

The Fireside.

SUNSHINE COMES AT LAST.

BY H. ELLIOTT M'BRIDE.

For twenty-five years they had lived together. Troubles had come to them, but hand in hand Mark Manson and his wife Mary had gone on in life's pathway. They had buried all their children and as one by one they were taken from them their hearts grew heavy and their pathway became darker and darker.

Mark Manson was a farmer. It was not necessary for him to work. "But," he said, "I want to be employed. I must do something, and as I was raised on a farm and know how to do farm work I think I should stick to that kind of work."

We often wonder why it is that at times we step out of the way and say and do unreasonable things. We probably "get a little off," as it is called. And when we are in this "off" state we can hardly be classed as reasonable and accountable beings.

Mark Manson had been unfortunate in some business transactions and this, for a time, had made both him and his wife unhappy. And the loss of their children had weighed heavily on their minds and they were at times fretful and unreasonable.

Mary Manson got up one morning with a new idea in her head. She had heard that the Higgins's, over on the Ridge, had got an annex built to their house, and as the day wore on she began to believe that they—the Mansons—had as good a right to have an annex as anybody else.

"Mark," she said, "I think we'll have an annex, too."

"And what's an annex, too?" asked Mark, who at the time was reading the weekly paper.

"Well, I don't just altogether exactly know, but I think it's a kind of a lean-to, or a sort of a small kitchen leaned up against the other kitchen."

"Oh, is that it?" said Mark. "Well, that would be a queer piece of furniture. I think we've got too much house a leaning around now."

"Now, don't commence objecting," replied his wife. "I ought to know about these things, and you ought to know about the farm work."

"That's so! and I calculate I do know about the farm work. I know also about the house arrangements. I planned this house, didn't I, Mary?"

"Well, you made a queer plan of it, then. I reckon you think you're an architrave."

Mark laughed loud and long. "An architrave! Ho, ho, ho! That goes ahead. Do you know what you're talking about? I think you meant an architect, didn't you, Mary?"

"Well, maybe I did," replied his wife. "I sometimes get somewhat mixed in my words. But you needn't laugh; you make some bad blunders yourself."

"Yes, that's true, Mary, and I'll say nothing more. But go ahead with your suggestions in regard to the annex. No, Mary, don't go ahead. Consider this question first: What do we want an annex for when we already have six rooms?"

"Well, Mark, we want to keep up to the times and stand up alongside

of other people. We don't want to be behind."

"We're not behind, Mary; we're fully abreast of the Higginses and the Hoganses."

"But I say we must have an annex. We have the money and I say we will keep to the Higginses."

"And," replied Mark, "giving way to his temper, 'I say we will not! What care I for the Higginses and the Hoganses? I say we will not have an annex, nor on appendix, either.'"

That was the spark in the powder magazine.

They had both lost their tempers. The storm was on.

Mary sprang to her feet. "I'm going to leave you," she said. "Don't darken my door again. I know what I'm doing, too," she added. But she didn't. She and her husband had both "lost their heads," so to speak. Mary seized her bonnet and was gone in a very short space of time.

Mark kept his seat. He was angry but he thought that when Mary had been out in the open air for a short time she would cool off and come back.

"She's the most unreasonable woman I ever saw," he said to himself. "The idea of building an annex, to our house when we already have six rooms and only us two people to live in them. It shan't be done—no, not by a long shot. I s'pose she's mad. Well, she can just remain in that frame of mind as long as she wants to. I can stand up under the pressure if she can. She's an old fool. It makes me sad to say this, but it's the truth and the truth ought to come out. An appendix! What under the shinin' sun do we want an appendix for? Haven't we got a big house now? Of course we have. Six rooms and the bake oven shed. You might call it seven rooms. And now she wants an appendix. And if she had that, and if we'd count the bake oven shed it would make eight rooms. Why, she's an old fool! Mebbe she's getting a little off. Somebody has said that grief will make some people get a little off."

Then he sat in silence for a while.

"Mebbe," he continued, "I've been a little too hasty. Mebbe I've said too much. Yes, I s'pose I've been too hasty. When I get started I say too much. My dander rises too suddenly and distressingly. I wish now I had kept my mouth shut about the appendix. I could just as well have let her talk on about it as not. It wouldn't have done any harm. But that's just my constitutional failing. I fly off the handle too suddenly. I wish Mary was back. I think mebbe she'll get over it and come back before nightfall."

But she didn't. The shadows were lengthening around the old farm house, and Mark was sitting on the porch anxiously waiting to see her turn into the lane and come up to the house. But she didn't come.

"Well," he said, at last, "I s'pose I said too much. I ought to have thought twice that time before I spoke. But she raised my dander. I don't stop to think when I get angry. Oh, I wish Mary'd come back."

He sat a few minutes and then he sprang up.

"I'll go out and see if I can find her. Oh, dear! wouldn't it make a talk if she'd get clear away. Wouldn't it be a disgrace if she'd run clean off and leave me? Oh, dear! oh, dear! I think it would kill me right on the spot." Mark started on the run. "She'd likely go to Higginses," he reasoned, "and stay a spell just to scare me back into my senses. I'll go right there and I think I'll find her. I'll apologize and then we'll come home together, and I'll never make such an idiot of myself again."

He went to the Higginses rapidly, but she wasn't there, and when informed of the fact, he started again.

"Oh, Father in heaven," he prayed in his agony, "where can she be? If she's entirely gone what shall I do? Oh, what a fool I was! Oh, what a fiend I was to talk to her in that way! I'd rather build sixteen annexes or appendixes, or whatever they are, than to lose her. Oh, heavenly Father grant that I may find her!"

It was now quite dark, and he had gone two miles in the direction of another neighbor's when he heard someone a short distance ahead of him.

"Is it you, Mary?" Is it you?" he exclaimed.

"Yes," came the reply; "I was going home."

"Oh, were you? Oh, were you? Oh, Mary, how I have suffered! Oh, Mary, I am so glad! You shall have half a dozen appendixes if you want them."

"Don't want them," answered Mary. "I was wicked—yes, I was very wicked to treat you so meanly. After I had been gone a while I got to thinking about you and how you suffered when our little darlings died. And that brought me to my senses, and I turned right around to go home."

"Oh," answered Mark, "I am so glad you have come back! I think it would have killed me if you hadn't! Now, Mary, I want it to be distinctly understood that you can have all the annexes you want."

"I tell you, Mark, I don't want a single one. I just think the evil one had got after me and was inciting me to get up a riot. I thank the Lord that I have beaten him off and that I have come out all right." And thus the affair ended.

They lived happily together for many years, and if at any time troubles seemed to be arising they recalled the annex tiff and this never failed to bring peace and harmony.—*United Presbyterian.*

NUGGETS OF GOLD.

He who would regulate the saloon should first try to regulate Mt. Sinai. Good laws cannot always make good people, but good people ought always to make good laws.

You cannot legislate a sinner into a saint, but a saint can so legislate as to make himself a sinner.

The further down you can drive the saloon, the further away you remove temptation from those who work in high places.

Repentance is better late than never, but just as well never as too late.

Thunder storms purify the air, but a burst of righteous indignation never was known to purify a saloon.

"Man is born unto trouble as the

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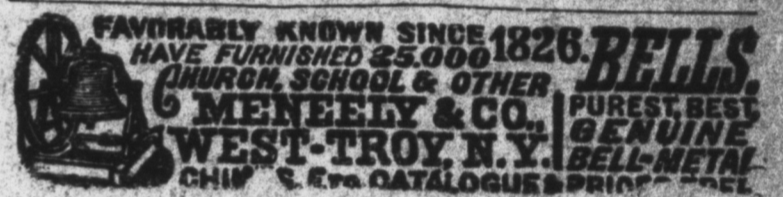
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sparks fly upward," and the drunkard's wife is married to trouble, as sure as saloons drag downward.

Better to be seen in a small company of those who try to do right than to be hid among a company of wrong-doers.

Mixing politics with religion is not good, but religion is a good thing to mix with politics, especially if the religion be good and the politics bad.—*Nat. Advocate.*

The question has been asked, Is it possible to sail 1,000 miles from land? This can be done at several points. By leaving San Francisco and sailing northwestward into the north Pacific a spot is reached where there is no land, not even an islet, for 1,000 miles in any direction. So, too, sailing from the southern point of Kamchatka southeastward ships reach a point equally distant from land of any kind, the nearest to the north being the Aleutian Islands and to the south the outlying members of the Sandwich group. In the Southern Indian Ocean it is possible to sail 1,000 miles out from the southern points of Australia and New Zealand and still be as far from any other land, and the same may be done in a westerly direction from Cape Horn. Indeed, from this point a much longer distance might be reached, for the Southern Pacific, between the Horn and New Zealand, covers a space of 80 degrees of longitude and 20 degrees of latitude of absolutely unbroken sea, making its central point over 1,200 miles from anywhere.