The Wife's Secret,

OR A BITTER RECKONING

By CHARLOTTE M. BRAEME

CHAPTER III.—(Continued.)

Forget her! As Jack turned into the house, after watching the carriage down the drive, his head and heart were on fire with the memory of her last lingering look, and the blood danced in his fingers as he recalled the warm, clinging pressure of her hand at parting.

"I think I must be mad when she is near me, for somehow I always manage to believe in the possibility of her love for me when in her presence," he muttered, remorsefully. "And, if she did love, what then? Could I throw Ethel over? My sweet, pure little Ethel, it would break her heart! I must get rid of this folly. I'll finish Ethel's letter at once, and send it off by the morning post. I'll write a long, loving letter to the poor little girl; it will do me as much good to write it as it will her to receive it."

This time he commenced with "My dear Ethel," and then, before proceeding further, he made a close examination of the beautifully executed address and crest on the paper.

The crest of "Mallyngs"—as the name was originally spelled—a tiger's head and front paws in repose, with the motto, "Let the sleeping lie," particularly interested him. He had stood for many a minute during the past week in front of one of these emblems of the family circle—fierce, ungovernable—and pondered the probable events that had caused it to be bestowed on them as their badge.

"I wonder why she never married?" he mused. "I wonder if mine is the true reason, and there really is some poor beggar in the background awaiting her twenty-fifth birthday? I shall have a chance of finding out if I accept her invitation for the partridge shooting in September, for Lord Summers told me she would be twenty-five in that month. Ought I, in justice to Ethel, to place myself in the way of such temptation? Bosh! I must be a weak fool indeed if I cannot live in the society of a beautiful woman without making an idiot of myself! Besides if I come and see for myself that she is really 'gone' on some lucky fellow, it will be the most complete cure I could find for my own folly."

But Jack knew this to be false reasoning; nevertheless he would not listen to conscience, and, with a gloomy brow and tightly compressed lips, sat glaring moodily at the blank sheet of paper before him.

"Will you take your luncheon in here, sir? It will seem less lonely than in the dining room, I think."

Jack looked up in surprise at the housekeeper.

"I must have been sitting here nearly three hours. I don't mind where I lunch, Mrs. Perkins."

"Then I'll put it in here, sir; it's brighter and more cheerful than the dining room."

Mrs. Perkins walked to a sideboard and flicked away an imaginary speck of dust.

"Were you here in Sir Paul's time?" he asked, more because the old lady wanted to talk than from any interest he took in the matter.

"Bless you, sir, I've been a servant in this house for turned fifty years! I began as under housemaid at sixteen, and here I've been ever since; so I'm what you may call an old servant."

"Of course you remember Miss Malling's mother? She must have been a beautiful woman."

"Sometimes she was and sometimes she wasn't. She was handsome enough naturally; but she had such an awful temper that it quite disfigured her at times. I've known her to sulk about the house for a month at a time because her brother, the late Sir Paul, had refused her some trifling thing. We were quite relieved when she got married, and went away on the Continent with her husband. You see she was many years younger than her brothers, Sir Paul and the present baronet, Sir Geoffrey, and was a bit spoiled in consequence—though there is an old saying in the family that a Malling's daughter is always a fiend, asking your pardon for the word, sir; so it's lucky Miss Pauline is only a Malling by adoption."

"Then you think she has eccaped the failing usual to the ladies of the family?"

"I should not like to give an opinion of my mistress' disposition. It would be very bad taste on my part, sir. Miss Malling, during the six years she has been mistress here, has been everything one could desire."

"I beg your pardon," he said, politely. "I did not wish to betray you into disrespect for Miss Malling. My question was the natural outcome of your remark as to Miss Malling's being only a Malling by adoption."

"To be sure, sir; and that takes me back to what I wgs saying. Miss Pauline's mother was away on the Continent with her husband directly after they were married, and roamed about for years from one country to another with him; she never came home again, poor dear! She died when Miss Pauline was fifteen years old; and then Sir Paul was anxious to have the child with him in England, as he had made her his heiress, in consequence of the other brother, Geoffrey, having married without his consent. But Major Lufton would not part with his daughter, and refused even to let her come on a visit; so we none of us ever saw Miss Pauline until she came here, a grown woman, to take her place as mistress of Mallingford."

"I suppose you knew her at once by her likeness to her mother?"

"Strange to say, we didn't, sir! To be sure she was very ill, for her father had been dead six months before she heard a word about being heiress to this property, and all that time, to keep herself from starving, had been teaching in some Spanish convent. But even as she recovered her looks we watched in vain for something in the voice or the expression of the face that should remind us of her mother. There are the same beautiful hair and eyes, and there the likeness ends."

"Do you say she never knew about her heiress-ship until after her father's death?"

"Yes, sir. She says he would not tell her because he was afraid she might be tempted to leave him. I believe they were in dreadful straits sometimes."

"It must have been a wonderful change for her when she came here."

"It was indeed, sir—so great that she can never to this day bear to recall that dreadful time, and refuses to talk about it to any one.

CHAPTER IV.

Ethel Mallet knelt on a chair, her bonny face pressing closely against the window pane. The room being on the second floor, it was only by so doing that she could see the steps that led up to the front door. It was a quarter past eight, and she was watching anxiously, as she had done for several mornings past, for the coming of the postman. She left her position presently, and bustled about, putting little finishing touches to the breakfast table.

"It is hard on poor dear dad to have to put up with petty inconveniences," she said, affectionately, as she laid the morning newspaper next the roses, and looked to see if she could do anything further to beautify the unlovely lodging house breakfast table. "I know the sight of a stain on the tablecloth takes away his appetite. With the very next few shillings I make by my copying I'll buy a couple of tablecloths, and then we can have an extra one, without asking Mrs. Philpott for it and risking black looks for the rest of the week. Oh, here you are, papa! I thought you were going to be late—and it is your Kensington day, too. Ah, there's the postman! I wonder if he has a letter for me? Isn't it strange that Jack has written only once in a whole week?"

"Young fellows always find plenty of occupation in the country; you must not worry about it, my child." This remark was rather uncalled for, as Ethel, the whole week through, had scrupulously avoided mentioning the subject of Jack's neglect. "The country round Mallingford is particularly attractive, and I can quite understand that Jack is feasting his soul on its beauties."

"Oh, papa, do you know Mallingford? You never said so before!"—and Ethel was just about to launch out into a string of questions when her thoughts were diverted by the appearance of the servant with the fish for breakfast, and a letter.

"For me, and from Jack!" she exclaimed, breathlessly; but she did not attempt to read it until she had attended to every little want of her father's, and seen him comfortably settled for his morning glance over the leaders in the newspapers.

Then she took up the letter and began reading it. As she read, the sweet anticipation of pleasure faded slowly from her face, and she laid the epistle down, looking perplexed and troubled. She went on pretending to eat, filled her father's cup when he pushed it toward her, and resolutely kept silence until he had laid down his newspaper and caught her wistful look.

"Well, what are you waiting to say?" he asked.

"I don't know; Jack has written a nice, long letter, and yet I am disappointed. I'm never satisfied; am I, dad? He tells me here that he's very lonely, and a line or two lower down he says that Miss Malling, of whom he gave such a glowing description in his first note, has left for London. I know I'm narrow minded, but I can't help fancying that it's more her absence than mine that makes him lonely. As if I did not know Jack to be one of the most honorable men in the world! Please call me a few hard names, dad, and make me ashamed of myself."

But Mr. Mallet did nothing of the sort.

"I think it extremely bad taste on Jack's part to fill his letters to you with descriptions of another woman's beauty."

"Now, there you are wrong! It's just that that satisfies me as to Jack's good faith. If there was one scrap of unfairness to me in his admiration for Miss Malling he would not write so openly about it. It was only my nonsense about being jealous, you know."

"You are a veritable little bee, sucking the honey and leaving the poison, I'll not say one word against your hero, my dear. But I don't like to hear of any slight being put upon you. You know I don't think him worthy of my little girl."

"You conceited old dad," Ethel said, with a smile, "to think your girl better than any one else's! Why, Jack is much too good for me! Even you admit he's clever."

"Granted. But who is he? He has a straight nose and a good pair of shoulders; but what was his grandfather? Have you ever asked him?"

"Papa! What an extraordinary question that would be for me to ask him! I dare say his grandfather was as good a man as mine."

"My dear, your grandfather was one of the oldest commoners in England. The Mallings of Mallingford hold themselves among the best people in Exbridgeshire."

Ethel looked at her father as if she feared his reason had given way.

"I dare say you are very astonished. You have always known me as a hard-working drawing master, and of course concluded I had never been anything else. My dear, that Mallingford Park, of which Jack writes so enthusiastically, is mine by all just laws of succession. But my elder brother, the late owner, cut me off with a shilling because I annoyed him about a trifling matter, and left the whole property to my niece, your cousin, Pauline Lufton."

"And I am eighteen, and this is the first word I have ever heard of it!"

"Yes, and most likely the last, for it is a subject I don't care to talk about. I don't think I should have spoken of it now if I had not felt extremely annoyed with Jack for his ungentleman-like neglect during the past week. You are as well born as this cousin of yours of whom he raves, and I will not allow him to slight you in any way."

"Daddy, will you let me manage this matter myself? You have so surprised me by what you have just said that I am almost bewildered, and can hardly think of anything else. But I am sure that I am too self-conceited to let Jack really slight me. If I thought he wanted me to give him his freedom I would do it at once. I think it would almost break my heart, but I would do it. I would not bestow myself where I was lightly thought of."

"Heaven bless my child! I can trust you to support the family reputation for self-respect; and, Ethel, if you are writing to Jack to-day, don't touch on that subject. I have reasonus for not wishing him to know anything about the matter until I tell him myself."

Ethel looked disappointed. She handed her father his hat and gloves, and kissed her hand to him from the window as he turned the corner of the street, and then went back to her letter. She read it through more than once, her face wearing a thoughtful expression. Then she sat down with loosely clasped hands, thinking over the letter even when she had returned it to her pocket.

"I am sure of it—he loves this Miss Malling! Papa did not call her by that name. I forget now what he called her; but it was not Malling. I thought my dislike to parting with Jack was all nonsensical fancy at the time; but I know now it was a real forewarning of this sorrow. He will never come back just the same as he went, even if he gets over this fancy for her. Jack—dear old Jack—why—why did you speak of your love for me until you were quite—quite certain you could never care for any one else? Oh, Jack, I can't let you go, dear!"

With a heart-broken little cry she threw herself upon the cushion.

CHAPTER V.

Babette's arms and back ached almost beyond endurance, yet the brush continued to play over Pauline Malling's hair as it hung in luxuriant profusion down her back. Pauline was deep in thought, for the Duke of Bennoir had just sent her the exquisite bunch of roses she held in her hand, with the little note lying open on the table, and she was making up her mind as to whether she should accept or reject the offer she knew he would make when he called by and by.

"Did I look really well last night, Babette?" she asked.

"Mademoiselle is irresistible when she chooses," murmured the French woman.

Miss Malling again relapsed into deep thought.

"If I could only be sure of the past remaining the past, if I were only certain that ugly facts would not turn up unexpectedly to face me, I would marry this poor creature with a title—I would, if only to save me from myself. Surely, after six years of safety and prosperity, I am never going to be such an utter idiot as to risk loss of everything, because this poor painter is good looking and charmingly candid. I hate myself for my weakness. Only ten days ago I began this flirtation for my own amusement and to annoy that big-eyed, pale-faced child, to give her a few unhappy hours as a set-off against the perpetual anxiety her mere existence causes me, and, before I am certain that either of these purposes is accomplished, I wake up to the humiliating knowledge that I am caught in my own trap, that for the first time in my life I have fallen in love!"

She burst into scornful laughter, so startling Babette that the ivory-backed brush flew out of her hand, and she stood with round eyes and open mouth regarding her mistress' face in the glass.

"What is the matter with you? Why are you staring at me like that?"

By an effort Babette recovered her usual subdued, respectful expression.

"I feared mademoiselle was not well," she murmured, apologetically.

"Nonsense! Go on with your brushing, and do not take notice of what does not concern you."

"She is a very cat!" Babette said, confidentially, to the brush, as she picked it up. "I should like to know what wickedness she is planning now."

"Perhaps it is not to be wondered at, after all," Pauline mused. "He is so different from the men one usually meets—so honestly simple, so bright and true, so sensitively honorable. I believe he would marry that chit in spite of me if the release did not come from her. It shall! If I cannot have him, she never shall! On that one point my mind is fully made up!".

(To be continued.)

A Night of It.

"Popley's got an awful big family. It must be awful to feed all of them."

"I guess so. I realized last night what it meant to have about a hundred mouths to feed."

"Goodness! did you have to entertain that many people?"

"No mosquitoes." — Philadelphia Press.

Important, if True.

"Have you ever attempted to play 'Hamlet?'" asked the manager.

"No, sir. I do not consider myself fitted by nature to impersonate the melancholy Dane."

"Then you are indeed, as you have said, an exceptional actor. I will give you a job."—Chicago Tribune.

The New Girl.

Dolly was out for a walk and met an old friend of her father.

"And how old are you, little one?" asked the old gentleman.

But Dolly was indignant.

"I'm hardly old at all; I'm nearly new," she answered, tossing her head. —Chicago Journal.

Highest Office.

The Foreigner—The presidency, I believe, is the highest office within the gift of the American people, is it not?

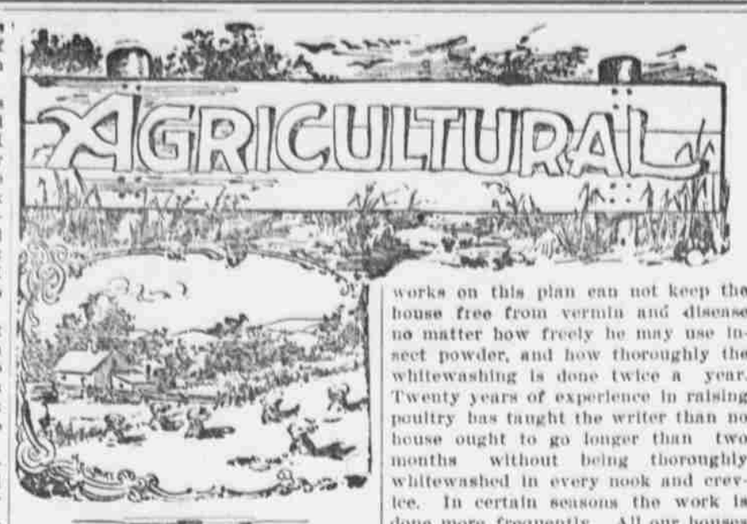
The Native—No; the highest office is the weather signal station on Pike's peak.

Sure Sign.

Edyth—I think Stella is beginning to get uneasy about the future.

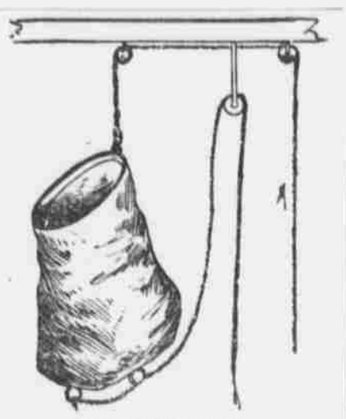
Mayme—Because why?

Edyth—She has begun to speak of spinsters as maiden ladies.



A Labor-Saving Bag.

It is not an easy task for the man who must do all of the work around the farm, most of the year to handle some things alone, so that if he is at all ingenious he welcomes the devices which will enable him to do his work more easily. Here is a plan for one man to handle grains or any other thing which may be placed in a bag which is stored in the upper part of the barn and must go to the main floor. Take a bag of strong material, a seed bag is the best, and have it resewed so that it will be a trifle smaller at the top than in any other part; a



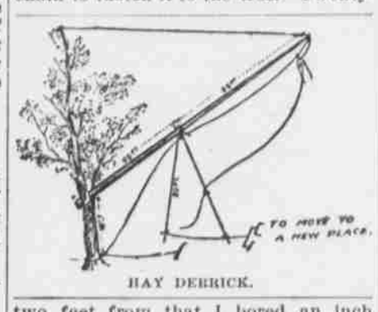
LABOR-SAVING BAG.

light iron or strong wire hoop is then sewn around the top, so that the bag is kept open and yet the contents are not easily spilled out. Two rings are placed in the bottom of the bag several inches apart and a ring is slipped over the wire or iron hoop before it is sewed to the bag. Place a strip of lumber properly braced over the top of the door and to it fasten three pulleys, the center one fastened so that it will come down some four inches lower than the others. Now fasten one rope to the ring in the hoop, run it through the first and the third pulleys and you have the raising and lowering rope. Then fasten a second rope in the ring at the bottom of the bag, the one farthest away, run it through the second ring and then up through the middle pulley and you have the contrivance by which the bag may be easily dumped. A glance at the illustration will show how useful this appliance is and how readily it will work in practice.

Derrick for Stacking Hay.

Where there is much hay to stack labor and time may be saved by using a derrick. There are numerous plans for building a derrick, but none is simpler or cheaper than this design, which is the invention of a farmer, who says:

I have tried to make a drawing of a derrick that I put up to stack hay with this year. It works so slick that I am sure it will please anybody. The pole is 10 inches at the butt, 5 at top and 47 feet long. I made a mortise at the butt through which to put a chain to fasten it to the tree. Twenty-



HAY DERRICK.

two feet from that I bored an inch hole, through which to put a pin to keep legs from slipping. I used crotches for legs, and wired them fast to the pole. I twisted four No. 12 wires together for cable with which to stiffen pole by guying to tree as shown in cut. I can take a fair-sized load at four forkfuls with this rig. When we get a stack done we rope the two legs together, hitch a team of horses to them, as illustrated, and haul it over to a new place; it works like a boom on a mast. If I had not had the tree handy I should have set a 50-foot pole in the ground 4 or 5 feet, staying it with a couple of guy cables. I should fasten butt of pole the same as a boom; then I could build stacks three-quarters of the way round the center pole. We build our stacks 22 feet square and 25 to 28 feet high. By having a pulley at the legs, as shown, the hay will not rub against the stack, but swing clear and drop right in the middle of the stack, thereby keeping the center of the stack solid, thus making it sure to keep good.

Use the Whitewash.

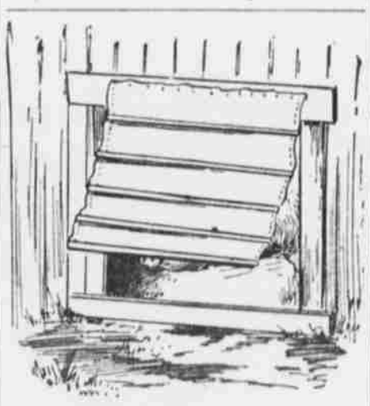
A writer in a prominent poultry journal says that the houses should be whitewashed and cleaned twice a year. By cleaning it is assumed he means everything removed and thoroughly renovated. The poultryman who works on this plan can not keep the house free from vermin and disease no matter how freely he may use insect powder, and how thoroughly the whitewashing is done twice a year. Twenty years of experience in raising poultry has taught the writer than no house ought to go longer than two months without being thoroughly whitewashed in every nook and crevice. In certain seasons the work is done more frequently. All our houses are built with scratching sheds so it is easy to do the whitewashing while the hens are in the shed and then by shutting them in the house whitewash the scratching sheds. Insect powder is, of course, a necessity, but less of it will be necessary if the houses are kept clean by lime and disinfectant.

Reform in Milking.

Additional knowledge and the necessity for looking after every detail in order that the dairy may be profitable, has resulted in wonderful improvements in the care of cows and of the milk afterward. Stringent health laws of the several cities have forced the shiftless man to wake up or else get out of business. There are still many opportunities for improvement, particularly along the line of cleanliness of the cows and of the stables and milking along more scientific lines. If the dairyman was half as clean as the milkman there would be little to complain of. The milkman must, of course, keep his milk on ice, but use an abundance of scalding water in the washing of bottles and utensils of tin, and further purify them in the sun. I go further and wash the little crates of wood in which bottles of milk are carried, using hot water and scouring soap and give these, too, a sun bath. See that ice boxes are scrubbed with hot water daily, that the milkhouse floor is also scrubbed, and then thoroughly dried.

Door for a Hog House.

There is no good reason why the door to the hog house should be made of heavy boards and kept shut nor why the house should be without any door if one will work out this simple plan. Take some strong burlap or an old fertilizer bag and get a few laths. Plate the laths an inch apart on both



DOOR FOR THE HOG HOUSE.

sides of the bag (crosswise) and fasten them to each other, nailing through the bag. Hem the edges of the bag so they will not ravel, then fasten over the opening in the door, letting it nearly touch at the bottom. The laths will weight it sufficiently to hold it in place so that it will keep out cold and storm, yet it will be sufficiently light so that the hogs can push it with their heads when they want to get in or out of the house. The illustration shows the plan plainly and it will work better than any door we know of, obviating the trouble of opening the door every time the hogs are to be let out. If desired the regulation board door may be put in place, to be closed when desired.

Spraying with Bordeaux.

I have been spraying with the liquid bordeaux, arsenate of soda, and arsenate of lead combined for several years with good results. I give one good spraying just before the bloom, a second just as soon as most of the bloom has fallen, a third a week or two later, a fourth about a month later and made a fifth application last year still a month later, or the last of July or the first of August. For the last two applications the bordeaux was not used at full strength but the lime was increased rather than diminished and the arsenates about the same. With a strong mixture all the season, the foliage is sometimes injured, especially in wet weather, and when the leaves drop the fruit quits growing and does not take on the most beautiful color nor have the best flavor.—Ohio Cor. American Agriculturist.

Cure for Barb Wire Cuts.

I had a young horse cut on wire so badly I decided to shoot him. My wife objected to that and made salve which her father (veterinary surgeon) had used for twenty-five years with unfailing success. My horse was cured in seven weeks without a blemish. This recipe has never been allowed before the public, but with his consent it is herewith inclosed. Unsalted lard one pint, wood soot one-half pine, burnt alum two tablespoonfuls, turpentine one tablespoonful, carbolic acid eight drops. From the simplicity of the ingredients it is marvelous to note the results.—A. R. B., in Epitomist.

Book News and Reviews.

F. Hopkinson Smith's new book, "The Wood Fire in No. 3," is said to resemble "outwardly and inwardly," his "Colonel Carter's Christmas."

Miss Clara Driscoll, who wrote "The Girl from La Gloria," is famous in the Southwest through her patriotic purchase of the historic Alamo property, which she bought to preserve from demolition and which the State of Texas, now alive to the value of the property as a historical memorial, is repurchasing from her. The sum total was $65,000.

After "Sherlock Holmes" and "Raffles," comes "McAllister," the good-tempered but blundering clubman, whom Arthur Train makes the hero of some entertaining complications in "McAllister and His Double;" stories disclosing some of the ingenious schemes of the more intelligent class of criminals, and partly, at least, brought to light in the course of Mr. Train's career as assistant district attorney in New York.

E. W. Hornung, creator of "Raffles," has put the finishing touches to the history of that distinguished cracksman, and in the book in which the final series of "Raffles" stories is shortly to appear disposes of that adventurous rascal for good and all. It is alleged that he will not, as Conan Doyle did with Sherlock Holmes, allow his hero to rise from his own ashes, like the fabled phoenix, at the demand of a clamorous public. Mr. Hornung's work has, until recently, attracted more attention in America than it has in England.

Matt. Stan. Kemp, author of "Ande Trembath," is better known in Pittsburg as Rev. Matthey Stanley Kemp, of Turtle Creek, where he has preached for several years. The plot of the story is chiefly laid in Cornwall, England, a region the author knows well, his father, a miner, having been born in that country. At the age of 10 the senior Kemp took his son to England to be educated. The results of this early sojourn are seen in the touches of local color, a broad Cornish dialect, and a liberal sprinkling of Cornish legends and folk-lore.

It is said that Henry W. Boynton's biography of Bret Harte and his literary career, recently published as a volume in an English biographical series, does not please certain reviewers because of its moderate tone. Mr. Boynton is not much given to panegyrics, but his literary judgment is much respected. It is easy to account for the English appreciation of Mr. Harte. The American of the British imagination is uncouth, crude and extravagant, and Mr. Harte's characters seemed "the real thing." There was some lack of reason in the English adulation of this author, although he was a good literary artist in his limited range.

English reviewers seem to cherish peculiar ideas regarding American literature—when they are gracious enough to admit that we have a literature. Now here is Clement Shorter, a London critic of reputation, who asserts that George W. Cable, in "Madame Delphine" and "Old Creole Days," has probably made more permanent contributions to literature than any living American man of letters. While Howells and Mark Twain and Henry James, not to speak of Joel Chandler Harris and James Whitcomb Riley, are still living there will be many who will "beg leave to differ" with the distinguished English critic.

CABS IN RUSSIA.

Fares Are Low if You Are Up to the Tricks of the Drivers.

In no European country are cab fares so cheap as in Russia, for there is no tariff at all. On the rank are half a dozen drivers on the boxes of their droskies—tiny victorias, hung low and with just room for two if the two clasp waists after the Russian mode.

If you know just about how far you want to drive you take the first driver and tell him where you want to go and what is the price offered. The etiquitte is followed invariably. The driver throws up his eyes in horror. He calls upon the saints to witness that so ridiculous a price must be doubled before he could look at it.

You are not deceived. You walk on. And before you are gone ten paces the cabman is after you, pointing politely to the seat in the drosky and, with a grin, repeating frequently the Russian equivalent for "please."

But if you are driving to a destination at an unknown distance it is necessary to ask the opinion of the first bellied, belted, bearded brigand on the box of a drosky. Then it is your turn to throw your eyes to heaven and call on the saints. A quick problem in division works itself out in your head. Threes into a ruble? And you put yourself up to a Dutch auction along the rank. "Hotel So-and-so, sorok kopeck!" you cry, with a leaning toward generosity. There is a race for you. You drive a long way in Moscow for a dime.

A Good Place.

"I got a haircut to-day."

"What! In cold weather like this?"

"Yes."

"Well, I wouldn't tell anybody."

"No, I'm keeping it under my hat."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Perhaps one reason that the Jewish husband is the best in the world is, that he is not nagged into going to church more than once a year.