

of the individual is an epitome of the life of the race, and Peter had been passing through the savage and the semi-civilized periods, and the middle ages, and was only now arriving at his Victorian era.

Autumn slipped on into winter, and Peter, as he faced the snow storms in his morning walks to college, often found himself back at Prankville in his thoughts. And at night, when returning from his dissections, the yellow glare of the street lamps in the distance sometimes seemed to him, through the storm, as the old familiar light, whose steady rays guided his noiseless footsteps along the snow-clad road to the farm-house by the well. He had become acquainted with a number of students, most of them, strange to say, city boys, and under their influence was very slowly altering in his manner. Their influence was unconscious, for, like an iceberg, he kept the atmosphere around him near his own temperature, but he was, like the berg, being slowly undermined, and would some day topple over into a new state of equilibrium, and woe to the unfortunates who had trusted in him!

Once a week, for a shorter or longer time, Peter showed himself at the James'. Some days he would be closeted with Mr. James all the time of his visit; at other times he would be received by the family, and entertained with conversation, or, perhaps, a game of cards, backgammon, or checkers. On these occasions Edith was often absent, or excused herself early in the evening. Alice, who had got it into her head that, in one sense, this giant was a baby, treated him very kindly, but very often brought a smile even to his lips by bringing forward some childish occupation for him to engage in. She kept him all one evening cutting and pasting pictures in a scrap-book. Edith, for a long time after this, privately called him "knight of the scissors and paste-pot."

But there was one thing that Peter could do that always brought Edith to the fore. It has been said that he was no musician, but it must be added that he had a fine voice, and knew how to use it, in a way. Marv an evening he spent in the parlor, singing, while Edith would seat herself in one window, and, looking out into the night, dream such dreams—as she listened to the singer or to her sister—as few but poets or children ever dream. Music was Edith's hobby; when a baby she had escaped from her nurse and wandered off with an organ-grinder, who seized the opportunity of turning an extra penny by passing her off as his, which her dirty condition made plausible. He had no intention of stealing her, though he very nearly found himself within the goal walls; but when Providence threw the child his way, he reasoned that he would have been wrong not to avail himself of his opportunity. Her brown curls, even then luxuriant, betrayed her to her own father, who was passing, and in the scene that ensued it was lucky, perhaps, for her future respect for his moral character that she was too young to grasp the meaning of all he said to the organ-grinder.

One of these musical evenings marks an important station in Peter's railroad of life. Edith had been listening, as usual, until her heart, that always felt chilly towards Peter, had warmed so far as to hide,

for a time, her dislike for him. Peter, on his part, had grown kinder under the influence of his surroundings. His heart was on the latch, though he knew it not, and before he could lock it Edith crept in.

Stop, stop, reader! Do not run away with the idea that he fell plump in love with this girl of fifteen, though we have known the thing happen before his time. No; he was true to Lizzie, and we only mean that Edith kept the resolution she made the night of the concert, and asked him if he had a sweetheart, and got a reply.

But she was too clever a girl, too sympathetic, if you prefer the term, to attack him in front in this way. She out-flanked him, and this was how she did it. The elder folks were upstairs, not a very usual circumstance with them, and he had been singing with the girls. Edith, as usual, had ensconced herself in the bow window amid the curtains, and was listening. Alice had begun a very beautiful piano-forte piece, and Peter had also withdrawn himself to the window, where Edith sat. She greeted him with a smile, and, after a few minutes' silence, said to him: "Do you know, Mr. Simson, what kind of songs you sing best?"

"No, Miss Edith, what kind are they?"

"You sing the love songs best. It always seems to me as if you put your heart into them."

Now, had Peter been city bred, he would, probably, have turned this off with a neat compliment to Miss Edith, who would have taken it for what it was worth, and no harm done. But he was still an unpollished gem, that, instead of reflecting light from so many facets that one could not see its interior, gleamed brilliantly enough, but was quite transparent. He only said—

"Perhaps you are right, Miss Edith."

Edith laid one hand upon his arm as he sat, half unconscious now of his surroundings in the thoughts of Lizzie that flocked about him.

"Will you not tell me about her, Mr. Simson?" she asked, softly, yet with childish eagerness.

And thus she won his confidence.

To understand her victory, you must place yourself in his position, you must hear the music that was falling on his ears, you must have lifted yourself in song, like the lark, into an atmosphere that the thought of deceit or hate does not enter, and lastly, but by no means the least, you must be questioned by a pair of brown eyes, full of sympathy, and have a heart that, like those of most lovers, is only too ready to betray itself if it can get a listener.

Peter told her everything, even to Lizzie's refusal to become engaged, and her fear that he would forget her. There was a fine tone of scorn in his voice when he reached this last part of his confidence, and Edith's eyes sparkled in sympathy as he repeated his vow never to forget his country sweetheart.

Alice, meanwhile, had finished her piece, and turned to see what the others were doing. Much to her surprise, and somewhat to her annoyance, she saw them seated in the window, while Peter was discoursing volubly about something. Alice was a shrewd girl, and if she did not like the neglectful manner in