

THE CHARITY GIRL
By EFFIE A. ROWLANDS

mured, and in a few seconds she was asleep.

Constance Fraser had been brought over to England and laid beside her mother in an old-fashioned country churchyard. It had been a simple funeral enough, though flowers had come from far and near. High and low, rich and poor, one and all, had a sorrowful thought for the sweet, gentle woman, who had so long a better sojourn on earth.

Shelia was left to herself and her not very agreeable reflections. The masked ball had cost her an enormous sum. Lady Daleswater had never offered to take her away with her; she had absolutely no notion of what had happened to Jack and Audrey. Beverly Rochfort never made the least sign, and as to Mrs. Murray, the whimsical maid at Craighlands, and her niece too clever accomplice, took matters into her own hands and bolted one night with all the available jewelry and lace she could lay her hands upon.

Energized beyond all expression at the loss of her property, Shelia at once put the matter into the hands of the police, and, in fact, was far more interested in this affair than she was at the death of her stepmother.

But a more disagreeable condition of things than this awaited Shelia when the report of Audrey's disappearance spread to Mounthbury. She was fairly frightened; ignorant of what might really happen, she conjured up all sorts of evil that would be visited upon her when the whole truth was given to the world, as it most probably would be. She eagerly searched for Rochfort, to force him to exonerate her from blame in the mischief they had brought about, but like a coward he was hiding from his consequences.

Then one day she had a frantic visit from Alice Fairfax, who, in great and terrible fear lest something would happen to her, had stated that it was Lord John's intention to sift out the whole gossip that had been spread about his wife, and clear away much that he could not understand.

"And if so, we shall be ruined, Shelia," sobbed Alice Fairfax, "but, anyhow, I shall tell the truth, and say you asked me to do—"

"You dare to turn on me!" Shelia flashed, furiously, white with anger, and then she would have proceeded to further ebullitions of wrath had not the door of her room been opened at that moment, and Mr. Fullerton announced by a brilliant career on Shelia's jewels which he had been examining at the time. The two flushed faces would have satisfied Willie as to their guilt, if he had not, at that moment, reposing in his pocket, a complete confession signed by Murray, whom Dawson, the detective, had easily found—this had been done at Jean's suggestion—and who, discovering that her chance of a brilliant career on Shelia's jewels was briefly cut short, eased her conscience and her spite by disclosing the whole plot.

Willie's interview with Shelia was short and to the point; and when he left the room he carried with him her signature and a few words at the bottom of Murray's confession testifying that the maid had written was true. (To be continued.)

HE REBUFFED THE COLLECTOR.

Rebuffed Him So that He Forgot to Present His Bill.

"Quick! See that fellow?" exclaimed the bill collector to a Kansas City Star man. "That burly-looking guy coming out of the barber shop. He's a cross between a coyote and a grizzly bear; good at getting away, you know, and a bad man when he's cornered. He runs a sort of miscellaneous business in east bottom. I know him well—very well. His name's Sprezz."

"He got us in for a small amount and the boss told me to try my luck. So I mooched out there for several days and had long heart-to-heart talks with a diminutive office boy, but the boss of the dump never came near. The said he was out collecting his bad bills."

"Well, for the first few days," continued the collector, "I didn't mind my slim work in the east bottom, but when you keep a thing up forever, and still nothing in sight, it is quite vexing, you know. The office boy informed me that Mr. Sprezz wasn't having much luck with his collections. Encouraging, wasn't it?"

"But perseverance always counts, you know, and I finally caught my man. I was pretty sore by this time, and decided to unload on him. The office kid opened the boss' door and gave me a gentle push. My victim was crouched on a cracker box, numbing up a column of figures—his bad bills, I guess. His back looked me in the face—one of those square, man-looking backs."

"Oh, I was going to say a lot of things, but I didn't get the chance, for just then Mr. Sprezz reached in his desk and pulled out a horse pistol, and then he hit around on his box and glared at me. He didn't point the pistol at me—he just monkeyed with the trigger."

"Are you the fool collector from Brown & Co? he inquired, casually.

"Er—could you please direct me to Helvi's park?" was all I said."

Fully Qualified.

"So you're after the job, eh?" said the milkman who had advertised for a helper.

"Yes, sir," replied the young man.

"Well, what experience have you had?"

"Why, I've pumped the organ down to our church for years."—Philadelphia Press.

Absent Minded.

Stranger (with suitcase)—Can you advise me, sir, as to the nearest route to the leading hotel?

The Native—Straight ahead three blocks. Two dollars, please.

Stranger—Eh!

Native—Bog pardon. Force of habit. My card. I'm Dr. Pellet.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

No Graft in It.

"See here," said the lieutenant of police, "that countryman claims he told you of his experience with a bunco man, but you paid no attention to him."



Opinions of Great Papers on Important Subjects.

TRAGEDY TEARING.

ANY young woman drowned herself near Wilmington, Del., the other day because she could not resist the playful taunts of her associates about a trivial personal matter. She had asked them to stop, but they persisted. She threatened to end her life if the persecution continued, and still they teased her. Then she snatched her throat into execution, and now the young body who engaged in her pastime of annoyance are overwhelmed with regret.

This tragedy carries an impressive lesson, applicable to great numbers of people who do not realize the sensibility of others. Of the present reference to a subject that is painful to another. Yet this form of torment is indulged in constantly. Parents tease their children about things that may seem trifling to them, but are serious and important to the little folks. They cause great suffering of mind by this incessantly "poking fun" at the youngsters whom they are supposed to cherish and guard from pain.

The expression is often heard: "Oh, it is good for her. She is too sensitive. She will have to get used to being criticised and teased while she is young." But this very treatment is calculated to render the child more severely susceptible to mental torture than before. It may not be doubted that many a child's nature is warped by injudicious familiarity on the part of its elders.—Washington Star.

THE STOCK EXCHANGE.

ANY person think of the New York Stock Exchange as a seat of commercial iniquity, and have been encouraged in this view by imaginative articles picturesque and expert in phrasing, but not so accurate as they ought to be.

When something unusual, like the recent decline of stocks, calls attention to "the market," we realize how little thought most of us give to it day by day. It seems remote from the interests of the man of small means. But the central stock-market is a solid and important institution, and the conditions which it indicates at the end of each day's trading are almost sure signs of the state of the country's production and commerce.

It is true that a great many of the transactions on the stock exchange are mere gambling, and represent nothing more than the turning of money from one man's pocket into another's; it is also true that even in legitimate trading there is a fever and hysteria which perverts not only commercial values, but life values.

Nevertheless, most of the cheery and madness of stock transactions flourishes not in the central market, nor in the offices of those who guide it, but in the suburbs of the business, in offices not related to the exchange or to any reputable banking house.

Real stock transactions bear a definite relation to the business of the country, and after due allowance is made for the artificial manipulations, so difficult to

practice on the market as a whole, we find the exchange a sound register of the state of the country. The same things that all human beings fear, crop failure, war, strikes, depress the market. That is why men were afraid when the market "broke"; not so much because they care for the stocks, as that they feared the signs of the end of prosperity. Fortunately the market recovered, and there was no panic. But for a few days all intelligent persons watched the market with respect and attention.—Youth's Companion.

BOYS AND THE STREET.

THE Illinois Senate has passed a bill which will have the effect, if it becomes law, of requiring boys between 14 and 16 to be lawfully employed during school hours or to be in school. Some latitude will probably be allowed to the interpretation of the word "employed," so that it may cover useful work at home or under the direction of the boy's parents as well as work for hire. The intent is to keep off the streets the boys who are not in school.

The street is not the place for a boy under 16. Habits of idleness unfit the boy for serious work and give him a distaste for it. No phase of the criminal history of the city is more disquieting than the increase in the number of adolescent criminals during recent years. This increase is due, more than anything else, to the failure of parents to see to it that their boys are kept under discipline after they have reached the age of 14. The gang that meets near the corner saloon is not good company for the boy who expects to make a success of life. Boys who will be men can be made or ruined by the habits into which they fall before the age of 16.

Idleness during two of the most important of the formative years is likely to lead to incompetence and failure, if nothing more serious. It is better for a boy to enter upon life as fully equipped for the struggle as possible. To some boys two years more of school would be an invaluable help. To others an earlier start in business or a trade would be more important. But to no one in average health can two years of the lessons of the street be anything but harmful.—Chicago Tribune.

PLAY A NECESSITY OF LIFE.

THE gospel of play will, we are confident, win for itself a hearing as the gospel of wholesome and a fuller life. It will go far to create a better race of men, a better social state and throw a new light on the plea of grime and "other worldiness." What we have said has been applied mainly to city life, to the overpacked and unnatural crowd; but it is applicable in a modified form to country life. The people who live among the trees and brooks do get, in spite of themselves, a certain relaxation, yet they need what they do not get—the useless sport, the utter relief for a portion of each day from "trying to make ends meet."—New York Independent.

SHAKESPEARE QUOTED BIBLE.

Present Generation Knows Many More Things than Men of Old.

"Yes," said Rev. John Snyder, author of "As Ye Sow," "we know many things better than our ancestors knew them. We know more about microbes and scientific benevolence and expert sanitation. But they knew more about the Bible. It was a part of their very intellectual and spiritual life."

"Do you realize," continued Mr. Snyder, "how much of the Bible there is in Shakespeare's plays? A great English bishop declares that these plays contain nearly 400 biblical quotations and references. Which do you think of all the Shakespeare characters quotes the Bible most frequently? You would probably never guess."

"Nobody but that delightful old roborator, Sir John Falstaff. When the old sinner is on his deathbed Dame Quickly, you will remember, says he 'babbled of green fields.' Mr. Richardson, the celebrated Shakespeare reader, says he was probably attempting to repeat the twenty-third psalm."

"But how many people—even people of education and intellectual culture—understand the biblical allusions of Shakespeare to-day? A few years ago a college president presented to one of his classes (young men from all the different conditions of American life) a collection of nineteen biblical allusions taken from the works of Tennyson. The young men were asked to explain the allusions. The mistakes they made were simply ridiculously astounding. They reminded you of the man who thanked the preacher for telling the congregation the facts concerning Sodom and Gomorrah. He said he had always seen the names associated, but he supposed they were man and wife."

That scarcely seems an exaggeration. R. Melville Baker says he was reading a play to an intelligent actor one day. One line contained a reference to Ananias. "Who's he?" asked the actor. Mr. Baker smiled and said: "Don't you know Ananias?" "Never heard of him," said the actor, "and I guess I never heard of him the line out."—Boston Globe.

Changing His Colors.

Jacob A. Hills tells of a little boy who earned his living by blocking books. Every Sunday he attended a mission school. This school, through its well-schooled teachers, decided to have a Christmas tree. The gifts for the pupils were provided for them by the teachers and some patrons of the school.

Jimmy, the bootblack, was disappointed when his present proved to be a copy of Browning's poems. He folded it carefully in the paper in which he received it, and took it home.

The next Sunday the superintendent of the mission school announced that any child who was disappointed with his or her gift could exchange it.

Jimmy marched boldly to the front with him.

"Having you there, Jimmy?"

"Browning, sir."

"And what do you want in exchange?"

"Blacking, sir."

A Sole Theory.

"A shoemaker is the most paradoxical of human beings."

"Why so?"

"Because his first word is his last."

—Baltimore American.

CATS ARE FOND OF FISHING.

Naturalist Says Many Are Disciples of Isaac Walton.

"Cats," said a naturalist, "are very fond of fishing. I have personally known three feline fishers. One was a mere acquaintance and used to fish in a trout stream. The other two were admirers of a country-house in which I lived and during the summer months used to fish in a nearby lake every evening.

They would crouch on the shore and suddenly jump into an advancing wave-let, very frequently bringing out a small fish. When they had kittens I have sometimes seen them bring up to the house three fish in the space of an hour.

"I know of a cat, whose home was close to a stream, that was a regular and accomplished fisher. She was a half Persian. Her daughter belongs to friends of mine, and I have myself seen this latter watching the goldfish in the children's aquarium, which at that time was open at the top and on a broad window seat.

"Fuss put in one paw and stirred the water violently, then sat down to watch with apparent satisfaction the terror of the fish, which she could not on that occasion reach. Once the family found she had caught one and killed a second, so the aquarium was afterward always covered by wire or net.

One of this cat's kittens belonged to me, and during her short life of under a year was very dependent on human companionship. She came up to my bedroom frequently the first thing in the morning and always took great interest in my wash basin, from which she would fish out the sponge or soap, and liked to have her paw in the water."

"Nerves" National Ailment.

Neurasthenia is a long word and a naughty one; it covers a multitude of sins and follies. No other disease known to man is so characteristically national as nerves. It has become a joke, a bore, a reproach, but it remains a fact.

The symptoms of the malady are widespread and wonderfully varied. Mr. Harriman's famous "Wow, wow, wow" is as clear a pathological mark as the President's incessant activity or Mr. Rockefeller's baldness and golf habit or Tom Lawson's advertising mania. Very few of our great men, in fact, fail to betray some sign of the national disease.

But the collective phase of nerves, the neurasthenic condition of the community, is more interesting than any individual case. Large masses of apparently healthy citizens manifest an evident hysteria over some trivial or disgusting topic of news.

Another form of the community attack of the nerves is the craze such as the bridge mania through which we are now passing. The same lesson could be found in the current drama, in the thirst for elemental plays or in popular fiction.

The Book Advertisement of a Saturday Newspaper.

The book advertisement of a Saturday newspaper are enough to convict the publishers and writers of neurasthenia if not the readers of their wares. The shrieks and screams are all symptoms.

The one cure is fresh air and less of the cause, whatever it may be—less drink or money making or ambition or love of life. The neurasthenic is rarely incurable; he is often a brilliant person temporarily unbalanced. If he gets hold of himself in time he may avoid the rest cure. And the public, if it takes a brace, may avoid a kind of national rest cure, which is depressing and costly.—Saturday Evening Post.

Black Bear and Her Cubs.

The black bear has her cubs, from one to three, in her den during the months of March and April, and it is an interesting thing to know that she has the power to give birth to her young at least two weeks before the proper time if driven from her den. She will return to her cubs if let alone.

In the den she cares for her young until the snows of the north country have melted to permit of her getting about, when she "bits the trail" again. She eats nothing during the five months that she hibernates, except that from time to time she will lap the icicle which is made by the freezing of her breath on her paws.

She ventures forth as soon as the snow has sufficiently melted to permit of her getting about and for several days eat nothing but hemlock bark and certain roots, which act as a physic.

When in her normal state of health again she is ravenously hungry and will diligently fish the brooks and streams in search of a dinner of trout. Will hunt up the carcasses of deer or moose which have been overcome by the severity of the winter or will prey upon porcupines by quickly pulling her jaw under the stomach and rolling the porcupine on its back, then with a slap tear out the entrails and escape the quills.—Field and Stream.

Quietus on Questioner.

A kindly faced woman showed great interest in going through the New York Home for Blind Men. Seeing one sightless man bustling carrying a chair, she said sympathetically:

"I don't see how you men do that work at all."

"That's the way with us, madame," said the worker, cheerfully. "We don't see how we do it ourselves."

To another blind man she said:

"Do you close your eyes when you sleep?"

"Oh, no, madame; we have a watchman that goes around and closes 'em for all of us at 10 o'clock."

When He Was Sober.

In the Recorder's Court in Atlanta a majority of the persons tried are negroes, and the bulk of their erring is in drinking too much. Not long since a shifty-looking negro was arraigned for habitual drunkenness. The principal witness against him was his wife. She was on the witness stand, with Recorder Broyles applying his incisive scalpel.

"Does your husband stay drunk all the time?" asked the Recorder.

"No, sah, not all de time. Sometimes I ain't got any job."