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"bout Honey, and not be there when she was leavin'. I don't want no money fer 'em, ner no trade nuther; I don't seem lak I want nothin', now Honey's gone. I wonder—say, do you reckon ef I'd of got 'er the musling curtains instid o' the silk stockin's, she'd of stayed—er a hat? I was 'lowin' to git 'er a plumb stiley hat some these days. Ef I'd hustled up and done it before, do you reckon it'd 'a' made a difference?"

The old man plied his questions with such piteous eagerness that John turned away for a moment before replying.

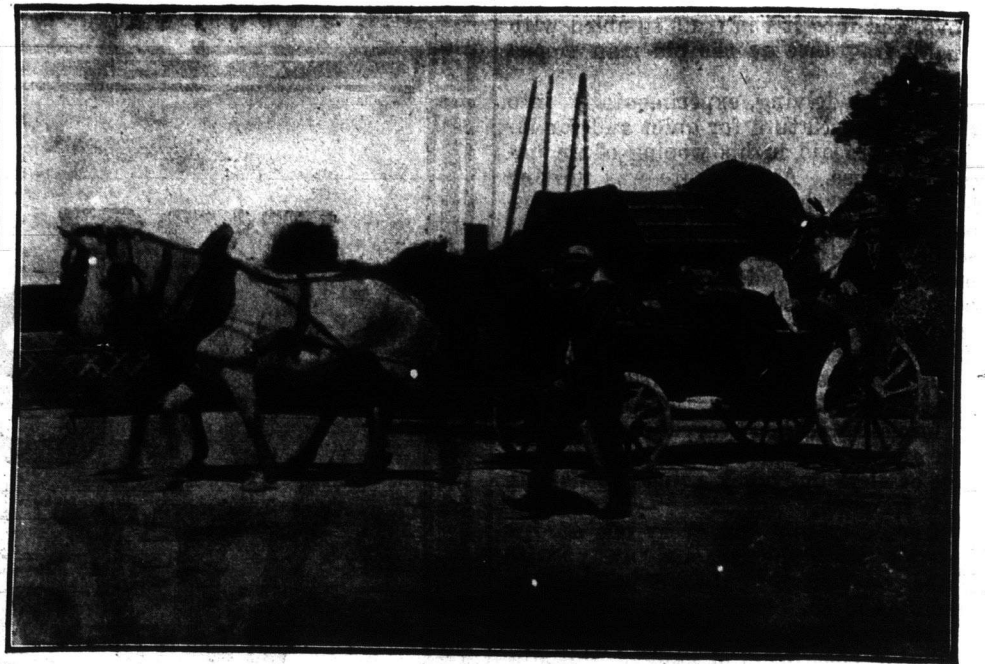
"No," he said at last, "I don't think it would have made any difference; she'd have gone anyway, if she was so inclined."

"Wull, mebbly — mebbly; I reckon it wouldn't-er been no use. I must iog."

weighted with a ponderous, jet-trimmed black hat; she held a sun umbrella in a neat case, and an imitation alligator-skin satchel stood on the floor beside her. The other woman wore a black calico riding skirt and a slat sunbonnet.

"Your train'll be along right soon, now," the latter observed, squinting along the track that flashed white in the hot sunshine. "Where's Sereldy?"

"Yonder at the station-house," responded the large woman in a voice that pounded its way through the tapping of Jim Peters' stamp, and made John think of a copper saucepan in sudden conjunction with the top of a stove; "it's hot enough to kill a snake over there; I told her ef she wanted to fry out in that sun, she could—I was a-going to stay right here in Jim's store till I heard the whistle



Refugees with their baggage making their way out of France

He took up his basket and went out, trudging spiritlessly along the footpath from John's door and up through the wood. The last bit of spring in the poor, stiff old wooden bird was broken.

It was noon when he reached his cabin. Honey had spread a little lunch for him before she left, upon the small table against the wall — cold corn-bread and boiled bacon, young green onions, and a yellow bowl of musky ripe dewberries; a shabby little tin coffee-pot stood upon the stove. The fire was ready to light but Uncle Jabez did not light it. "Shucks, I can't eat nothin'!" — he said aloud.

He went and looked into the second room of the cabin—Honey's room. Upon the floor just beneath the window stood a pair of shoes — Honey's shoes, small, somewhat battered, and run over a little at one side.

The old man's mouth twisted piteously as he stood looking at the shoes, his face taking tremulously new creases. With a sudden loud sob he hobbled quickly back through the kitchen and out upon the doo-step; there, under the suddenly loosened tension of his emotion, he sat sobbing unstintedly.

"Honey's shoes," he repeated weakly, between exhausting outbursts, "Honey's more little shoes."

IV

Uncle Jabez and his trouble stuck harassingly in John's mind and caused him, at last, to fling by his pencil and tablet and set forth to find the lonely old man's shanty.

Jim Peters, a clear-cut type of the country postmaster and storekeeper combined, volubly acquainted John with the exact spot upon a lonely hillside where Uncle Jabez's cabin could be found.

"Quare old shrub he is!" — Jim put forth the opinion, suspending his official stamp above the pile of letters under his left hand—"got a heart in 'im as big as a scalloped squash. Seems to me like I got a paper for the old boy—if you'll take and hold on till I get the mail bag fixed I'll han' it to you—train's most due, and I got to hustle."

John leaned against a show-case, looking idly at the cakes of bright pink soap, and bottles of "Appl' blossom" and "Meadow hay" perfumery it contained, and listening absently to the gossip of two women standing near the door. One was large and stout; she was dressed in a warm-looking black silk gown and

Shore," assented the woman in the sun-bonnet, "sereldy pleased to go with you?"

"Law, yes. Even now, a female under ninety-five that wouldn't go neer door to the brimstone place, she could get plenty of hats and sills and by it? She

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