FROM

POORHOUSE TO PALACE

BY MARY J. HOLMES

CHAPTER IV.—(Continued.)

With the utmost care Ella arranged her long curls, and then, tying over her black dress the only white apron which she possessed, she started for Mrs. Campbell's. The resemblance between herself and Ella Campbell was indeed so striking that but for the dress the mother might easily have believed it to have been her own child. As it was, she started up when the little girl appeared, and, drawing her to her side, involuntarily kissed her; then, causing her to sit down by her side, she minutely examined her features, questioning her meantime concerning her mother and her home in England. Of the latter Ella could only tell her that they lived in a city, and that her mother had once taken her to a large, handsome house in the country, which she said was her old home.

From this Mrs. Campbell inferred that Ella's family must have been superior to most of the English who emigrate to this country, and after a few more questions she decided to take her for a time at least; so with another kiss she dismissed her, telling her she would come for her soon. Meantime arrangements were making for Mary and Alice, and on the same day in which Mrs. Campbell was to call for Ella Mr. Knight, one of the "selectmen," whose business it was to look after the town's poor, also came to the cottage. After learning that Ella was provided for, he turned to Mary, asking, "how old she was, and what she could do," saying that his wife was in want of just such a girl to do "chores," and if she was willing to be separated from Alice he would give her a home with him.

But Mary only hugged her sister closer to her bosom as she replied, "I'd rather go with Alice. I promised mother to take care of her."

"Very well," said the man. "I'm going to North Chicopee, but shall be back in two hours, so you must have your things all ready."

"Don't cry so, Mary," whispered Billy, when he saw how fast her tears were falling. "I'll come to see you every week, and when I am older, and have money, I will take you from the poorhouse, and Alice, too."

Just then Mrs. Campbell's carriage drove up. She had been taking her afternoon ride, and now, on her way home, had stopped for Ella, who in her delight at going with so handsome a woman, forgot the dreary home which awaited her sister. While she was getting ready Mr. Knight returned, and, driving his old-fashioned yellow wagon up by the side of Mrs. Campbell's stylish carriage, he entered the house, saying, "Come, gal, you're ready, I hope. The old mare don't want to stand, and I'm in a despit hurry, too. I ort to be to hum this minute, instead of driving over that stony Partupog road. I hope you don't mean to carry that ar' thing," he continued, pointing with his whip toward Alice's cradle, which stood near Mary's box of clothes.

The tears came into Mary's eyes, and she answered, "Alice has always slept in it, and I didn't know but——"

Here she stopped and, running up to Ella, hid her face in her lap and sobbed, "I don't want to go. Oh! I don't want to go; can't I stay with you?"

Billy's yellow handkerchief was suddenly brought into requisition, and Mrs. Bender, who, with all her imaginary aches and pains, was a kind-hearted woman, made vigorous attacks upon her snuffbox, while Mrs. Campbell patted Mary's head, saying, "Poor child, I can't take you both, but you shall see your sister often."

Ella was too much pleased with Mrs. Campbell and the thoughts of the fine home to which she was going to weep, but her chin quivered when Mary held up the baby for her to kiss, and said, "Perhaps you will never see little Allie again."

When all was ready Mr. Knight walked around his wagon, and, after trying to adjust the numerous articles it contained, said: "I don't see how in the world I can carry that cradle; my wagon is chuck full now. Here is a case of shoes for the gals to stitch, and a pillercase of flour for Miss Smith, and forty 'leven other traps, so I guess you'll have to leave it. Mebby you can find one there, and if not, why, she'll soon get used to going without it."

Before Mary could reply Billy whispered in her ear, "Never mind, Mary; you know that little cart that I draw mother's wood in; the cradle will just fit it, and to-morrow afternoon I'll bring it to you, if it doesn't rain."

Mary knew that he meant what he said, and, smiling on him through her tears, climbed into the rickety wagon, which was minus a step, and, taking Alice into her arms, she was soon moving away. In striking contrast to this Ella, about five minutes afterward, was carefully lifted into Mrs. Campbell's handsome carriage, and reclining upon soft cushions was driven rapidly toward her new home.

Will their paths in life always continue thus different? Who can tell?

CHAPTER V.

How long and tiresome that ride was, with no one for a companion except Mr. Knight, who, though a kind-hearted man, knew nothing about making himself agreeable to little girls, so he remained perfectly taciturn. Alice soon fell asleep, and though the little arms which held her ached sadly, there was no complaint.

Only Mary's tears gushed forth, and falling upon the baby's face awoke her. Her nap was not half out, and setting up a loud cry she continued screaming until they drove up to the very door of the poorhouse.

"For the land's sake," said Mr. Knight, as he helped Mary from the wagon, "what a racket; can't you contrive to stop it? you'll have Sal Furbush in your hair, for she don't like a noise."

Mary glanced nervously round in quest of the goblin Sal, but she saw nothing save an idiotic face with bushy, tangled hair, and nose flattened against the window pane. In terror Mary clung to Mr. Knight, and whispered, as she pointed toward the figure, which was now laughing hideously: "What is it? Are there many such here?"

"Don't be afeerd," said Mr. Knight; "that's nobody but foolish Patsy; she never hurt anybody in her life. Come, now, let me show you to the overseer." And he led her toward the red-whiskered man, who stood in the door.

"Here, Parker," said he, "I've brought them children I was tellin' you about. You've room for 'em, I s'pose?"

"Why, ye-es, we can work it so's to make room."

They now entered the kitchen. Mary was very tired with holding Alice so long, and, sinking into a chair near the window, she would have cried; but there was a tightness in her throat, and a pressure about her head and eyes which kept the tears from flowing. She pressed her hands tightly and said, "Oh, I hope I shan't faint."

"To be sure you won't," said a loud, harsh voice, and instantly large drops of water were thrown in her face, while the same voice continued: "You don't have such spells often, I hope, for Lord knows I don't want any more fitty ones here."

"No, ma'am," said Mary, meekly; and looking up, she saw before her a tall, square-backed, masculine looking woman, who wore a very short dress, and a very high-crowned cap, fastened under her chin with bows of sky-blue ribbon. Mary secretly hoped she would not prove to be Mrs. Parker, the wife of the overseer. She was soon relieved of her fears by the overseer himself, who said, "Polly, I don't see any other way but you'll have to take these children into the room next to yourn. The baby worries a good deal, and such things trouble my wife, now she's sick."

The person addressed as "Polly" gave her shoulders an angry jerk, and sticking the pin on the waist of her dress, replied, "So, I s'pose it's no matter if I'm kept awake all night, and worried to death. But I guess you'd find there'd be queer doin's here if I should be taken away. I wish the British would stay to hum, and not lug their young ones here for us to take care of. Come, child, I will show you where you are going to sleep;" at the same time she caught up Alice, who, not liking her handling, kicked so vigorously that she was soon dropped, Polly remarking that "she was mighty strong in her legs for a sick baby."

After passing up a dark stairway they came to a door, which opened under the garret stairs, and Mary was startled by a voice which seemed to be almost over her head, and which, between a sneer and a hiss, called out, "See where the immaculate Miss Grundy comes!" Mary sprang in terror to Polly's side.

"Oh, what is it?" she said. "Is it Patsy?"

"Patsy!" was the tart reply. "She never is saucy like that. It's Sal Furbush."

Mary asked who Sal Furbush was, and was told she was one of the poor insane inmates. She subsequently learned that Sal was perfectly harmless, and struck up quite a friendship with her. At present Mary followed her guide until they came to a longer and lighter hall, or "spaceway," as it is frequently called in New England. On each side of this there were doors opening into small sleeping rooms, and into one of these Polly led her companion, saying, as she did so, "This is your room, and it's a great favor to you to be so near me. But mind, that child mustn't cry and keep me awake nights, for if she does, maybe you'll have to move into that other space, where we heard the laugh."

Mary thought she would rather do anything than that. She also felt a great curiosity to know who her companion was, so she at last ventured to ask, "Do you live here, Miss Polly?"

"Why, yes. I'm staying here for a spell now; kind of seeing things. My name isn't Polly. It's Mary Grundy, and somehow folks have got to nicknaming me Polly, but it'll look more mannerly in you to call me Mrs. Grundy; but what am I thinking of? The folks must have their supper."

That night Alice, who missed her cradle, was unusually restless, and Mary, remembering Mrs. Grundy's threat, carried her in her arms until after midnight. Then, without undressing, she threw herself upon the bed, and for the first time in many weeks dreamed of George and his parting promise to see her again. The next morning when she awoke, the clouds were pouring rain. "Billy won't come to-day," was her first thought, and, throwing herself upon the floor, she burst into tears, wishing, as she had once done before, that she had died with her mother.

In the midst of her grief the door was pushed hastily open, and Mrs. Grundy's harsh voice exclaimed, "Wall, so you are up at last, hey? I didn't know but you was goin' to take it upon you to sleep over, but that don't answer here. Do you think we's goin' to support you in idleness?"

Here, touched perhaps by the pale, tearful face, uplifted to hers, Mrs. Grundy's voice softened, and in a milder tone she added, "We won't mind about it, seein' it's the first morning; but, come—you must be hungry by this time."

Mary glanced at Alice. She was sleeping sweetly, and, though there seemed to be no reason, she still lingered.

"What are you waiting for?" asked Mrs. Grundy, and Mary, with some hesitation, answered, "I haven't said my prayers yet."

A change passed suddenly over Mrs. Grundy's face, and she turned away without a word. When she was gone Mary fell on her knees, and though the words she uttered were addressed more to her mother than to God, she felt comforted, and, rising up, started for the kitchen. It was a motley group which she found assembled around the breakfast table, and as she entered the room a man called Uncle Peter smiled on her, saying, "Come here, little daughter, and let me touch you with the top of my fourth finger."

About noon the clouds broke away, while here and there a patch of bright blue sky was to be seen. But the roads were so muddy that Mary had no hope of Billy's coming, and this it was, perhaps, which made the dinner dishes so hard to wash, and which made her cry when told that all the knives and forks must be scoured, the teakettle wiped and set with its nose north, in what Mrs. Grundy called the "Pout Hole," and which proved proved to be a place under the stairs, where pots, kettles and ironware generally were kept.

All things have an end, and so did the scouring, in spite of Mary's fears to the contrary, and then watching a time when Mrs. Grundy did not see her, she stole away upstairs. Taking Alice on her lap, she sat down by the open window where the damp air cooled and moistened her flushed face. The rain was over, and across the meadow the sun was shining through the tall trees, making the drops of water which hung upon the leaves sparkle and flash in the sunlight like so many tiny rainbows. Mary watched them for a time, and then looking into the road, she saw directly opposite the house Billy Bender and with him Alice's cradle. In a moment Mary's arms were thrown around his neck as tightly as if she thought he had the power and was come to take her away.

"Oh, Billy, Billy," said she. "I was afraid you would not come, and it made me so unhappy."

As Billy released her he was startled at hearing some one call out, "Bravo! That, I conclude, is a country hug. I hope she won't try it on me!"

Turning about he saw before him a white-faced boy, nearly of his own age, whose dress and appearance indicated that he belonged to a higher grade, as far as wealth was concerned. It was Henry Lincoln, notorious both for pride and insolence. Billy, who had worked for Mr. Lincoln, had been insulted by Henry many a time, and now he longed to avenge it, but native politeness taught him that in the presence of Mary 'twould not be proper, so without a word to Henry he whispered to the little girl, "That fellow lives near here, and if he ever gives you trouble just let me know."

"Kissed her then, didn't you?" sneeringly asked Henry, retreating at the same time, for there was something in Billy's eyes which he feared.

"Come into the house," said Mary, "where he can't see us," and leading the way she conducted him up to her own room, where there was no fear of being interrupted.

Alice was first carefully fixed in her cradle, and then kneeling down at Billy's side, and laying her arms across his lap, Mary told him of everything which had happened, and finished by asking, "how long she must stay here?"

Had Billy's purse been as large as his heart, that question would have easily been answered. Now he could only shake his head in reply, while Mary next asked if he had seen Ella.

"I have not seen her," returned he, "but I've heard that rainy as it was this morning, Mrs. Campbell's maid was out selecting muslins and jaconets for her, and they say she is not to wear black, as Mrs. Campbell thinks her too young."

Mary did not speak for some time, but her head dropped on Billy's knee, and she seemed to be intently thinking. At last, brushing aside the hair which had fallen over her forehead, Billy said: "What are you thinking about?"

"I was wondering if Ella wouldn't forget me and Alice now she is rich and going to be a lady."

Billy had thought the same thing, and lifting the little girl in his lap, he replied: "If she does, I never will," and then he told her again how when he was older and had money he would take her from the poorhouse and send her to school, and that she should some time be as much of a lady as Ella.

(To be continued.)

NOT CONCLUSIVE OF GUILT.

Fair-Minded Men Are Often Deceived by Circumstantial Evidence.

"As to circumstantial evidence, it's a queer thing," said the man in the brown suit. "Five or six years ago I was in a town in Indiana for a night when a bank was robbed. Next morning I was arrested as an accomplice, it being contended that I was seen idling in front of the bank and evidently acting as sentinel for those within. Three different persons identified me as the man and the fourth claimed to have seen me enter the hotel at a late hour by way of a shed and a window. I was locked up for examination, with a chance of things going hard with me, when evidence began to come forward on my side. The landlord asserted and swore that I was sitting in the office at 10 o'clock p. m. Two servants swore to seeing me go to my room half an hour later. A man having rooms opposite the hotel swore that he saw me smoking at my window at midnight. A guest of the hotel who had a room next to mine swore that my snores disturbed him from midnight till 2 o'clock and that he heard me turn over in bed at 3, and so I was honorably discharged from custody."

"But about it's being queer?" was asked.

"Why, all the people on both sides were mistaken. I was not outside the bank at the time mentioned and neither was I in the hotel."

"But you were somewhere."

"Oh, of course. Fact is I got mashed on the landlord's daughter and we sat up all night on a balcony and squoze hands and talked love and looked at the moonlight and slapped mosquitoes. Yes, sir, sat there all night like a couple of idiots, and though I declared I would die for her and she said she only wanted me and a humble cottage she was married to a red-headed butcher within a year and I was sued by a snub-nosed widow for breach of promise. I was simply observing, you know, that circumstantial evidence is a queer thing, and I wish to add that a juryman shouldn't be influenced too much by it."—Washington Post.

Chasing a Bear.

Any one who has seen a bear walk knows how slowly he seems to move, and his run is a shuffling, lumbering gait that is comical to witness, unless he happens to be running after you. But a bear moves pretty fast, notwithstanding appearances, and the grizzly, which looks to be clumsier than the brown or black bear, can cover ground faster than the average saddle-horse. A Philadelphia exchange prints this story of an Arizona sheep-rancher:

He was riding in the foot-hills when he saw a big, awkward silvertip. He had a rifle, but was not certain he could kill the bear at one shot, and knew that he would get into trouble if he missed. So he gave a regular cowboy yell, and the bear started away in alarm. The man gave chase, at the same time keeping up the piercing yell, and he soon noticed that the grizzly was getting farther away. He continued the chase for nearly two miles, until the bear disappeared in the mountains, and he had not gained a foot.

In going back along the trail, he noticed places where the bear had made jumps of fifteen or twenty feet, and the ground had been cut up by his claws so that it looked as if a harrow had been run over it. It is evident that a man would have no show running a foot-race with a grizzly.

Assured of a Long Life.

Mrs. Knowit—So you are engaged to Miss Sweetly? I do not wish to discourage you, but I understand that she has said she has absolutely no wish to know how to cook.

Mr. Wise—That's right; I proposed as soon as I heard it.—Baltimore American.

Stingy.

"Barlow is rather close, isn't he?"

"Close? He's stingy. He lets the students in the barbers' college shave him and cut his hair, in order to save expense."

Give a grateful man more than he asks.

HISTORY OF RUBBER.

WORLD HAS BEEN SLOW TO APPRECIATE ITS USES.

Man Who Came with Columbus Saw Haytians Playing Ball—Early Used to Exclude Water from Coats and Boots—Increasing Importations.

"The world was a long time learning the uses and value of rubber. For two centuries after the Spaniards saw the gum in the hands of natives of the new world, it was little more than a curiosity. Old Herrea, who went with Columbus on his second voyage, made a note of an elastic ball which was molded from the gum of a tree. At their games the nude Haytians made it bound high in the air. The Aztecs were familiar with the gum and called it ule, and from them the Spaniards learned to smear it on their coats to keep out the wet. They had crossed the seas for gold, and never dreamed of a time when the sticky milk the uncouth Indians drew from strange trees would be worth more than all the treasure of the hills. (On Feb. 23, 1899, a ship carrying a cargo of 1,167 tons of rubber valued at $2,210,000 sailed from Para, for New York, leaving 200 tons behind on the wharf.) Jose, King of Portugal, in 1555, comes down to us as the wearer of a pair of boots sent out to Para to be covered with a waterproof gum. Yet three hundred years were to elapse before a Connecticut Yankee should make a pair of boots of rubber which would not decompose. Dr. Priestley, author of a work on 'Perspective,' now forgotten, recorded that caoutchouc (pronounced 'kachook') was useful in small cubes for rubbing out pencil marks—hence the name rubber. The India linked with it refers to the savages who gathered it in the Amazon wilderness. Dr. Priestley's cubes were half an inch long and sold for three shillings, or seventy-five cents apiece. A stiff price, for the finest rubber today is a dollar a pound. Its price for ten years has ranged from sixty-two cents to $1.09. The conversion of the gum to useful purposes made but slow headway. The first waterproof cloth in 1797 was the work of an Englishman. It was tentative, and, of course, it would not stand heat. In 1823 Charles Mackintosh, of Glasgow, discovered naphtha, and, dissolving rubber in it, produced a varnish which, when spread on cloth, made it really impervious to water. As late as 1830 the importation of rubber into England amounted only to 50,000 pounds. In 1890 no less than 16,975,584 pounds were consumed in that country, and the consumption in the United States reached 51,606,737 pounds. Most of the rubber used in the world still comes from equatorial South America, and the forests where the Indians gathered ule are as dense to-day and almost as little known to white men as in the time of Cortez."—Ainslee's.

COMICAL WAS CORRIGAN.

An Old-Fashioned Traveling Showman and Ventriloquist.

"I suppose there are more queer byways in the show business than in any other vocation on earth," said an advance agent, chatting after the performance a few nights ago. "I ran across one of the oddities recently," he continued, "in the person of a single-handed entertainer, who has been working a quiet little circuit of his own for the last twenty years, and is beginning to think about retiring on a snug fortune, yet I doubt whether you could find a soul in the city who ever heard of him. My discovery of the gentleman was due to a mislaid railroad schedule that forced me to stop over night at a dreary little country town in West Virginia. Looking around the 'office' of the hotel, which was also dining-room, reading room and smoking room, I was surprised to see a handbill announcing that Comical Corrigan would give one of his well-known and justly popular entertainments at the brick church that evening. The poster went on to say that there was nothing about the show to offend the most fastidious; that it would include comic and sentimental ballads, imitations of wild beasts, ventriloquisms, selections on fourteen separate and distinct musical instruments, a funny stump speech and refined jig and wing dancing, the whole to conclude with 'an exhibition of prestidigitation or parlor magic.'

"That sounded promising, so after supper I sauntered around to the brick church, which I found crowded to the doors. I managed to get a seat, however, and, upon my word, I haven't enjoyed myself as much for years," quotes the New Orleans Times-Democrat. "I was transported back to my boyhood's happy days, and for two solid hours I forgot I had a trouble on earth. Comical Corrigan turned out to be a plump, rosy person, with a flexible face and a jovial eye, and his entertainment was exactly what I remember seeing at our old town hall when I was a little shaver of 9 or 10—the same good, old jokes, the same conundrums, the same stories, the same songs—I don't believe I missed a single boyhood favorite. In the ventriloquism selection he hauled out the two dolls I hadn't seen for so many years, perched them on his knees and began the well-remembered dialogue: 'Well, Sammy, how do you feel?' he asks. 'With my fingers,' squeaks Sammy, in falsetto. Then Comical Corrigan whacked him over the head and we all roared with laughter. When Mr. Corrigan announced that he would 'now recite a pathetic recitation by special request,' I knew he would favor us with 'Curfew Shall Not Ring To-night' before he opened his mouth, and when he asked for a ring to grind to atoms and fire from a pistol in his chaste seance of prestidigitation, or parlor magic, I could hardly get mine off quick enough, I was so anxious to see that dear old trick done again.

"After it was all over I met Corrigan and found him a first-rate fellow. He told me he had been doing that sort of thing ever since 1880—drifted into it by degrees, organizing his circuit of towns, making friends of the church and fraternal order people, and gradually building up a clientele that was now as regular and steady as a clock. He sticks to small places, makes the rounds once a season, and is welcomed everywhere as an old friend. He is under next to no expense, and if it rains on any given date he simply stays over and gives the show the next night. I thought of the trials and vexations of piloting a big company over the road," added the advance agent, "and I envied him from the bottom of my heart."

Fooled Him.

Up in Harlem there lives an old gentleman who is remarkable for his absent-mindedness, his nervousness and his disposition to go off at half cock.

The other night he attended a dinner and did not reach home until 1 o'clock. He was feeling pretty good, but he was master of his movements. He does not carry a night key, as he seldom goes out after dark, so he rang the doorbell, and his daughter, who had been sitting up for him, opened the door. Her mother had gone to bed and was sound asleep. The daughter is a rather waggish young woman, and, as she opened the door, she said: "Just think—it's 1 o'clock and papa isn't in bed."

"What!" yelled the old gentleman. "Not in bed? Where is he, then? Oh, he must be in bed!"

"You can look for yourself, father," said she with a grave countenance.

Up the stairs he hurried, full of excitement. He ran into the bedroom. A light was dimly burning, his wife was sound asleep, but she was alone.

His daughter had followed him upstairs.

"My heavens, daughter, where can he be?" cried the old man in alarm.

"Here he is, father," said the young woman, leading him up to the mirror over the chiffonier.

The old man looked and tumbled, and it cost him a half dozen pairs of gloves to keep the incident from reaching the ears of his wife.—New York Evening World.

An Exclusive Colony.

Those who work in the Du Pont powder mills on the Brandywine, in Delaware, form a queer colony. They are all Irish people, whose ancestors came to this country when the Du Ponts started in business and went to work for them. For generations the Du Ponts and these people have passed their positions from father to son. Like their employers, they intermarry and are very exclusive. They live on what are called Du Pont's banks, which are about three miles from Wilmington. The people of Wilmington know hardly anything about them, for they have few outside acquaintances, and their visits are not frequent. The hills about the banks are the highest in Delaware, and it is at the base of them that these workers live.

The town is lighted at night by the electric plant in the works. The people have their own places of amusements, the principal being the Brandywine Club, which has a finer building than any club in Wilmington. They also have dances and theatricals frequently. Nearly every one of them has lost a relative by an accident in the works. They have their own graveyard, too.—New York Press.

A Helpful Institution.

A lunch room has been opened in Kansas City, under the auspices of the Young Woman's Christian Association, where food is sold at exact cost. The prices seem almost impossible, but judicious management will accomplish wonders. Cream of tomato soup is sold for 5 cents; roast beef with potatoes, the same; two salmon croquettes cost 2 cents; mashed potatoes the same; peas, 3 cents; cabbage salad, 4; apple pie, 5; coffee, tea or milk, 3; cheese, 1 cent; two sandwiches, 5 cents; a hot roll, 1 cent; butter, 1 cent. The men have found out this wonderful opportunity to get food at cost prices and are beginning to edge their way in among the women. Unless they become too numerous they will not be debarred. Let us hope so kindly an institution will prosper, and pave the way for many similar ones.

Elephants in England.

While excavating for the foundations for the new buildings of the Victoria and Albert museums in South Kensington a car load of fossilized bones was brought to the surface by the workmen. These were taken in charge by Dr. Woodward, of the geological department, who pronounced them the remains of the primitive denizens of the soil that lived there before man came to interfere with them. The bones belonged, he said to a London newspaper representative, to the elephant, the stag and the primeval horse, and date back to a time before Great Britain became isolated, ere yet the Straits of Dover had been cut through.

Not Learned in Society Ways.

"There is no use of talking," said one navy officer: "I can't help admiring that man Noah. The way he built his own boat and then sailed it was remarkable."

"Yes," answered the other. "It showed good workmanship. But, you see, Noah wasn't obliged to represent anybody diplomatically when he touched at foreign ports. I doubt very much if he would have known how to behave in a drawing room."

Sickle from the Sphinx.

The oldest piece of wrought iron in existence is believed to be a roughly fashioned sickle blade found by Belzoni, in Karnas, near Thebes. It was imbedded in mortar under the base of the sphinx, and on that account is known as "the sickle of the sphinx." It is now in the British museum, and is believed to be nearly 4,000 years old.

His Next Meal.

"That man says he never knows where he's going to get his next meal."

"Is he so poor?"

"No, but he's a collector and eats wherever he happens to be."—Philadelphia Bulletin.

Only a "Bluff."

The Parson—I hope you are not going fishing on Sunday, my little man.

The Kid—O, no, sir; I am merely carrying this rod so those wicked boys across the street will not suspect that I am on my way to Sunday school.

The more holes there are in a sponge the more water it will hold.

Brevity is the soul of wit—but it doesn't always embody the truth.

HUMOR OF THE WEEK

STORIES TOLD BY FUNNY MEN OF THE PRESS.

Odd, Curious and Laughable Phases of Human Nature Graphically Portrayed by Eminent Word Artists of Our Own Day—A Budget of Fun.

Farmer—See here, you! You remember putting two lightning rods on my barn last spring, didn't you? Well, that barn was struck six weeks after and burned down.

Peddler—Struck by lightning?

"It was."

"In the daytime?"

"No; at night."

"Must'a' been a dark night, wasn't it?"

"Yes; dark as pitch."

"Lanterns burnin'?"

"What lanterns?"

"Didn't you run lanterns up 'em dark nights?"

"Never heard o' anything like that."

"Well, if you didn't know enough to keep your lightning rods showin' you needn't blame me. G-lang!"

Depends on the Doctor's Bill.

Brown—That was a lovely basket of fruit you were carrying home last night, Jones. How much did it cost you?

Jones—I don't know. The doctor is still at the house.

An Innovation.

"I notice," said Bronco Bob, "that you make a rule at a political gatherin' to have all the speaker's close friends an' partners lined up on the platform with him."

"Yes; he is usually accompanied by some of the distinguished men of his own party."

"Well, it's a mighty good idea. In Crimson Gulch, when a man has anything to say, he jes' gets up on the keg an' takes his chances. But I'll have the boys adopt your way. It keeps the opposition from makin' a man reddiculous by comin' up behind an' gettin' the drop on him while he is bowin' and scrapin' to the folks in front."—Washington Star.

Enough for Him.

Reuben—I suppose Sal Whiffletree is all th' world tew yew, Josh?

Josh—Wal, no; but she's all I want uv it—forty dern good acres and a peach orchard!—Puck.

Left.

Wylkins—Did you ever run for office?

Watkyns—Yes.

Wylkins—What luck?

Watkyns—The office ran about twice as fast as I did.—Somerville Journal.

The Benefit of the Doubt.

"Don't you think some of our Congressmen waste a great deal of their time?"

"Well," answered Senator Sorghum, with great deliberation, "you ought not to be too hasty in judging. Unless you look through a man's private ledger, how are you going to know whether he has been wasting his time or not?"—Washington Star.

The Sponge and Its Uses.

Two little girls with snub noses and public-school voices stood in front of the window of a Third avenue drug store yesterday afternoon.

"My!" said one. "Look at the sponges! 'Most a thousand of 'em. What d'yer s'pose they use 'em all for? I didn't think they was so many slates in the world." The other little girl looked at her companion with withering scorn.

"Don't yer know," she sniffed contemptuously, "that windows has to be washed?"—New York Commercial Advertiser.

Profitable Poetry.

Bobbs—There goes a fellow who got $1,000 for a spring poem.

Dobbs—Lucky fellow!

Bobbs—Yes, it was a poem to advertise a car spring.—Baltimore American.

On the Beat.

Joakley—Well, well, the greed of these policemen!

Coakley—What's the matter now?

Joakley—Why, haven't you heard about this new Copper Trust?—Philadelphia Press.

It Cured Her.

"No," said the man in the mackintosh, "my wife doesn't give away any of my old clothes or sell them to the ragman any more. I cured that habit effectually once."

"How was that?" they asked him.

"When I fould she had disposed of a coat I hadn't worn for several weeks I told her there was a letter in it she had given me to mail the last time I had it on. And that was no lie, either," he added, with deep satisfaction.

The Family Silver.

"Fer the land's sake," said the woman in the blue Mother Hubbard as she fastened the clothesline to the division fence, "what do you think of them Joneses telling around that the burglars got in their house an' stole the family silver? Family silver! Huh!"

"It's so, though," said the woman in the next lot. "They had a dollar an' a quarter piled on the mantelpiece fer the grocery bill, an' it was all in silver."—Indianapolis Press.

An Earnest Worshipper.

Dashaway—Miss Calloway took me aside yesterday and wanted to know my honest opinion of you.

Cleverton—I hope, old man, that you gave me a clever send-off!

"Certainly. I told her that you never made love to a girl in your life that you didn't mean it."

Peeaness.

Mr. Isaacstein—Misther Goltstein, dit a shentleman gome in here a leedle vile ago mit hees hat all smashed und dirty, und puy a new one?

Mr. Goldstein—Vell, maype he might, I dunno.

Mr. Isaacstein—Vell, if he dit, I glaim a berrentage.

Mr. Goldstein—Vy is dot?

Mr. Isaacstein—Pecause it vas mine leedle Ikey vat trowed der panana peel on der sitevalk.

True Love.

Briggs—Do you think he really loves her?

Griggs—Of course. How can he help but love a girl with as much money as that?

Push and Pull.

She—He's in the push, all right.

He—How did he get there?

She—Oh, he had a pull.

Spring Warning.

Let us then be up and working
With our hoe and with our spade,
If we ever do expect to
Have our kitchen garden made.

Wise Restraint.

"There's one characteristic in men I profoundly admire."

"What is it, Becky?"

"They can be so raging mad at each other and not show it."

Not a Buffalo.

"Aguinaldo says he will not attend the Buffalo exposition."

"Why not?"

"Because he is not a Buffalo."—Ohio State Journal.

A Man of Peace.

Biggs—There goes a man who will fight at the drop of a hat.

Diggs—Who is he?

Biggs—Justice of the peace.—Ohio State Journal.

Friday Not Unlucky.

Quizz—Do you thing Friday an unlucky day to move?

Bizz—Not for me; I moved on Friday and found out if I'd waited until Saturday my goods would have been attached for rent.—Ohio State Journal.

Compulsory.

First Boarder—Do you believe in the salt cure?

Second Boarder—No, but since our landlady gives us mackerel every morning what's the use to object.—Ohio State Journal.

The Hat Got It.

Dashleigh—Did Miss Avoirdupois make an impression on you at the reception last night?

Flashleigh—No, I am happy to say it was my hat.—Ohio State Journal.

A Model Relative.

"I reckon Bobby's got a letter from his uncle."

"Shouldn't wonder. He's allus been purty kind to Bobby."

"Yes; he's the sort of feller that promises to give a boy a lot of presents if he's good, an' gives 'em to him anyhow."—Puck.

Changed the Prescription.

Patient—Doctor, would you mind stopping at the drug store and paying for this prescription. I'm short of change.

Doctor (hurriedly writing another prescription)—Excuse me. I made a mistake. You don't need any nerve medicine.

One to Be Avoided.

"Do you see that very ordinary-looking man over there?"

"Yes; what of it?"

"He's a man with a history."

"A man with a history! What has he ever done?"

"Nothing at all. He's selling the history by subscription."

A True Prophecy.

"The late editor's wife is something of a humorist."

"Indeed?"

"Yes; took a line from his original salutatory and placed it on his tombstone."

"What was it?"

"'We are here to stay!'"

Defined.

Willie—Pa, what's an "old flame?"

Pa—My son, when a man speaks of "his old flame" he refers to something over which he used to burn his money.

Refined Repartee.

"I never tell all I know," he said, intending to be mysterious.

"Well," she replied, "it certainly can't be because you don't have time."

Hawsers of Monster Size.

The largest cable of modern times is the manilla hawser which was used to tow the drydock to Havana. It is twenty-three inches in circumference, but it is by no means the largest that ever was made, although it has the reputation of breaking the record.

There are at least two others of a greater circumference, but both older. One of these had a circumference of twenty-three inches, and was used for the purpose of anchoring the ship North Carolina in the navy yard at Brooklyn, while the other was a twenty-four-inch hawser, which was used as a sheet-anchor cable on the Tennessee, when she was stationed in the Mediterranean in the '60s.

Such an enormous rope was naturally found to be unwieldy, a fact which was abundantly demonstrated when the vessel encountered a storm in the Bay of Naples. When the Tennessee returned to her native home in America the hawser was sent to the oakum mills and made it into oakum.

All things are for the best—and every mother's son of us thinks he's it.