

lifted her face, and said firmly, "I do love Hugh. I will do my duty to him as a faithful wife. If, dear Grace, that is what you wanted to be sure of, be sure of it. You have sought my confidence, and I have given it you. All is settled. Let us say no more."

For all that I was certain that the tears were moistening her pillow for an hour afterwards; and when her eyes were closed at last in slumber she sighed as though her dreams were not of happiness and peace. I, too? Yes, I had got her confidence, and how much good had come of it! As for giving her my own, the bargain was only carried out on one side. Well, I must lock my skeleton's closet closer than ever and try to be content.

V.

As once more the two households were alone, for loneliness it was in the absence of Hugh, and of Charley also, for he had become one of us in reality, there came a season of melancholy days and weeks. The war news was scanty, and the letters we got spoke only of unimportant movements in Virginia, where, so far as we could tell, the opposing armies of Grant and Lee were entrenched, watching each other, expectant of the struggle not far off, which one intended and the other felt must be final. Pickett duty, the holding and strengthening of fortified lines, with an occasional sally and skirmish, were the incidents described. As December commenced we were led to expect another visit, not for a very cheerful reason, however. Hugh's health was again failing, and one of Charley's wounds troubled him more than was expected. Neither had been relieved from duty, but they had hopes of a short furlough, not an easy matter to obtain. If they succeeded, they would be with us at Christmas. Who could tell? At all events we, I chiefly, wrote letter after letter, begging Charley to use every endeavour to be with us. General Warren, their corps commander, was so no longer, for Sheridan had deprived him of his command just after he, General Warren, had, at Five Forks, as the place was called, achieved one of the most brilliant victories of the war. Somebody blundered, as often before, and Warren's reputation gained rather than lost by the insult cast upon him. Did I not with maps and thought, and many a shrewd criticism from our apparently careless father, form many a judgment of what happened upon those dark days? Did I not know that Warren, the hero *since par et sans reproche*, was one of the great soldiers, the glory of whose deeds was appropriated by the stolid "hammer," to whom the sacrifice of lives was nothing, and in whose brain scientific war was ignored in favour of mere slaughter. Never till now have I written what in my secret heart I felt then, that Mr. Lincoln knew all, and shuddered with horror. I know, too, that he must be aware of the insult to Warren.

Anyway, I wrote to General Warren; I wrote to Mr. Lincoln, also, in behalf of our two wounded and ailing boys. And there came—oh, joy, joy, and thanks to God! a brief note: "We have got leave; shall be home on the twenty-third, sure." That blessed message reached us on the 20th of December.

The very next day, to our great surprise, Hugh suddenly made his appearance—alone! We were bewildered, us, stopping the hack at his door he, without getting out, shouted, "I am going to mother first, back directly, bad news of Charley," and then was gone.

We had all rushed out to hear this, and instinctively turning to look at Phemie I saw that she was white to the very lips.

He was not long away, and then the dismal story was told. The furlough had been granted. They had made ready for departure. Many messages of comrades to dear ones at home had been confided to them, and many a little *souvenir* entrusted to their care. One little task of reconnoitering duty and they were free. Forth from the entrenched lines they went with a party of sharpshooters in charge. It was night. A straggling moonbeam now and then lighted their perilous way, save for which all was dark. Another party similarly purposed were on the way towards them. An affair of a minute. The hoarse challenge; the defiant reply. A scattering volley; a rush and a struggle, and then blackness of darkness everywhere. Nothing left for both sides but to draw off and count the cost. Ay! the cost. A dozen corpses. Half a dozen "missing," of the half dozen missing our Charley was one.

So, then! oh, bitter festive season! Oh, mockery of Christmas cheerfulness! Hugh was safe; but what avails it, when Charley was lost, perhaps, nay, too surely, never to be found again.

I dread even now, to recall that dreary week. For, as I said before, he was one of us, and for two women he held the key which should open the door of their sad or happy future.

Notwithstanding this, which I now know, our father had understood all along. There was, as he said, to be as much got out of the season as we could get. He was right. I think that we none of us knew him thoroughly; but I am sure that beneath all his not exactly joviality, not exactly heedlessness, or light disregard of what the morrow might bring forth, there was always a watchful care that we should not magnify our troubles, and a constant tender heedfulness to avert, smooth over, heal up, the little paltry outbreaks and unkindnesses which occur in all families, and which, if let grow, poison, like foul weeds, the very atmosphere of home. "Did you think I was blind, Gracie?"

he said laughingly long after. And he added, "I fancy you all thought me so, but though you may call me a conceited old gentleman for saying so, I never was blind, and I never am."

Christmas! "Ach Gott!" as the Germans say, what a Christmas!

However, there were the usual "kitchen worries"—not that I disliked them, for it is a pleasure to see our own culinary handiwork enjoyed, and I was not a bad domestic pastry-cook, though I say it who should not. There was also some little attempt at parlour decoration; not to speak of Mrs. Deroche's jubilant millinery—for she, of course, and Hugh, were with us.

Well, I pass over the dinner. It was a good one really, and of the time-honoured sort. After that was done with, we gathered round the fire. The little circle was not a happy one. Father wanted some music, but there was none in our hearts, and, after some attempts at miscellaneous conversation, he said it was so evident that while talking nothing we were all thinking of something else, and the best way was to open our minds all round. "So," he added, "tell us once more, Hugh, how the disaster to poor Charley came to pass."

"That is not easy," replied Hugh. In fact, almost impossible. We were on that night quietly smoking before turning in for our allotted hours of rest, when an order came for two companies to advance silently to observe some movement which was fancied to be in progress, at a point of the Confederate fortifications, facing and very near to where our brigade lay. Not that much importance was attached to it, whatever it might be. Probably some night surprise on a small scale was intended. "What do you say, Hugh?" said Charley. "Neither of us in good trim for the duty, but it would be a plucky act to volunteer, now wouldn't it?"

"I strenuously opposed this notion. It was even a foolhardy proposition, considering his weak condition, nor do I think I was cowardly in doubting my own strength. No! He would insist; nor when the Colonel was disposed to refuse permission to 'a couple of invalids,' as he very properly called us, would he accept refusal. Our superior officer might have made his veto absolute, but did not, and what could I do but go along with Charley? Our companies were silently assembled, and we cautiously issued forth from the covering breastwork. For a short distance we saw nothing, though we could hear the sentries' voices now and then from the enemy's lines. We were, indeed, just considering the propriety of retiring and reporting nothing moving in front. All on a sudden, a crowd of dark forms were close to us, as if they had risen out of the earth, and we were blinded almost by a fire of musketry. Then it was cold steel, clubbed pikes, a brief struggling to and fro, and men dropping heavily on the ground, and as suddenly as they had appeared our foes were gone. A pause of expectancy ensued, but nothing more came of it. All was over, apparently, and I turned to look for Charley—he was 'missing.' Not a trace of him, though we scattered in search, after hunting among those who had been struck down. We had—there was no alternative—to go back with the miserable story. It was dreadful, horrible. Charley a prisoner! I feel, friends, like a guilty man before you now. I feel that I ought not to be here. And for him—where, where is he?"

"Here!"

What was this? Who was this? Whose shriek was it that thrilled through the room?

It was Charley, standing in our midst, while with sobs and cries of "Oh, my love! my love!" Phemie flew into his arms and held him in a close embrace.

I shall not try to describe the scene that followed—of confusion, and tears and joy. It was a supreme moment. A life crowded into a few heart-beats. It was a revelation, too; and when we all calmed down we knew that there was peace ineffable in store. For without an explanation had not she claimed him as her own, and did not father, smiling with wet cheeks at Hugh and me, whisper to us, "Are you contented now, you two?"

We were.

"Content, the purest of all human bliss, Was ours at last!"

There is little more to say. Our soldier boys never went back, for there was still a period of suffering and sickness that forbade it. There came a time when

"Flowers were springing, birds were singing, And all the world was May."

for Hugh was mine and I was his,

"'Till he or she Shall whisper to the other, love, good-bye, I shall not linger; I will follow soon."

INGOLSBY NORTH.

THE TENOR.

The tenor is generally a cooper, a baker, a cabman, or a tanner, who has been caught singing over his tubs, his hot rolls, or his hides. Why is the tenor so rarely a law student, an architect, or an apothecary's assistant? The problem is one for physiologists to solve. The only thing quite certain is that the tenor is never a prodigy of learning. Grammar especially perplexes him; orthography drives him to despair. He therefore adopts a phonetic system of his own invention. "Let him take less us, then," you say. Very good; but taking lessons in spelling is a confession that he cannot spell.

His prestige would suffer. What would his idolatrous crowd think of their idol on learning that, in a letter to his mother, he had written, "hevery mornin i heat a raw hegg for the sake of my elth." And his fellow-singers in the green-room! Wouldn't they make fun of him? Consequently, the tenor abstains from writing; or, if absolutely obliged to write, he takes refuge in a prudent laconism. One sweet-voiced gentleman, compelled to answer a manager who had proposed, by letter, a reduction of his salary, thought of sending his card with the simple phrase, "I maintain my pretensions." But the last syllable of the last word sorely puzzled him. Not liking the look of it with a 4, he tried it with a double s, and finally decided on a c, "pretensions." His geographical knowledge is equally at fault. He is offered an advantageous engagement at New Orleans, and without reflection signs at once. "You are going to see a lovely country," says the manager. "No doubt, I have often heard speak of the Maid of New Orleans, and I am particularly fond of New Orleans plums." "Ah!" says the manager, opening wide his eyes. "We start in three weeks' time. Send your luggage at once to Liverpool." "Liverpool? I don't know him. Where is his office?" "Liverpool is the seaport where we take the ship." "No ship for me, if you please; you can go by sea if you prefer it; I shall take the express train instead." It was the same individual who fancied that horticulture was the art of cultivating *orties* (nettles), and who thought to give dignity to Robert the Devil, who was a chevalier, by wearing the cross of the Legion of Honour. Another drawback to the tenor's happiness is, that he himself is the slave of his organ. That voice, which is the source of all his success, has to be guarded and nursed with jealous care. Sobriety, even austerity, have to be strictly observed. Syrups, gruels, lozenges, liquorice, potions, and flannel neckties are his fate. Besides which are to be reckoned his professional labours, mental and physical. Thus, between 1839 and '70, Mario, the famous tenor, learnt by heart, studied, rehearsed, dressed and performed more than one hundred grand operas by Meyerbeer, Mozart, Rossini, Verdi, and a host of composers too numerous to mention, to say nothing of minor pieces, concerts and the like. Was that the life of a sybarite? And his final destiny is to be forgotten. The painter leaves his picture behind him, the sculptor his statue, the author his book, the composer his score. What permanent record of the tenor remains, not merely after his death, but after his operatic life has ended! History speaks of Sophocles, Phidias, Apples; but what historian, two thousand years hence, will rescue Rubini from oblivion? How many of our younger readers have ever even heard of Rubini? Unhappy vocalist, in the midst of thy triumph "*Memento, tenore, quia pulvis es!*" Remember, O tenor, thou art but dust!"—*Times*.

BY THE SAD SEA WAVES.

MRS. SPOOPENDYKE BATHES MRS. SPOOPENDYKE E.

"Now, my dear," said Mr. Spoopendyke, as he bounced out of the bathing-house and thumped on the door of one occupied by Mrs. Spoopendyke, "are you ready? We must hurry into the water and out again, or we won't be through in time for dinner."

Mrs. Spoopendyke emerged, bent almost double and shivering with the cold.

"Isn't it rather chilly?" she asked.

"Not at all, Mrs. Spoopendyke, not at all; the air is rather cool, but the water is warm. If you are going with me you want to move along."

As they reached the beach, Mr. Spoopendyke left his wife and boldly strode into the surf.

A wave broke over him, drenching his eyes, nose, ears and mouth, and then he strode out.

"What are you standing there for, eh?" he demanded. "What do you take yourself for—a big lighthouse! Did ye come down to take a bath, or are ye waiting for some ship to tie up to you. What is the matter with you any-ways?"

"I'm afraid of the waves," whimpered Mrs. Spoopendyke, "they're so big."

"Oh, they're too big for you, ain't they?" retorted Mr. Spoopendyke. "Wait till I get a man to saw off a little one. Better get measured for one to suit, hadn't ye! It's the big waves you want, I tell you. Look here!" and Mr. Spoopendyke went boldly into the sea again.

Another wave caught him and landed him high and dripping on the beach.

"Why didn't ye come when I called ye?" What d'ye want to make me walk all the way up here after you for?" shrieked Mr. Spoopendyke. "Are you wanting to be launched like a ship? Can't you walk as far as that? What are you hoisting up the legs of your pants for? They ain't skirts. Now look at me. See how I go in, and you follow when I beckon to you. Watch me now."

Mr. Spoopendyke ploughed in and swished around a few minutes in safety, but the treacherous water was biding its time. Another wave caught him and rolled him over, pumping itself into his stomach, drew him under, whirled him round, and finally deposited him howling on the sand.

"Got most ready to join in," he jerked out, as he climbed up himself and assumed the perpendicular. "Think I'm going to slam around here all day, like a waterspout, waiting for you! What did you come here for? Find any fun

standing out there like a soda water sign? Why don't you get into the water if you're going to? Come on, now."

"I'm afraid," snivelled Mrs. Spoopendyke. "If I go in I know I will be drowned."

"No, you won't get drowned, either. Can't you hold on to me? What did you put on the shirt and trousers for if you meant to get drowned? What are you doing around here? Now when I go in again you come along, or else you go home."

Mr. Spoopendyke plunged into the surf, but as he came up he missed the rope. For a second or two he sprawled around, and then began to yell. Mrs. Spoopendyke eyed him a moment, and then her fear for him overcame her fears for herself, and with a yell she dashed in and hauled him out by the hair.

"Dod gast the water!" choked Mr. Spoopendyke. "I'm full of the mussy stuff. So you got in! didn't ye! Let go my hair, will ye. What d'ye think you are, anyway—a steam barber's shop? Going to let go of that hair sometime?"

But, frightened out of all reason, Mrs. Spoopendyke clung still, and hauled Mr. Spoopendyke to his bath-house.

"Oh, if I hadn't saved you!" she sobbed.

"Oh, yes, you saved me, didn't you?" sneered Mr. Spoopendyke. "All you need is four airtight compartments and two sets of thole-pins to be a patent life-raft. Are you going to let go of that hair?"

As she released him they went to their separate apartments.—*Brooklyn Eagle*.

VARIETIES.

THE FINE REMITTED.—Tom Marshall was engaged in the trial of a case in the interior of Kentucky, when the decision of a judge struck him so bad that he rose and said, "There never was such a ruling as that since the days of Pontius Pilate." "Mr. Clerk," responded the judge, "fine Mr. Marshall ten dollars for contempt of court." "I confess, your honour," continued Tom, "that what I said was a little hard on Pontius Pilate, but it is the first time in the history of Kentucky jurisprudence that it is held that to speak disrespectfully of Pontius Pilate is contempt of court." "Mr. Clerk, make the fine twenty dollars for continued contempt," said the judge solemnly. "Well, judge," Tom added, "as you won all my money last night at poker, lend me the twenty." "Mr. Clerk," cried the judge hastily, "remit the fine. The State can afford to lose the money better than I can." "I congratulate the court upon its return to a sane condition," said Tom, resuming his seat amid roars of laughter.

THE PLUG HAT.—An exchange paper says that the plug hat is virtually a sort of social guarantee for the preservation of peace and order. He who puts one on has given a hostage to the community for his good behaviour. The wearer of a plug hat must move with a certain sedateness and propriety. He cannot run, or jump, or romp, or get into a fight, except at the peril of his head-gear. All the hidden influences of the beaver tend towards respectability. He who wears one is obliged to keep the rest of his body in decent trim, that there may be no incongruity between head and body. He is apt to become thoughtful through the necessity of watching the sky whenever he goes out. The chances are that he will buy an umbrella, which is another guarantee for good behaviour, and the care of hat and umbrella—perpetual and exacting as it must ever be—adds to the sweetness of his character. The man who wears a plug hat naturally takes to society of women, with all its elevated tendencies. He cannot go hunting or fishing without abandoning his beloved hat, but in the moderate enjoyment of croquet and lawn tennis he may sport his beaver with impunity. In other words, the constant use of a plug hat makes a man composed in manner, quiet and gentlemanly in conduct, and a companion of the ladies. The inevitable result is prosperity, marriage, and church membership.

No article ever attained such unbounded popularity in so short a time as Burdock Blood Bitters, and that too during the existence of countless numbers of widely advertised bitters and blood purifiers. It is evident that this medicine begins its work at once, and leaves the desirable effect unattained.

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