

Then a letter came down from the old folks that heaped coals of fire on my head,  
Sayin' that, as they couldn't give money, I could have half the old farm instead;  
But they wanted their boy to come to 'em, and live near, and help 'em to plan,  
But instead I sold what they had given, and that's when their troubles began.

Well, Molly and me we got married when the leaves was a-flutterin' down,  
And I went into big speculations a-buyin' up lots in the town,  
Buildin' houses and rentin' and sellin', and before a three year had gone o'er,  
I found I was fast makin' riches, for my money had trebled and more.

One day when I came home to dinner, Moll handed a letter to me,  
And when I had read it my eyesight was so dim that I scarcely could see,  
For it told me the old folks were beggars and the farm had been taken away;  
That the mortgage had eaten and eaten, till it swallowed the hull of the clay.

My father was sick at a neighbor's, and mother she worked by the day;  
They was too proud to ask me to help 'em the rest of the mortgage to pay.  
Brother Ike he had finished his schoolin', and was preachin' around anywhere—  
Why, bless you, he couldn't a kept 'em, for he hadn't a penny to spare.

His work it was work of the spirit, and he gleaned in the harvest of God,  
A-pointin' and 'vitin' of sinners to turn from the way that was broad,  
While them that had paid for his larnin', by giving him all they had made,  
Were paupers, and maybe a-dyin'! then my conscience began to upbraid.

So I started to go to my father, like the Prodigal Son did of old,  
Only father had all of the husks now, while I carried all of the gold.  
And I found him, but only to hear him say, faintly: "I'm goin' home, Mike,  
But I tried to do well by the famby by makin' a preacher of Ike."

My brother stood there at his pillow, and when all was over and done  
We knelt, and he prayed such a prayer that the light of a heavenly sun  
Seemed to light up my heart with a glory that t never had felt there before,  
And a blessing came down while he asked it like it did to Elijah of yore.

So now we are workin' together in a kind of unorthodox way;  
Ike goes to the poverty-stricken, and I furnish all of his pay.  
He is doin' his duty by father in a line he must certainly like;  
As for mother and me, well, we're glad that we helped make a preacher of Ike.  
W. H. T.

"I DO wish my face wouldn't get so red. It looks horrid!" exclaimed Miss Frizzie, as she stood before the mirror fixing her hat to go out. "Pshaw!" said her brother Bob, "I should think you ought to like a red face. Isn't that what they mean when they speak of a woman possessing *rare* beauty?"

PRESENCE of mind is a great thing. If that young man who ran away with Mr. Rykert's money had only thought of it he might have explained that it was not a case of boodling, but that he considered himself entitled to the money for his legal services in cashing the draft, and it would have been all right. Mr. Rykert could have done nothing but embrace him and ejaculate, "My boy, you're the makings of a statesman!"



### PERISH THE THOUGHT!

Tramp—What! pea-soup! Woman, would you insult me? I'm just out of the Central Prison!

### A REAL GHOST.

YOU published a ghost story in your last issue, MR. GRIP, but, as the ghost turned out to be a stray cat, I gather that, like the majority of mankind, you don't believe in ghosts. Now, sir, I *do*. I have had ocular demonstration of their existence. When I was a boy they were my greatest bugbear, and I was very much afraid of them. After father came to live in this country he took up his abode in a somewhat ancient though pleasant old house. Shortly afterward some of the boys in the neighborhood informed me in a smothered whisper that our house was haunted. From that day I never knew an hour's peace of mind while we lived in the old house. I saw ghosts walking across the fields by moonlight; I heard them making strange noises through the house at night, and I lay awake in bed for hours at a time, afraid to go to sleep lest I should miss a number of the concert. One night I heard several panes of glass break in one of the windows; then the ghosts began playing ball with the broken bits, and I was positive I felt one fall on the bed where I was lying. In the morning I inspected the windows; but they were all sound. I informed father of the occurrence and told him I would not sleep alone again. He said he guessed I had heard the dog rattling his chain, and he didn't want any more of my nonsense.

With a load of agony on my mind I went around the house that day. I knew it was only a matter of time when the ghost would confront me in visible form. What