

LAURA'S STRATEGY.

Laura had taught her school, and now she was going to get her money—three months' wages, and she had had \$30 a month—and she had paid for her board in sewing and knitting, for Mrs. Bennett had a large family and was glad to have her do so, she could have the whole \$90 to use as she pleased. It looked like a very large amount to her, and a dozen times she had planned how she was to spend it.

"The boys want the work horse to draw in wood," Mrs. Bennett said, as she started, "so John has hitched up Banquo for you. He's gentle enough, but he's a colt, mind ye, and the best thing ye could do is to let the whip alone."

No need of the whip, she thought, as the sleigh glided smoothly and swiftly along the well-trodden road. She was quite surprised when she so soon came in sight of the house where the treasurer lived. He was at the door when she drove up.

"I'll hitch your horse for ye," he said, coming down to the gate. "Come after your money, I s'pose. I've got it in here, all ready for you. It's lucky you come now; I was jest about startin' off. Got the colt, have you? Well, I swan! he's a clipper. I didn't s'pose Bennett 'ud let anybody drive him. Come in; I'll sign your order and pay you right off. S'pose you want to see your money—pretty good little bunch of chink for a girl like you."

Laura talked with the treasurer's wife a while, then got her money and started home. She had not gone far before a man on foot came out of a cross road just in front of her. He stepped aside and waited for her to come up.

"Good-afternoon, schoolma'am," he said. "Would you object to letting a fellow ride a little? I'm pretty tired, and I see you've got Bennett's colt. I'd like to ride behind him once." Laura stopped her horse and the man got into the sleigh. She did not know him, but from the way he spoke she supposed it must be some of the neighbors who knew her, probably a brother of some of her scholars—he was a young man.

"I see you don't know me," he said; "it isn't strange, you see so many. I've been around here all winter," he added, but Laura remembered afterward that he did not tell her his name. "This colt does step off well; doesn't seem tired; driven him far?"

"No, only over to Mr. Smith's."

"Yes, he's one of the board, I believe."

"He is treasurer."

"You taught in a good district. Some of them make their teachers wait for their pay, but I believe this one never does."

"I think not."

"Have you long to teach?" asked the man, evidently bent on being sociable.

"My school is done," said Laura, still wholly unsuspecting.

"And you've been after your money," said the man with a sudden change of manner, "and I'll take it," drawing a revolver and pointing it at her head.

No use to try to resist. They were passing through a lonely strip of woods, not a house near them.

She was a frontier girl with plenty of nerve. She remembered she had two pocketbooks, one empty, one full.

"If you want my money, get it," she said, snatching the empty pocketbook from her pocket and throwing it as far as possible behind them into the snow.

The man sprang after it. She caught the whip from its socket and laid it sharply, with all her force, the full length of Banquo's nervous back. With a mad plunge he was off like lightning.

The man opened the pocket book, and, enraged at his defeat, fired a couple of shots after her, but they did not touch her.

"The colt's runnin' away with the schoolma'am," shouted John as she dashed in sight, but she guided him up to the gate in good order.

"You're plucky," said Mr. Bennett, when she told the story, and "She's a plucky one," said everybody, when it was repeated.

The man proved to be one of the neighbor's hired men. He was never again seen in that part of the country.

THE REAL SCARCITY.—A man went into a bank to borrow some money. He asked if they could let him have a thousand dollars for a short time. "Oh, yes," was the reply, "one thousand, or two thousand, if you want it." The rate of interest was satisfactorily fixed and the borrower was asked as to the character of his collaterals. "Collaterals? I haven't got any collaterals," said the borrower. "No collaterals!" said the banker; "then it will be impossible for us to let you have the money." The man was silent for a few moments and then exclaimed: "I have heard a good deal of talk lately about the scarcity of greenbacks—there wasn't money enough to do the business of the country. But it does not look so. I come here and find you anxious to lend me all the money I want. No scarcity of greenbacks here. But before you lend it you require collaterals. Now, that's just what I haven't got and can't obtain, and have come to the conclusion that it isn't a scarcity of greenbacks the country is suffering from, but a scarcity of collaterals."

A Michigan backwoodsman, young and handsome, but untutored and rude, has married the accomplished daughter of a wealthy tourist, and taken her to his cabin in the forest, where he chops wood for a living. Her father, unable to recover her by law, since she was old enough to legally choose a husband for herself, has sensibly taken board at a Milwaukee hotel, where he is now patiently waiting for the girl to voluntarily return. "I may be delayed three months," he says, "but I don't believe it will be as many weeks. These little incidents of travel are worrisome, but not very serious."

Among the remarkable novelties of recent discovery is the boot-blackening plant, a native of New South Wales. The leaves of this shrub contain a tough substance gifted with all the properties and attributes of the finest boot polish. Squeeze them gently and they will yield some thick, dusky drops of sticky fluid, which must then be spread over the surface of the boot. This done, a polish of dazzling brilliancy may be brought out by a few light touches of the finishing brush.

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Elegant Silver Castors, at the Dollar Store.

METRICAL MELANGE.

A POINTED WARNING.
Hid in the cushion of a chair
There is a wee pin, Willie—
Thou, too, if perched upon it square,
Will be a weepin' Willie.

FRANK GIRL.
She lived in an elegant suite,
And was blessed with smallest of suite;
To her lover she said,
As he stroked her fair head,
"It's whispered around you're a bulge!"
—Our Own Machistat (W. D. O.)

A REVERIE.
In the cozy arm-chair, dearest,
When the old man is away,
And the coal fire's ruddy shadows
Round your striped socks gently play;
When the embers are all eaten,
And my leg is getting lame,
I'll put you on the other knee
And hold you just the same.

In the cozy arm-chair, dearest,
Which the clock is striking ten,
I will sadly put my hat on,
And remark I'll come again,
And although some other fellow
Goes against the same old game,
I'll be there some other evening
And hold you just the same.
—An Experienced Young Man.

TIME'S MUTATION.
About a year or so ago,
When I was young and quite conceited,
I chanced to meet the prettiest girl
I thought my eyes had ever greeted.
I loved her, or I thought I did,
Yet found my true love had miscarried;
For when I asked her heart and hand,
She said she was already married.

This was a year or so ago,
When I was young and sentimental,
My heart was nearly broken then;
Now I don't care a continental.
—From "My Colish Days," by Whitelaw Reid.

AN INSANE IDYL.
Oh, come, my love, where the Dugong calls,
Oh, come where the Thrasky weeps;
Oh, come where the Doodle dimly bawls,
And the raging Crooker sleeps.
Oh, come, my love, with your eye of pearl,
And your other eye of gneiss,
With your smile of blue and your nose of glue,
With your chin of gum and your ear of rice,
Oh, come my darling girl!

We will wander, dear, 'neath the hookah vine,
Where luscious Earwigs cluster;
We will smell the delicious Mandoline,
And we'll lunch on the linen duster;
We will gaze at will on the gambou moon;
We will sail on the lake of beer;
We will tangle the fish with a stinuous dish—
Made of hoop-poles and hair-pins and fear.
O my darling, come soon!

We will sing the song of our grandfathers' clocks;
We will chirp it in pure Chinese.
We will gather the tumble-bugs into my socks,
And chevy them round on my knees.
We will race with the celerous sepia Coot;
We will howl at the mad Bohea;
We will linger to turn the chaomoline churn,
Filled with cinders and rags and tea.
O love, list to my suit! —Spectator.

TOO UTTERLY TOO MACVEAGH.
There was a reformer named MacVeagh,
A statesman wise, and brilliant and geagh,
And a wonderful lawyer, too, they seagh;
A fine-haired, sweet-scented, lackadeagh-
sical, utterly utter sort of a man, anyweagh,
Who filed common mortals with blank dismeagh.
Whenever he made a stunning displeagh
Of virtue and wisdom in gorgeous areagh.
This handsome man, Mr. Weagne MacVeagh,
Got into a lively sort of a freagh
With Senator Dorsey and General Breagh-
dy, 'bout carrying mails for too much geagh.
When the fight grew hot, 'tis said to seagh,
He got sulky and wouldn't pleagh;
He couldn't be conged nor hired to steagh,
But got right up and hastened areagh
To his home in Philadelphiaeh.
—Warren (Ohio) Tribune.

OUR BEAUTEUS LANGUAGE.
Remember, though box in the plural makes boxes,
The plural of ox should be oxen, not oxes;
And remember, though fleece in the plural is fleeces,
That the plural of goose isn't gosses nor geces;
And remember, though house in the plural is houses,
The plural of mouse should be mice, and not mouses,
Mouse, it is true, in the plural is mice,
But the plural of house should be houses, not hiee;
And foot, it is true, in the plural is feet,
But the plural of root should be roots, and not reet.

PROOF POSITIVE.
I know he's an old bachelor, a horrid, grumpy thing!
A nasty, spiteful, cross-grained, ugly fright!
I wish, John, that such callers to your wife you would
not bring;
You know as well as I do it's not right.
Why do I think him single? Why? Oh, John, I'll have
a fit!
Did you not hear, you stupid, you? He called dear
baby—"It."

TO MY LATEST FLAME.
Your eyes, serene and pure, have deigned to look on me,
Your hand, a fluttering bird, has lingered in my hands;
And yet the words I would, alas! have all foregone me,
Because your way and mine lie thro' such alien lands
You are the rising sun that fair day follows after,
And I the deep of night, the gloomy clouds and gray;
You are a fower, a star, a burst of tuneful laughter;
I am December drear, and you the merry May.
—S. J. Tilden.

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