THE MISER

"I TELL you Agnes, I shall never give my consent. That young fellow just wants my money. I know him, I know him. I know all that kind of fellows. They dance around a bag of money as the Jews around a golden calf. I shall never give my consent."

"Father you are too hasty. You don't know Walter. He is good, honest and energetic."

"Energetic you say! I would like to know what he has made by his energy?"

"He has studied hard and has an excellent education."

"Education—nonsense. Can a person live from his education or does it help him to make money?"

"Yes it does. Walter can make his own living. He has an excellent position as a bookkeeper."

"Yes, and I suppose he just makes money enough to pay for his fine clothes. I know the young fellows. But no more about that. If you prefer your bookkeeper to your poor old father you may of course do as you please. I can't live here all alone and I know that I shall not live very much longer and it seems to me—well it doesn't matter, you may leave me if you think it's right."

"Oh don't talk that way father. You have no right to think that I would do a thing like that. You know very well that I could never leave you."

And Agnes threw her arms around the old man's neck and kissed him, then she turned around quickly and left the room.

"It is strange with these young fools," the miser murmured when his daughter had left. "There have been plenty of young fellows to court the girl—for her own sake? No, I know better than that—for my money. Well, Agnes never cared for any of them until Walter appeared, but now she wants to get married. At last. Oh it's all nonsense. The old man bowed his head and looked at his hand, he saw a tear on it.

"She cried when she kissed me," he whispered and wiped the little drop away. "I don't understand how she got her soft heart. She certainly didn't get is from me—but she may have got it from—"

The old man stopped and felt a pain in his heart. He was thinking of the beautiful, gentle loving woman who had been his wife. The mother of his child. He remembered that she was married to him when she was only 16, while his hair was already turning gray, he remembered how faithful she had been to him. How she had taken care of him, looked after the house, loved him and taught her child to love him. And he remembered that she never complained even when she was sick and feeble, and how she had died with a smile.

Noah Preman bowed his gray head deeper and wished he could forget. But he couldn't. He also remembered that the neighbors had whispered among themselves that his young wife might have been saved if she had had a good doctor.

"But that would have cost too much. It would have been too expensive. I saved my money."

Noah was old, now nearly 80, and all through his life his only interest had been to get money. He had denied himself every comfort and his hard heart was as hard as the gold he loved. But as his hair grew thinner and his former straight back bent he thought more, and now he often thought of his dead wife. He saw her gentle smile, her laughing eyes and the love of his daughter always reminded him that there were human beings who were far better than he.

At last he stood up and went out of the room. He wanted to go into the garden but when he came into the little hall he heard a voice from a room upstairs. It was that of his daughter.

"Whom is she talking to?" The blood rushed to his head and he murmured to himself: "I shall soon put an end to that."

Noiselessly he crept up the stairs and looked into the room through the keyhole. There he saw Agnes, she was kneeling in front of her bed, and the tears were running down her face while she was praying: "Oh Lord be good to my old father, soften his heart and give him peace. Help me to love him with all my heart and teach me to be good to him. Help me to keep the promise I gave my mother when she was about to die, that I should always love him and look after him. Heavenly Father help me."

Silently the old father sneaked down the stairs and went into the garden hoping to get rid of his thoughts. He was thinking of his wife, of his daughter, who cried for his sake, but then the thought of his money came once more and this thought was the stronger.

Agnes cried long and bitterly in her little room and when she had grown more quiet and wiped away the traces of her tears she went downstairs and looked after everything in the house as usual. Father and daughter took their supper together as usual, but she was no longer the happy, smiling girl who seemed to carry light and sunshine along with her.

One day old Noah came back from a walk and heard somebody walk in the summer house in the garden. Suspicious as ever and an expert at listening he sneaked close to the summer house and through the foliage saw his daughter and lover, young Walter. Her head was resting on his shoulder and his arm was around her waist.

"Agnes," he said, "listen to me Agnes."

"I cannot leave my poor old father," the old man heard her say with tears in her voice. "I must live for him, look after him now that he is old and alone. Remember that I am the only one in the world who cares for him. He has nobody but me and he is not to live alone during his last years. Oh, Walter, my head is bursting when you say that I must choose between you and him. You know how I love you, but I cannot forget my promise never to leave papa. Are you angry with me?"

"Angry—oh, Agnes, how can you think. As if I could be angry at you, but it's very hard to see all that disappear which I had dreamed of for years. The dream was so beautiful, Agnes, and reality almost makes me lose courage. We two who have always loved each other, we should have made such a beautiful home for ourselves in the little cottage by the lake and now it is not to be. I dare not persuade you to leave your father. If you could do that you would not be the Agnes whom I love. But there is one thing I wish from my whole heart and that is that God in his mercy will take the curse away from your father before it is too late."

"The curse! What do you mean Walter? Why do you say that word?"

"The curse of gold I mean," the young man replied hotly.

"His mind, his thoughts cling to the accursed money. I wish he were poor; I wish he would lose every penny he's got."

"Poor! Lose his money. How can you wish for such a thing? Poor old father, then he would have nothing to love at all."

"He would not! Then I should think his eyes would open and he would see the treasure he possesses in your love. He would remember to love you when he no longer had his money to steal all his thoughts. And what would be better still, I could then show that I love you for your own sake. I could take you to my house and I would ask your father to live with us. It would be so cozy if we could all three be together."

Noah retired hastily. He was afraid to hear more strange things, and while he was walking toward the house he murmured to himself: "A nice wish, indeed! That young scoundrel! To wish that I were poor. I, Noah Breman! And he praised God to make me poor! I must say he is a nice fellow."

Time passed and Agnes grew thin and pale, and she was always longing for Walter, but she took care of the house as faithfully as ever, but she hardly ever smiled, and an expression of sadness had come into her former happy face.

One evening Noah came back from the city and in his hand he carried a small iron box. He carefully locked the door, pulled down the shades and sat down at the table.

"AGNES," HE SAID, "LISTEN TO ME, AGNES."

"Look here," he exclaimed, "here's what I've worked for all my life. I had no education, but I have money, money, money!"

"Don't you think many people would be without their fine education if they could have what I have here? Look here, Agnes. Count these stacks of gold. How many do you think I have here? There is five thousand dollars in every stack."

Agnes counted them and she saw that there were 50 sacks.

"Why did you take the money from the bank, father?" she exclaimed.

"To speculate with it, to lend it to people at high interest. I'm going to make much more money before I die."

And the old father's eyes beamed with joy while his daughter looked at the money through tears. She said good night to her father and went to her own room, but for a long time she heard him moving about down stairs. At last she fell asleep.

"What was that sound? Agnes sat up and listened.

A bright light is shining through the windows and clouds of smoke filled her room.

A voice cries fire! fire! and she recognizes it as her father's.

"Agnes Agnes, hurry up and get dressed. There is no time to lose. The house is on fire."

A moment later they were both standing outside. She carrying a few clothes and he a small box. Both were looking at their old home burning down, but neither of them said a word.

The neighbors came rushing up, but there was nothing to do, for the old straw thatched house burned like tinder. There was no danger of any of the other houses taking fire, so they did not try to put it out.

"You have your money safe here father?"

"Yes, I have. Here's the box. I had let the candle burn after I went to bed that I might look at the box until I fell asleep, and I think that the curtain must have blown into the flame, but I have the money," and he raised the little box.

Agnes got hold of his arm.

"That isn't the right box, father," she whispered.

"What do you say?" Noah turned quite pale with fear. He now saw that in his hurry he had made a mistake and that he was carrying with him now the box filled with old letters and papers of no value.

"Ruined," Noah groaned, turning toward his house once more. "I had two hundred and fifty thousand dollars in that box and now there all gone."

"Poor, dear little father," Agnes whispered. "I shall love you so much that you shall forget your loss."

"My loss! Is it really true? Has it really happened?"

A young man came rushing toward Agnes and her father and whispered something into her ear. Noah stared at him.

"What was it you said? Did you offer me a home, with you that my own house is burning? Do you mean that and can you afford it?"

"Yes, I can afford it all right. I have 1,200 a year and we can easily live from that. Oh you know Agnes, you know that I should never be happy if I did not know that your father had a good home."

"Well take her then, love her and be good to her. Make her happy and let her never—"

And Noah rushed away when he saw Agnes' eyes fill with tears of joy and Walter's honest brown eyes beaming with gratitude.

And now these people started a new life. Agnes was as happy as a lark when she moved into her little home as Walter's wife. The color came back into her cheeks and the old smile was there like it used to be.

"Do you still pray to God to help you to love me," Noah suddenly asked when he had lived with the young couple a few months.

"What do you say, what do you mean, father?"

"You have prayed that before, I have heard it myself."

For a moment Agnes stood all confused, then she threw her arms around her father's neck and whispered: "I pray to God that he may let you stay with us for many years, but to pray to him to make me love you, I do not need for I could not help it if I tried. And Walter, oh father he loves you so much now, I know it for he has told me so several times."

A month later the three happy people were sitting at supper. But tonight Walter was looking rather thoughtful.

"What is the matter dear?" Agnes asked.

"Nothing dear, I was only thinking."

"Of what?"

"I was building castles in the air."

"Of what? Tell us."

"That is easily done. In a short time Mr. Osborne will retire from the firm and he is no longer young and has made a fortune. For some time he has not been quite well and now he wants a rest."

"Is that all?"

"No, from the first of September I am the first bookkeeper with a salary of $200 a month."

"But Walter! That was news indeed! Two hundred dollars! You don't call that castles in the air."

"No," the young man said with a smile. "But today during the lunch hour Mr. Osborne came over to me, slapped me on the shoulder and said in his friendly way: 'Walter I will sell you my part in the business for two hundred and fifty thousand dollars.'"

"And you believe he meant that?" It was Noah who asked.

"No, no I don't believe that, but I know that the two partners would like to see me in the firm."

"Well, all you need then is the money." Old Noah laughed and Walter joined him.

Next evening Walter came in and threw himself into a chair without saying a word. He was pale and restless and it was evident that his thoughts were far away.

"Walter," Agnes exclaimed, "what is the matter?"

"He's sick," Noah said without looking up.

"No, I'm not sick, but there is somebody who is having fun with me in a very peculiar manner, and I don't understand it at all. I'm all out of myself. Today I had some extra work to do in the office and had stayed for a while after the others had left. Then Mr. Osborne came to me, put some papers in the desk in front of me and said: 'Here you are Walter, those are yours.' And then he left."

I looked at the papers and the first was a list of what Osborne had owned in the business amounting to a little more than $400,000. The other paper was a document turning it all over to me and making me a partner in the firm the same terms as the other two."

"Well," Noah exclaimed, "I don't think that ought to make you sick."

"No, but it's cruel to make fun of a man that way."

"Walter, listen to me now," old Noah said. "When young men were courting Agnes I thought they cared only for my money and I knew that I was right same of you. I knew no ther love but the love of money. But my child thought me something else. Little by little she opened my heart to softer feelings. I heard her pray to God to help her love me and that was after I had refused to consent to her marriage with you. I saw that she was pale and thin from sorrow, but still she was smiling when she was with me. One day I heard you talk together in the old summer house. My child chose to stay with her old father and do her duty by him even though the longing was almost killing her, and you Walter expressed a wish. You said that you would pray that I might lose everything I had. You said that you would wish that the curse of gold might be taken away from me. Your words struck me. And you were going to show your unselfishness. I did not believe you but decided to try you and I must confess that I did wish and hope you wouldn't disappoint me. Then I laid my plans. I went to the bank and drew $250,000. I showed them to Agnes and she saw me put them into the box.

"The same evening my old house burned down. Whether the curtain took fire from the candle or how it happened I do not know. I got outside carrying the round box while the other burned. But the money was not in it. No, old Noah had the money on his person. In his pocket, and the next day he brought it back to the bank again. And then he started to live with you and at last I have found happiness.

"Yes Walter, I saw you were really the good noble fellow I wished you to be. You took me to your house and loved me when you thought I was poor and unhappy and you loved my daughter for her own sake, you made her happy and never thought for a moment of her lost fortune. And now my boy I have worked a little in secret. I have bought out Mr. Osborne for $250,000 and you are a partner now. And let me tell you one more thing my boy: If your two partners can each raise $250,000 more to enlarge the business you may tell them that within 24 hours you will put in an equal amount. Tell them that my boy, and tell them that old Noah will not be quite poor even then. And tell them that at last he has learned what it is to love somebody."

JIM CROW SECOND HAND STORE

By Louise H. Adams.

SILVERCITY was young when Jim put up his sign. Jim was young and Silvercity suited him. He decided it had a wonderful future, and in that future Jim determined to share. He rented a small shell of a place on the one business street, bought some red and black paint, and after much labor invented his sign. Then in the quiet of the early morning hours Jim with the help of his old mother decorated the front of his store with its wonders.

Jim in red, slanted crookedly across a black background, each letter ending in a red flourish that had required much paint, and all Jim's skill to perfect.

The crow stood boldly out on a bright red field, every feather standing straight as if the red was a bloody field of battle. As a result he gazed on the world through a fiery red eye. Mrs. Carow, Jim's mother, objected to the crow, on the ground he was a travesty on the good old name, Carow. "Jimmy!" she cried, holding the dim oil lamp aloft to throw its feeble light on the nails Jim was driving. "Jimmy! your daddy'll turn in his grave, when he sees that bird picturin' out his name. Jimmy, he'll feel 'shamed o' that."

"Now, ma," Jim called down to her through a mouthful of nails, "dad'll have to come a long ways to see this bird, an' if he did he'd tell it to sing in the folks to trade, an' he'd sit back o' the stove an' smoke." Mrs. Carow shook her white head, and looked apprehensively at the dim corner in the store, back of the stove.

When the big 2 went into place, she admired its red curves. "Jimmy, you fixed him a nice curly tail," she called. "It has a real brisky, lively look."

"See! old lady, ain't that fine?" Jim shouted, vigorously pounding in the nails that held the black hand on the red ground in place.

"You've it beau-tiful fur a hand, a nigger one. It sort o' gives me the creeps, it's so real like," she answered. Then the black board came next with its wavering line of red letters, like a row of wild football players, racing after the big period at the end. "There!" cried Jim, "she's up."

Mrs. Carow set the lamp on a barrel belonging to the place next door, and stepped into the muddy street. Jim followed her. Both stood in the mud and gazed at the strangely constructed rebus that straggled across the front of their premises.

Mrs. Carow wrung her thin hands as she quavered, "Oh! to think, Jimmy, I've lived to see my boy's name up over a store, an' my Jimmy tradin'. But, oh! Jimmy, if 'twas only pictured out Carow, 'twould look a sight better."

"Mebbe," said Jim, "but ain't sound I'm fishin' fur; it's folks, an' this suits me." That morning Jim made his first purchase, and sale, buying an old silver watch for a dollar and selling it for five. Embarking in this way he soon commanded a big and prosperous business.

Later he married a young lady who got the better of him in a trade over an umbrella. Jim decided wisely their combined shrewdness meant a successful future.

Mrs. Jim Carow selected from their stock the unsalable furniture, and fitted up a number of rooms above the store. Renting them at prices better suited to the former state of the furnishing than their present rickety shabbiness.

Among the roomers was one, a lady, whose presence in their home was a constant source of pride to all the Carow family. They knew nothing of her more than her name, Mrs. Gray. When she came to see the rooms, Tilly, Jim's wife, showed her the only way up stairs, through the store, fearing it would end her desiring any place that necessitated such an entry.

Mrs. Gray gazed in curiosity at Jim's medley of things, old and new, asked more questions about what he bought than her room, assured herself of its cleanliness, and rented it, taking immediate possession. Mrs. Carow, the elder, had a new listener to her stories of Jim's father's pride in family and name. Tilly often told Jim, "Miss Gray's a lady, any one with sense ken see that."

"Of course, she is," Jim would answer. "She knows a mighty lot. She ken tell first price o' every high class thing in the store, an' give me pointers." Jim had good reason for his words. Mrs. Gray made use of her passage through the store in a study of its contents. Jim often bought books. Whenever he brought them home Mrs. Gray was ready to help him unpack and care for them. At first Jim wondered at her way of carefully looking through some of the books, until he decided she was anxious to see their condition.

Mrs. Gray lived among them so long the Carows looked upon her as one of the family. She knew the ruling ambition of them all. To own a notion and dry goods store, with Jim's name, James Henry Carow, over its door, and to celebrate the placing of the new sign by a "swell" dinner at the Silvercity hotel.

Jim's mother thought when she saw the new sign, the lingering bitterness of the old Jim Crow would fade into nothingness. Tilly cared very little about the name; Mrs. Jim Crow suited her. She even called her children the little Crows, but if her Jim wanted something else she wanted it for him. She often told Mrs. Gray, "I hope to goodness Jim ken git that notion store, 'twould be a good place to raise the girls in, an' he wants it."

One day Jim sent one of the children to tell Mrs. Gray "He'd just got a lot o' old books, fine ones." She came into the store at once to see them. Jim was explaining how he bought them from a man who came from "Montany," when he was called away by a customer. "Looks kinder white," he thought glancing at Mrs. Gray's face as he left her. He was away some time, and when he went back she was holding a large book in her hand.

"Mr. Carow, what is this book worth?" she hurriedly asked.

Jim looked at her before he answered. She had changed during his absence. Changed in a way that without understanding why, caused him to lift the dingy old hat from his head as he spoke. "Well, it's hard to tell, fur I bought 'em in a lump but if you want one, I'll let it for for a dollar."

Mrs. Gray handed him the dollar, took her book and quietly left the store. Jim looked after her muttering, "I jest do wonder what ken be up." He wondered more than ever when Tilly came to him crying, "Mrs. Gray's away, she's packin' up now."

Later Mrs. Gray departed amidst the teary farewells of the entire Carow family and a curious collection of parting gifts taken from the stock.

The next winter the bitterness of hard times crept in among the people of Silvercity. It walked bodly into fine homes, changing them, until their owners longed for the money the beauty about them cost. Jim Carow soon found from such homes came the most of his calls. "I ken buy forever," he said, "but I tell you sellin's another thing." With the rest of Silvercity he found it hard work to provide for the necessities of his family. In the struggle his dreams of a notion store vanished.

One day Tilly was busily helping Jim arrange some of their possessions in front of the store. She suddenly dropped her armful of tin ware and rushed up to a lady on the street, "Oh! Miss Gray," she called, "I'm so glad to see you, come right in an' see me."

Mrs. Gray stopped to speak to Jim while Tilly hurried in the store. She uncovered a huge red velvet chair, and moved it back of the stove. "Now, Miss Gray," she cried, "take that chair an' feel at home, my ain't it good to see you."

When Mrs. Gray left them she invited all the family from Grandma Carow to the newest baby Crow, to take dinner with her the next evening at Hotel Silver. Great was the pride of the Carow family. Secondhand garments of all sorts come out for inspection. Jim decided that a dress suit made for a portly judge would just fit him. Tilly and the children had a harder time finding what they wanted. Grandma Carow picked out an old green satin dress, and was well suited.

Mrs. Gray sent Silvercity's best carriage for them, and the entire family found places in or on it, much to their delight. Mrs. Gray welcomed them in her parlor, then led the way to the dining room. She had remembered each item of the often talked of dinner. Even the place Jim said he "would order a table." There one stood waiting for them, beautiful with flowers. A waiter behind each chair, most of them dressed in Jim's dress suits, rented for the occasion. The Carows took their places with great dignity, even the baby in Tilly's arms clutched its neck adornment, a man's watch chain, without a sound.

"It is your entertainment Mr. Carow," said Mrs. Gray, "will you order for us all?"

Jim studied the bill of fare carefully before he began. Then he skipped about in a way that distracted the waiters, and drove the cook wild. Many a dish they liked was served the second, or even the third time. Some things Jim pompously ordered, "Take that right away. You fellers better learn how to cook."

Mrs. Carow, the elder, looking like a dissipated old parrot, in her green satin dress, thoroughly enjoyed herself. She pecked at the new and strange food with a lofty air. She looked at the people about her with disdain. "Jimmy," she muttered, "see, none o' 'em has such fixins as we've got. Them blows do set the table off, how I wisht your daddy could see us now."

Tilly, determined her children should have the full benefit of the occasion, and, with reckless disregard of consequences, called for ice cream for them all between every course. Mrs. Gray watched carefully to see her guests had every attention, often adding a word to Jim's orders that enlightened the waiters.

The dinner came to an end at last, and the little Carows indulged in naps on the sofas in Mrs. Gray's parlor. Mrs. Carow, Tilly and Jim enjoyed the easy chairs. "Now I must tell you," said Mrs. Gray, "why I came to Silvercity. I came here to hunt for a paper I needed in order to claim my own. With very little money to spend I had to search for it myself. That was the reason I came at first to live with you. I hoped Mr. Carow would buy something that would lead to its recovery. I found the paper I searched for so long in the book I bought—"

"There Tilly!" interrupted Jim, "I told you she found somethin' an' you didn't believe me."

"And I found something for you," laughed Mrs. Gray. "You have all been so kind to me during my stay in your house, and through your help I recovered my fortune. I shall never forget it all." She smiled at Tilly's eager face, but turned to Jim as she said: "I want to invest some money here in Silvercity, and I find I can buy the Emporium. If I do, Mr. Carow, will you be my partner and manage the business for me?"

Jim's good-natured face lost its pleasantness. In his disappointment he looked cross. "Can't," he said shortly, "times been to hard. I ain't got the money."

"You don't need any money," said Mrs. Gray quickly. "Let my furnishing the capital balance your work, and your name on the sign, and we will call it even."

Jim gazed at her blankly. It meant more than he could understand at first. He could not believe in his good fortune.

"Oh! Jim! can't you see how she means?" Tilly cried, her anxious little face shining as she turned and caught Mrs. Gray by the hand, with a thankful "Oh, Mrs. Gray; but you're good."

Jim's face changed suddenly. "Good! I should say so," he laughed. "Say, Tilly, ma! wake up the children, an' tell 'em pa's Mr. James Hen-ery Carow, an' runs the boss store." Even the judge's vest was too small. Jim unbuttoned it shouting, "Hurrah! for Mis' Gray! Hurrah for Carow's Empor'um!"

"Oh! Jimmy!" quavered his mother, looking at him in teary delight. "Oh! how I wisht your daddy was here."

AMERICA'S NEW TYRANT, THE CHAUFFEUR

Continued From the First Page of This Section

occasion, Mr. Hill not only denied his appeal for bail, but declared he hoped the law would deal with the man severely.

"When I employed him ten days ago," he said, "I made only two conditions with him. The first was that he should never take the machine from the garage without my permission; the second was that he should never, under any circumstances, run at high speed in the city limits."

Atlantic City, at the height of its recent season, held two men, Charles Baudoine of New York, and Dr. C. J. Schneider of Philadelphia, who had the pluck to call for the enforcement of the New Jersey law providing penalties for the use of an auto without the permission of the owner.

But there, with some few instances elsewhere, the praiseworthy record stops. The showing is admitted, by all motorists, to be shameful to the United States.

In Europe, the idea of taking out an employer's car would no more enter the head of a chauffeur than the donning of a suit of his master's clothes for a fashionable promenade would enter the head of a valet, or of a coachman.

The reason lies in the plain fact that there the position of the chauffeur is simply that of the valet, so far as his relations with his employer go. He is definitely a servant, and he knows his place from the first hour when he conceives the ambition to handle a car.

In the United States there are probably 500 men owning automobiles for one who believes his scant leisure or his social position requires him to have a valet. From the beginning, the chauffeur in this country has been imbued with the belief that he is an expert of a new class, a man with a quasi profession, a mechanic of a high order—but rarely, if at any time, a servant.

Even when some exceptionally punctilious employer insists that his chauffeur take the position of servant in his establishment, the line of demarcation is one that differs radically from even the superiority with which the butler of an English household is invested over the other domestics. At worst, the chauffeur holds himself upon the level of a housekeeper.

He is, besides, often the intimate, sometimes the boon, companion of his employer in carouses and adventures which the owner could afford to have disclosed only at the cost of painful scandal.

Owners of the class who, resembling the driving men of a former generation, thus put themselves in the power of their chauffeurs, as their forerunners left themselves at the mercy of coachmen, are of two kinds: Those who are by temperament chronically reckless and indifferent of the minor dignities which their wealth puts at their command, and those who are so afraid of losing the respect of their general circle of acquaintances that they dread reprisal by a chauffeur who is dismissed.

And then, as all managers of garages agree, there is the average auto owner, who coolly doesn't care whether his chauffeur has a good time or not while he himself is not using the car, or is apprehensive that, a chauffeur once lost, he may not be able to replace him, except at a rate of wage in excess of the one he has fixed as his limit.

The wage rate, in the light of the notorious recklessness of the "joy ride," evidences a curious inconsistency and mistaken economy on the part of owners.

They will invest several thousand dollars in an expensive machine, and, place the whole investment absolutely at the whim, inexperience and inefficiency of an underpaid chauffeur, for the sole reason that he can be hired cheaply. A $600-a-year chauffeur, still in his proper place when he is in the learner's class, will jump at the chance of work for any man who consents to let him acquire experience at an owner's expense.

An owner, with a $2,000 machine—even with a machine that has cost twice as much—will as eagerly hire him and flatter himself that he can make inexperience at $12 a week accomplish what can be expected of efficiency alone at $29.

Within a year his $600 man can, and often does, cost him from $1,000 to $5,000, by reason of accidents, that range all the way from the incessant repairs to the total ruin of a valuable car.

Apart from those chauffeurs who earn wages that approximate salaries in amount—from $30 to $35 a week—the American car owner is known as paying more for poorer service than any other autoist in the world.

The average chauffeur in France earns little more than $10 a week. A similar wage rate applies to England. There are French chauffeurs, famous as daring and skillful drivers in races, who do not receive more than $100 a month on their native heath.

But transplant the French chauffeur to the United States. He may be no more expert than the ordinary American mechanic who has concluded to barter for a chauffeur's wage what he flatters himself is his glorious American birthright of independence. But the mere French accent—though it be so full flavored that he commences to learn English the day he lands—suffices to win him a place that pays from $80 to $125 per month, and few questions asked.

Until American democracy, combined with his employers' laxity, has completely corrupted his home training as a domestic, the French or English chauffeur, whatever may be his shortcomings otherwise, remains the well-drilled, respectful, order-obeying servant.

He may be even that prize among chauffeurs, who is never corrupted, but proceeds steadily toward perfection and higher wages, until some plutocrat, envious and ruthless, gathers him from your cheerishing fold and exalts him to that plane of society where a chauffeur can develop into a capitalist.

The domestic product, however, ordinarily starts on the career of chauffeur with no such advantages. Young, perhaps with no mechanical training whatever, he discerns in the job nothing more than a chance at living wages, with an even break for high wages as a chauffeur later, or the opportunity to turn his hand to something else, should he become dissatisfied.

His brains and his character may make him a chauffeur of the highest type, and he then takes his place permanently in the class which, already a credit to the country, is slowly being evolved out of the melee of a totally new calling.

But if he amounts to nothing better than common, average human nature, he encounters difficulties of skill and temptations of spirit that combine to create the type of chauffeur who, on occasion, proves a danger to himself and the public at large.

For the tyrant chauffeur, in his seizure of his master's car and his reckless "joy rides," owners may talk among themselves till they are blue. Legislatures may pass the most stringent laws of restraint and garages may install register clocks and formulate the most ironclad rules; but all must be in vain until the owners themselves develop the sense of dignity, responsibility and self-reliance that will compel compliance with their wishes as emphatically as James H. Hill expressed it.

THE ELM TREE INN

"ARE you really engaged? Do tell me all about it." Dorothea rang for the maid who quickly removed the tea service, while Grace settled herself comfortably among the soft cushions.

"Well," began Dorothea, "it was Leon's fault. He forgot the batteries. We left New York with everything in shipshape order and made New Haven without a hitch. We stopped there over night, leaving early next morning. We reached Meridan, Conn., about noon and stopped for luncheon. Father told Leon to have the gasoline tank filled—to get new batteries and a fresh supply of acetoline gas in case we might need the lamps.

"It was a scorching hot day and poor Leon must have been upset by the heat. Anyway he forgot the batteries. We left Meridan at 2 o'clock, reckoning on reaching Hartford in time for dinner. A good breeze blew up and the sun lost some of its fierceness as the afternoon wore on. We took it pretty easy (making about 20 miles an hour) to see the country.

"And oh! Grace, such a country. I am sure I shall just love it. Rich green rolling fields in which grazed fat sleek cattle and dotted here and there were pretty little cottages, some almost covered with vines, each one boasting its own neat flower garden.

"The farmers working in the fields stopped at the chug-chug of our engine and watched us disappear down the road. I didn't mind the dust the least bit. In fact, Grace, I had never thought motoring such fascinating sport. The roads were as smooth as asphalt and the scenery one delightful surprise after another. Then something went wrong. My knowledge of motor cars is very limited and I frankly admit that I gleaned my information from the look of apprehension that suddenly clouded father's face.

"Then when Leon began jerking the spark regulator up and down I knew my suspicions were correct.

"Then the engine began pounding, we slowed down gradually, then stopped altogether.

"'Switch onto the other battery' suggested father, as Leon climbed out to investigate.

"A look from Leon told me we were stalled.

"'I forgot to get fresh batteries, sir,' he faltered, addressing father, and pulling the spark plug in and out aimlessly.

"'You forgot!' roared father.

"You know, Grace, how irritable father is. He was in a terrible temper, and I confess I was somewhat put out myself.

"We had halted, or rather been halted, at the top of a steep hill, and nestling down in the valley beneath us surrounded by a grove of apple trees loaded down with crimson and yellow fruit, stood an old colonial farmhouse. The blinds were drawn tightly but there was someone chopping wood in the farmyard, so father dispatched Leon to inquire how far we were from an inn or garage, and to make arrangements, if possible, to be towed to it. Never until then had the small boy's cry 'get a horse' meant anything. Now it irritated me.

"I clambered out of the tonneau to gather some wild flowers that grew along the side of the road, while father took advantage of Leon's absence to express his opinion on the worthiness of chauffeurs in general.

"Suddenly a faint chug chug came from the road behind, gradually getting louder as it came nearer. Then around the bend in the road in a cloud of dust, at about 50 miles an hour, came a huge red touring car. It came straight up the hill, stopping within a few feet of us and I saw it contained but one person.

"It was him."

"Oh! Dorothea, what was he like?"

"Well," went on Dorothea, without answering her, "he answered father's volley of questions, then volunteered to tow us to Farmington. There was a grange there where we could secure the necessary batteries and a very comfortable inn where we could get dinner and spend the night. Leon, who had returned from the farmhouse at the urgent request of the farmer who set the dogs on him, looked crest-fallen indeed as he tied our car securely behind the huge red one of our deliverer.

"You see, Grace, it's dreadfully humiliating to be towed, but somehow I didn't mind it. Father and I sat in the tonneau of his car, while Leon remained in ours to steer.

"It was growing dark when we arrived at the inn, a rambling two-story structure surrounded by a great wide veranda and almost hidden by giant elm trees, from which it has derived its name, 'Elm Tree Inn.'

"Our deliverer quickly explained that he was stopping at the country club, whose grounds joined those of the historical old inn, and that he would be at our service should we need him again.

"After accepting thanks he invited us to inspect the golf links next morning, then left us in the care of the proprietor, a keen-eyed, cherry-faced fellow, who gave us very comfortable rooms and gave orders for our dinner.

"When I awoke next morning the birds were singing and the sun streamed in at my window in a path of golden light across the carpet. After breakfast I sat on the end of the veranda that looked over on the clubhouse. Father had gone with Leon to inspect the installation of the new batteries, and I was quietly admiring the beauties of the quaint old place when suddenly a handsome figure appeared in the door of the clubhouse, hesitated a moment, then came smiling across the smooth green lawn straight to where I sat.

"Instantly I had recognized him as our deliverer, but I had not noticed before how handsome he was. He threw himself into one of the huge porch chairs and stretched his legs comfortably in front of him, sprawling out lazily. I would have been angry at his apparent lack of manners had he not turned those deep blue, sincere eyes on me.

"And oh, Grace, such shoulders! He was like one of those formidable old trees, silent and grand in the sunlight. Just then father came and we started on our tour of the golf links. Personally, I could never see anything in golf, and have always associated it with fat people whose physician prescribes it as a last resort.

"Frankly, Grace, I am lazy, and I was glad when it came time to return to the inn for luncheon. It was such a cool, inviting, mysterious old place that I would not refrain from asking questions. He seemed quite shocked at my apparent ignorance.

"'Never heard of Elm Tree inn? Why, it sheltered Washington when that great nation's father had passed through Connecticut on his march through the New England states, away back in the days of the revolution. It was then a rude one-room hut, but surrounded by the same old elm trees. The original one room had been preserved and the inn had been built piece by piece around it until it was no longer to be seen from the outside.

"But inside it was as it had been when our first president had stopped there. The wide brick fireplace, with the blackened crane and kettle remained as it had been originally, and the low ceiling and low broad windows easily distinguished it from the rest of the building. The old brick oven at the side of the fireplace was now used as a receptacle for fuel, but it was as it had been in the days of 1776.

"There was so much of interest about the old place that the afternoon had gone before we had finished our tour of inspection.

"Then father thought it best to remain over till morning before resuming our trip. After dinner we sat under the elms a while; then I retired, bidding our deliverer goodby, as we were to start early in the morning, perhaps before he was up.

"The moon sifted in through the great trees, and the quivering leaves made queer little pictures on the carpet. In the pond back of the inn the frogs croaked noisily. Now and then the screech of an owl pierced the clear night air, echoing over the hills.

"I got up and looked out of the window over toward the clubhouse. I closed my eyes to shut out the glorious night, but it was impossible to shut out the vision of his handsome, erect figure, his honest blue eyes and frank smile.

"Unable to longer resist the strange impulse, I dressed and went softly down stairs out into the moonlight. At the side of the house was the stump of a dead elm, covered over with blossoming honeysuckle vines. I sat down on a bench at the foot of this dead giant. I was drunk with the fragrance of the honeysuckle, awed by the splendor of the elms, inspired by the glory of the moonlight. Again there came a vision of him, all fair and splendid.

"I knew that was love.

"Suddenly there came the thud of footsteps on the soft grass, and I opened my eyes to find him standing before me. He spoke, and I knew it was no longer a vision."

"And," prompted Grace.

"Well, we're engaged," answered Dorothea.

"How romantic!" sighed Grace. "Do tell me, Dorothea, I really won't tell anyone. Where are you going to spend your honeymoon?"

"Oh, dear!" pouted Dorothea.

"Please tell me; I won't tell a single soul."

"Why, the Elm Tree inn, you silly. But, remember, you're not to tell a soul," she cautioned.

Three Plain Hoorays.

"I propose three cheers for the candidate," cried the suffragette. "Hip-hip——"

"Hold!" objected the chairwoman; "hips are no longer the thing."

"Accordingly the enthusiasm was edited to three plain hoorays.