

A HAPPY ENDING.

Christmas Eve.—It was a very trying day in the great departmental store and as a consequence the employees were not in a happy frame of mind. In the first place it was uncomfortably warm for December; secondly, the store was thronged with people; thirdly, the grand orchestra, hired for the occasion, were "murdering" their limited repertoire. Nevertheless, one of a dozen girls in charge of the counter at which the holly and mistletoe were sold, seemed quite contented. Several times she glanced at the big clock on the wall behind her. At last one of her companions remarked in an injured tone "I'm sure I don't see how you can keep so calm, Lena, when the rest of us are just flurried."

few moments the sweet joy of three years' of trusting love. At one o'clock they parted and Lena went back to the store. During the afternoon she went about her work with so great a pain at her heart that she wished she might die. The motto, "A Merry Christmas," framed in holly and mistletoe, hanging close by the big clock, seemed to look down upon her in bitter mockery. She could never be merry again. Six o'clock—closing time—came at last. On her journey home she recalled her first meeting with Phil; just after she had come to the great city with her mother and father. It was such a wondrous change from the little country town wherein she was born and had lived until her twentieth year. Her home was a quiet one, and not very bright, for it had felt the pinch of poverty. Then Phil had come into her life and somehow city skies shone brighter and life's roadway seemed smoother. The years had gone by swiftly, happily. A certain day, not long since past, stood out with a clear joyous glow; the day when Phil told his love and had slipped on her finger the "dearest" engagement ring. Sometimes she had wondered why Phil, who had come to the city shortly after herself, spoke seldom of the years intervening between his early manhood and the time he met her. She had not doubted him for that, but now she understood. In a vague way she tried to assure herself that Mrs. Darlington's story was not true. But Mrs. Darlington had more than once proved a staunch friend, and her story, together with a shadowy misgivings which had troubled her at times despite Phil's strong love, convinced her and hardened her heart. When Phil called that night she did not meet him at the door as was her wont. Mrs. Douglas showed the young man into the little parlor and excusing herself, left him alone. Phil waited and wondered why Lena did not appear. Presently she came, her dark hair disarranged, her features contracted by mental suffering. In her arms she bore a number of books, some photos, and dainty brace-brace. Phil, who had risen on her entrance, recognized them as presents he had given her. She placed them on a little table by the window. "Dear heart," he said, "what is the matter?" She laughed hysterically. Phil was pained and mystified. "What does this mean?" he asked. "Take them away," she answered wearily. "I never want to see them again." She sat down in a chair by the table. "What does it mean?" he demanded again, hoarsely. She did not answer. He stood looking at her. When she became conscious of his gaze she averted her head. "Go away. You are hurting me." Her tone was one of entreaty. "You have no right to treat me in this fashion," he said hotly, "and," stubbornly, "I will not go before you offer some explanation."

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"Lena," gently. "Don't interrupt," she broke in. "A good woman saved him. You were a gambler then?" His face paled as he answered slowly. "Yes." "A professional gambler, I believe," she went on, "a drunkard, too?" "Not that," he cried, "I swear—" "Ah! you only drank occasionally. Your calling demanded a clear head and a steady hand." "Since I have known you—" he began. Again she cut him short—"But you generally managed to get the men you played with intoxicated." "That will do," he murmured, "I will go." He turned to leave the room. "Not yet," she commanded, with strange inconsistency, "You shall hear me to the end." He faced her again. "The police knew of you." "I never—" "Figured in the police court," she added quickly, "I know that. You took good care to avoid it, but you were not so lucky." He was grimly determined now. "Go on," he said. "You were a blasphemer." "God forgive me," he answered reverently. Her courage failed her. She sat down again and covered her face with her hands. "You do not deny it," she sobbed, "and I would have believed you against the world. Oh! Phil, how can I trust you again?" He let her cry for a while, then when she seemed calmer he asked, "Do you remember the night we first met?" "Yes," she answered, almost inaudibly. His voice was steady and dispassionate as he continued, "I had promised to go to a card—a gambling party, you would call it—that night. In your presence I forgot my promise." He paused. She did not look up. "When I left you I went straight to my rooms and burned every pack of cards I owned, and destroyed my whole stock in trade as a professional gambler. Then I did what I had not done since as a child my mother taught me—I faltered and stopped abruptly. Still she did not speak or move. "I prayed. Can you understand what that meant to such as I was then. I prayed that God would help me so that some day I might win your friendship." A little cry escaped her. His hands clenched nervously. He stepped closer to her. "You came into my life when I had lost faith in womanhood and God; when I lived for self alone; when I was all what you have said. That night a new-born hope came to me. That is three years ago. Since then, and I do not say it boastfully, I have lived as a man should live, true to himself and true to humanity. The thought and belief in me, made me strong. You brought me back to real life, from a course that could have ended only in blackest misery—and—and—perhaps in self-inflicted death." "Not that," she gasped. "Yes, slowly, 'for I was troubled, or blessed, with a conscience, but fancied it too late to make amends.' His voice was broken now, his words halting. "We have been such true friends these happy years. You know my life during that period. Can you point to any one action of mine and say it was mean, contemptible, unworthy of you?"

"No, dear," she answered softly. His face flushed, his eyes glowed. He bent over her and kissed her hair. "No, he continued more hopefully. 'No. And now I will go. The firm have offered me a responsible position in their New York branch. I leave town next week. I had thought—that 'but,' weakly, 'that is past. Perhaps some day you will forgive me and trust me again. But, whatever happens—there was a ring of triumph in his voice—the old life cannot call me back. I can thank you for that. I shall live as I have lived for the three happiest years of my life. Let us say good-bye—'" "No," she cried. She lifted her head. There was a glorious light in her tear-dimmed eyes. Her whole face was radiant. She stretched out her hands impulsively. He lifted them to his lips. Kissing them again, again. Then he kissed her lips and her eyes. "Phil," she said joyously, while the blushes came and went on her bonny face, "when you leave town you will take me with you?" With a happy sigh he answered, "Yes," and even as he spoke the words the bells from a neighboring church rang out the Christmas chimes.—Wm. Banks in Canadian Home Journal.

THROW HIM DOWN McCLOSKEY.

An Englishman Thinks the Song Originated in This Country in the Sixties.

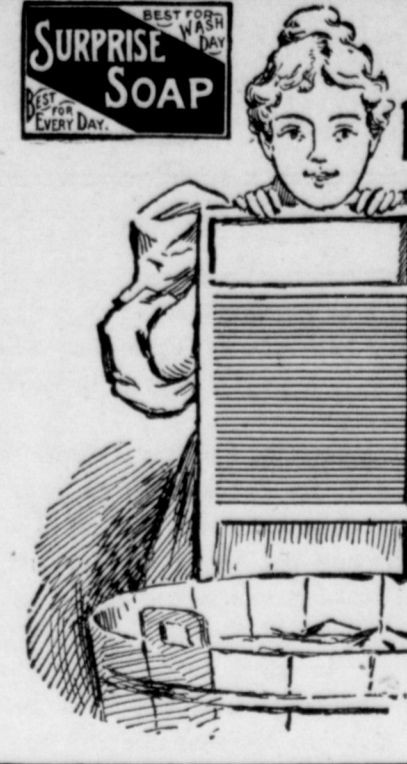
An English newspaper which devotes more space to prize fighters and sport than to literature or music has asked its readers to help it find the author, composer and tune of the song with a chorus that runs: Down with him, McCloskey, Ye can do it if ye try; Down with him, McCloskey, Let it be the battle cry! Let future generations Thrill with wonder and delight When they read in history's pages Of the great McCloskey fight!

The editor apparently never heard of Mile. Cline, who has devoted so much energy to bringing these lines to the attention of an appreciative New York public. The inquiry, however, brought out an answer that is interesting to all New Yorkers who have heard the vigorous old song. The writer says that many years ago a similar song was sung all over the United States. He heard it in St. Louis back in the sixties, and there was a companion piece with a chorus that ran: Say, boys, will you be true?

Both songs, says the newspaper's informant, were written about a proposed fight between a Yankee named Awful Gardner and an Irish champion named McCloskey. Awful Gardner had been conquering every one who met him, and McCloskey was thought by the Irish to be invincible. The writer says that the fight afterward took place, and Gardner who whipped McCloskey was not heard of again until he figured in the song. "A few years later," says the writer, "Gardner was conquered by John Morrissey, a noted politician of New York," and adds that the song and music can probably be obtained from some old New York music dealer, as it was famous in its day.—New York Sun.

COULD NOT LIE DOWN FOR EIGHTEEN MONTHS.

The sufferings of a Toronto Junction Resident from Heart Disease. Not an exceptional case of heart disease but very distressing was that of Mr. L. W. Law, of Toronto Junction, Ont., who was obliged to be propped up in bed with pillows for eighteen months, because of smothering spells that would come over him whenever he attempted to lie down. No treatment had done any good until he tried Dr. Agnew's Cure for the Heart, and here one dose gave complete relief, and one bottle cured him, and to-day he enjoys the pleasures of good health as other people do. Heart disease will kill if not cured.



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GENERAL GRANT'S YOUTH.

Some of the Youthful Character Traits of the Famous General.

Hamlin Garland, in McClure's, tells of certain traits shown by Gen. Grant, in his youth, which presaged the distinction he was to win in the service of his country, in his greatest crisis. Some of the good people of Georgetown Ripley, and Batavia, however, go far in their attempt to show how very ordinary Ulysses Grant was. A boy of thirteen who could drive a team six hundred miles across country and arrive safely; who could load a wagon with heavy logs by his own mechanical ingenuity; who insisted on solving all mathematical problems himself; who never whispered or lied or swore or quarrelled; who could train a horse to pace or trot at will; who stood squarely upon his own knowledge of things without resorting to trick or mere verbal memory—such a boy, at this distance, does not appear ordinary, stupid, dull, or commonplace. That he was not showy or easily valued was true. His unusualness was in the balance of his native judgement, and at his knowledge of things at first hand.

Even at sixteen years of age he had a superstition that to retreat was fatal. When he set hand to any plan or started upon any journey, he felt the necessity of going to the turn of the lane or to the end of the furrow. He was resolute and unafraid always; a boy to be trusted and counted upon—sturdy, capable of hard knocks. What he was in speech he was in grain. If he said, "I can do that," he not merely meant that he would try to do it, but also that he had thought his way to the successful end of the undertaking. He was, in fact, an unusually determined and resourceful boy.

There was something mysterious in his power to communicate to a horse his wishes. He could train a horse to trot, rack, or pace, apparently at will. When he was about eleven years of age he made a reputation among the boys by riding the trick pony of a circus which came in trailing clouds of glorified dust one summer day, like a scene from the "Arabian Nights." "It was a small animal show and circus," said Judge Marshall, "and one part of the entertainment was to turn a kangaroo loose in the ring and ask some lively-tooted boy to catch it. I considered myself a pretty good runner in those days, and I tried to catch the kangaroo, to the vast amusement of the people looking on.

Ulysses, however, was a plump boy and a good runner. He made no attempt at the kangaroo, but was deeply interested in the trick pony, which had been trained to throw off any boy who attempted to ride him. He was a very fat bay pony with no mane, and nothing at all to hang to. Ulysses looked on for awhile, saw several of the other boys try and fail, and at last said, "I believe I can ride that pony." He anticipated the pony's attempts to throw him off, by leaning down and putting his arms around the pony's neck. The pony reared, kicked, and did everything he knew to unhorse Ulysses, but failing; and at last the clown acknowledged the pony's defeat and paid the five dollars which he had promised to the boy who would ride the pony. As Ulysses turned away with the five dollars in his hand, he said to the boys standing, "Why, that pony is as slick as an apple."

Of this following incident there are two versions. The father's story runs thus: "When Ulysses was about twelve years old, the first phrenologist who ever made his appearance in that part of the country, came to our neighbourhood. . . . In order to test the accuracy of the phrenologist, asked him if he would be blindfolded and examine a head. . . . The phrenologist replied that he would. So they blindfolded him, and then brought Ulysses forward and had his head examined. "He felt it all over for some time, saying to himself, 'It is no very uncommon head! It is an extraordinary head! At length Dr. Buckner broke in with the inquiry whether the boy would be likely to distinguish himself in mathematics. "Yes," said the phrenologist. "In mathematics or anything else. It would not be strange if we should see him president of the United States."

The village version of the incident is quite different. With all his shrewdness and energy, the neighbors say, there was a strain of singular guilelessness in Jesse Grant. He was credulous and simple—in the old meaning of the word simple. According to their report, Doctor Buckner was only putting up a practical joke on his neighbor Grant. As the timid and blushing Ulysses was pushed forward to the platform the crowd began to titter, and the quickwitted lecturer seized upon the situation.

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