

Dorothy

THE Judge had dined and was enjoying an after-dinner cigar before turning to a pile of papers that lay on the table at his elbow. Yet even as he watched the flickering fire and puffed dreamily at his cigar, luxuriating in a little relaxation after hard day's work in a close and crowded court, his mind was busy formulating the sentences in which he intended to sum up a case that had been tried that day. There could be no doubt as to the guilt of the prisoner, who had been accused of a most impudent fraud, and though it was a first offense the Judge intended to pass the severest sentence which the law allowed.

The Judge was no believer in short sentences. He regarded leniency to a criminal as an offense against society—a direct encouragement to those who hesitated on the brink of vicious courses and were only restrained by fear of punishment. The well-meaning people who got up petitions to mitigate the sentence upon a justly convicted thief or murderer were, in his eyes, guilty of mawkish sentimentality. There was no trace of weakness or effeminacy in his own face, with its grizzled eyebrows, somewhat cold gray eyes, thin lips and massive chin. He was a just man, just to the splitting of a hair, but austere and unemotional.

He had conducted the trial with the most scrupulous impartiality, but now that a verdict of guilty was a foregone conclusion he determined to make an example of one who had so shamefully abused the confidence placed in him.

Stated briefly, the situation was as follows: The prisoner, Arthur Maxwell, was cashier to a firm of solicitors, Lightbody & Dufton. The only surviving partner of the original firm, Mr. Lightbody, had recently died, leaving the business to his nephew, Thomas Faulkner. Faulkner accused Arthur Maxwell of having embezzled a sum of \$1,250. Maxwell admitted of having taken the money, but positively asserted that it had been presented to him as a free gift by Mr. Lightbody. Unfortunately for the prisoner, the letter which he had stated had accompanied the check could not be produced, and Faulkner, supported by the evidence of several well-known experts, declared the signature on the check to be a forgery. When the check-book was examined the counterfoil was discovered to be blank. The prisoner asserted that Mr. Lightbody had himself taken out a blank check and had filled it and signed it at his private residence. He could, however, produce no proof of this assertion, and all the evidence available was opposed to his unsupported statement.

"Arthur Maxwell," soliloquized the Judge, "you have been convicted on evidence that leaves no shadow of doubt of your guilt of a crime which I must characterize as one of the basest."

The chattering of voices in the hall brought the soliloquy to an abrupt conclusion. The Judge required absolute silence and solitude when he was engaged in study, and the servants, who stood in constant awe of him, were extremely careful to prevent the least disturbance taking place within earshot of his sanctum. He jerked the bell impatiently, intending to give a good wiggling to those responsible for the disturbance.

But the door was thrown open by his daughter Mabel, a pretty girl of 12, who was evidently in a state of breathless excitement.

"Oh, papa!" she exclaimed, "here's such a queer little object that wants to see you. Please let her come in."

Before the Judge could remonstrate a little child, a rosy-faced girl of between 5 and 6, in a red hood and cloak, hugging a black puppy under one arm and a brown paper parcel under the other, trotted briskly into the room.

The Judge rose to his feet with an expression which caused his daughter to vanish with remarkable celerity. The door closed with a bang. He could hear her feet scudding rapidly upstairs, and he found himself alone with the small creature before him.

"What on earth are you doing here, child?" he asked, irritably. "What can you possibly want with me?" She remained silent, staring at him with round, frightened eyes. "Come, come, can't you find your tongue, little girl?" he asked more gently. "What is it you want with me?"

"If you please," she said timidly, "I've brought you Tommy."

Tommy was clearly the fat puppy, for as she bent her face toward him he wagged his tail and promptly licked the end of her nose.

"Come here," he said, sitting down, "and tell me all about it."

She advanced fearlessly toward him,

as animals and children did in his unofficial moods.

"This is Tommy, I suppose?" he said, taking the puppy on his knee, where it expressed its delight by ecstatic contortions of the body, and appeared to consider his watch chain a fascinating article of diet.

"I've brought you other things as well," she said, opening the brown paper parcel, and revealing a doll with a very beautiful complexion, large blue eyes, and hair of the purest gold, a diminutive Noah's ark, a white pig, a woolly sheep, a case of crayons, a penholder, a broken-bladed knife, a small paint box, a picture book or two, and what bore some faint resemblance to a number of water color sketches. She seemed particularly proud of the last named.

"I painted them all by myself," she exclaimed.

The Judge thought it not unlikely, as he glanced with twinkling eyes at the highly unconventional forms and daring colors of these strikingly original works of art.

"Well," he said, "it is very kind of you to bring me all these pretty things, but why do you want to give them to me?"

"I—I don't want to give them to you," she faltered.



"IF YOU PLEASE," SHE SAID TIMIDLY, "I'VE BROUGHT YOU TOMMY."

The Judge regarded her with friendly eyes. He was so used to hearing romantic deviations from the truth from the lips of imaginative witnesses that frankness was at all times delightful to him.

"Come," said he, with a quiet laugh, "that's honest, at least. Well, why do you give them to me if you don't want to?"

"I'll give them to you, and Tommy, too"—the words were accompanied by a very wistful glance at the fat puppy—"if—if you'll promise not to send poor papa to prison."

A silence, such as precedes some awful convulsion of nature, pervaded the room for several seconds after this audacious proposal. Even Tommy, as though cowering before the outraged majesty of the law, buried his head between the Judge's coat and vest, and lay motionless except for a propitiatory wag of his tail.

"What is your name, child?" asked the Judge, grimly.

"Dorothy Maxwell," faltered the little girl, timidly, awed by the sudden silence and the perhaps unconsciously stern expression upon his lordship's face.

"Dorothy Maxwell," said the Judge, severely, as though the little figure before him were standing in the prisoner's dock awaiting sentence, "you have been convicted of the almost unparalleled crime of attempting to corrupt one of her Majesty's Judges; to persuade him, by means of bribery, to defeat the ends of justice. I shall not further enlarge upon the enormity of your crime. Have you anything to say why sentence should not be—no, no, don't cry! Poor little thing, I didn't mean to frighten you. I'm not the least bit angry with you—really and truly. Come and sit on my knee and show me all these pretty things. Get down, you little beast."

The last words were addressed to Tommy, who fell with a flop on the

floor and was replaced on the Judge's knee by his little mistress.

"This is very like condoning a criminal offense," thought the Judge to himself with a grim smile, as he wiped the tears from the poor little creature's face and tried to interest her in the contents of the brown paper parcel. But the thoughts the tears had aroused did not vanish with them. Arthur Maxwell was no longer a kind of impersonal representative of the criminal classes, to be dealt with as severely as the law allowed in the interests of society in general. He was the father of this soft, plump, rosy-cheeked, blue-eyed, golden-haired little maid, who would inevitably have to share, now or in the future, the father's humiliation and disgrace. For the first time, perhaps, the Judge felt a pang of pity for the wretched man who at that moment was probably pacing his cell in agonizing apprehension of the inevitable verdict. A vivid picture started up before him of the prisoner's white face, twitching lips and tragic eyes. He remembered his own emotion when he first sentenced a fellow creature to penal servitude. Had he grown callous since then? Did he take sufficiently into account the frailty of human nature, the brevity of life, the far-reaching consequences that the fate of the most insignificant unit of humanity must entail?

At this moment the door opened, and his wife, a slender, graceful woman, considerably younger than himself, with a refined, delicate face, came quietly in.

"Ah," exclaimed the Judge with a sudden inspiration, "I believe you are at the bottom of all this, Agnes. What is this child doing here?"

"You are not vexed, Matthew?" she asked, half timidly.

"Hardly that," he answered slowly, "but what good can it do? It is impossible to explain the situation to this poor little wite. It was cruel to let her come on such an errand. How did she get here?"

eyes suddenly flashed and he examined it with breathless interest.

"Well, I'm blessed!" he exclaimed excitedly.

It was not a very judicial utterance, but the circumstances were exceptional.

"Here's the very letter Maxwell declared he had received from Lightbody along with the check. His reference to it, as he couldn't produce it, did him more harm than good; but I believe it's genuine, upon my word, I do. Listen; it's dated from the Hollies, Lightbody's private address:

"My Dear Maxwell—I have just heard from the doctor that my time here will be very short, and I am trying to arrange my affairs as quickly as possible. I have long recognized the unostentatious but thorough and entirely satisfactory manner in which you have discharged your duties, and as some little and perhaps too tardy recognition of your long and faithful services, and as a token of my personal esteem for you, I hope you will accept the inclosed check for £250. With best wishes for your future, believe me, yours sincerely,

"THOMAS LIGHTBODY.

"What do you think of it? I'll send it round to Maxwell's solicitor at once."

"Oh, Matthew, then the poor fellow's innocent, after all?"

"It looks like it. If the letter is genuine he certainly is. There, don't look miserable again. I'm sure it is. If it had been a forgery you may be sure it would have been ready for production at a moment's notice. Where did you get this letter, little girl?"

Dorothy blushed guiltily and hung her head.

"I took it out of pa's desk—I wanted some paper to draw on, and I took it without asking. You won't tell him, will you? He'll be ever so cross."

"Well, we may perhaps have to let him know about it, my dear, but I don't think he'll be a bit cross. Now, this lady will take you to your mother, and you can tell her that papa won't go to prison, and that he'll be home to-morrow night."

"May I—may I say good-by to Tommy, please?" she faltered.

"You sweet little thing!" exclaimed his wife, kissing him impulsively.

"Tommy's going with you," said the Judge, laughing kindly. "I wouldn't deprive you of Tommy's company for Tommy's weight in gold. I fancy there are limits to the pleasure which Tommy and I would derive from each other's society. There, run away, and take Tommy with you."

Dorothy eagerly pursued the fat puppy, captured him after an exciting chase and took him in her arms. Then she walked toward the door, but the corner of her eye rested wistfully on the contents of the brown paper parcel. The Judge hastily gathered the toys, rolled them in the paper and presented them to her. But Dorothy looked disappointed. The thought of giving them to purchase her father's pardon had been sweet as well as bitter. She was willing to compromise in order to escape the pang that the loss of Tommy and the doll and the paint box and other priceless treasures would have inflicted, but she still wished—poor little epitome of our complex human nature—to taste the joy of heroic self-sacrifice. Besides, she was afraid that the Judge might after all refuse to pardon her father if she took away all the gifts with which she had attempted to propitiate him.

She put the parcel on the chair and opened it out. Holding the wriggling puppy in her arms, she gazed at her treasures, trying to make up her mind which she could part with that would be sufficiently valuable in the Judge's eyes to accomplish her purpose. Finally she selected the sheep and presented the luxuriantly woolly, almost exasperatingly meek-looking animal, to the Judge.

"You may have that and the pretty picture for being kind to papa," she said, with the air of one who confers inestimable favors.

He was about to decline the honor, but, catching his wife's eyes, he meekly accepted it, and Dorothy and the puppy and the brown paper parcel disappeared through the door.

"Well, well," said the Judge with a queer smile as he placed the fluffy white sheep on the mantelpiece, "I never thought I should be guilty of accepting a bribe, but we never know what we may come to."

The next day Maxwell was acquitted and assured by the Judge that he left the court without a stain upon his character. The following Christmas Dorothy received a brown parcel containing toys of the most wonderful description from an unknown friend, and it was asserted by his intimates that ever afterward the Judge's sentences seldom erred on the side of severity, and that he was disposed, whenever possible, to give the prisoner the benefit of the doubt.—Strand Magazine.

A Simple Card Trick.

Take an ordinary visiting card. One that is rather stiff is best for the purpose. Bend the ends so that you can stand it on a table. Then ask your friends to blow it over. They will find it almost impossible unless they know the trick. It consists in blowing sharply, but not too violently, on the table about an inch from either end of the card.

FLASHES

"Yes, her looks favor her mother people." "Indeed?" "Oh, greatly. She doesn't look a bit like them."—Detroit Journal.

"Yes," said Uncle Jonas, "that boy mine allus was fond o' books, an' now he's becom' a page in the Legislature."—Philadelphia American.

Querulous—Do you know why this often called a cold world? Cynical! To distinguish it from the next, I propose.—New York Journal.

Robert—Is Harry fond of female society? Richard—Immoderately. He known him to play whist with the women.—Boston Transcript.

"Did you read that magazine article on 'The Working of a Bank'?" "No, it by an ex-bank president or an ex-burglar?"—Cincinnati Enquirer.

"The Turks seem to have a mighty poor opinion of the Greeks," "Yes, that accounts for them running down."—Cleveland Plaindealer.

"Clingstone never takes any interest in euchre unless diamonds are trumped." "Why is that?" "He is a base-ball crank."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

"Few men have any trouble in meeting their creditors," says the Manayunk Philosopher, "but they do have trouble in dodging them."—Philadelphia Record.

He—J must have a kiss for every camel, dear. She—Some men would have bought a whole box instead of the measly little paper bag full.—Detroit Free Press.

"Julia, have you bought a new spring suit yet?" "No, I'll have to wait until next month; Dick had to buy a new spring gun and two new spring fishing rods this month."

He—Just listen how that hen cackled. She doesn't know how little one egg will sell for. She—Perhaps she was. She may be advertising a bargain.—Somerville Journal.

Mrs. Jones—Wake up, John! There's someone trying to get into the house. Jones—How do you know? Mrs. Jones—The dog has stopped howling. Hurry, John!—New York Journal.

Mr. Crimsonbeak—I don't believe a man ever stole anything but he lives to regret it. Mrs. Crimsonbeak—You stole my heart once, John. Mr. Crimsonbeak—Yes.—Yonkers Statesman.

"Joe got the inside track of his wife this year." "What did he do?" "He read her a whole lot of newspaper stories of men who had dropped dead beating carpets."—Detroit Free Press.

Kerrigan—That's good for a cowl! Casey—How yez got th' price up two hot whiskies about yez? Kerrigan—O' hov not. Casey—Will, thin, Kerrigan, ut wud be a mercy not t' tell yez—Puck.

Walker Farr—I thought your next tour was to have been through South Africa. Count d'Ties—It was, but the company struck. One of them had read that an ostrich egg often weighs a dozen pounds.—Puck.

Amanda (alighting from her wheel at the roadside, where Mortimer awaits her)—Have I kept you waiting long, dear? Mortimer—Long? Many cycles have passed since the hour appointed for our meeting.—Judge.

"You see, it was this way: The were all three so dead in love with her and all so eligible that to settle the matter she agreed to marry the one who should guess the nearest to her age." "And did she?" "I don't know. I know she married the one who guessed the lowest."—Pearson's Weekly.

A hereditary liar: Mrs. Jackson Dat's seventeen lies yo's tole me to-day, all different. Yo' am a reg'lar raskillion. 'Rastus Jackson—W-wha am a raskillion, mammy? Mrs. Jackson—A raskillion am a young 'un dat got his fadder's blood in him—dat whad a raskillion am.—Judge.

"You don't mean to tell me you have gone and got engaged to two women at once?" "Yes, but it really amounts to only one engagement—half an engagement for each girl." "Will you please explain." "Why, certainly. Each of 'em is engaged to another fellow."—Cincinnati Commercial Tribune.

A vindication: "I don't understand why you dislike Herbert so," said Mabel to her father. "I don't think he has any ideas of finance." "I am sure you're wrong him. He is devoted to it. He stopped right in the middle of his proposal to me to ask how your business was getting along."—Washington Star.

Mrs. Commonstalk (soberly)—Are you sure your fiancée will make a good home-body, Eli? Do you think she knows anything about mending, for instance? Cholly Commonstalk—About mending, mother? Why, that is the very strongest point. I saw her mending a busted tire once in just fourteen minutes by the watch.—Bazar.

Publisher (impatiently)—Well, what is it? Poet (timidly)—O—er—er— you Mr. Jobson? Publisher (irritably)—Yes. Poet (more timidly)—Mr. George Jobson? Publisher (excitedly)—Yes, sir, that's my name. Poet (more timidly still)—Of the firm of Messrs. Jobson & Doodle? Publisher (angrily)—Yes. What do you want? Poet—Oh—I want to see Mr. Doodle!—Punch.