

'Oh!' exclaimed Mabel, 'I entirely forgot that the Stuarts' new house was on this road! Stop, Tom; don't drive up here! They have company, too. There's that stylish Miss Saunders, whom we met in town yesterday, and Dan Stuart, who has just come home, with another student, from Harvard! What shall we do?'

'Do? Drive on—right up to the front door!' said Tom, sternly.

'But they are new people here,' cried Mabel. 'We've only known them a little while, and what will they think when they see us here in this grocery-wagon?'

'We can explain that it is for charity, I suppose,' said Madge, 'and charity covereth all things.'

'No ma'am! none of your fine lady-patroness airs!' exclaimed Tom. 'That would spoil the whole thing. Business is business! I knew you girls would be ashamed to be caught doing a little honest boy's work!'

'We're not ashamed!' cried Madge, with flashing eyes, 'and I'll prove it. It is my turn to distribute! Give me six of those yardsticks—the very yellowest!'

'But I am not going one inch,' declared Mabel. 'I'll get out and walk home first!'

'Twelve inches one foot, sixteen and a half feet one rod, forty rods one furlong,' muttered Tom in an undertone. 'Eight furlongs one mile, according to this yardstick; and three and a half miles home! Quite a long walk for you, Mabel!' And all this while they were rapidly approaching the house.

'Mabel,' said Madge, heroically, 'we've just got to!' and she tucked up the curly, flying locks of hair which the breeze had blown about her face, and settled her sailor hat squarely on her head.

'Oh, dear,' sighed Mabel, 'big, ugly dogs and termagant women are nothing to this.'

'And how about the fairy godmother?' asked Tom mercilessly, as he drove up the broad avenue at full speed, and lifted his hat with profound gravity, as the grocery waggon rounded the curve in front of the house, when the tennis players paused in their game with looks of surprise upon their faces.

For a moment Christine Stuart did not recognize her young friends from town. Then she rose to the occasion, and ran forward, saying cordially:

'Why, Madge and Mabel, I really didn't know you. But we are so delighted to see you, and your brother, too! We were just wishing we could make up another set at tennis. You have met Miss Sanders. Let me introduce my brother and his friend, Mr. Prince.'

The young man bowed gravely, while Miss Sanders made no effort to conceal the supercilious smile which came to her lips at the sight of the plebeian motto, 'Groceries and Provisions,' upon their visitors' conveyance.

Madge courteously declined the cordial invitation, and proceeded to explain their business.

'We really cannot stop, you see,' she said 'for we are hired by the day to distribute these yardsticks. We have agreed to leave them at every house. Will you permit me to present you with one of these elegant and useful articles? We represent, I assure you, the largest and most reliable grocery store in Plainfield. Our tea and coffee are of the finest grade; our canned goods are unsurpassed; and our fruit and vegetables are always the freshest in the market.'

'Madge Ingraham, you fill me with awe and admiration!' exclaimed the pretty

Christine. 'But will you tell me what this delicious masquerade is for?'

'Masquerade!' repeated Madge, in tragic tones. 'If ever there was real life, this is it—and you would think so if you had been at it, as we have, ever since seven o'clock this morning.'

'You might order those lemons, Christine, which we were wishing for to-day,' said Miss Sanders, languidly seating herself in a garden-chair.

'Oh, thank you!' replied Madge, gayly. 'We should be charmed to take an order.'

'We are greatly obliged to you, Miss Ingraham,' said Dan Stuart, who had thus far listened with immovable countenance to the conversation, 'but my friend, Mr. Prince, and I are going into town to-night and we can execute all commissions. If you will kindly give each of us one of those delectable yardsticks, however, we shall be forever your grateful debtors.'

'Are you sure that you do not both reside here? We have been charged to use great discrimination and economy in the distribution of these valuable souvenirs.'

'Oh, I assure you,' replied Philip Prince, with great eagerness, 'that we both live far away, within the walls of a gloomy brick dwelling whose darkness would be gloriously illuminated by those two yellow sticks.'

Here Miss Sanders, who was secretly embroidering a silk banner with the Greek-letter initials of a well-known college fraternity, which she intended to present to Dan and Philip, arose from her chair and smiled more superciliously than ever.

'Don't forget to say where you saw this advertisement!' called Tom, as the party, having made a final farewell, rattled down the avenue.

'I declare, I felt as though I should like to sink into the earth,' said Mabel, 'when I saw Miss Sanders with her immaculate gown and white shoes, and such an expression.'

'I didn't,' said Madge. 'That was what braced me for the fray.'

Tom patted Madge upon the shoulder.

'You did your duty like a man and brother,' said he, 'and I'm not sorry I gave you the job.'

One evening, not long after this eventful Saturday, Dan Stuart and Philip Prince drove into town and called upon Madge and Mabel, and upon Tom also, bearing to them from Christine, an informal invitation to lawn tennis and afternoon tea the following Wednesday, and it was on this occasion that Tom took it upon himself to explain—what the girls had carefully refrained from doing for themselves—the whole story of Harry Hanscom's misfortune and the true object of the yardstick expedition.

Dan retold the story with much enthusiasm to his mother and sister, and the result was that Mrs. Stuart, while serving tea to her young guests upon the lawn, begged the privilege of contributing, in the name of her son and daughter, an amount which, with the sum already raised by Harry's fellow students, would place the unfortunate lad comfortably in the hospital, where his recovery was soon assured.

At the beginning of the following college year, when Dan Stuart and Philip Prince reopened their luxuriously appointed rooms at Harvard, two yellow wooden yardsticks, crossed swordwise, might have been seen fastened above the mantelpiece, amidst canes, rapiers, fencing foils, and other similar paraphernalia; and whenever any lordly upper-class-men demands the meaning of this simple, yet curious device, he is surprised, if not completely overawed, by be-

ing quietly told that 'it is an emblem of charity which was measured and not found wanting.'

Child Marriage.

(By Mrs. Ellison, of Rungpore, North Bengal.)

Although so many have heard of child marriage, it requires one to come into personal contact with its effects in the home life of the people of India to really understand what it means.

It is the 'cruel yoke of custom' which made the father and mother of this little wife of eight years belie their hearts' affections, and send her away from home to live with an unkind mother-in-law, who made her the drudge of the house. I have watched her myself draw all the water from the well, then go out into the nearest field with a basket to gather up anything that might be of use in the way of firewood, then she had to cook the meals, and if any mistake was made she was beaten—and what girl of eight can be expected to understand the art of cooking, even a Bengali



CHILD WIFE EIGHT YEARS OLD.

meal? Poor child! No play. No romping and skipping for her, and no bright happy childhood. This is a most cruel custom, and one which the English Government cannot remedy, because in the manifesto which they publish in 1858 they promised not to interfere with their religion in any way.

This is the greatest of woman's wrongs, and is an ancient custom, being at least five hundred years older than the Christian era.

The most outrageous instance of child marriage I ever saw was at a Rajboushie village, in Rungpore, where a baby girl of ten months was married to a boy of four.

'Oh, cruel custom that makes parents lavish their best love upon their boys, and send the helpless girl away just when she needs her mother most. Oh, cruel religion, that exalts the one and degrades the other.' Our hearts are sad to see it, and we cry, 'How long, Lord, how long?' Still, we may rejoice as we remember that the day is fast approaching when the King of a kingdom, not of this world, shall send forth the proclamation through the length and breadth of the land: 'I have broken the bands of your yoke.'—Baptist Missionary Magazine.