

THE FAVORITE

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LITTLE BROKEN SHOES.

BY NATHAN D. URBEN.

Where go you, little Broken Shoes?
Your eyes are bright; what cheer?
"I am going around the corner, sir,
To buy my mother some beer."
Your mother, instead of drinking beer,
Should buy you a pair of shoes.
"Well, I don't know. She has trouble enough.
But I haven't much time to lose."

But your little toes peep out in the wind,
Like mice from a cupboard crack;
Your little nose is a nubbin of blue,
And you've hardly a rag to your back.
"Well, what of that? Do you want a cove
To have fifty jackets and things?
So long as I'm cheery, and mother has beer,
What odds if the cold wind stings?"

"When Pop was alive, before the War,
And hunger and hard times pressed,
I remember I used to whimper and cry
To be even better dressed,
Though snugly clad, and as neat and clean
As the child of any man;
But now, since mother's to work so hard,
I stand it the best I can."

"Sometimes I may cry in a corner alone
To see her so tired and 'beat,'
As she bends above the wash-tub's brim
All day for the crusts we eat.
But I'm always cheery to her, though I know
She is washing her life away,
And wringing her heart as she wrings the clothes,
All through the sloppy day."

"But it can't be always winter, you know;
Better days in store may be;
An' winter or summer is all the same,
For I'm always cheery, you see."
Good-by and good luck, little Broken Shoes!
Like a hero this life you begin.
You won't starve in this whirling world,
If pluck and bottom can win."

Here is five-pence, to give you a lift;
Now run for your mother's beer;
And never you mind if the chill wind nips,
You will never have cause to fear.
"Not I! I'm hearty and gamey, I am!
All the days are alike to me.
I suppose there's some good in everything,
And—I'm always cheery, you see."

(For the Favorite.)

HARD TO BEAT.

A DRAMATIC TALE, IN FIVE ACTS, AND A PROLOGUE.

BY J. A. PHILLIPS,
OF MONTREAL.

Author of "From Bad to Worse," "Out of the Snow," "A Perfect Fraud," &c.

ACT III.

DEAR.

SCENE II.

MR. MORTON FINDS HIMSELF MISTAKEN.

Time, September fifth, eighteen hundred and seventy; place, Mr. Howson's residence in Sherbrooke Street.

Mr. Morton had not been able to carry out his intention with reference to Miss Howson during the past two weeks, for the reason that he had never been so fortunate as to find her alone. On the occasion of all his late visits he had been forced, somewhat unwillingly, to endure the company of either Mr. Johnson or Dr. Griffith, and sometimes of both.

I am afraid these trials did not sweeten Mr. Morton's temper, and he fervently wished both the doctor and Mr. Johnson could be transported to some remote portion of the earth, there to remain until he should desire their recall; he thought it very probable they would remain there some time.

The three or four visits during which he had encountered his two rivals for so he felt them to be, had served to confirm him in his determination to ask Miss Howson to be his wife. She had been kinder to him on his last visit than she had been for some time past, and Mr.



"SOMETHING SERIOUS TO SAY TO ME?"

Morton flattered himself there was a touch of tenderness in her tone when she asked him to "call again soon." He determined to take advantage of the invitation, and so, on the evening of this fifth day of September, although it was only three nights since he had seen her, he called again.

Fate was not any kinder to him on this occasion than on former ones, for on entering the parlor he found Dr. Griffith already there; however, this time he was the last caller, and he determined to quietly sit the doctor out.

The meeting between the two men was polite, but not very cordial. Charlie Morton had never quite got over his boyish distrust of Harry Griffith; he treated him as an old acquaintance and school-fellow, and to the outward eye they were great friends; but there was no bond of sympathy between them, and they never grew to be more than intimate acquaintances and nothing more.

There is a much broader gap between the meaning of an "intimate acquaintance" and "a friend" than most people suppose. One is a person whom we meet frequently, are always on pleasant terms with, trust, perhaps, to a small degree with some of our little secrets which are not very important; but we cannot place implicit confidence in him; we cannot open our secret soul to him, go to him for advice or comfort in the hour of need, place our

whole trust in in the hour of danger. Although our tastes may assimilate, our pursuits be almost the same, our intercourse constant and intimate, yet we never get beyond that imperceptible barrier which divides acquaintanceship, however intimate, from true friendship. The other is one whom we can trust fully and entirely, in whom we repose our whole confidence, and lay bare our most secret thoughts to, certain that we shall get an honest expression of opinion, well and kindly meant; it may not always be pleasant—a true friend's advice is frequently the reverse, for he will tell us our faults, which an acquaintance won't,—but there is a bond of sympathy between us which makes the most unpleasant pills go down, because we know they are intended for our good. Two such friends may have the ocean roll between them, but it will not wash away the bond that links them together; they may not see each other's faces for years, but the old kind feeling will remain; their tastes, interests, pursuits may differ, but that very difference frequently only serves to strengthen the bond; there is something more than mere companionship between them—they are friends; they can have trust and confidence in each other, and neither time nor distance will change the feeling. There is nothing like absence, or danger, or difficulties to test friendship; many persons walk through life apparently surrounded by friends, and yet

when the time of trial comes it is found that they are simply intimate acquaintances, nothing more. And so with marriage; many and many a couple go through life to the grave, and never get beyond the stage of intimate acquaintanceship; they have a transient passion for each other which they think is love, that wears off, there is no bond of sympathy between them, and they drift into intimate acquaintanceship, and never rise to the height of friendship. Husband and wife of all people in the world should be friends,—close, intimate, bosom friends,—and when they are not there is always danger of their union being an unhappy one; they may drift through life together without any serious mishap, but they are very apt to run aground on the first sandbank they meet.

Charlie Morton and Harry Griffith, from early associations, from circumstances and from habit, had reached the stage of intimate acquaintanceship, but they were destined never to pass it.

The evening at Mr. Howson's was not a very brilliant one. Mr. Howson "looked in" for a little while, and the doctor engaged him in a lively discussion about the war and other current topics, but Mr. Howson did not seem to relish it very much, and after half-an-hour's conversation, in which the doctor did nearly all the talking, he went off to his club, consoling himself with the reflection that Charlie's presence would have a neutralizing effect on the doctor's fascinations, and that he would not be able to attack Miss Annie's heart—which he strongly suspected he was doing—too severely that night.

Mr. Howson was an easy-going, quiet man, who was quite content to let things take their natural course, so long as that course was not highly improper; he was a man of very even temperament, but of strong will, and, when once he made up his mind on any subject, he was, to use a vulgarism, "as obstinate as a mule." He knew Miss Annie's weakness for flirting, but it gave him little uneasiness; he consoled himself by saying, "all women have a certain amount of devilment in them, and it is just as well if it comes out while they are young, they will make better wives and mothers for it by and by." So he troubled himself very little about Miss Annie's suitors, thinking that ere long she would get tired of having half-a-dozen strings to her bow, and be content to settle down into staid matrimony. On that point Mr. Howson had made up his mind, and it would take a great deal to cause him to change it.

After his departure matters did not improve very much in the parlor. The "neutralizing" process was strongly at work, and although everything went smoothly on the surface, each gentleman heartily wished the other at the bottom of the sea. As for Miss Howson, she would have preferred a *tit-a-tit* with her betrothed, but she also desired to have a quiet talk with Charlie Morton, for she had determined to solicit his assistance in gaining her father's consent to her engagement; she felt, therefore, very much like Captain Macheath in the *Beggars' Opera*:

"How happy I could be with either,
Were't other dear charmer away."

There was some singing and playing and a good deal of conversation about nothing, but it was hard work to each of the three to talk, and what was said was neither very brilliant nor very new.

At last the little ermine cloak on the mantelpiece chimed out half-past ten, and the doctor, finding Mr. Morton was determined to sit him out, rose to go.

Miss Howson accompanied him to the door, and it seemed to Mr. Morton, who sat idly running his fingers over the keys of the piano, that it took much longer to say good-night than either necessity or politeness required; at last, however, she returned, with rather a heightened color, and seating herself at some little distance from the piano, said:

"Sing something for me, Charlie; you only sang once to-night."

"I don't feel like singing, Annie," he answered, changing his seat to one a little nearer to her. "I have something very serious to say to you."

"Something serious to say to me?" she asked in surprise, rising and facing him, "that is a strange coincidence, for I have something serious to say to you."

He did not notice the interruption, but went on:

"I want to ask you a very serious question,