

ONLY FIVE DOLLARS.

BY ROSE TERRY COOKE.

"Say, Delia, will you go in to Waterbury with me to-morrow?" Mrs. Peck...

"Well, I was going to say if you'd go with me, I'd pay your fare for your company. I never traded much there, and don't know the stores, or where to go for my purchases; and I want to call at Aunt White's, too, but I hate to go alone."

"It don't seem right, Mary, for you to pay my fare, but if I can really help you, why, I shall go. I ought to get my Mary a Sunday hat, and Luman some stockings, and myself a calico, and I should have a greater variety to choose from than here."

Mrs. Peck was a country doctor's wife. Does any dear reader know all that means? She had to economize, because the doctor's bills is the last bill anybody thinks of paying—in the country; and a good doctor, which means a good man—sympathetic as well as skillful, and kind-hearted as keen—forebears, even to his own detriment, to press the settlement of his accounts; seeing, as he only can see, how hard it is to be both poor and sick.

Blessings on a country doctor! Out of their ranks a whole calendar of saints might be canonized; but the good Lord only knows how good are these ministering disciples of His, who go about as He did, doing good.

And their wives have a harder time than if they were miss-naries. Many a dark hour did Mrs. Peck watch and wait for her doctor, knowing well that in storm or calm, through the wild bursts of thunder, or treacherous and blinding snows, his solitary little sulky was abroad on the rough hill-tops or in lonely valleys, holding almost her life in its frail shelters; tugged by the sturdy horse that was only less hard-worked than its master.

All alone with her little girl she spent the greater part of every day and night; hard work prevented anxiety from doing its worst upon her, though you could see its traces in the gray lines among the soft waves of her hair, and in the sad dark eyes that when she was not smiling looked tired with past tears.

Mary Peck was the doctor's sister. Having a large school in a village some miles beyond Dennis, where her brother lived, she frequently spent her vacations at his house.

It was now the spring recess of two weeks, and she wanted much to go to Waterbury, twenty-five miles east by rail, to do her shopping for the summer. She had a good salary and could well afford to give Delia this outing, so the tired little woman gladly consented to start.

The doctor literally had not a cent in his purse to give her; but she had a knack at raising poultry, and while her own table was well-furnished from the great "coop," as she called it, in the yard, the superfluous eggs had been rapidly bought at the village store, and she had laid up ten dollars, devoted to shoes, stockings and calico, absolutely needed; for she did hate to ask the doctor for money. Not that she grudged it—never—but he never had it. Most of his bills that were paid, were paid in produce, and neither potatoes, brussels, pork, straw, nor oats would serve her purpose. She must have money for her purchases. So she set out for Waterbury with Mary, leaving little Mary with the minister's wife, and was soon plunged into the attractive precincts of the Waterbury dry-goods shops.

She bought her little girl a pretty straw hat, and some ribbon to trim it, looking sharply about her to see how it should be trimmed.

This cost two dollars and a-half. Then came some socks for the doctor, and four pair of these, strong and serviceable, cost another dollar.

get them on. They had gone to the tinman's cart with the other rubbish. Mrs. Peck thought every day she should hear from Mary, and would get the money so that she could buy Mary some shoes, but neither letter nor money came.

The cobbler patched up the ragged shoes as well as he could; and now Mrs. Peck found to her dismay that her own boots had given out from the Waterbury trip, and she, too, had to stay at home from church on Sunday, because they were not fit to wear.

After ten days' delay, a letter came from Charlemont; a gay, bright letter, ending with: "There's a teachers' convention in Ludlow, (the next town to Dennis) on the twenty-fourth and I will bring the five dollars I borrowed of you when I come through."

This was the second of May. It was the twenty-second of April the money had been sent Mary. Eggs were now a drug at the store. The doctor never would let her run in debt, and she and May were all but shoeless.

In the meantime Mary had said to herself—seeing a pretty cambric she wanted in a Charlemont shop—"If I buy it I can't send Delia her money till next month, but it's only five dollars. She will not wait it before I go to Ludlow."

She did not think that Delia had been too poor to pay for her own car-ticket to Waterbury, or that she had refrained from buying her shoes there as she meant at first, saying that she would get them at home at the store, because Mr. Clark had been so civil and kind to her always.

"But evil is wrought for want of thought, as well as for want of heart." May's old shoes soon gave out past patching. The slight cold she had taken from wearing moccasins hung about her, owing to the damp and cold spring winds. There came on a heavy shower one day while she was in school, and running out at recess her shoes were wet through, for the patched soles and cracked upper leathers soaked easily. She sat all the rest of the morning with wet feet, and went home very hoarse.

Mrs. Peck undressed her, and looked for some chlorate of potash in the office. It was all gone. The doctor had filled his bottle that morning with the last.

She did not like to leave May alone to go to the store where a small assortment of drugs was kept, and even if she would have left her, her own old shoes were unfit to wear, it still rained so hard.

She bound some salt pork on the child's throat, and steamed it with camphor, but the child grew worse and worse, and before the doctor came home, at midnight, she was in a high fever.

Yet feet had exasperated the cold she had before, and by the next morning she was in the grip of pneumonia, and very ill indeed.

The doctor scolded about her shoes; but Mrs. Peck could not complain to him of his sister. She cried a little, and was silent.

May grew worse. There were many little alleviations to be had, if her mother could have paid for them. The child pined for oranges. There were plenty at the store, but no money to buy them with. Her gruel was sweetened with maple sugar, and she hated it. She cried for coffee, and there was none.

Only five dollars! But how Mrs. Peck wanted it! After a long struggle little May began to get better; her fever subsided; she needed tonics.

"I wish I could get a little wine for her!" said the doctor, looking wistfully at his wife. He knew she had money from the sale of her eggs, but what could she have done with it? Mrs. Peck grew desperate. She could not see her darling so weak and white with any patience.

Suddenly she bethought herself of the calico dress she had bought. Perhaps Mr. Clark would take it, for it had never been unfolded. But how could she get it to the store?

Luckily the doctor had an hour to spare after tea that day, so while he stayed with May, she put on his shoes and went down with the bundle. Mr. Clark was glad to buy the dress.

"It'll just suit my wife, Mrs. Peck, I know. It's a dreadful chore, she says, to make her gowns, and this is sort of lasty, ain't it, coming from the city? Well, well, it is amazing how they can make 'em so cheap."

Mrs. Peck did not stay to hear any more. She went to the old maiden lady who "had the name" of making currant wine as good as any imported article, and bought a bottle of her at an exorbitant price, but as Miss Davis earnestly said:

"It's seven years old, and think of them worms! I haint made a drop for two year back; and it's dreadful healthy. I don't want to part with none o' it niter but seeing it's yours."

And Mrs. Peck again cut short a discourse, hurrying home with her precious bottle, thinking no more of her calico dress when she saw the doctor's tired face light up and a little color flicker in May's face after the first teaspoonful had been cautiously administered.

By the time Aunt Mary stopped at Dennis, on her way to Ludlow, May was able to sit up against her pillows; and Aunt Mary was shocked to see how pale and weak she was.

"You precious little morsel," she said. "How did you ever get such a dreadful cold to begin with?"

"My shoes was all torn to pieces, Ansty. Mover couldn't get me any new ones."

After Bret Harte. There was evidently trouble brewing, and trouble of abnormal interest, for never before in the history of Four Ace Flat had all hands knocked off work for a whole day. When Abe Tucker was hung a committee took charge of the solemnities, and the rest of the inhabitants attended to their business as usual. Even when Bud Davis held four queens over the king full of the 'Frisco man, with six hundred thousand in the pot, the honest denizens of the Flat industriously stuck to their legitimate vocation of gouging each other, and local tradition says that the tight between Mullins and the Kid did not draw a half-paying ring side.

But today the whole Flat was at leisure, and it was removed in the morning that Buck Galloway would wear a plug hat, and possibly vest when he appeared on the field. But Leffingwell had bought a new blue flannel shirt that morning, and it was said that he had greased his boots, all of which proved true, though denounced as canards by skeptics when first mentioned in their presence.

At the Oriental saloon there was tripe on the free-lunch table, and at the Palace Garden blue chips had gone to \$20.

And yet it was not a gala day. There was an earnestness in the faces of men that destroyed any idea that a picnic or a lynchng matinee was in prospect. Besides the constitution of the flat was rigorously in favor of postponing all pleasure until night, and so it was manifested there was trouble on hand, and trouble of a serious nature.

During the morning it was all gossip, but toward noon, when Buck Galloway, in the much envied plug hat, and Bill Leffingwell, resplendent in full blue shirt of dazzling brilliancy, with boots pressed to a mirror-like resplendency, passed each other on the street without the customary salutation, all Four Ace Flat knew that the hour had come, and braced itself for the excitement.

Pools took a new impetus. Money was placed rapidly, and in the market loans were effected at the heavy percentage of four for one, which made it easy to keep the reckoning.

"Think she'll stay game!" asked Pete Wilder, as he examined his pistol and loaded it with great solicitude.

"For whatever yer got she will," responded Mr. David Sampson, who by reason of his having added some salt codfish to his stock of liquors, had become a merchant and been elected mayor.

"She'll stick like a tree." "And the Englishman?" demanded Pete, taking aim at a man who had refused him a thousand dollars.

"Pretty good shot," criticized Mayor Sampson, as the unaccommodating capitalist dropped in his tracks, "took him just under the ear. Yes, sir, I think the Englishman will stay too."

And they joined the crowd who were pressing toward the outskirts of the town.

"You say along the outside of the weepin', Bill!" remarked a tall, handsome girl to Mr. Leffingwell, as she fastened her hat with a steady hand. Life in the silver leads had left its impress on her face, which, in spite of her dissipation, had still lines of womanly loveliness in it.

got out," remarked Bill to Buck as they met at the Oriental during the evening. "The boys would have grafted him if he'd staid."

"You bet!" replied Buck. "If I'd know'd what it was he'd have got it from me right there."

"What was the weepin', anyway?" asked the bar-keeper, who had not been able to attend because of some financial regulation imperatively demanded by the till in the absence of the proprietor.

"What was it?" sneered Bill. "What was it? It war a doggoned live mouse! That's what it war!"—[Brooklyn Eagle.

Josh B. H. H. Philosophy. If you will sit down and wait, young man, at least one half of the good things of life will fall into your lap. If you will wait you will have the more you chase them the more they will break into a run.

All of nature's works are a part of a perplexion or a plan. She makes no mistakes, creates no vacancies, and guesses at nothing.

Idea are what wins, but if a man hain't got but one, he is apt to run that one into the ground, and take himself along with it.

Lauffer proves nothing. Wise men laff, ideats grin all the time.

Conning is a weak intashun of wisdom, and is liable at any time to merge into fraud.

Happiness has no abiding place, but often is very near at hand, like the old woman's spectacles. After hunting for them hi and lo, she found them at last safe on her nose.

Gravity is bekinning to a phool at all times, but only to a wise man on state occasions.

Very money seek knowledge, not so much for the truth, as for speculation there is it.



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