

Since her sickness, a note came saying that he was coming to see her by the evening train.

Not a word about his wife did he write. And Mother Hawkins, looking at Mary moving about with such a bright face, thought that if Will had married a girl like that they could have been so happy.

But her sickness had softened her hard old heart toward her only son, and she wanted to see him very much indeed.

She heard the whistle of the train that brought him down. It was only a half-mile from the farmhouse, and she waited, listening to every sound until she heard his step upon the porch.

"That's him! that's my boy, Mary, come to see his old mother!" she said, eagerly. "Open the door and let him in!"

Mary opened the door — and — what? Mother Hawkins could not believe her eyes. Was Will, a married man, hugging and kissing her hired girl, with all his might, right before her eyes? The scandalized old lady sprang right up in her chair, crying out:

"Why, Will! — William! — stop that! You, a married man! That's my Mary!"

"Yes, mother," answered Will, brightly, "and she is my Mary, too." And he took the new girl to his mother with his arm around her waist. "Mother, this is my wife."

"Your wife!" and the old lady dropped back in her chair, overcome with surprise. "But your wife's name is Lily."

"Yes, so is this lady's. Lily Mary Sherman Hawkins. I sent her to take care of her so you would learn to love her. You have learned, haven't you, mother?"

Well, that stubborn old lady, who had vowed she never would have anything to do with her daughter-in-law, just put her arms up about Lily's neck and cried like a baby!

And now, when Mrs. Jones goes over to take tea, Mother Hawkins can talk of nothing half so much as the perfections of her daughter-in-law.—[Selected and Revised.

#### Skeptical.

An old West of England country woman, speaking to a district visitor of her son who was a sailor, said:

"Ah, ma'm, my son that has been to the North Pole, he tells me some things that I really can't believe, though he is my son. He tells me, ma'm, that he has seen with his own eyes 'ice bugs' as big as a church."

All the cleanly instincts of the old soul were in revolt at the bare possibility of such monstrosities.

Pointing to another world will never stop vice among us; shedding light over this world can alone help us.—Whitman.

#### My Honest Opinions.

EDITOR TORCH OF REASON:

In view of the fact that I am getting old and may not last much longer, I desire to place on record something regarding my views on what is termed "religion", especially the religion, so-called, which is prevalent and somewhat in fashion at this time. I am classed by religionists as an "Infidel". Neither the appellation nor my views are generally understood, and I do not expect them to be, because of the ignorance and prejudice generally prevailing, especially among Christians. And I claim to know more about myself as regards these matters than others do or can know; hence this writing.

As to my belief: I believe in a supreme power. As to the attributes of that power, I am, in common with all others, totally ignorant. And I regard all persons who pretend to know more than I do regarding this power, either as frauds or as ignorant, unthinking persons on this subject.

I believe that true religion, in the proper meaning of that term, consists only in leading an upright life here. This is right-ousness. I have endeavored to do this to the best of my ability, and do not entertain the slightest fear of death, as such, or what may come after.

As to a future state or condition, I know absolutely nothing, and I regard all persons as equally ignorant.

The only guide to conduct is reason, but a great many people, a large majority perhaps, are controlled solely by prejudice and conceit, the result of ignorance.

As to religions and religious systems, they are simply schemes conducted by designing rascals for the purpose of securing the resultant power and revenue. And I regard the Christian religion as the most cruel and unprincipled fraud of the lot. Of course they condemn me. I do not blame them; it is a part of their business.

The necessity of my making some statement regarding my position on these questions was exemplified some three years ago. I was quite sick, and a report got abroad that I was dead. And the lying about me immediately began. How I had repented; had called upon Christ; was afraid the devil would get me; and a lot of similar silly stuff. Of course it was all false, but that is the usual course by which Christianity is sustained.

But suppose I had done so. What would it have amounted to? What one says and does and the conclusions one holds when in full possession of one's faculties and understanding, is the only true test of what one thinks and means. Death bed repentances, or talk of any kind, after one's faculties are

Concluded on 5th page.

...The....

# Liberal University



THE ONLY SCHOOL  
OF THE KIND.

Free from Superstition  
Strictly Non-Sectarian

Pupils are Given Every Opportunity to Learn  
Without Being Hampered by Supersti-  
tions and Dogmas.

Location Healthful,  
Society Good.  
Expenses Moderate

A Splendid Corps of Teachers and Good Facil-  
ities for Teaching. For information,  
address

J. E. HOSMER, Ph. D., B. S. D.,  
PRESIDENT,

SILVERTON.

OREGON.