

A COUNTRY SCHOOL.

Pretty and pale and tired... She sits in her stiff-backed chair...

It seems such an endless round— Grammar and A, B, C, The blackboard and the sums, The stupid geography...

Her heart outruns the clock... As she smells the faint sweet scent...

Have patience, restless Jim... The stream and the fish will wait...

Stand some one with fresher flowers; So turn to your books again...

THE PISCOPAL LOT.

"Have you heard what Lyman Silsbee's been doin' now?" The Porter girls were picking and preserving...

The Silsbees were odd, and Lyman was the consummate flower of his race in this respect. He was "as close as the bark of a tree..."

She had even felt a momentary bitterness against Lyman Silsbee, who had absorbed both her past and her future.

Charlotte herself was thoroughly contented with her estate; she was perfectly sincere in saying that she "wouldn't marry it she could have her pick even of the ministers"...

It was only within a few years that Charlyss had ceased to speculate on the great problem of her life—why Lyman had never asked her to marry him.

"Sweet pickles!" echoed Charlotte, and clicked her false teeth energetically; but it was not until the door had closed behind Charlyss...

Aunt Nabby opened the door and called after her. "I declare if she ain't clear 'n out of sight and hearin'...

"You ain't a twin sister, Aunt Nabby, nor you ain't the responsibilities of one, and if you had, your eyesight ain't what it was..."

She flushed a little at Miss Deacon Hart's question—she always felt as if people looked curiously at her when they mentioned Lyman's name...

hadn't give up usin' it for meetin' purposes. Don't seem as if he would have done just as he has if he hadn't been so mad with Frank Hurd...

"I want to know! I want to know!" repeated Aunt Nabby, coming out of the butterfly with her spectacles on her forehead. "Well, his great-uncle, old Squire Enoch Silsbee, hung himself. Think I, the other day, Lyman is appearin' queerer 'n ever..."

"They won't let him stay there long," said Miss Deacon Hart. "I expect the 'Piscopals is puzzled what to do, but the boys they won't let him have no more peace than a toad under a harrier..."

"Land sakes! I guess the law will fetch him out if he is Lyman Silsbee," said Charlotte, who spoke and moved with great decision and vigor...

"I expect Lyman would enjoy bein' burnt up a-havin' his own way," said Aunt Nabby.

Miss Deacon Hart shortly afterward went her way to talk the matter over with other neighbors. Charlyss had slipped out of the room, and she returned dressed for a walk.

"I thought I'd just step over to Miss Luke Patten's, and see if she hadn't a good receipt for sweet pickles," she said. There was a flush on her thin cheeks, and she was nervous and hurried.

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that if Lyman had any friends they'd ought to persuade him to come out. "Persuade him! He must be dreadful little acquainted with Lyman Silsbee," said Charlotte.

"I don't expect there's nobody in the world that has the least mite of influence over him," said Aunt Nabby, meditatively.

Charlyss put sugar into the piccalilli, and almost put vinegar into the plums, and then she took Aunt Nabby's kindly advice to "go upstairs and lay down a spell..."

When she came down it was late in the afternoon. Aunt Nabby had gone across the field to the minister's with some preserves, and Charlotte was writing labels for her jars of goodies with great pains and primness.

"I thought I'd ought to tell you," said Charlyss, with great embarrassment and difficulty. "I'm thinkin' of offerin' to lend Lyman my money that's in the bank..."

"Charlyss Porter, have I lived to see this day—my own sister's mind a-geoin'!" cried Charlotte. "Has Lyman Silsbee took such good care of his own property that you're a-geoin' to trust him with yours? And you're a-geoin' down to offer it to him! Seems as if it would look remarkable friendly, wouldn't it? Seem' what's been and gone, seems to me you might as well ask him to have you without any shilly-shallyin'!"

"There was an appealing tone in Charlyss's meek voice, which might have been expected to touch her sister's heart, but it had the opposite effect; it was Charlotte's boast that she had never tolerated any kind of foolishness."

"When a girl is in love, why, it's kind of natural; it's silly, but folks know she'll get over it if there's anything to her; but when it hangs on till she's an old woman, why, it's just as if the whoopin'-cough or the measles-had got chronic; it's ridiculous, and folks can't help havin' more contempt than pity for her..."

Charlyss was shrinking as if from blows. She always shrank in that way from Charlotte's sharp tongue.

Charlotte had long ago decided that it was "agin' nature" for her to do so, and consequently a hopeless case. Charlyss was timid and gentle, and unready of speech.

Charlotte had turned away. "I don't know as I really expect I could, Charlotte," she said; "but it didn't seem to me as if 'twas no more'n friendly 'n neighborly to try."

"Friendliness and neighborliness had better start from the men folks' side of the house," said Charlotte, crisply. And then Charlyss slipped away, looking guilty and subdued.

"That's the end of about the worst foolishness she ever undertook! It a mercy I can set down on Charlyss," said Charlotte to herself, complacently.

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that way. I most wish 't I had brought the pie. Before she had left home Charlyss had slipped into the pantry. Charlotte and Aunt Nabby being engaged meanwhile with old Solomon Hitchens, who was to mend an umbrella to pay for his supper...

He opened the wide doors, and quickly shut and fastened them again after Charlyss had stepped in. "The boys are pesterin' me considerable most of the time," he said, and in fact, so oblivious was Carmel to conventionalities that no one would have thought it unusual or in any degree improper.

"I've heard that you was in trouble, Lyman, and there's that money that Uncle Eli left me layin' idle in the bank—I thought mebber if you could use it—It's nigh upon two thousand dollars now."

"I don't know enough about the rights of it to say, and you know, Lyman, I ain't one to argery or give advice, but I wish 't you wouldn't stay here."

"Well, folks has said 'most everything to me, but I don't know as anybody has said that before," said Lyman, with a short laugh that had a softer sound than his speech.

"Clatter! clatter! Crash! crash! Tommy Jessop, with a bean-slinger, was just outside the chancel window, preferring that because it was stained, and it would consequently be greater mischief to break it. Through a rent in Elias's yellow robe beans and pebbles came rattling down into the broad aisle, even so far as to threaten the safety of Lyman's kerosene lamp."

"I can't seem to feel sorry that he broke in. Seems as if 'twas all right. I know now that I ain't been dreamin' and imaginin' all these years. Charlotte would say that I drove him to sayin' it, but I know Lyman ain't one to be drove nor one to say more'n what he feels. I wish 't I had had a chance to say more about his lettin' the 'Piscopals have that lot. I don't know as it would have done any good, but it does kind of appear as if he cared something about what I thought."

"The air is real kind of bracin' tonight, ain't it? I declare if it ain't made you rosy. You look 'most as if you was a girl agin'."

"Some folks hain't any realizin' sense, and they always look young," said Charlotte, who had no suspicion of the extent of Charlyss's revolt, but felt from her appearance that she needed to be sat down upon still more.

"Beats all how plump that was comin' out, when I used to lay awake nights thinkin' how I could get up courage to say it! Thinkin', too, whether 'twould answer, there was so much that I could see for and agin marriage. I was considerable afraid of her then. I seem to kind of got over it— and yet I hain't altogether, neither. I don't expect I could ever get so far agin to save me, not knowin' how she'd take it,"

either, seem' I didn't speak when I'd ought to, and she must have expected it. Kind of curious that, so set as I be and always was, I should have been so backward and unsteady about courtin'.

"Lyman Silsbee's been fetched to a better mind," said old Solomon Hitchens who had come the next morning to finish his job of umbrella-mending. "He's cleared out and left the old meetin'-house; gone home just as peaceable as a lamb, and they say he don't calculate to hender the 'Piscopals nor make no claim on 'em no more. There ain't nobody that can make out what changed him so sudden, such a one for holdin' out as he was. Some calculate Frank Hurd must 'a paid him, but there ain't nobody that knows nothin' about it."

When he hired Squire Meacham's new top buggy and took Charlyss to the Agricultural Fair and County Conference the gossip whisped. Even Aunt Nabby was heard to say that she "shouldn't be a dretful sight surprised if 'twas a match. Lyman wa'n't one that would be everybody's fancy, but it kind of seemed as if he suited Charlyss."

"It's cur'us now," he said to himself. "I give up to her, when nothin' else on earth could 'a made me give up. But to fetch myself right to the pint of askin' her to have me, I can't! There's some that has the gift of courtin' and marryin' and some that hain't, and that's jest where 'tis."—Sophie Sweet, in Harper's Weekly.

FOUR AT A BIRTH.

On the morning of Nov. 2, says a Millbury, Mass., dispatch, a wagon drove up to a house overlooking the valley of the Blackstone river. A pale-faced woman alighted from the wagon and walked slowly to the door of the house, where she was met by an older woman, its mistress. "You have come to pass the day with me, Anna?" said the elder. "I have, mother, if you are willing," was the reply of Mrs. Frank DeGroote, the visitor.

"Mrs. DeGroote sat down and began to talk with her mother, Mrs. Nudick. Suddenly she was taken ill and a doctor was summoned. Before he arrived a five pound baby was born. When he rapped at the door a second girl came into the world. It weighed four and three quarter pounds, and looked as much like its predecessor as one twin looks like another. "Twins, doctor," remarked Mrs. Nudick, as she helped him take off his overcoat. "Why, bless me, she is doing nicely," was the doctor's reply.

When they again entered the room another girl, the third of the series, had been born. It weighed four pounds and a half. "Triplets," said the doctor. "Oh, dear, what will Anna do and what will Frank say?" was Mrs. Nudick's observation. Before these questions were settled the fourth and last character in this romance of girls had appeared, and then the doctor grew excited. "Bless my soul!" said he; "I wonder if there are any more?" But no more came. It was the last and the least of the lot, and, on the whole, was one of the smallest babies that ever visited this earth. The length of its body, from heel to crown was eleven and one-half inches. The weight was just three pounds.

The babies were named at once. The oldest was called Laura, the youngest Lillian, the others Anna and Alice. Just four weeks from the day of its birth Lillian died. She had always been the weakest of the four. The others seemed strong and healthy, and bade as fair to live as any child, but three days before Christmas the oldest, Laura, grew strangely weaker, and Christmas eve she, too, passed away. The remaining two are growing feeble, and it is feared that they cannot live.

The case has attracted much attention among medical men, for the birth of quadruplets is a rare occurrence. They say that the chances are strongly against such infants ever reaching adult age, because of lack of vitality.

THE TIME FOR ANNEXATION.

When weather bureaux tell the truth, And dunes give up their canes And carry bundles in the street And cultivate their brains; When free trade is the principle To win in politics; When bismarck steering is no more, When ostriches hatch chicks; When Hunco is a man of peace, When gold is cheap as tin— Then is the time to open up And let the Dominion in.—New York Press.

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