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Our Story.

Polly's Religion.

Continued.

The girls smiled. They were fond of Joe and ready to welcome his wife.

But I hope she is ready to take a leading place in the church, said Grace, after he had gone. Joe will some day fill his father's place, and his description of her does not give me the idea of an energetic, religious woman.

We'll hope for the best, said Isabella. She was very busy making an imitation stained glass window for the Sunday school room and was anxious to finish it before Mary arrived.

Uncle Ben must be kept in his own room when she comes, and Tom can be sent to the country for a month's visit, Grace said, her delicate cheek flushing painfully.

For there were two skeletons in the Demming household. The squire's brother, Ben, who was a paralytic old soldier and a most cross-grained, profane old fellow, occupied one wing of the mansion. He had a man to nurse and read to him, for his oaths were intolerable to his nieces. Tom was their brother, younger than Joe. Tom Demming had disappeared for three years after he left college, and came back a haggard, dissipated loafer.

Nobody in Ball's Ferry knew what he had done in that gap of time, but was certain that he was under the ban—a marked man. The family treated him with gloomy patience. They had taken up their cross and borne it but it was heavy, and he knew they found it heavy. Tom was never seen by visitors at the table or in the parlor. At dusk he would skulk out to join some of his comrades at the village grog shops, and occasionally, but not often, was brought home brutally intoxicated.

Joe's wife disappointed them all. She was a plump, merry little girl, nothing more. A very pleasant little heathen!

Isabella named some of the best books on religious fiction, but she never heard of them; and she did not know of a single one of our foreign missions.

Good Mrs. Demming was uneasy at this, and that very evening turned the conversation on doctrinal subjects. Polly grew red.

I am afraid, she said, I am not clear in my ideas concerning these difficult points. The truth is, after mother's death I had the charge of my four brothers, and I had so little time—

You will have more time now, said Isabella. I will mark out a course of doctrinal reading for you.

But Mary made slow progress with her course of reading. As time passed and she settled down into her place in the household she proved to be a very busy little woman. She had a positive talent for finding work; took her part of the family mending, tossed up dainty little desserts, helped Joe with his accounts. When Joe had gone to his office she took tremendous walks, advised mother Demming about her fancy work, or copied the squire's papers for him.

What a clerical hand you write, said Grace, one day. I often wish mine were not so delicate when father worries over those papers. But as for mother's embroidery, women of her age ought to give up that useless work when their eyes are failing.

It does not seem useless to me, said Polly, gently. She thinks you all value it.

Where can Mary go on those interminable walks! said Isabella one morning to her father. You should warn her about Black lane. She might wander into it and bring home typhoid fever.

You ought to report that lane as a nuisance, father, said his wife. It is a perpetual sink of filth and vice.

It is a disgrace to Ball's Ferry that such wretches can find harbor in it, added Isabella. They ought to be driven beyond the borough limits!

Well, well, my dear! It doesn't do to be too energetic, said the squire.

They never had a chance. He was aroused, however, to mention Black lane at a meeting of the town burghesses that day.

Something ought to be done, or we will have typhus among us, he said.

Something has been done, said Judge Paule. I came through the lane this morning, and hardly knew it. There has been a general draining and cleaning, the cabins are whitewashed, the women—some of them had actually washed their faces.

What has happened? asked the squire. I heard the sound of children's voices singing in one of the cabins, and the men told me it was Miss Mary's class. Some good woman has been at work, I suspect.

Miss Mary?—the squire's face grew red, his eyes flushed, but he said nothing more.

Going home he met Polly coming to meet him. He looked at her with the eye of a judge. Are you the good Samaritan? Have you been in Black lane, my dear? (Concluded in our next.)

Writing for the Press

"I always read your hints to young writers with interest and gratitude," writes a contributor, "and follow them closely, as I hope you will perceive by the way in which my 'copy' is prepared. Amateurs, even if talented, require instruction, sometimes, as well as encouragement, and a word of practical advice is of inestimable benefit—at least, I find it so." Were all literary beginners as teachable, they would save themselves trouble and disappointment. The reading of carelessly prepared manuscript is a sore trial to the editor who, indeed, often finds it necessary to reject matter simply because he cannot spare the time required to prepare it properly for the compositor. Therefore, look to the physical aspect of your manuscript, and prepare your page so neatly that it shall allure instead of repelling. Use good pens, and black ink; choose a medium size of paper; avoid long sheets of foolscaps, from which the soul of an editor recoils. Do not emulate "paper-sparing Pope," whose chaotic manuscript of the "Iliad," written chiefly on the back of old letters, still remains in the British Museum. If you really wish to obtain an editor's good-will for your production, do not first tax his time for deciphering it. On the same principle, send your composition in such a shape that it shall not need the slightest literary revision before printing. Of course, the first thing to attain is a pure and lucid style, and this can partly be done by thoroughly studying, in some good manual, the structure of sentences. Then the ear should be trained by the habitual reading, if possible aloud, of the great masters of English prose—Macaulay, Hume and Nathaniel Hawthorne. Disabuse your self of the belief that any grace or flow of style can come from writing rapidly. Haste can make you slipshod, but it can never make you graceful. Do not habitually prop your sentences on crutches, such as italics and exclamation points, but make them stand without aid; if they cannot emphasize themselves these devices are commonly but a confusion of sleepiness.

Keeping Warm.

It may not be generally known that, when exposed to severe cold, a feeling of warmth is readily created by repeatedly filling the lungs to their utmost extent in the following manner:—Throw the shoulders well back, and hold the head well up. Inflate the lungs slowly, the air entering entirely through the nose. When the lungs are completely filled hold the breath for ten seconds or longer, and then exhale it quickly through the mouth. After repeating this exercise when one is chilly, a feeling of warmth will be felt over the entire body, and even in the feet and hands. It is important to practise this exercise many times each day, and especially when in the open air. If the habit ever becomes universal, then consumption and many other diseases will rarely, if ever, be heard of. Not only while practising the breathing exercise must the clothing be loose over the chest, but beginners will do well to remember, in having their clothing fitted, to allow for the permanent expansion of one, or even three inches, which will eventually follow.—Iron.

Improved Diamonds.

Many persons have been puzzled to understand why the diamonds worn in ear-rings by ladies nowadays maintain such a ceaseless quivering motion. It makes no difference that the head of the wearer is in perfect repose, and that she is even speechless, and therefore exerting no muscle of face or feature, the ceaseless twinkle of the diamond goes on, enhancing greatly the flashing beauty of the gem. The secret is in the setting of the diamond and the method is a patent device. The patentee is reaping a royalty of fifty dollars apiece from every manufacturing jeweler to whom he sells the privilege of using it. The stone is set in the usual manner, except that a band like the handle of a diminutive basket is attached to the frame-work. On the other side of this band is a cup-like cavity. On the lower part of the hoop is a projecting pin pointed with rhodium, a metal which never wears out—somewhat like the iridium with which gold pens are tipped. Now, when the diamonds are put in position on the hoop, the rhodium point projects into the cup. The result is what scientists would call a condition of unstable equilibrium. Like the pea blown with a pipe by a school-boy the diamond is given no rest, with the difference that no effort is required to keep it dancing. The metal point never wears out.—St. Louis Spectator.

The Height of Waves.

It is a very common phrase to speak of the waves during a storm as running mountains high; but this really means nothing. Accurate measurements made by Scoresby proved that during storms, waves in the Atlantic rarely exceed 43 feet from hollow to crest, the distance between the crest being 560 feet and their speed 32½ miles an hour. More recent observations in the Atlantic give from 44 feet to 48 feet as the highest measured waves; but such heights are rarely reached and, indeed, waves exceeding 30 feet are very seldom encountered. The monsoon waves at Kurrachee breakwater works were found to dash over the wall to the depth of 18 feet or about 40 feet above mean sea level. The greatest heights of waves on the British coast were those observed in Wick Bay—so famous for the exceptionally heavy seas which roll into it—being 37½ to 40 feet. Green seas to the depths of 25 feet poured over the parapet of the breakwater at intervals of from seven to ten minutes, each wave, it was estimated, being a mass of 40,000 tons of water and this continuously for three days and nights. During severe storms the waves used to rise high above the top of Smeaton's Eddystone tower, while at the Bell Rock the seas with easterly storms enveloped the tower from base to balcony—a to the height of 400 feet.

212.

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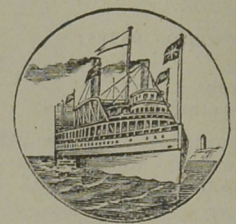
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