

having his own way at home, as was right for a wage-earner. At eighteen he got a shock, for he threw up a job, and couldn't get another. It was his first rude experience of the big current in which he was borne down. Will didn't realize that he exemplified a Social Problem. He did feel that luck was down, and married to comfort himself. For a while he dealt in second-hand jute-bags, but some swirl in the Indian market, far out of his knowledge, sent up the price, and trade left him. Then he tried selling fish along with his uncle in the Old Kent Road, but he would not be put upon, as he proudly said, and left that. Half a dozen other trades he tried, and sometimes made a success—for a while. But he always left them, or they left him. He was always independent, was Will. When he was twenty-seven he was hunting for work round the docks, and getting three days a week, on an average. But as he explained, he could live on three days' wages, and it gave the "uvver chap a chawnce." He didn't drink and couldn't stomach more than an occasional smoke—to show his manhood; he was kind in his feeble way to his wife and boys; there was no vice in him. His wife became a little shrewish as money came more rarely. Then, as he said proudly, "I wasn't going to stand that, so I cut my stick and went." He drifts along the road from doss to doss till the last eddy casts him aside. He has freed himself from the tyranny of the current by yielding, and is happy. He is very glib at explaining how he came to be a tramp, but has no glimmering of the real reason, any more than the Will of years ago understood where the tins passed, and why? Anyone may see that as his father drifted before him, so he drifts, and so his sons will drift. But whether Will or the current is the more to blame, it will take a wise man to tell.

'Luvly Miss'

NOBODY thought of consequences. There was a lighted paraffin lamp on the table and nothing else handy. Mrs. Brown's head presented a tempting mark, and of course Mr. Brown's lengthy stay at 'The Three Fingers' had something to do with it; but nobody thought of Miss Brown, aged four, who was playing happily on the floor, unruffled by the storm to which she was so well accustomed.

Mrs. Brown ducked; there was a smash, a scream, and poor little Miss Brown was in a blaze. The shock sobered the father and silenced the mother. Miss Brown was extinguished with the aid of a table-cover, much water, and many neighbours; but she was horribly burnt all over, except her face.

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I made Miss Brown's acquaintance a few days later. She was lying on a bed made up on two chairs, and was covered with cotton wool. She had scarcely any pain, and could not move at all; and the small face that peered out of what she called her "pitty warm snow" was wan and drawn and had a faraway look in the dark eyes.

Miss Brown possessed one treasure, her 'luvly miss.' I suppose I must call it a doll, though in what its claim to the title consisted I dared not ask; Miss Brown would have deeply resented the enquiry. It was a very large potato with