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The Girl He Left Behind Him

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John Hobbs was a Yorkshireman, born on his father's farm, worked on his father's farm and was contented on his father's farm. He had received only a few years' schooling, but he was a bit of a philosopher in his own way. He was engaged to be married to Ellen Brierly and expected to inherit her father's farm and live and die there. Ellen was a high strung, emotional girl and when the war with Germany broke out insisted that John should enlist.

"What for?" asked John.

"Why, all the men are enlisting."

"It seems to me, if that's so, some one 'ad better stay 'ome and do the farmin'."

"But think of the excitement of going off to the war with the flags flying, the drums beating and the band playing 'The Girl I Left Behind Me!'"

"And hobblin' back singin' 'the leg I left be'ind me.'"

"John, I'm afraid you're a coward."

John looked at her, leaning on the spade with which he had been digging, then threw it down and said:

"I can't stand that from the girl I love. I'm goin' to enlist."

"Forgive me," said Ellen, throwing her arms about him. "I knew you weren't afraid to go to the war. I thought you needed a little prodding."

"I'm goin' to war to please you. I don't believe in wars. The fellers that

go either don't come back or, if they do, they find the excitement all over and people talkin' about somethin' else. They don't cut no figure at all. The fellers that stayed at 'ome has got the jobs, and the soldier 'as to git a livin' the best way 'e can."

"Don't fear for that, Johnny, dear. I'll be 'ere to welcome you back, and if you are maimed I'll take care of you for the rest of your life."

She kissed him and patted him to make him feel better about the sacrifice he was making, but Johnny refused to be comforted. However, he went to the nearest recruiting station and enlisted. When he marched away with the regimental band playing "The Girl I Left Behind Me" Ellen stood by the roadside waving her handkerchief at him, her eyes bedimmed with tears.

One day, the better part of a year later, a discharged soldier, walking along a road in Yorkshire on one flesh leg and a wooden one, met a man with a hoe on his shoulder.

"Mister," said the ex-soldier, "Hi been to the war. Hi was taken prisoner by the Germans on the battlefield, all hexcept my leg, that was shot off and wasn't worth anything. I been a prisoner for months, but was hexchanged not long ago and sent 'ome. I went from this place and want to arsk you about some people I left 'ere. Wot's become o' Ellen Brierly?"

"Wot's Ellen Brierly to you?" snarled the man.

"Wot's she to me? A good deal, seein' that Hi went to the war for 'er sake and left my leg in Belgium for 'er sake too."

"Are you John 'Obbs?"

"Fauncy I are, wot's left o' me. Besides my leg, my right 'and 'as gone and my left heye."

"And you've come back to marry your sweet'art?"

"Hi fauncy. She promised to take

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care o' me for the rest o' my life if I came back maimed."

The man looked thoughtful, stroked his beard, changed the leg he was standing on several times, then said:

"This 'ere promisn' to take care o' any one for life is a bad business."

"Ow so?"

"I promised to take care of a woman for 'er life, and I'm a-doin' of it, but it's a 'ard job. I wouldn't mind givin' 'er to you to take care of you."

"I don't want 'er. I want Ellen Brierly, the girl I left behind me when I went to the war and the girl I went to the war to please."

"I'm sorry you did that."

"Why?"

"Well, your goin' to the war got me into a lot o' trouble. I was mighty independent in them days. I 'ad no worryment wotsoever. A girl took a shine to me and married me. I ain't 'ad no peace since."

"Is that wot comes o' matrimony?"

"That's wot come to me. See 'ere, young fellow. I fancy it was very 'ard stayin' in German 'ospitals and leavin' your leg and your fingers behind you and losin' your eye, but you missed a lot o' troubles worse than that by goin'."

"Wot troubles?"

"The troubles o' matrimony. You missed 'em; I got 'em."

"Ow so?"

"I married the girl you left behind you."

"Wot! You married Ellen Brierly?"

"I did. I knew that a feller named John 'Obbs that 'ad gone to the war was expectin' to marry 'er when 'e got back—if he ever did git back—and I thought I was wrongin' 'im. I don't mind John the best I can to make amends. If you want 'er I'll light out and say nothin' about it, leavin' 'er to you."

John Hobbs thought awhile before accepting or declining this very self sacrificing offer. Finally he said:

"That's very kind 'earted o' you, my friend, but seein' 'ow you and Ellen is married it wouldn't be 'onorable o' me to crowd you out. I'm goin' to my father and mother, and I fancy they'll be glad to take care o' me. So long."

And he stumped on.

The amen of nature is always a flow-er.—Holmes.

THE STRASSBURG CLOCK.

Its Many Remarkable Features That Make It Famous.

Strassburg, the capital of Alsace-Lorraine, is remarkable for the great clock of its cathedral.

This clock, which is twenty feet in height, was made by Jean Baptiste Schwilgue in 1842. Besides various astronomical devices indicating true solar time, it has a great planetarium in which the revolutions of the planets are represented, so that the relative positions of each at any time can be seen at a glance.

Then on a platform above are movable figures representing the four ages of man. At the first quarter of an hour a child strikes the bell with a rattle; a youth in the garb of a hunter strikes it with an arrow at the half hour; at the third quarter a warrior strikes it with his sword, and at the fourth quarter an old man strikes it with his crutch. Then a figure of Death appears and strikes the full hour with a fleshless bone.

On the highest platform is a natural sized figure of Christ, and when Death strikes the hour at noon the twelve apostles pass before the feet of their master, bowing as they do so. As Peter passes a large cock perched off on one side flaps his wings, ruffles his neck and gives three times a loud and perfectly natural crow.—London Standard.

Sunshine and Dust.

There is more dust in the places illuminated by the sun's rays than in those which we call shady. If you look along a beam of light as it streams through a window or a chink in the door you will see innumerable dust particles dancing about in the light. You will be told by most persons that there is just as much dust in the non-illuminated parts of the room as in the more favored spaces, but you cannot see the particles because the rays do not fall directly upon them. You will think that this is eminently plausible, but it is not the case. The sun falling upon the air creates irregular currents, and these currents stir up the dust and collect it in layers along the line of light; hence there is more dust where the sun shines than elsewhere.—Exchange.

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