

The Great Tontine
by
HAWLEY SMART
Author of "Broken Bonds," "Bound to Win,"
Etc.

CHAPTER XIII.

Next day Jack Phillimore made his way to Ronald Ringwood's chambers in the temple. He found that light of the law at home. Jack's name, of course, was quite sufficient an introduction. Ringwood shook him heartily by the hand, put him into an easy chair, proffered him tobacco in all shapes, and then said:

"Now you shall tell me what there is to tell about dear old Bob; by the time you have done that I hope you will feel that I am no longer a stranger."

Jack Phillimore heartily responded to his host's cordial welcome, and briefly told the little there was to tell about Bob Ringwood.

"By the way," he continued, "that was a very curious bit of news that you sent me in your last letter to me. I never heard my uncle make the slightest allusion to being engaged in any such big lottery as you mentioned. Of course, I understand that it is only a chance, but if it did come off it would be a tremendous windfall for him. I should think it would enable him to clear Lakotown."

"That, of course, I cannot say, having no conception of the extent of his liabilities; but since I wrote Lord Lakington has taken steps to ensure that a big slice of that hundred and sixty thousand pounds falls to himself. I was talking over the whole thing with Mr. Carbeck, one of the great 'guys' of our profession, and an old friend of the Viscount's, and he said it was quite one of the smartest moves he had ever heard of."

"What the deuce do you mean?" said Phillimore.

"Why, surely you have heard that your cousin, the Honorable Miss Beatrice, is about to be married."

"Yes; to a fellow called Pegrum. I am told. And why on earth she is going to marry him we can none of us understand, unless it is that the beast has lots of money."

"I can make that clear to you in a very few words. Pegrum senior is one of the three nominators left in the 'Great Tontine.' His son is to marry Lord Lakington's daughter, so that the Viscount and Pegrum senior may share the whole hundred and sixty thousand pounds between them as soon as they can prove the death of the nominee of Miss Caterham, the third nominator left in. He was an old man of wandering habits, and as he has not been heard of for some time, the probability is that the result of the inquiries the Pegrams are instituting will result in the discovery of his decease."

"What a rascally plot," exclaimed Jack Phillimore passionately. "I begin to see it all now. Beatrice is sacrificing herself and me for the sake of her father. Do you know that I looked upon myself as engaged to my cousin when I left England some few months ago?"

"No, I cannot say I did; nor did I know of this projected marriage till about three nights ago. I certainly did know that Lord Lakington had a daughter, because, as Miss Caterham's representative of the 'Great Tontine,' I made it my duty to inquire about the other competitors. I, like the Pegrams, am diligently searching for Miss Caterham's missing nominee, although, of course in diametrically opposite interest to theirs; my object being to find the old man alive, and theirs to find him dead. Do you love your cousin Beatrice in genuine earnest?"

"Do I love her? That nonsense you are talking; she is the only woman I ever cared a rush about in the course of my life. Have I not come home to claim her as my bride, and prevent this disgraceful marriage, if possible?"

"Then you will excuse my asking you one more delicate question. Have you been at all successful?"

"No; my uncle won't listen to me. He says the marriage is all arranged, and must take place, while Beatrice refuses to see me."

"Well, Mr. Phillimore, you cannot be said to have done much for yourself as yet. What do you say to entering into partnership with me? If some vague suspicions I have formed should happen to be justified, there will be an end to this marriage at once."

"I will do anything to save Beatrice from her imprudence. She may never be mine; but I am convinced that she is marrying this man very much against her own inclinations, and is likely to be a very miserable wife in consequence."

"Just wait a bit, while I think it over," replied Ringwood; and he began to walk up and down the room. Two or three minutes' thought, and he came to a stop and said: "Now listen to me, and don't interrupt me till I have finished. You can easily understand that to gain such a sum as this an unscrupulous person would not be likely to stick at any fraud which he fancied might escape detection. A very clever man, upon hearing that I was acting for Miss Caterham, remarked, 'I can only say, that, in your case, I should scrutinize the other competitors pretty closely.' That is how I come to know so much about your uncle and the Pegrams as I do. Now, although noblemen at times have shown themselves by no means exempt from the frailties of their baser-born brethren, still I am not for a moment insinuating that Lord Lakington would condescend to foul play of any description; but, about these Pegrams, strictly between you and me, I don't feel implicit confidence. They are lawyers, and the old man especially has the reputation of being a hard, crafty man, very unscrupulous in driving a bargain, and dabbling in a good deal of speculation and money lending. I intend to investigate the proceedings of the Pegrams during the last few months pretty closely, and, if possible, find out who is their nominee. Now this ought to suit you as well as me. If Pegrum has committed a fraud, this marriage will, of

course, fall through; or we may succeed in finding such strong presumption that he has done so as to justify a postponement of the marriage. That would suit you; while, on my side, I should get rid of one of Miss Caterham's adversaries perhaps."

"That is a splendid idea. I will go in with you heart and soul."

"Very good; then the first thing we have got to do is to ascertain, if possible, who is likely to be old Pegrum's nominee. I have a friend who, I think, will give us a valuable hint on that point if he can only be convinced that this marriage is against Miss Phillimore's inclinations."

"But when he hears all that I have to tell him surely that will be sufficient," replied Phillimore hastily.

"Well, she refused to see you. Is there not any friend of the family who takes your part?"

"Yes; Mrs. Lyme Wregis, Beatrice's grandmother. It was she who sent me word of this projected marriage, and called me home from Malta. Beatrice has lived with her all her life."

"What! the widow of the famous financier? That is the very thing. It is very possible my friend Hemmingsby, the manager of the 'Vivacity,' knows something of her. You get a note from her, strongly backing up your case, and I think Hemmingsby will help us. He knows these Pegrams well, and almost hinted the other night that he could make a pretty shrewd guess in what direction to begin his inquiries."

"All right," said Phillimore, rising. "I will get that letter from Mrs. Lyme Wregis to-morrow, and we will expose these Pegrum bandits before the week is out."

CHAPTER XIV.

Jack Phillimore was as energetic a young gentleman of eight-and-twenty as needs be. Of a restless and active disposition, he was not at all the man to sit with his arms crossed under any circumstances. That he should engage in this campaign against the Pegrams with all his characteristic energy was only natural. It was a fight for the hand of the girl he loved, wholesome animosity towards a rival that can always be depended upon in the glamor of a first passion. He was in the Victoria road soon after twelve; and, asking for Mrs. Lyme Wregis, found that lady, as he anticipated, in the drawing room alone.

"I am afraid I did not play my cards well yesterday," said Jack, the first greetings passed. "I a little lost my temper. I was tried rather hardly."

"Yes," replied Mrs. Lyme Wregis; "you had a chance and failed to take advantage of it. There was a moment when she was in a melting mood; and if you had only been tender with her then, I think the chances are that she would have confessed everything, and we should at least have known the 'why' of this strange marriage."

"I must do my best to remedy the mistake. In the meantime, strictly between ourselves, you will promise me, Mrs. Lyme Wregis, not even to hint, not to breathe a word of what I am going to tell you?"

"You may rely upon my silence," said the old lady.

"It has been suggested to me that there is something not quite right about these Pegrams, and surely that is a point that ought to be cleared up. I am given to understand that the man who holds possession of the clue quite declines to open his mouth on the matter unless he is first firmly convinced that Beatrice is in reality averse to this proposed marriage."

"Well, why do you not tell him that she is so?"

"Ah, you see that, as a rejected lover, he would hardly credit my evidence on that point. There is only one person that I can think of whom he is likely to accept as an authority, and that is yourself."

"But who on earth, pray, is this mysterious unknown? and when, where, and how does he expect me to testify?"

"You know Mr. Hemmingsby, manager of the 'Vivacity' Theater, I think?"

"Yes, very slightly. Lakington has brought him up into our box once or twice. I am quite willing, if it pleases you, to admit that he seemed a pleasant, gentlemanly man enough; but you don't, surely, expect me to write and call him to the family counsels?"

"And yet if you do not, I don't know how we are to get this clue that I require."

"But, my dear Jack, it is impossible. I cannot write to a man I only just know about such an extremely delicate subject as this. You must see that yourself."

"Yes, I will admit it is very awkward; but I do not know what else to suggest. You would do a good deal to break off this Pegrum marriage, would you not?"

"Most decidedly, although I should be running in direct opposition to your uncle. Still, I am convinced that Beatrice's heart is not in it, and that nothing but unhappiness can come of it; but I do not see it is possible for me to write to Mr. Hemmingsby."

"Stop. I think I have it. You cannot write to Mr. Hemmingsby; but there is no reason why you should not write a letter to me, which I can show to him and which will doubtless have the same effect."

"I do not mind doing that, Jack," replied the old lady; "only, remember, I must not be supposed to know that it is going to be shown to anybody, nor do I want to know anything about what you are doing for the present. It will be quite sufficient for me to hear all about it whenever you have that to tell to Mr. Pegrum's disadvantage which shall make this marriage impossible. Their attempting to keep me hoodwinked about the real reasons of this match is simply a gross piece of disrespect on both their parts. No; I have argued my best against this marriage with each of them, and now I trust I am about to do something more."

And so saying, the old lady rose, and proceeded to write rapidly for two or three minutes. She folded up her note, placed it in an envelope, directed it, and then, to Jack Phillimore's astonishment, proceeded to fasten it and stamp it.

"There," she said, as she handed it to him, "you will find that all you want; but I prefer that it should go through the post, so that there may be no suspicion of its having been written for Mr. Hemmingsby's perusal. Drop it into the pillar box."

"Thank you very much," said Jack, as

he took the missive. "It shall be posted as you wish. Armed with this, if I have any luck, I shall beat that beast Pegrum yet; and now I will say good-by."

Jack awaited the arrival of that note of Mrs. Lyme Wregis which he had himself posted, feeling a little disposed to sympathize with lady's over-caution. No sooner did it arrive than Jack sped to the Temple, and, placing it in Ringwood's hands, suggested the sooner they saw Mr. Hemmingsby the better. The two accordingly proceeded to the "Vivacity," and were fortunate enough to find that Mr. Hemmingsby had not left the theater.

"I gave you a hint," he said, "about what I should do if I were in your place, and I told you then that I had nothing now to do with it, and as they were both friends of mine, had excellent reasons for not meddling with what does not concern me."

"Yes," replied Ringwood, who had evidently got up his brief with great care; "but you would not see the young lady sacrificed fraudulently to a Pegrum when it is within your power to prevent it."

"Allow me to remark that I know nothing about any fraud; and as for the lady, she is going to marry Bob Pegrum of her own free will, and it is most obviously no business of mine even if she is only marrying him to please her relations."

He took the letter that Ringwood proffered. He read it carefully, and as he concluded, said:

"Well, the writer speaks her mind pretty plainly. She is the young lady's grandmother, is she not? It does seem rather throwing herself away," continued the manager, "a beautiful girl like Miss Phillimore marrying such a one-horse looking concern as Bob Pegrum. Still, though they won't match, Bob is a good-tempered fellow; they will have plenty of gold dust, and I have no doubt will run together pretty comfortably."

"But still," burst in hot-headed Jack Phillimore, "you are an old friend of Lord Lakington's; you made surely not see his daughter made miserable for life by being married to a man she cannot care about—a man like Pegrum, whose account of himself, after all, is extremely doubtful."

"Excuse me, Mr. Phillimore," replied the manager. "That Bob Pegrum is what he represents himself to be. I can vouch for that; but you are a relation, and so have a claim to interfere; to say nothing," he concluded slowly, "with a slight twinkle of his eye, 'of a rather personal interest in the matter if I mistake not.'"

"Be quiet, Phillimore," suddenly exclaimed Ringwood. "Look here, Hemmingsby, you know just as well as we do that this marriage is simply the amalgamation of the two last shareholders, as they suppose themselves, in the 'Great Tontine.' I declare I think, under the circumstances, that somebody ought to see that old Pegrum's claim is all right. If Lord Lakington is too indolent to take the trouble, then I really think that Jack Phillimore, as Miss Beatrice's next nearest relation, is justified in seeing that Miss Beatrice's wedding settlements, which, in good truth, are involved in the 'Tontine,' are all right and genuine."

"Quite so," replied the manager. "Still, as I said before, what have I to do with all this?"

"Everything and nothing," replied Ringwood. "We will investigate the Pegrams; but what we want you to do for us, is just to give us a hint where to begin."

"And now," exclaimed Ringwood, breathlessly, "what is to be our first move?"

"I think," replied Hemmingsby slowly, "that the history of the illness of Mr. Krabbe, from the time he broke down in Pegrum's office and had to give up work, down to the state of his health in his retirement at the present day, would very likely pay for looking into."

"Krabbe—Krabbe? I never heard the name before," observed Ringwood. "How do you spell it—C-r-a-b-b-e?"

"No; it is rather singularly spelt—K-r-a-b-b-e—Krabbe. He was, still lately, old Pegrum's confidential clerk, and that is where I should begin, no matter why."

"Well, Phillimore," exclaimed Ringwood, rising, "we must be very grateful for what has been vouchsafed to us. Good-by, Hemmingsby; I do not suppose we shall get any more out of you."

"No," rejoined the manager, laughing. "The oracle has spoken. When you have worked out the clue I have given you let me know the result, and I will tell you what I think of you as detectives."

"(To be continued.)"

Hot Onions Cure for Pneumonia.
Hot onions, according to a French physician, are said to be a sure cure for pneumonia. The remedy is as follows: Take six or ten onions, according to size, and chop fine, put in a large pan over a fire, then add the same quantity of rice meal and vinegar enough to make a thick paste. In the meantime stir it thoroughly, letting it simmer for five or ten minutes. Then put in a cotton bag large enough to cover the lungs and apply to chest as hot as patient can bear. In about ten minutes apply another, and thus continue by reheating the poultices, and in a few hours the patient will be out of danger. This simple remedy has never failed to cure this too often fatal malady. Usually three or four applications will be sufficient.—Detroit News.

Not Well Named.

"Now where did I lay my rat, I wonder?" fretted Mrs. Troussaint.

"You—er—rat?" said her husband. "Do you mean that fluffy thing you put on your head?"

"Of course!"

"I'm sure I don't know, my dear; but why call it a rat? Rabbit would be better—it would sound more like real hair!"—Lippincott's.

Two Classics.

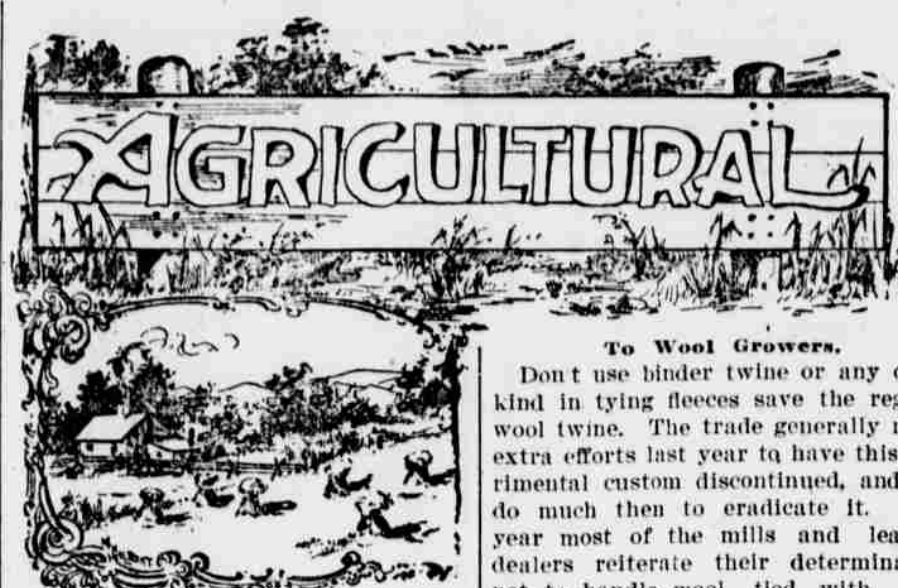
"I thought you said he was an expert golfer?"

"I didn't mean he played it, I meant he talked it!"—Houston Post.

White!

Gunner—The Van Alberts have had the same girl ten years.

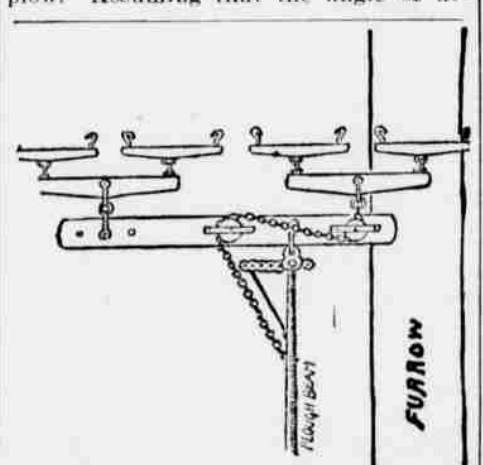
Guy—Good cook, or does she know their family secrets?



Four-Horse Eveners.

This particular form of four-horse eveners is entered to work with one horse in the furrow and the other three on the land. To get an even draft will perhaps require some adjustment of the left hand double tree and the proper place to attach the chain to the plow beam can be found by experiment. The two double trees are of the ordinary length and the stick used for eveners needs to be tough oak and five feet four inches in length. The two pulleys should be large enough to allow a small link log chain to work through them. Two bolts are required for the pulleys, and two pieces of strap iron two inches wide, used as braces. The illustration does not indicate exactly the distances between the different points which should be as follows: From the right end to the first pulley, 7 inches; from the point of attachment of the plow to the center of right hand pulley, 15 1/4 inches; from the point of attachment of the plow to the center of the left hand pulley 8 1/2 inches. This places the two pulleys almost 24 inches apart. At the left end have three or more holes into which the double tree for left hand team can be hitched.

For an even distribution of the draft the proper point of attachment of the left hand double tree will depend solely upon the point of attachment of the chain to the plow. If the chain is carried far back, its draft will be different from what it would be if it were attached closer to the nose end of the plow. Assuming that the angle of at-



PLAN OF FOUR-HORSE EVENERS.

achment of the chain to the plow is 30 degrees the left hand double tree should be attached to the main piece of the eveners at a point about 2 1/2 inches from the point of attachment of the plow to the double tree. There is no reason why this eveners should not work on any kind of plow provided that the lengths of the parts are adjusted to suit the distance of the point of attachment of the main tree from the furrow and that there is a rigid brace to which to attach the chain.

Treatment for Potato Scab.

It is true that as early as 1842 a German investigator suggested that the trouble was caused by a parasitic organism, but later it was definitely determined that the fungus, *Sclerotinia scabiei*, which he had isolated, was not invariably the cause of the trouble. It was not until 1890 that Prof. Bailey definitely determined that potato scab was caused by a fungus parasite. Until resistant strains could be bred up it was necessary that some temporary preventive be applied, says Farm, Stock and Home. Treatment of scab may be made by the use of formalin or corrosive sublimate (bichloride of mercury). The latter is perhaps the most effective; but it should be handled with the greatest caution, as it is a very powerful poison when taken internally. The solution is prepared by dissolving two ounces of corrosive sublimate in two gallons of hot water. When the poison is well dissolved, add twelve gallons of water, making fourteen gallons in all. The potatoes, which should be reasonably clean, should be put in a gunny sack and the whole suspended in the solution for an hour and a half. Then empty them out on a floor to dry thoroughly before cutting and planting.

Wash for Nursery Stock.

Dipping nursery stock in lime-sulphur wash or other insecticides has recently been much advocated as a substitute for fumigation with hydrocyanic acid gas. The station at Geneva, N. Y., finds, however, that this treatment, if used at all, must be handled with care to secure scale destruction without injuring the trees. With the sulphur wash, exposure of the trees for too long a time or at too high temperature resulted in injury; while with any of the materials used, exposure of the roots to the mixture resulted in serious injury to the stock. For nurserymen the station still recommends fumigation as most effective and least liable to injury, and would advise orchardists to use the lime-sulphur as a spray after the trees are set, rather than as a dip when they are received.—Farm Journal.

To Wool Growers.

Don't use binder twine or any other kind in tying fleeces save the regular wool twine. The trade generally made extra efforts last year to have this detrimental custom discontinued, and did do much then to eradicate it. This year most of the mills and leading dealers reiterate their determination not to handle wool tied with sisal twine, as it renders the wool unfit for dyeing; hence, if growers or those preparing wool for market expect to find ready sale and top prices for their wools, they must adhere to this advice. Higher prices and active competition for the receipts, if properly and carefully handled, is confidently anticipated in this market the coming season, and shippers are also advised that in order to realize the best results consignments should be sold here on the open market, where all buyers can compete for them.

To Hold the Gate Open.

A piece of timber 4x6 two feet long, with a notch in one end 3x6 inches, a piece 2x4 two feet long with one end beveled and a notch 2 1/2x6 inches cut in position as shown in sketch serves



HOLDS THE GATE OPEN.

to hold the gate open. The dotted lines show the position of the holder as the gate is forced over the level. The post should be set to correspond with the height of the gate when open. If the gate drags on the ground there is something wrong; hang the gate a little bit higher. The end opposite the notch of the holder should be the heaviest so as to keep the notch in position on the gate.

Concerning Hogs.

A hog is a hog frequently because he is given no opportunity to be cleanly and decent. There are farmers who believe a hog would die if not allowed to wallow in mud and filth, while others are of the opinion that the hog should have plenty of clean water. The hog needs a great deal of water in hot weather, and if he cannot get it he will take mud as the next best thing. A hog rushes to a mudhole to cool off. He comes out and the mud dries on his skin. The next mud bath he takes adds another layer to that already dried on, and in a short time the pores of his skin are completely clogged with mud. Now, a hog cannot thrive with his pores all clogged up any better than a man. If a hog has access to a deep pool of water, as he should in hot weather, he will keep clean and thrive much more than if he lies around in a mudhole made filthy by continued use. Most farmers who supply a bathing place for their hogs make them so shallow that they are soon converted into mudholes. On our farm we usually keep from thirty to fifty pigs, and they have a pool of water fed by a stream, and it is deep enough for them to swim in. The sides are dug down sharply, and were laid with cobblestones for a distance of four or five feet from the water's edge. The pool was always clean; we never have trouble with mange or lice, and when on two occasions cholera swept through the country our hogs were not affected. The hogs never used the pool unless the weather was extremely hot.

A Smooth Field.

It worries the good farmer to see his neighbors plowing the fields round and round the same way year after year. He knows that by-and-by there will be deep furrows all over the farm, and all the while these might be avoided. How? Change the order of things this spring by going out into the center of the field where the dead furrow is and turning it full the first thing. Then go around instead of haw, as is usually done, plowing back to the place of beginning. Keep this up to the end and you will have no ditch in the middle, but a field that is nice and smooth and good to look upon. It may be a little awkward turning round to the right where one has always been in the habit of turning to the left, but you will soon get accustomed to it, and so will the horses.

Champion Holstein Bull.



Illinois State Fair, 1908.

Applying Lime to the Soil.

As a rule all compact clay soils may be greatly benefited by the application of one ton of lime per acre, just after breaking up, either in fall or spring, and thoroughly mixed with the earth. Lime should not be applied with manure of any kind, but the latter (manure) may be applied as a top dressing and worked in by cultivation of the crop. One application of lime every five years is usually sufficient.

UNCLE JOSHUA'S FLIES.

Occasion for Aunt Eliza's Statement of Matrimonial Philosophy.

Uncle Joshua was catching flies. Uncle Joshua's method of catching flies was to stalk them one by one, following them about the room with a stealthy shuffle and bringing his big hand down with a ponderous slap, which nine flies out of ten easily evaded. It must be confessed that if a fly was caught, it proved fatal.

Betty, watching Aunt Eliza beat up a pan of gingerbread in the kitchen, listened to the shuffle and thump and muttered exclamations till it got upon her nerves. Aunt Eliza's face, over the gingerbread, was full of placid content. Finally Betty could stand it no longer.

"Aunt Eliza," she asked, "doesn't it drive you wild to hear Uncle Joshua catch flies?"

Aunt Eliza laughed. "Bless you, no, child. It don't hurt the flies any. By and by, when I get round to it, I'll drive them out. There ain't more'n half a dozen in there, ever, but he likes to think he's clearing them out."

"But he thumps so," Betty answered, laughing, and yet persistent.

Aunt Eliza glanced at Betty's left hand, and her wise eyes became grave.

"There was a time once," she said, slowly, "when Joshua's chasing flies nearly drove me wild. It was the second year we were married. If we'd discovered nerves in those days, I suppose I'd have said it got on my nerves, and gone off to a rest-cure or something. As we hadn't, I fought it out myself."

Joshua was real kind and thoughtful and a generous provider—in all the big things, I knew he was a man in a hundred. And he was patient, too, over my quick speeches.

"Then I thought about the other men I knew. Eli Potter used to sit with his feet in the oven—I couldn't have stood that, anyway. And Jacob Jarvis was the worst hand for tracking in mud you ever saw, and Jont Kilgrove never would wear a collar, even to church—and so it went. It seemed as if every man had to let off steam somewhere; and when I thought it all over, I concluded that flies were about the best of the lot; they don't last more'n three months, anyway."

"So after that when Joshua chased flies, I'd go and do something I specially liked to do till 'twas over, and presently it got so I didn't mind it a bit. Mercy sakes, child, the best man that ever lived will have some little way or other that you'll have to get around. The secret is in seeing how little it is beside his love."

Betty, looking thoughtfully at her ring, was silent. From the sitting room came a thump and a triumphant exclamation. Uncle Joshua had caught a fly.—Youth's Companion.

Hotel Cells.

The chief difference between the average hotel cell and the average prison cell, viewed from the standpoint of social psychology, is that one is locked on the inside to keep outsiders out, while the other is locked on the outside to keep insiders in. The occupant of the hotel cell is afraid that something will be done to him or that something will be taken from him by some one who ought to be in a prison cell. That is the theory of it.

"Lock your door and leave your valuables at the office," cautions the obliging innkeeper. "If you had valuables you wouldn't be here," observes the witty prison keeper. That is to say, the question of valuables seems to enter largely into the matter.

It would be great to have a civilization which considered valuable only those things which could not be stolen, such as mental and moral equipment, skill and goodwill. Then we could be a little more sociable. We could talk to each other without buttoning our coats or feeling for our diamond studs every few minutes. Then the man who willingly secluded himself in a stuffy hotel cell could be locked in and made to stay there, on the ground that something terrible was the matter with him.—Success Magazine.



The Boss—So it was your grandmother's funeral kept you away from the office yesterday? Who officiated? Johnny—De umple.

On His Side.

Satan danced in mad glee as he held the sheet and glanced over the spring fashions.

"Why do you rejoice?" asked a sad shade.

"Somebody loves me," smiled Satan.

"Who loves you?"

"The man who invented styles for women."

It Depended.

"Is your mother at home, little girl?"

"Are you the lady with the new dress or the one from the installment house?"

The empty back seat of a big automobile is one of the things that add to the discontent of a man on foot.

If there is so much fun in dancing, why don't families dance by themselves at home?