

hard towards us. Accordingly, Mr. Armstrong, I ask you most earnestly, as an act of simple justice on your part, to aid me in this matter. Please let me hear from you at once.

Respectfully,

ABEL S. MARTIN.

Miss Tempy's glasses were misty again by the time she had finished reading this letter.

"What under the canopy does this mean!" she exclaimed. "Humph! this letter is a funny sort of valentine, I must say. 'Twasn't intended for me at all—that's evident. It's for that ne'er do well John Armstrong. And brother Abel got into a mess because of him! I thought it was because he'd speculated in stocks or some foolish thing, or because he wanted to get Eleanor a silk dress and cabinet organ. Mandy Peters told me that she heard Eleanor's aunt sent her the organ and the dress—willed them to her; but I was possessed to disbelieve it! And here I've held anger and spite in my heart all these two years, while poor Abel and his family have been undergoing all sorts of hardships, and me not lending them a hand or giving a kind word, and only being grumpy over a matter of a few dollars! May the good Lord forgive me!"

An hour later, Miss Tempy stood at her brother's bedside, briskly unpacking a big basket filled with the good things she had brought. "Here's a nice fat fowl. I have just picked. And some fresh eggs—yes, eggs are scarce just now, but they'll be the very thing to give you strength. I brought one of my fruit cakes and a couple o' pies. And Silas Horn, my hired man, is coming down from the hill farm with a load o' maple and hickory wood and some vegetables; he'll bring a hog and a prime quarter o' beef—he butchered this week. Now hush up, Abel, don't say a word—it makes me—"

"Well, I've got to say,"—interrupted Mr. Martin—"I've got to say that the very best of all the nice things you've brought, Sister Tempy, is your own dear self!"

"And however you came to get John Armstrong's letter is a mystery to me!" exclaimed Mrs. Martin, half laughing and half crying.

"That's so—and coming in that sort of Saint Valentine way, too," remarked Miss Tempy.

But when Billy came home from school that noon, he said to himself, sheepishly:

"Guess it was I who made the mistake. I was in such a hurry to get back to mother's flapjacks, that I slipped pa's letter into the envelope intended for the—that other thing! I tore up the valentine in the dark alley, but the letter—my! Ain't I glad—that reached Aunt Tempy by what I spect mother'd call the Providence Road."—*The Christian Intelligencer.*

NEW SOIL.

When John Dalton came back from the asylum where he had gone to place his wife, his neighbor, Perry, met him at the station and went home with him, that he might not enter the empty house alone. The old man was stunned and dazed.

"I don't know what ailed Mary," he said, dully. "You see how clean and snug this house is?" She always kept things so. Up before dawn, milking and baking and washing. Same thing done at the same hour year in and year out. She hadn't complained of sickness for forty years. Then, all at once she

began taking of an iron band around her jaws and queer pains in her head."

"She seldom went into town, did she?" asked Perry.

"Never, hardly. I'm not much of a hand for gadding about to no purpose. She used to want to go to church Sundays, but I didn't just like to hitch up when there was no work to do. But I wish now I'd done that for Mary."

"She didn't visit much with the neighbors, either, did she?" asked Perry.

"No. That was my doing, too. When the day's work is done, I want to put on my slippers and rest, and then to bed, and not go skirmishing about or having a lot of company in."

He was silent a while. "I don't know what ailed Mary," he said again. "She would sit looking at nothing, straight ahead of her, by the hour, and then cry and cry, yet always saying she had no trouble. And she got weaker every day, and then her mind went altogether. She didn't know me, not even her own name."

"She will be cured in that sanitarium," said Perry, cheerfully, "and come home well in the spring." He watched his old neighbor furtively a while, and then said:

"Do you know, Dalton, some years ago my wife and daughter got peevish and irritable. I thought the steady work and loneliness were telling on them. So I got that parlor organ and paid for a year's lessons for Susy. We had music and singing every evening, and the young folks would gather in with their reading clubs. Then I took two or three papers; my wife is a main hand for guessing the riddles. And once a year I took her an' Susy up to town for a week."

"Yes," said Dalton, dryly. "You spent a lot of money, I've heard."

"It's bringing me in good interest." They sat in silence a while. Then Perry put his hand on the old man's knee. "When she comes back, if she ever does come, I'd open up life for her a bit, Dalton. You know how it is with potatoes. You plant the best kind in good ground, and they yield splendid crops for a year or two. Then they begin to dwindle and rot."

"Of course the ground runs out. They need new soil."

"Yes. You plant them in a different lot, and they yield big, healthy crops. Human beings are like them, Dalton. You've got to renew the soil, give them fresh food for their minds, or they'll dwindle and rot."

Dalton did not speak for a long time.

"There's something in it," he said, finally. "I'll do different—if I ever have the chance."—*Youth's Companion.*

COULD NOT SING IN A STRANGE LAND.

A remarkable instance of the intelligence of birds is taken from the letters of Lady Mary Bird, who was a witness to the following incident:

One day while walking with my mother (in London) over the bridge we were attracted to a small, poor cottage by the exquisite singing of a thrush. The old couple who lived in it were very poor, and their richest possession was the thrush which sang outside in a wicker cage. After listening for a few minutes, my mother asked if they would be willing to sell the thrush to her. The bargain was made, the double of the sum they named was paid by my mother, who sent a servant next morning to claim her purchase. The cage was placed in a large and cheerful

window in our dining-room, but not a sound nor a note came from the melancholy bird, which drooped and hung its head as if moulting. We fed, we coaxed, we whistled, but it remained silent, motionless, and moping. My mother felt as much indignation as was consistent with her gentle nature. She was not suspicious, but it looked as if another bird had been palmed off upon us. She waited several days, when her patience was exhausted and she sent for the late owner. The door opened and my mother advanced to meet him, but neither of them were allowed to speak, for no sooner did the old man make his appearance in the room than the bird leaped down from its perch, opened its wings and broke into so triumphant a song of joy that it seemed as if the whole room vibrated with the melody. "Why, my pretty lad," said the man, approaching the cage, "you know me, don't you?" and the thrush kept flapping its wings and moving from side to side, one might almost say dancing for joy. There was no doubt about it; it was the same bird that had charmed us in the lane at Wolsey, but, like the Hebrew captives, it would not sing its song in a strange land. "Take it back," my mother said, "I would not part such friends for all the world," and off together went that loving pair."

GETTING SELF MASTERY.

There is a story of an old monk who was walking through the forest with a boyish student by his side. The old man suddenly stopped and pointed to four plants close at hand. The first was beginning to peep above the ground; the second had rooted itself pretty well into the earth; the third was a small shrub; whilst the fourth and last was a full-sized tree. The old monk said to his young companion: "Pull up the first." The youth easily pulled it up with his fingers. "Now pull up the second." The boy obeyed, but not so easily. "And the third." This time he had to put forth all his strength and use both arms before he succeeded in uprooting it. "And now," said the master, "try your hand upon the fourth." But lo! the trunk of the tall tree, grasped in the arms of the youth, scarcely shook its leaves, and the boy found it impossible to tear its roots from the earth. The wise old monk explained to his scholar the meaning of the four trials. "This, my son, is just what happens with our passions. When they are young and weak, one may, by a little watchfulness over self, and the help of a little self-denial, easily tear them up; but if we let them cast their roots deep down into our souls, then no human power can uproot them."

TRIBUTE TO HER PIES.

Elder Dodd was a quaint old man who lived in New England a good many years ago. He was a peripatetic and faithful laborer in the vineyard who gave his entire time to the saving of souls without asking other reward than that which comes from a consciousness of duty done to the best of one's ability. Unlettered, but kind of heart and genuinely honest and consistent in his life, he had the respect of all and was welcome in any home.

He sometimes made queer speeches when expressing pleasure over the manner in which he had been entertained. One time he was entertained for several days in the hospitable home of a Mrs. Blank who was a famous cook.

Rising from the dinner table the last

day of his stay with the Blanks, Elder Dodd said solemnly:

"Well, Sister Blank, I've eat pie in nine different States and in two Territories and down in Cuby, and I can say of a truth that if the angel Gabriel was to descend to-day and say to me, 'Whose is the best pie you ever eat?' I would lift up mine eyes and say if it was with my dying breath: 'Sister Elizabeth Blank's pies. Amen!'"

ACUTE INDIGESTION.

A Trouble That Causes Untold Suffering to Thousands Throughout Canada.

"I suffered so much with acute indigestion that I frequently would walk the floor through the long nights," said Mrs. Thomas Vincent, residing at 98 St. Peter street, Quebec. "I had been afflicted with the trouble," she continued, "for upwards of twenty years, but it was only during the past year that it assumed an acute form. There were times when I was almost distracted; everything I ate disagreed with me, and the pains in the region of the stomach were almost unbearable. When the attacks were at the worst my head would grow dizzy and would throb violently, and sometimes I would experience severe attacks of nausea. As time went on I was almost worn out, either through abstinence from food or the havoc it wrought when I did take it. I tried many much lauded dyspepsia cures, but they did me no good. In fact I got nothing that helped me until my nephew urged me to take Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. He had used them himself with the greatest benefit, and assured me they would help me. After I had taken three or four boxes of the pills there was some improvement, and I continued to take the pills regularly for about three months, and at the end of that time I found myself cured. I could eat a hearty meal, and eat it with relish; I slept soundly at night, my weight increased, and my constitution generally was built up. I think Dr. Williams' Pink Pills will cure any case of dyspepsia, if they are given a fair trial such as I gave them."

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills cures cases like Mrs. Vincent's simply because they fill the veins with that rich, red blood that enables every organ of the body to do its work properly. That is the reason why the pills cure all blood and nerve troubles such as anemia, neuralgia, rheumatism, heart troubles, skin diseases, St. Vitus' dance, paralysis, and the special ailments of growing girls and women of middle age. When you ask for Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, see that you get the genuine, with the full name, "Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People," printed on the wrapper around every box. Sold by medicine dealers everywhere, or by mail at 50 cents a box, or six boxes for \$2.50, by writing the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

Lift up yourselves to the great meaning of the day, and dare to think of your humanity as something so sublimely precious that it is worthy of being made an offering to God. Count it a privilege to make that offering as complete as possible, keeping nothing back, and then go out to the pleasures and duties of your life, having been truly born anew into his divinity, as he was born into our humanity on Christmas day.—*Phillips Brooks.*