

THE DEMI-TASSE

JUSTIFYING THE MEANS.

HE was a young Methodist minister from Canada and he was enjoying a wedding tour in Europe. His bride was a charming girl who knew more about the making of fudge and the game of tennis than she did of the joys of the Epworth League. He had actually managed to make a few thousand dollars in his holidays, dealing in Western real estate; so, he had ventured on the highly unusual ministerial course of a prolonged trip in Germany and France. In their wanderings, they came in due time to Monte Carlo, where they found the charms of nature all that the soul of tourist might desire, while the young minister was filled with dismay at the sight of so much gambling, although he had been familiar with the real estate market at home. Suddenly, one evening as they were watching the players, he became aware that his devoted young wife had left his side and was approaching the fatal "wheel" with determination in her eye and several gold pieces in her hand.

To reach her and grasp her arm was the work of a few seconds, and then the horrified young minister gasped: "For goodness' sake, Mabel, what did you intend to do?"

"I wanted to make some money," she pouted daintily.

"Make money! Gambling among all those wretches!"

"Well, you might have let me try it for once. Besides, I was going to spend all I made on new sofa-cushions for the parsonage."

The parson bridegroom wasted almost half an hour of eloquence, while the sweet young wife persisted in saying it was a great pity that her plans had been frustrated; but promised not to tell of her intentions on her return to Canada. However, the grievance was too great and the promise has been conveniently forgotten.

THEIR POSSIBILITIES.

SOME years ago, there were two Toronto girls, living on Bloor Street, who were school chums and confidants of the most approved type. But Dorothy married five years ago and went away to Ohio, while Marion became the wife of a Toronto lawyer. This summer, Dorothy has come back to her girlhood's home for a visit and takes pride in showing her young son to a group of admiring relatives and friends. Marion, also, takes a pride in her small son's achievements and the two young mothers are given to comparing the respective feats of George and Willie.

"There is one nice thing about the United States," said Dorothy the other day, in a thoughtful mood. "You see George was born in Ohio and may be President of the country some day. Now, Willie can never be more than Premier of Canada."

Marion's eyes flashed ominously, but she said with frozen calm: "That is the worst of the United States—anybody can be President."

HURRAH FOR HOCKEN!

Oh, Montreal is envious
And throws a jealous fit;
It sneers at foolish subway schemes
And is not pleased a bit.
It hints in broadest accents
Of poor aspiring "rubes"—
Because Toronto aldermen
Discuss the future "Tubes."

NOTHING IN COMMON.

IN the County of Bruce, where the clans of the Highland Scotch muster in strength, the service in certain historic Presbyterian congregations is sometimes strongly flavoured with the Gaelic. To one of these "kirks" belongs a Lowlander who objects in no uncertain fashion to the Celtic tongue and makes a point of protesting against the use of this moving, if not melting speech. This worthy elder was properly incensed when he heard that a Highland pastor, with a gift for the Gaelic, was to visit the congregation and preach the communion sermon in unadulterated Celtic. He grumbled and criticised, but his mutterings were all unheeded by the Highland majority. The Lowland elder, therefore, attended the "preparation" services on the Friday night, but absented himself from Communion on the following Sunday morning. His pastor encountered the missing elder on Monday and addressed him genially.

"Mornin' meenister," was the uncompromising reply.

"Ye were not at the Communion, Robert," ventured the spiritual adviser.

"I wasna," came the prompt reply.

"And do you think it becoming to absent yourself from the Communion?"

"It's just this, meenister," was the firm response. "I'm sure that naeboddy was ever the better for Communion with thae domned Hielanders." The clerical reply is unrecorded.

THE PURPLE HUE.

THE Montreal *Star* once engaged as cub reporter a young McGill freshman called Binks. He was a small, insignificant person like his name. Like many other insignificant persons, the commonplaces of life appealed to him not at all. He avoided them on every possible occasion. He did not talk like the other fellows. For instance, he would never say to an inquisitor, "I am going hiking after copy, old man," but would respond with a most grandiloquent air, "I am proceeding on an assignment, sir." The principle which governed his speech he carried out

in his writing. At college, the purple colour characteristic of his essays delighted the English professor's æsthetic soul. His early journalistic experiences were to teach him that the royal hue and newspaper "stuff" did not harmonise well at all.

The first morning on which he reported to the city editor that gentleman told him to do the police court. Binks expected to write editorials. However, he determined to make the best of it. He would make the ten o'clock police court scene live, and incidentally show the editorial head a few things. He did so—and forever.

The case of Kate Barrett, one of the "regulars," because of the lady's habitual fondness for the cup that cheers, came up. Binks saw the opportunity of a lifetime. He traced the downfall of the once sweet, innocent Katie from the pretty hamlet to the gutter of a great city. Hyperbole, the unnecessary dash, the senseless question point, the childish italics and all the other rhetorical tricks, which he so loved, he affected to make the story one great big hit. The next morning, when the paper came out, Binks puffed out his little chest with pride. He burst into the "brain room" and gushed to his brother reporters, "Was my story to your tastes, gentlemen?" There was a sudden silence, then a snigger, then a perfect howl from the assembled.

Binks is now the bald and portly editor of a thriving Western journal. He has learned some things since his early journalistic days. Whenever he picks up a copy of the Montreal *Star* from among his exchanges, he smiles at the recollection of his first story. He always remembers what he considered the most vivid sentence of that yarn:

"Down, down, the ladder—rung by rung—tumbled the village belle."



The End of the Line.—Life.

NEVER SAY DIE!

GEORGE HAM'S most famous speech, says the *Saturday Sunset*, was made under unique circumstances. He had been ailing for some time when one spring morning in 1905 the malady took a sudden turn for the worse. The physician who was called in, after making an examination, said:

"Mr. Ham, you have a clearly defined case of appendicitis. You will have to be operated on at once if your life is to be saved."

"Not on your life, doc," replied the patient. "They say you are sure death with your knife, and I am going to have one more good feed before I cash in. The boys are giving a dinner to Usher, the assistant passenger traffic manager, to-night, and I'm going to be there. After the dinner you may do your worst."

Incredible though it may seem, Ham actually did carry out his avowed intention to attend the dinner, though he was suffering great pain. Not only did he attend, but he made the brightest, wittiest speech of his life. Before the applause died away he was in a cab on the way to the hospital, where he underwent the dangerous operation for appendicitis.

For a time life was despaired of. In fact, a report was circulated that he was dead, and one paper, accepting the report without verification, published a touching obituary of the genial Ham.

On returning to his office, Ham's first act was to have this obituary framed in sombre black and hung above his desk with this legend in his own irreverent chirography beneath: "Not yet, but soon."

PROOF ENOUGH.

"I've got a good story to tell you. I don't think I ever told it to you before."

"Is it really funny?"

"Yes, indeed it is."

"Then you haven't told it to me before." — Lippincott's Magazine.



"For what we are about to receive—make us truly thankful."—Life.