalk through the empty rooms, bare of delight,
Smell the brown roses that once were so white.

"Let it count over 'mid silence and dearth,
Hopes that once laughed in the glow on the hearth,
Snows that have chilled both the flame and the mirth.

"Then, when the dawn o'er the hilltops doth peep,
Back to its grave let it silently creep—
Grave that the slow years dig ever more deep!"

The cause of Alice's reluctance was at once made clear to me; for a moment, I felt a flush on my own cheek. By means of that marvellous intuition of hers, she had arrived at some conception of the sort of chill and torpor that had fallen on my heart, and given it voice, in my stead. Strange that the poet's insight can almost dispense with experience! That a slender New England girl, hid away in the quietest corner of a quiet town, with no personal knowledge of love, and quite innocent of its heartache, should write such a sombre, hopeless, death-scented lyric as this, was indeed a marvel!

I read it twice or thrice, partly to get rid of my self-consciousness, partly to qualify myself for judgment.

"Well, Alice," I said, at length, "you need not burn this, and you may go on rhyming."

She looked at me with a slow, tremulous joy dawning in her blue eyes; yet the mute gaze seemed to ask for something more. To gratify it, I went on:—

"Your verses are better than I expected. They are simple and unpretending, and, therefore, do not greatly challenge criticism. I am glad to observe that you avoid false rhymes and mixed metaphors, and that a distinct line of thought is traceable throughout. There is something—much, in so young a poet."

Her face grew radiant, but her questioning look did not change. What an unerring instinct the girl has!

"If you really crave a little criticism," said I, smiling, "here it is! The last line is not quite smooth."

"Ah, yes! I know it," she replied; "but how else am I to get both the thought and the rhyme?"

"There, I suspect, is the poet's worst difficulty," said I. "To make sense and rhyme perfectly harmonious, so that neither warps nor constrains the other; to manage both so artfully as to make it appear that the thought could in no otherwise be so well and adequately expressed—that must give him his hardest labour. But I should really like to know what is the poet's process, Alice."

"I do not know if I can tell you," she answered, slowly. "With me, it seems like a remembering rather than a making. My verses come to me precisely as you recall a half-forgotten poem or song. Whole lines and stanzas start up in my mind, without the least effort; but here and there are gaps which it is hard to fill. In vain I try to remember what belongs in them; the missing line or phrase hovers about the outer edge of my mind, but cannot be coaxed within it. It is only after long trial that I can fill up these gaps at all; and the interpolation always has the air of a patch over a hole in a garment—at least, to me."

She then brought me her morning's production. It proved to be better than this, after all—more original, and with a stronger, sweeter flow. It is too long to copy, but it can be found in the August No. of the———Magazine. For, after Alice had copied it in her best hand (and it is not the least of her literary qualifications that she writes one which it is a pleasure and not a penance to read), I went it to the editor thereof—whom I happened to know slightly—bespeaking for it a more prompt and careful examination than is usually vouchsafed to the production of an unknown author. Two or three days brought back a letter, saying that he would be "happy to hear from her again;" and enclosing a sum which filled Alice with shy, crimson delight, and made Mrs. Prescott hold up her head as high as if she had received the first instalment of an ample and certain fortune.

But Alice's literary path was not always to run thus smooth. Her second venture was "declined, with thanks;" it was "too grave for our columns" (which means simply that it was devotional)—would she "try again?" She did try again, and her article was accepted; but not without a warning that it was below the mark of the first one, duly emphasized by a much smaller enclosure. Her rejected "Hymn"—which was really the best of the three—finally found a place in the columns of a religious weekly, at a rate of compensation so low as to leave no question whatever about the comparative values of religion and non-religion in the literary market; nor any shard of doubt in which branch of the trade a neophyte's talent would be best rewarded—that is, so far as earthly remuneration is concerned.

And this brings Alice's intellectual history up to the present point. As for her emotional one, that lies, for the most part, beyond my ken. Not that she is deliberatively secretive; but she is naturally reserved and likes little to talk about herself—easier for a deep, shadowy, enclosed well to turn itself into a running and sparkling brook, than for Alice to assume the openness and communicativeness of Ruth. Her natural channel of expression is her pen; that suffices her for interpreter and confidant.

Of course, this summer of constant association has knitted Alice, Ruth, and myself very closely together. Any picture of me, at this epoch, would be incomplete without one or both of them at hand, looking up to me with an affection that is half worship. I get even a little too much of their society, and am often oppressed by their reverential regard. It may be morally good for one, but it is none the less wearisome to fallen human nature, to be compelled to live always at the height of some loving, worshipping friend's ideal. Often I feel an insane impulse to do something unredeemably weak or wicked, just to cast my image down from that uncomfortable and insecure elevation, and give it leave to stand, henceforth, upon the lower earth, among its kind. I am withheld therefrom by no selfish considerations of loss of power or prestige, but by an intuitive knowledge that both these simple, loving souls would seem to see, in its downfall, the entire universe tumbling backwards in chaos. In life's earlier years, as I have sore reason to know, it is a serious matter to lose one's ideals; with them the fair structure of faith crumbles to dust; the whole moral world falls, seemingly, into irretrievable ruin; its foundations heave and gape beneath our feet—its sky crashes down upon our heads, with fearful and startling effect. All that was worthy of reverence has hopelessly gone to rack, we think, as we struggle forth from the ruins, stunned and bewildered. It may be years before we find out the scarcely less bitter, if more wholesome, certainty that it was only an unfounded, illusory fabric of our own creation which fell, and that the fair temple of Truth, with its immutable foundations in Goodness and Right, was in nowise involved in the crash.

To be sure that crash must come to Ruth and Alice, sooner or later; but woe to him by whom it cometh! To escape which malediction, I go on teaching, moralizing, suggesting, encouraging, according to the established routine, and striving to keep my interests and sympathies unflagingly up to their work, in spite of the inevitable loss of their first fresh impetus, till I can recover it by a temporary withdrawal and rest—things indispensable, it would seem, to the health of any friendship, however sweet and cordial, wherein the sum of help, sympathy, and rest received does not very closely approximate to the amount rendered. In this effort Mala, as may be expected, gives me little assistance. Not even under the guise of pride or self-respect is she capable of lending a steady, lasting aid to any good and unselfish work. But Bona, though often sore grieved, and, doubtless, tempted to withdraw and leave me to the unhelped and unhindered tendencies of my nature, doth yet stand by me, and enable me to struggle on, if not to the unmixed approval of my conscience, at least to the apparent satisfaction of my duo of satellites.

Perhaps I ought to say trio, since the summer did what it could to bring Carrie Thorne into the same category. Still, no part of the foregoing paragraph applies to her. The distance between the Divine and Bryer farms saved me from her too close attendance, and she is of too gentle, humble, and self-forgetting a nature ever to be felt as a restraint or a burden. She is content to adore her idols afar off, and accepts from them much or little with the same sweet thankfulness; whereas Ruth can be both jealous and exacting, upon occasion, I find, or even without it; and Alice, though she is neither of these, has such an insatiate hunger for thought, feeling, emotion, knowledge, and all sorts of mental pabulum—things by which her genius is to live and grow, in truth a vital necessity of its existence—that she becomes in constant association (not to use the simile harshly, and dissecting it of every heartless and repulsive idea), a kind of human leech. The one wearies by excessive stimulation, the other by continual absorption. Carrie presented the reposeful side of the picture; she neither excited nor drained; she simply soothed.

But the summer did something better for Carrie Thorne than to give her an assured place in my interests and affections. It brought her into closer contact with the life that beats around her, and so warmed her own into expansion and usefulness. She became an efficient teacher in the Sunday School—quiet, painstaking, and obedient—and she was one of the most regular attendants and faithful workers of the Sewing Society.

I say so, because those last summer days have swept Carrie away from me, into an atmosphere of trouble and anxiety. Poor Mrs. Thorne was stricken with paralysis, on the receipt of Rick's sudden announcement of his hasty marriage. Following close upon my notice of discovery of Cyrus Thorne's missing child, it seemed the deathblow to all her schemes, hopes, and ambitions. Rick's arrival, and the discovery that the bride and the heiress were one and the same, could not undo the bodily mischief, though they may have brought some comfort to her mind. Carrie was immediately sent for. A letter just received from her, reports Mrs. Thorne in a very dangerous situation.

There have been no new developments with regard to the artist. Though we meet often, and upon terms which time and a better knowledge of each other render more and more friendly, it is always in the presence of others, and the subject of his incognito has never again been broached.

He has nearly finished my picture of Ruth. The likeness is perfect; yet he has not failed to add, or take away, that indefinable, inestimable something which makes all the difference between a mere portrait and a work of art.

The "Dream—Reverie—Reflection," is also in progress. At my earnest solicitation, the artist has substituted Alice's face therein for mine, as furnishing a stronger contrast to Ruth's, and more perfectly embodying the idea—reverie being Alice's normal expression. Both she and Ruth give him a sitting when desired; yet I cannot report satisfactory progress of the little romance heretofore hinted at. His artist-eye lights up at sight of Ruth's face; yet his enjoyment of Alice's silent, intuitive sympathy with all his thoughts and moods is scarcely less evident. Certainly he is beguiled, by its subtle charm, to talk to her more freely than to anyone else of whatever he has done in the world, or dreams of doing. Nevertheless, he may forget her even while he talks to her most unreservedly, being moved solely by the natural impulse of thought to flow into the first sympathetic ear that comes in its way.

Yet the themes which chiefly engage his mind and conversation—the history, scope and mission of art—the successes, discouragements, and self-consecration of her workers—these, and kindred topics, discussed in a lofty, generous spirit, and with a rare flow of language and imagery, are not without a noticeable effect in quickening and enlarging the minds both of Alice and Ruth. With every visit to the studio, their faces are informed with a deeper thought; the girlishness is fast departing thence, and some new charm of womanhood blossoms there daily.

As for Essie Volger, though Shiloh would seem to lose half its sunshine without her, and parish-work would greatly miss her helping hand, yet any detailed record of her fresh, active, joyous life, free and bright as a meadow-brook, and as innocent of care and turmoil, would but serve to illustrate the French proverb, "*Heureux le peuple dont l'histoire ennuie.*"

(To be continued.)

Insomnia.

The cure of sleepness depends upon the cause; how various the causes are we have seen. I will not enumerate the devices for procuring slumber in the ordinarily healthy; they are very numerous, but none of them have any general application. One counsel may be given, for it is not hackneyed; it is this: Learn to sleep in the daytime. This art is one which everybody has not acquired. People there are—I know such people—who are wise enough to eat when they are hungry, but who have not attained that higher reach of wisdom to sleep when they are sleepy. But occasions come to all of us when we need to be able to sleep in the daytime at will. Have you failed to get your needed sleep, whether because of work or watching, or sorrow or pleasure? Then repose in the daytime is the restorative needed. There is a great virtue in naps—even in short ones—and the art of napping in the daytime, if you have not learned it already, is one to be learned without further delay. It may require a little practice, but nature is on the side of the learner.

And lastly, here is a bit of philosophy written by a wise man and physician, Dr. Frank Hamilton. Let me hope that at least one of my readers, if only one, will be wise enough to profit by its wisdom: "Gloomy thoughts prevent sleep. The poor and unfortunate magnify and increase their misfortune by too much thinking. 'Blessed be he who invented sleep,' but thrice blessed be the man who shall invent a cure for thinking."—*Titus Munson Coan, in Harper's Weekly.*

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Also spring from disorders of the digestive functions, and are not only exceedingly painful in themselves, but have symptoms, such as Dropsy and Rheumatism, which are of the gravest character. The work of the kidneys is the purifying of the blood. When, through disease, they cease to do this,

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