

"No. And I don't think she will. Come. It's time she was going now."

We went into the kitchen together. Feeling miserable and foolish, I repeated with the utmost stiffness the kind words which I had committed to memory the previous evening.

"Thank ye, sir," she said, quietly.

My wife held out her hand.

"Good-bye, Martha, but—not for long. We'll see you soon again. All good wishes, you know."

"Thank ye, mem," said Martha, still quietly.

"Then for an instant, she let her eyes—honest brown eyes they were—rest on her mistress. Surely, I thought, she was going to break down at last. But no. Although the look in her eyes was motherly (there is no other word to describe it), her face was hard.

We went to the door, and saw her off. At the last moment I fancied her lip quivered, but I could not be certain as to that.

So far Margaret had been unsuccessful in her quest of a maid, and for a fortnight we had to be content with the daily help of an elderly woman from the village.

"Martha will be married by now. They will probably be dancing at the wedding," said Margaret suddenly, about ten o'clock one evening. She did not look up from her sewing.

I had been dreading the coming of the remark all the hours during which I had been making a pretence at writing.

"So she will," I responded, with as much carelessness as I could muster, and was wondering helplessly what I could say to change the subject when a bright thought struck me.

"I say, Margaret, I'm shockingly hungry. Do you think you could be bothered—er—"

"Welsh rabbit," she said, rising with a sad smile. "Remember, I can't make it like Martha, Jim."

"Nonsense! It was you who taught Martha." For a moment I had stupidly forgotten that Welsh rabbit suggested the departed, otherwise I should never have mentioned it.

Presently Margaret left the room, after I had asked her to leave both doors open so that I might not feel too lonely.

I heard her moving about the kitchen, stirring up the fire, removing the lid of the range and shutting the damper. Then she went to the larder, there to the table, and I guessed she was cutting up the cheese and slicing the bread. Once more she went to the fire and remained there.

I was inwardly debating how I was going to attack the Welsh rabbit when ready, for I had no appetite worth mentioning, when I heard Margaret run hastily from the fire to the back door and open it.

"Martha!" she cried in a frightened tone, whereupon I jumped from my chair.

"Ay, men, it's jist me," replied a very familiar voice, not quite the voice of a fortnight ago.

"Oh, Martha! What are doing here?" gasped my wife.

The back door was closed, probably by Martha.

"Excuse me, mem, but is ma place filled up?" The question came anxiously.

"No. Not yet, Martha, but—"

"That's fine!" exclaimed Martha, with intense satisfaction. "I've jist a wee bag wi' me the night, but I'll get ma trunk an' other things sent on the morn. I'm rale glad to bech, mem. But I'm vexed to see ye a wee thing wearin'-like Hoo's the maister?"

"Jim!" cried my wife. "Please come quickly. . . . Here's Martha come back. Do try to get her to explain, for I—1-1-1"

"Well, Martha," said I, entering the kitchen, "what has happened? Has the wedding been—ahem!—postponed?"

"Deed ay!" she promptly answered, her face beaming with smiles, "it's postponed, as ye say, sir, postponed for ever an' ever."

"What?" cried my wife.

"I'm no' guan to mairry Maister Peck, nor ony ither man," said Martha, gayly. "Ye see, mem, ma Uncle Rubert is dead."

"Dear me! I'm exceedingly sorry," I began. "Dinna fash yersel', sir, for I'm no' sorry. He was a hard man when he was leevin', but noo he's awa', an' his bit siller comes to ma pair nither. So ye see, mem," she turned to her mistress, "I'm no' needin' to marry Maister Peck nor ony ither man, an' if ye'll let me, I wud like to bide here an' dae as I've done for near twinty year."

"But Martha," cried my wife, the tears in her eyes, "were you going to marry Mr. Peck because your mother was in want?"

"That's about it, mem. Ma mither's gettin' auld, an' her sicht was failin', and she had lost a' the fine needlework that used to bring her a bit siller. An' so there was naethin' for it out to marry a man o' substance, an' Maister Peck—awee! he was the only man o' substance that seemed to want me. It was a bargain 'twixt him and me. I was to keep his house an' shop when he gaed to the market, an' he was to see that ma mither didna want. I made him write it doon on paper, for I wisna jist shair o' him. But that's a' by noo, an' I tellt him yesterday to try an' get anither lass about ma ain size an' I wud mak' her a present o' ma weddin' gormant at hant price wi' plesure. He was gey pit oot, pair man, but I doot there's mair o' his heart in his cabbages an' plooms nor in his—his inside. An' that's the hale story, mem, an'—"

"But why did you not tell me of your trouble long ago?" asked my wife.

Martha's vivacity left her, and she looked at the ground. "Mem," she said softly and humbly at last, "I ask yer pardon, but if I had—if I had let ma heart get saft for a single mement, then I wud ha'e broke doon an' never faced the thing I thoct had to be. I had jist to pretend to mase' that I didna care for onybody, but, oh, mem! ye ken it wasna that wey wi' me! I'm ashamed an' vexed an' . . . oh, crittens! the cheese is burnin'!"

She rushed to the fire, and I slipped out of the kitchen.

"Martha will be herself again shortly," she said, "and then she'll make up fresh Welsh rabbits. Oh, I'm so glad to have her back, Jim. Aren't you?"

"Without a doubt, dear."

Ten minutes later a slight crash sounded from the kitchen.

"Martha is all right now," laughed Margaret. "She has broken something."

—The Outlook.

#### LITTLE DEEDS OF KINDNESS.

By Rev. W. A. Galt.

Did you ever stop to think about that story in the Bible which tells of Moses and the young women whom he met at a well in the land of Midian? You may remember that while sitting there these young women came to water their flocks, but were driven away by certain shepherds, "but Moses stood and helped them, and watered their flocks." He acted thus because the women came first and had filled the troughs. He stood for justice. He was a defender of the weak, doing just what he would have wanted some other man to do for his sister if in a similar position. Then, to put these selfish, disrespectful shepherds to shame, he drew water till the flock was satisfied. And this not for pay, nor for an intimate friend, but because he was a gentleman of the true type. But not a cup of cold water is given without being noticed and rewarded. What were his rewards? These young women spoke well of him to their father, a home was opened to him, a fugitive; an employer was found, the acquaintance of a wise counsellor was formed, and to him a wife was given. Was he not well repaid for his little act of gallantry? Just as surely will you and I be rewarded for similar acts of kindness.

#### HOT WEATHER AILMENTS.

At the first sign of illness during the hot weather give the little ones Baby's Own Tablets or in a few hours the trouble may be beyond cure. Baby's Own Tablets is the best medicine in the world to prevent summer complaint is given occasionally to well children. The prudent mother will not wait till trouble comes—she will keep her children well through an occasional dose of this medicine. Mrs. Edward Clark, McGregor, Ont., says: "My little girl suffered from colic and bowel troubles but Baby's Own Tablets speedily cured her." And the mother has the guarantee of a government analyst that these Tablets contain no opiate or harmful drug. Sold by all medicine dealers or by mail at 25 cents a box from the Dr. Williams Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont. Keep the Tablets in the house.

#### A LONG-FACED CAT.

About nine weeks ago there came to the Zoological gardens a cat which was unlike any other cat previously exhibited by the society, says the Fall Mail Gazette. This animal, which occupies a cage in the small mammals' house, has now been named Felix Badia, and its home is believed to be in Borneo.

The color of its short smooth fur, is hardly to be described as bay; it is gray rather than brown, and the inclination to chestnut is very slight indeed. The bay cat, as we must call it, is a pretty creature—short-legged and long-bodied, with a thick, tapering tail of no great length. For a cat, the shape of its head is remarkable, and it has rather small ears.

Instead of the short round face of the typical cat, the face of this animal is comparatively long. But in its movements this curious pussy is true to the instincts of its race. In the stealthy tread, in the manner of opening the mouth, stretching the limbs and protruding the claws, to say nothing of the method of carrying the tail, there is no mistaking the cat. This interesting inmate of the Zoo is fairly tame and apparently in the best of health.

#### THE LITTLE SCHOLAR'S CHOICE.

"Though I was sleepy as a cat,"

The little scholar said,

"I would not care to take a nap

In any river's bed.

"And though I were so starved I scarce

Had strength to stand,

I'd beg through all the valley ere

I sought a table land.

"But, oh, what jolly times I'd have!

I'd play and never stop,

If I could only take a string

And spin a mountain-top.

—The Independent.

#### HELPS FOR HOUSEWIVES IN SUMMER WEATHER.

The care of table linen and making the table attractive in summer weather are a great deal more difficult than in winter. The fruit stains annoy a fastidious housekeeper so much, and it requires the services of a laundress much oftener, making it not only more troublesome, but more expensive. I wish to tell the housewives of an excellent method for keeping their expenses down in this quarter and yet not detracting any from the daintiness of the table. Most of fruit stains, if taken in time, can be easily removed by simply pouring a hot-boiling stream of water through the stain, then, after the stain is all gone, take a hot iron and press the place smoothly, and you will then have a fresh, clean, table-cloth. Peach stains are the hardest to remove, but you can remove them by using a weak solution of chloride of lime. It is wise to keep this on hand to use daily if need be. To keep table linens snowy white, and to have them last longer, have your laundress always use borax in the wash water. It softens the water and cleanses much quicker, takes but little rubbing and this of itself makes the table linens last twice as long. The fastidious, careful housewives will not let a piece of bed or table linen be washed without the borax in the water.—Christian Work and Evangelist.