THROUGH PAIN TO PEACE

CHAPTER XXXVI.—*Continued.*

"I shall owe my success to the children of St. Monica's," she returned, her grey eyes shining. "And if I make money I shall give it to the home. For myself, I can live on very little; somehow I have never wanted to be a rich woman."

Mr. Wilmot Linn drew a deep breath. The words that he longed to say were trembling on his lips at that moment. But, knowing how poor he was, how could he say them then? It was such a hard life that he must ask her to share; a life full of worries, and demands, and perplexities that she did not even dream of. Yet if he remained silent it was for her sake. If he had been a more selfish man he would have spoken out his love there and then. The habit of self denial, strengthened by long years of practice, drove back the declaration.

"You must think of yourself first of all," he said, with a thrill of tenderness in his voice. "You have had sorrows, and you are not strong. But after the strength comes back, and all due care has been taken of you, then—"

"Then I shall spend all my energies on the children!" she exclaimed joyfully. "Oh, you can scarcely understand how sweet it will be! I am so fond of anything that is young, and has to be helped. When you help old people they are apt to take offence, although they need your aid badly enough. But the child puts its hand into yours, and asks to be guided and led. And the girl comes to you with her love-troubles, and the boy tells you his shy hopes. It is delightful!"

But he did understand. He could read the inner story through the outside story that every one knew. For years she had starved for lack of th young companionship which would have been spiritual refreshment. Grandma had never been able to comprehend Tracy's delight in the society of children. But then grandma had been filled with the notion that she, herself, was sufficient for all cravings; she had felt that, until Tracy was suitably married, she ought to be perfectly satisfied with her grandmother.

Oh, those bygone years! A wave of bitter regret swept over Wilmot Linn's heart again. Why could he not have met this woman earlier, so that they might have lived and worked as one? It was for her that he had been waiting, conscious that his life was incomplete, and believing that what he waited for would never be his in this world. And now, just when he was pressed down with burdens and worn out with anxious labour, she had come.

Then he looked at her radiant face, and took comfort, thankful for all that was given her. More was yet to come; the time was surely drawing near when he might speak out and claim her. For the present there was intimate companionship, peaceful talk, and a sense of rest whenever he came into her sphere. And that sphere to him was home.

He glanced round the room which she had made so personal that everything in it seemed to speak to her. Lamp and fire were burning with a steady glow; the softness of the light made all the details, and deepened the touches of colour. Here a scarlet fan took an intenser hue; there an amber jar stood vividly out of the rich shadow; and in the midst of these warm shades and subdued lights Tracy moved, a graceful, slender figure, making the picture perfect. To Wilmot it sometimes seemed as if they two must have sat here together every day for years; it was all so natural and familiar and restful.

It was six o'clock when he went downstairs and passed out of the private entrance of the house, which opened into Dodge Lane. The evening was dark and fine; the air was cold, and there were stars shining high above the roofs and spires. As Mr. Linn came forth from the doorway he almost ran against a dwarfish figure which was standing there.

"I beg your pardon," he said mechanically; and the figure sped away into the lane and vanished. It was far too dark for him to have caught a glimpse of its face; but there flashed upon him a sudden consciousness that it was some one whom he knew. The flash passed as swiftly as it came; the trivial incident was forgotten in a moment; and he quickened his steps, remembering the letters that must be written before the last post went out.

He found Pascoe in the study, waiting to help him; and as they sat down together at the writing-table he was struck with the look of happiness on the young fellow's face.

"I have been to see a certain picture, Pascoe," he said with a smile.

"Does Miss Taunton practise white magic?" young Rayne asked, blushing. "It has seemed as if I knew Agatha better on canvas than I have ever known her before. She has drawn out Agatha's hidden self, and revealed her to me."

"She has painted not merely the features but the mind and heart," the vicar answered. "That is what every true artist does. He looks for the soul, and fixes its light upon the face. Miss Taunton has shown you the true Agatha, Pascoe—the girl whose heart responds to yours. You may throw your doubts away."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Christmas had come and gone; January had set in with bitter winds, and there had been a light fall of snow. Margot Rayne hated winter, and complained unceasingly of the cold, although her brother had bought a long, thick cloak to protect her from the weather.

"I wish it hadn't been dark-blue," she said. "I hate dark blue; it makes me think of the charity girls at the Home."

She accompanied her words with one of those malicious glances through her yellow lashes which Pascoe had learnt to dread.

"I don't know why you should hate to think of the Home," he answered, rather coldly. "The girls have never done you any harm."

"Mr. Linn makes too great a fuss with them," she replied. "They won't be fit for work if they are spoilt. And they will give themselves airs."

"I never saw a more modest, simple-hearted set of girls!" he said indignantly.

"O Pascoe, how silly you are! Anyone can see that you have lost your head about Agatha March, and she doesn't care a straw for you. Miss Taunton has made her vainer than ever. She has praised her to her face, and put her into a picture as if she were the queen of beauty instead of just a common, pretty girl."

Pascoe was as angry as his sweet nature ever permitted him to be. It might have been better for Margot if he had spoken out as plainly to her as most young men would have done. But from his earliest childhood he had learnt to bear her, and bear with her temper. His father often urged on his son was full of compassion for his deformed daughter and no one has ever rebuked Margot for those outbursts of spite which were only too frequent. She cannot help it, poor thing," was the usual comment on her venomous speeches. And Pascoe had fallen into the habit of thinking that Margot ought to be forgiven for every thing.

Growing up as he had done, an close companionship and unhappy life it was well for him that he escaped with [illegible] The disease which affects [illegible] generally finds some predisposition which it seizes upon and developes; and the soul mysteriously and unconsciously invites the evil which blights its well being. Pascoe's nature did not attract bad influences. Religion and art were blended in his life; he had been sad often, but never miserable; lonely, but never forlorn. Each spirit lives in its own separate world, and Margot had never entered Pascoe's world at all: she had only touched upon its borders through her taste for music.

She was painstaking and had learnt to play well; but there was no poetry in her playing. There are certain strange melodies hidden in the organ which are only yielded to the player who can evoke them. Margot never drew any note from the instrument which you did not expect to hear. She played with care and judgment, imitating Pascoe as closely as she could; but she could not catch his inspiration.

"After all," she said after a pause, "it is that Taunton woman who deserves to be blamed. Why did she come here, and fill the girls' empty heads with vanity? The first time I ever saw her face—"

"Do stop, Margot," entreated Pascoe earnestly. "We are wasting the afternoon. Is that the piece you wish me to hear you play?"

He pointed at an open music-book which she was holding upon her knee. Brother and sister had met in the church for their usual practising on Saturday, and Margot had sat down in the choir stalls instead of taking her place on the organ-stool. She was brimful of bitterness, and longed to give vent to her feelings; but Pascoe would not let her talk to her heart's content. Moreover, there might be other listeners.

She rose reluctantly, and went to the organ with a bad grace. Pascoe stood by her side pulling out the stops, turning the leaves, and giving hints now and then. She played very well, despite her ill temper, and he could honestly praise her. Her brow had cleared when the piece came to an end.

"You have made great progress," he said as she rested. "I am really proud of you."

She smiled. The light from the music stand fell on her face, and showed its softened expression.

"If all my pupils were as good as you are I should be one of the most successful of teachers," he went on, glad to have soothed her.

"Pascoe," she said thoughtfully, "do you think that I shall ever get my heart's desire? I don't mean my chief desire—never mind what that is—but something that comes second to it. If I believed that I should one day be the organist of St. Monica's I could be almost happy."

"I think you have good reason to hope," he answered. "Although I love the dear church and its associations, it is natural that I should aspire to a more important post. Mr Linn has always encouraged me in this ambition. And if I am removed, you will be very likely to fill my place."

"How can you talk so calmly of being removed?" she exclaimed suddenly. "If I thought I should ever be taken away from St. Monica's I should die!"

She lifted her hand with a vehement gesture, and raised her voice passionately.

"Come," said Pascoe, "you have rested long enough. Play 'Silver Trumpets' as a finish."

She obeyed, and was again warmly praised. While she was rolling up her music he took her seat and played a voluntary.

As Margot, poor girl, loved to pour out her heart's bitterness in hard words, so Pascoe poured forth his heart's sweetness in lovely sounds. Both natures needed outpouring. At his call, all the [illegible] and tenderness contained in the [illegible] pipes came forth. Mellow notes of supplication, pathetic notes of soft complaint, holy notes of benediction, solemn notes of exultation—all were heard. It was the experience of a spiritual life told in music. Two persons, who stood listening at the dark end of the church, felt that the player was expressing all their past and future for them. They stood close together in silence until the sweet sounds ceased; then both drew a long breath, and looked toward each other in the half-darkness.

"I never heard you play better, Pascoe," said Mr Linn, as they came forward into the light. "We thank you with all our hearts."

When Margot caught sight of the vicar's companion her face became distorted with passion. Wilmot looked at the girl kindly, and noticed that she was strangely moved.

"Have you, too, been playing, Margot?" he asked.

"Yes," she answered in a choked voice. She took up her music, pushed rudely past Tracy, and rushed out into the winter darkness, as miserable a woman as could be found in the great city that evening.

It was snowing a little, but if Margot had gone out barefooted into the slippery street she would scarcely have felt the cold. She did not hear the exclamations of the angry men as she jostled them in her headlong haste: she could not feel the pavement beneath her feet. A fire was burning within her so fiercely that it scorched her cheeks and parched her tongue. She dashed across Cannon Street, escaping hoofs and wheels by one of those miracles which seem to be so often wrought for frenzied humanity. Going down Dowgate Hill she slipped and fell, but was up in a moment, and reached her own door in safety.

Without knowing how she ascended the winding stairs, she found herself in her room.

It was quite dark, and only a faint red glow came from a morsel of fire, but the windows of the opposite buildings were lighted up brightly, and she could see figures moving to and fro.

She tore off her hat and cloak and flung them on the bed. Then, with a half-suppressed yell of rage, she threw herself down upon the floor, and rolled in a sort of madness, howling at intervals. There was no one near to hear her: she was free to give vent to the fury that possessed her until it had spent itself.

At last, tired out with its violence, the fierce little body lay still.

There was a deep silence in the small room, the fire still glowed, now and then a cinder fell, and that was the only sound to be heard there. Pascoe Rayne, after knocking at the door and getting no answer, came in.

"Margot," he said anxiously, "Margot!"

A faint moan was the sole reply. Pascoe's heart seemed to stop beating for an instant: he felt a vague sense of coming horror which almost mastered him.

"Margot," he said again, "for heaven's sake, speak! Where are you?"

She was silent, and he advanced cautiously, holding out his hands. The fire favoured him, a small flame shot up suddenly out of the embers, and revealed the figure that was lying close to the fender.

He stooped down, and would have raised her in his arms, but she struck at him wildly.

"Let me alone," she said, in an odd, muffled voice.

It was such a relief to find that she was neither dead nor fatally injured, that Pascoe stood upright with a deep sigh of thankfulness. Then he remembered that the match box was usually to be found on the mantel-piece; and he groped for it with success.

When he had lighted the gas he returned to the figure on the hearth-rug. But Margot plainly was in no need of assistance; she got up without difficulty, and seated herself on the side of the bed.

"The fire is going out," he said; "you will take cold."

"What does it matter?" she asked gloomily.

He put on some fuel and coaxed it into a blaze. Next he set out the little black tea pot, and cup and saucer, and proceeded to make tea, doing everything with the quiet deftness which characterised all his movements. Margot did not stir; she sat and watched him with a scowl.

"Come, dear," he said, when the preparations were finished. "You are chilled and it is no wonder. The hot tea will do you good."

"I won't touch it," she declared with a stamp. "I don't know why you have followed me here. It is hard that I can't be permitted to rest in peace."

"I was afraid that you would be ill," he answered, in his gentlest tone. "The vicar was quite concerned: he said that he could see there was something wrong."

He said that, did he?" Margot's glance and voice were very sharp.

"Yes, indeed he did. Be a good girl and drink some tea. I wish there was something nicer for you to eat than bread and butter. To-morrow you shall have a slice of Mrs. Deale's cake."

"I'm not a child to be pacified with cake," she replied tartly. "Did Mr. Linn tell you to run after me when I left the church?"

"He said I had better go and see what was the matter," returned Pascoe, taking her hand in his. "Come and sit by the fire and I will make some toast."

"Do leave off talking about things to eat," she exclaimed pettishly. Nevertheless she rose and consented to sit in the chair by the fire; and he saw that she was mollified.

"Are you feeling better now?" he asked, after waiting till her cup was half empty, and ministering to her wants with careful attention.

"I am no worse," she admitted: and then there was another pause. She broke it suddenly.

"Pascoe, don't you see that things have been going badly ever since Miss Taunton came? She has cast a spell over the vicar. I don't know how she has done it, for she's not at all pretty; but I think she is a sort of a witch. I hate her pale face, and horrid, soft ways. Oh, how I hate her!"

"Do hush, Margot dear," her brother implored. "You will make yourself quite ill again."

"I shan't make myself ill with talking. It is a relief to speak, and there's no one to speak to but you. Pascoe, tell me that he doesn't care for her. If I thought that he did really care for her I should go mad!"

The young man stood resting his arm on the narrow ledge of the mantel-shelf, and gazing into the fire with a distressed look. Margot's wild words filled him with trouble, and made him bitterly ashamed of her. He answered her with unwonted sternness.

"Margot, it ought not to concern you if he does care for her. You know that he is free to do as he likes. He has lived for years a beautiful, unselfish life; and if at last he has found—"

Margot, sprang up, and wrung her hands.

"I know what you are going to say," she cried. "Don't go on, Pascoe, if it ever comes to pass I will not bear it."

"We must bear [illegible] that comes. Dear Margot, sit down and be reasonable. There is something that you have not noticed, but which I have seen coming on for a long time. Mr Linn's strength is wearing out. He is not the man that he was once."

Pascoe spoke solemnly, laying his hand on the girl's heaving shoulder. His words subdued her, and she sank back into her chair trembling and awe stricken. She knew that he always spoke the truth, and the terrible fear thus suddenly presented to her mind had an overwhelming influence.

"Do you think he is going to die?" she asked faintly.

"No, no, I only meant that he was worn and wearied. And I think it is probable that he will have to go away for a rest. It is long since he has had a good holiday, he has gone on and on in the old way, forgetting himself, and I believe—"

"You believe what?"

"That he will never remember himself unless some one else becomes a part of himself. That's badly expressed, I know," Pascoe added. "I'm afraid I can't make my meaning clear to you, Margot. But I want you to feel that you ought to welcome any change that is for his good."

She was silent. He stooped and kissed her tenderly.

"I must go now," he said. "My dear little sister, I wish I could give you a brighter home. It is terribly lonely here, isn't it?"

"No," she answered, "I'm not lonely. There's the music, and there are lots of things to do. You need not worry yourself about me."

He went his way, carrying a heavy heart with him, as he always did after a tete-a-tete with Margot. This wild passion of hers seemed to be assuming formidable dimensions. She was nursing and cherishing it until it bade fair to overshadow her whole life.

Left to herself Margot sat and mused by the fire, going over all that Pascoe had said. The violence of her fury had subsided, she was tired and languid now, and could think calmly. She had faith in her brother, but she knew his tendency to melancholy, and asked herself if he had not taken too dark a view of things?

It was easy, after a time, to believe that Pascoe was wrong. Mr. Linn was merely tired, not ill at all. As for Miss Taunton, if she were really as clever as every one supposed, she would become a great artist, go away from this neighbourhood and forget them all. The very thought of Tracy's departure brought new life and hope to Margot, who was only too ready to creep back into her fool's paradise.

While Pascoe, anxious and disturbed, was wondering how his sister would get through the night, she was moving about her room in high spirits, a new creature.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

In these days Tracy was so happy that she asked no questions of her heart. To have found her ideal realised, this alone was happiness. Everything that Wilmot Linn said or did, every look in his face, came to her with a sweet sense of familiarity. It seemed to her that she had always known him.

It has been well said by a modern writer that "when intercourse is very close and very frequent, so complete is the exchange of souls, that recognizable bits of one soul begin to show in the other's nature, and the second is conscious of a similar and growing debt to the first. This mysterious approximation of two souls who has not witnessed" Pascoe, quietly observant, witnessed it constantly.

Those spring days found Wilmot Linn continually turning over in his mind a problem which has puzzled many single men. How was it possible to blend another life with his own without disturbing all those lives that had grown up around him? Meanwhile he said nothing of this inner questioning to the person whom it chiefly concerned.

Tracy was, as he had predicted, a success. Her picture of Agatha March was accepted and honoured with a good place; and it attracted the attention of all the leading art critics. Her delight was so honest and child-like that it made Wilmot feel young. She was full of plans and hopes which he could not help sharing.

"I shall do wonders for the Home," she said. "Do you know what Jane actually asked a silly question this morning? When a sensible person says a silly thing it positively gives one a shock. She asked if I meant to seek new quarters?"

"And you will not?" His eyes anticipated her answer.

"Of course I will not. I have learned to love my city home too well. All my best thoughts have come to me here; how can I tell that they would follow me elsewhere?"

The face that she turned toward him at that moment was marvellously bright. Never, even in her younger days, had she looked so radiant as she did then. All the good things that she had desired seemed to have been showered upon her at once.

"I do see," he said slowly. And his smile was so beautiful, and so full of deep meaning, that she felt, just then, a pressure of happiness almost too great to bear. He was still holding the hand that he had taken when he came in, and he went on to say that he had come to make a request.

"Next Wednesday," he continued, "is Mr. Larello's birthday. My own birthday is unknown, and so I have borrowed his. When I was a child he always gave me that day as a feast-day; all the joy that I ever had came through him."

He paused for an instant. The eyes, looking into hers with such an intense gaze, grew misty; and involuntarily her hand nestled itself more closely into his.

And we remembered his birthday he said. "There is an old friend of his and mine, a Mrs. Willwood, who keeps up the feast. She lives in a quiet old house down by the river; and always, on the thirtieth of June, I, [illegible] there with Fordyce and Pascoe, and some of the children from the Home. We spend most of the time on the hayfield; it is just a simple, wholesome holiday. Will you come with us?"

"Yes," she said joyfully, "I will come. And Agatha?"

"We shall have Agatha!" he answered. "And we shall take Pascoe's sister Margot, a poor girl who has very few pleasures."

Tracy suddenly called up a vision of the deformed figure and strange, malignant face which had sometimes crossed her path.

"Margot Rayne," she said after a pause. "Yes, I have seen her several times. But—is she quite like other people?"

"Not quite," he replied. "I think Pascoe grieves over her in silence. She has peculiarities, and the dear fellow finds her temper uncertain. We shall try to give her a happy day."

"You love to give people happy days," she said.

"Think of all the happy days that were given to me through one man's influence," he returned, with that quick lighting up of the face that no one, who had once seen, could ever forget. "And think how easy it is to [illegible] the lives nearest to us. Such a little thing will do it; a pleasant word spoken here; a helpful word there; even a smile given, when one has nothing else to give. The wonder is that we don't give more; the pity is that we forget, even for an hour, the perpetual needs of humanity."

A faint shadow came over Tracy's brightness. She spoke with a touch of regret.

"I can be pleasant sometimes," she admitted. "But not to every one, always. It is so fearfully hard. I have not found it hard often; because I have seldom been sorely tried."

As the words passed her lips she thought again of the deformed girl who had given her malicious glances for her civil words. Insignificant as Margot was, the holiday would lose something if she shared it. After all, it takes the merest trifle to spoil a day's pleasure.

"You do not know what good you have done" said Wilmot gently. "I am always hearing of Miss Taunton's kindness. Many of our best gifts are unconsciously given. Don't you remember that—

"'The gift without the giver is bare'?

It is the spontaneous outliving of ourselves—of the life that is in us—that blesses others."

Mrs. Willwood was not a rich woman; but she lived in a house which had been her father's before her, and welcomed her friends to a peaceful home. It was a grey house, made green with ivy, and over grown with flowery creepers. The swallows knew it well, and darted in and out of the old chimney; birds sang round it all through the long summer days. The garden went sloping down to the fields, and the fields shelved away to the river. Cow stood half-hidden in the long grass by the water-side, a boat floated among the weeds, and you caught glimpses of the fishes gliding about in the clear brown shallows. It was a sweet pastoral country here, with through delicate veils of light and shade; and to Tracy it seemed as if she had come to a silent, sunshiny dreamland.

Wilmot Linn found a bench in a nook between the trees, and led her away from the hayfield to sit there and rest. It was afternoon; the banks cast long shadows into the water, green tendrils and straggling flowery trailers drooped down to meet the ripples; all was lovely everywhere there was the splendor of a bright peace.

He looked at Tracy's happy face, as she sat by his side. Surely this was a veritable glimpse of the earthly paradise.

"This is a little bit of rest for you," she said, suddenly and softly, as she turned toward him. "You are looking pale and tired. Is there anything the matter?"

"There are the usual little worries," he answered. But it was evident that he was not thinking of worries then and his eyes seemed to draw hers to meet them. She did meet them for an instant: then a faint pink tinted her cheeks, and gave an indescribable freshness and girlishness to her face.

"The little foxes spoil the vines, don't they?" she said. "And the little drops wear away the stone. Ah, Mr. Linn, I wish you would take care of yourself!"

He made a slight movement which brought him closer to her side.

"You have made my life dearer to me than it has ever been before," he said gently. "I have really determined to take a holiday. There is an old man in Scotland who has often asked me to stay with him, and I will go and get fresh air and quiet."

"You really will go?" she asked. "You won't let any one turn you from your purpose? Promise me!"

"I do promise you," he replied. "There is a reason why I want to see Mr. McDougall—a reason which I will explain to you later on. Years ago, in my Oxford days, I saved his only son from drowning, and he has insisted that he is my debtor ever since. The son died last year, and he is utterly alone now."

"Ah, then I know you will go!" she said, with a sigh of relief. "And now, we must make the most of this enchanting day. It is a day that will light up all future days, I have been in country places often enough; but I have never found such a charm anywhere else. Why is it?"

"I think," he answered quietly, "it is because we are together."

The confession did not surprise her in the least. After all, there was little need to put the sense of oneness into words. Sitting there side by side, hints were taken, and looks understood which conveyed the gist of long and delicate explanations. Each lived by faith; each was willing to wait a little longer before the bond should be revealed to the world.

"Oh!" she said looking away across the sun dappled grass "shall we ever be happier than we are at this moment? In another world shall we ever know a sweeter feeling than this?"

"It is the best part of all our love here that will survive," he answered. "Do not doubt it. The bodies of things must always perish when their time comes. But the souls of things must always live."

A stable clock struck five. It was the hour for joining the rest of the party, and both rose instinctively from their seat. Yet they lingered: Tracy, with her head thrown back a little, looked at the sunny lights quivering on the water. He had come so close to her that she rested against him, feeling the light pressure of his arm.

TO BE CONTINUED.

TID BITS.

GREAT AND SMALL.

A sparrow swinging on a branch
Once caught a passing fly:
"Oh, let me live!" the insect prayed
With trembling, piteous cry.
"No," said the sparrow, "you must fall,
For I am great and you are small."

The bird had scarce begun his feast
Before a hawk came by—
The gay was caught—"I pray let me live,"
Was the sparrow's cry.
"No," said the captor "you must fall,
For I am great and you are small."

An eagle saw this rogue and swooped
Upon him from on high.
"Pray let me live: why should you kill
So small a bird as I?"
"Oh," said the eagle, "you must fall,
For I am great and you are small."

While he ate the hunter came,
He let his arrow fly.
"I pray thee," the eagle shrieked, "you have
No right to make me die!"
"Ah!" said the hunter, "you must fall,
For I am great and you are small!"

The figurehead of a college is usually the professor of mathematics.

Few men who go into maple syrup manufacturing make an unadulterated success of it.

About the only way to make some people happy is to provide for them some sort of imaginary martyrdom.

"Why do you go to the Dartmoors' ball, Wallace? You can't dance." "No; but I can eat."

"Wife," said a benpecked husband, "go to bed." "I won't!" "Sit up, then. I will be obeyed somehow."

She—So you're fully determined to marry her, are you? He—Absolutely. She—H'm! Don't you ever feel sorry for her?

The donkey is generally regarded as the most stupid of animals, which is odd in view of the fact that it has the most brayin' power.

"I'm afraid Bridget won't work here much longer." "Why?" he enquired in dismay. "She's getting too stout for my clothes."

"I wish I was a twin," said Bobbie. "Why?" asked his father. "Then I could see how I looked without a looking-glass," said Bobbie.

Oh, for the age of chivalry!" sighed Hickley. "The knights used to wear tin trousers and they never bagged at the knee."

Tommy—There's a girl at our school, mamma, they call Postscript. Do you know why? Mamma—No dear. Tommy—Because her name is Adaline Moore.

Weary Watkins—By the way, what is your politics? Hungry Higgins—I guess I am a sort of mugwump. My appetite is Democrat, but me whiskers is Populist.

It is a little discouraging to a man to carry a yowling, squalling baby around for half a night, then sit down and reflect that "of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Miss Elderbody—I met Mr. Blake at the reception last evening. Miss Pert—Yes, he told me he saw you. He said it was such a pleasure to meet an old face in such a crowd.

"I know how to sympathize with that fellow Paderewski," said the kind-hearted brakesman. "I've had to take a lay-off many a time on account of a busted finger."

B. Elzonia, Esq.—Well, what do you think of this for a first Shide of Levinski—Grandt! Grandt! I subbose, of gourse, dot you haf everyting covert mit insurance.

"It took twenty minutes for the offertory this morning," said Mrs Higgins. "Collections are always slow in this neighbourhood," returned Higgins, who is a grocer, and knows all about it.

"Mamma," said little Benjamin, "I think it's awful nice to be a little boy. If I stay real quite all the time, and don't take any exercise, don't you think maybe I could stay a little boy all my life?"

Deacon—Yes, you can go on for a time in your present course, but remember the wages of sin is death. Young Fervor—O, I'm not so mercenary as to think only of pay. I'm quite willing to let the wages go.

Fortune Teller—"Let me read your fortune, lady. I can find out your future husband." Lady—"I already have a husband." Fortune Teller—"If you'd like to have him found out, I can do that, too."

Mrs. Suburban—"Do you raise your own vegetables?" Mrs. Howson Lott—"We can only afford to pay the rent of the cottage and grounds this year, but next year we shall be well enough off to be able to raise a few tomatoes and such things."

"How do you manage to get rid of bores?" asked Snoderass, as he came in and took a seat by the busy man's desk. "O, easily enough," replied the busy man. "I begin to tell them stories about my smart youngster. Now, only the other day he said—What! must you go? Well, good morning."

The Little Innocent.—Gertie's parents have staying with them on a visit an aunt whose charms are chiefly of an artificial character. The little girl would like to sleep with her and her wish is gratified. Next morning Gertie comes running to her mamma in the greatest alarm. "Oh, mamma, I think I'd rather sleep again with you, for, do you know, auntie takes to pieces!"

"And who lives in the big house opposite?"

"Mr. Flinders, sir—and Mrs. Flinders—the old veterinary surgeon and his wife."

"They must be pretty well off, I should think, to live in a house like that."

"Oh, yes, sir, very rich indeed. Why, they 'ad a golden wedding there the week before last!"—Punch.

"This country is growing," observed the statistical editor, looking up from his work, enthusiastically, "at a rate never before equalled, not only in wealth and population, but in manufactures, arts, sciences, and everything that makes a people great."

"That's all right enough," growled the sour-looking man at the desk in the corner, "but it's a country of blamed fools!"

The sour looking man was the editor of the answers to queries department.

A Henry county negro was discovered carrying a very large armful of books, which brought forth the inquiry:—

"Going to school?"

"Yas, sar, box."

"Do you study all those books?"

"No, sar, dey's my brudder's. Jes a ignorance kind er nigger side him, boss. Yer jest ought'er see dat ar nigger figurin'. He done gone an' clean cyphered through addition, partition, subtraction, distraction, abomination, justification, hallucination, derivation, creation, amputation, and adoption."

At M——, the other night, there was a temperance lecture in the chapel of one of the churches. The gentleman who was to preside did not show up, and a man known to have a deep interest in the temperance cause was called upon to act in his place. Mr. S—— is a very nervous man, who easily gets rattled. He struggled to his feet, and this is what he said:—"Ladies and gentlemen: Since Brother —— is not here to ask the blessing of God to rest upon this meeting, we will proceed with the business and do the best we can without it. Amen."

He was a small man, with a mouth that looked as if it had been made with a can opener.

He sidled into a "dental emporium" on the East Side, and when the operator got around his way, the visitor said:

"I see you pull teeth without gas for fifty cents."

"We do."

"Pluggin' come about the same?"

"That depends on the filling," said the operator.

"Does, hey? Well, I've got three teeth I thought mebbe you'd lump and do three for a dollar. I can't afford no luxuries, but the food ain't heavy anyhow over where I board, and with them three ragin' cavities, fact is, I'm starvin'."

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR.

The writer of "Notes and Comment" in Black and White says:—"Mr. T. P. O'Connor, politician, man of the world, and journalist, has found London too small for him. As a Sunday paper his Sunday Sun had become a success. Only a short time ago it was observed in

these Notes and Comment that the first column of his paper devoted to literary extracts and criticism was looked for with increasing interest by literary men. The Sunday Sun has now expanded into the Weekly Sun, and, still appealing to Londoners as a Sunday paper, goes into the provinces as well. It has become a fuller and a fatter journal. It is crammed with fresh and good reading, and still contains that first page of literary extract and intelligent, genial comment, signed "T. P." that made its predecessor welcome in every home where letters are loved."

First News of the War.

One Saturday afternoon in April, about one o'clock, as I was taking telegrams in the little cubby, a mannish sheet was handed in with only these words on it: "Sumpter is fired on." I turned cold, and very pale, I am sure, and without a word passed it over to General Hawley, who sat at the opposite desk facing me. He read it, turned pale for one instant, then flushed, started up, struck the desk heavily with his fist, and exclaimed, "My God, Charlie, I must go!" and passed straight to the desk in the counting-room. In less than five minutes he had drawn up an enlistment paper, "We the undersigned agree," etc., and signed it the first volunteer in Connecticut. Before night the paper was filled up, and the first company of the First regiment was raised. And what a Sunday that was! In all the crowded churches with heavy hearts but exultant patriotism they sang, "My Country 'Tis of Thee," and at noon the whole town seemed to be gathered in State-house square; it was packed with thousands, men, women, and children, and when the flag was raised, the starry flag, which lots of people had scarcely ever seen before, and few knew how to make, the great hymn of "My Country" went up, while tears streamed down the cheeks of the singers. There was no hate then, only sorrow and invincible determination, and a mighty emotion of love for the flag and the country. All that day and the next men and women were cutting out and making uniforms for the volunteers. On Monday morning came Lincoln's call for 75,000 men. The Hartford company—Low's—the crowd cheered and cried at the station—departed for the camp at New Haven, with Burnham captain, and Hawley lieutenant. And war was to be learned, and be the chief occupation for four years. It seems like a dream now, those years of excitement and dread, when one sat at the end of a telegraph wire that seemed to burn the brain.—Hartford Courant.

Windfalls.

In 1858 a lady named Burch, then living in Kensington, went, like a thousand others, to see the fine ladies pass on their way to attend a drawing room at Buckingham Palace. While gazing at the show, which, though not democratic, is an exceedingly pretty one, she noticed an old gentleman faint and confused with the pressure of the crowd, which, being composed of Englishmen, pronounced him drunk. Discerning with better insight that he was not drunk, but very ill, Miss Burch led him to a seat, found him somewhere a glass of water, and in a few minutes restored his scattered energies. He thanked her warmly, asked her name, and departed—to be heard of no more till a few days ago, when a solicitor called to inform Miss Burch that the old gentleman had bequeathed her the immense reward for such service of £150,000.

That story—if it is true, which we see no reason to doubt—is the most striking instance we can remember of the true and perfect windfall which all men, it is said, expect in their hearts, but which so rarely occurs to any one. Stories of unexpected fortunes, of course, are as common as blackberries. Somebody is always making or finding or inheriting a heap of money which seems to himself almost to have come from the clouds. Worthless shares become valuable, as happened to more than one man in the history of Devon great consols. A workingman discovers a rich mine, as Mr. Graham did in South Australia; or a relative, from who nothing was expected, suddenly heaps everything on the luckman who bored him least, as occurred last year within our own knowledge in a southern county. Only last week a pauper in a poor-house was declared heir to £300,000, a sum which he probably could not have put down accurately on a slate, but which had been earned in Australia by a relative who died intestate.—The Spectator.

"Yes, sir," said Mabel, proudly, "when a young man kisses me I scream."

"Mabel," said Reginald, with sudden coldness, "why is it you are so often hoarse when I call on you?"

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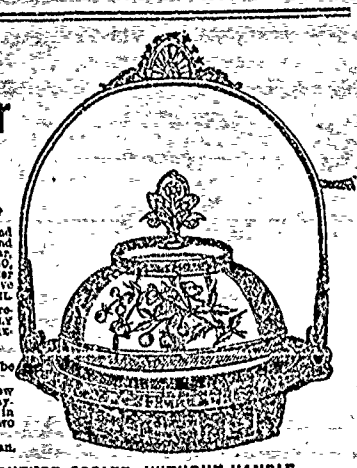

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