

TOM'S REFORMATION.

An overgrown boy of nineteen was coming carelessly up the narrow path that led to a rambling, weather-stained house in the suburbs of a small New England town. His limbs were too large for his body, and the eyes and ears, that were part of his good natured face were entirely too large. He seemed to have grown in spots and needed shaking briskly, like a bag of apples, to settle compactly together.

A girl, some years younger, flung open the rickety door at his approach.

"What's the matter, Liz?" he cried in sudden surprise, for her cheeks were wet with tears and her eyes swollen with much weeping.

"A wild, fierce gleam in the dark eyes seemed to scorch him as she answered in low, intense tones, 'Mother's dying! the doctor says so; and this is a pretty house to have a funeral in! There's Miss Thorn, waving her hand towards a house farther down the street, 'she can live an' have her house painted, while mother, who never had no pretty things, has got to die. Oh, it's cruel! it's cruel!' and wringing her toil-stained little hands in anguish, she ran around the corner of the house to sob out her grief on the bosom of that other mother, whose embrace we shall all share sooner or later."

Tom stood like one stricken dumb. In all his lazy, selfish life the thought had never entered his sluggish brain that their mother would ever leave them. The very foundation of the world seemed shaken. He looked helplessly up to the lowering sky.

The door opened again and the grave old doctor came out accompanied by a neighboring woman.

"Well, sir, you have got home, have you?" he said sharply.

Tom had been off for a week's idle pleasure, called fishing, with doubtful companions.

"There's work here for you: wood, water and food are needed," he added, as he tossed the weight into his buggy, the third seeming to emphasize his stern words.

"What ails her?" he asked, as he gazed at Tom, clutching his coat as he prepared to follow the weight.

"Hard work and poor pay. Anxiety about you. Hope would have lightened her load," gathering up the lines. "She is dry limbed, my boy," he added more kindly. "There is no disease. I shall call tomorrow, Mrs. Jenkins."

The woman looked curiously at Tom. "Come in," she said.

His mother lay quietly sleeping; a heavy stupor of utter exhaustion. How poor she was and how poor everything looked.

"Do you think she'll ever rouse up?" he asked brokenly.

"Yes, I do, I think she'll come round again, and possibly, with good nursing and nourishing food she'll get up again."

"Do you really, Miss Jenkins?"

"Why, yes, child, I do. I've set up with ninety-eight sick folks, nussed 'leven wimmen, an' laid out fifty-seven, an'—but the sentence was never finished, for Tom caught the waterpails from the sink and was half-way to the spring before she missed him. It seemed to him that water was never so heavy before. He remembered how his mother had stooped lately—could it be bringing so much water up that steep grade?"

Then he took his axe and cut a couple of armfuls of alders that fringed the pasture near by, carrying them in to the woodbox.

Liz was stirring up a Johnny-cake for supper, and made a contemptuous sound with her lips when she saw the alders. "Nice stuff to bake a Johnny-cake with!" she said; "I could get better wood than that with my eyes shut up," she continued, as he took his gun down from the door and went out.

"Seems to me you're kind o' hard on that boy, 'Lizabeth," said Mrs. Jenkins reprovingly.

"Hard, and he weighing a hundred an' eighty; an' poor mother tuggin' water to do folks' washin', and sackin' wood till she dropped down."

"You've helped her a sight, child. I no doubt you've done the greater part of the luggin' an' sackin' yourself, an' sense all must eat, somebody must work," consoling.

As Tom stumbled blindly along in the twilight's purplish haze, the same thoughts were peopling his brain. He was dimly conscious of the fragrance of field and forest, as he tramped through the frost-bitten leaves and brakes to a growth of birches, the favorite roosting place of partridges.

No one but his mother knew the vow Tom registered as he watched for his game; but his face was as placid as ever when he returned home with a plump bird.

"Has Tommy come?" a feeble voice asked from the bedroom.

He answered in person. How the faded face on the pillow lighted up! He knelt down by the bedside, while she softly patted his rough brown hair and smiled on him as only a mother can.

"My dear boy," she whispered, and closed her eyes again from sheer weakness. Muttering something about 'the stores being closed,' he hurried off once more.

"I didn't know't was in him to move so quick," exclaimed Mrs. Jenkins, wonderingly. "Can move fast enough if he wants to," answered Liz, grimly, looking up from the partridge plucking. Liz's hands were never idle.

"For the land's sake, what is that boy a-doin' now!" Mrs. Jenkins again exclaimed as later, by the clear moonlight, they saw him put a ladder up against the house and climb up with a bucket in his hand.

"I don't know," in a tone that said she did not care, returned the poor girl, who hung over her mother with strained, watchful eyes. "I wish't you'd come here Miss Jenkins, 'pears to me mother breathes kind o' short."

"No, I guess not! They 'most always do—some—when they sleep so. She'll be better very like in the mornin'."

Scratch, scratch went the worn white-

wash brush Tom had begged or borrowed, as long as the moon lent her rays to his assistance, and again at the early morning. They found a supply of good wood in the kitchen, and a peck of potatoes on the kitchen table.

"I don't believe that boy has slept a wink all night!"

"Neither have I," said Liz, as she put some potatoes on to boil. Her face looked old and worn in the sunshine of a new day.

A brave west wind had leaped into life, in the dark before dawn of the day, and swept the clouds eastward. The dead leaves were floating in the yard like tiny brown birds, and the sun seemed to be playing hide and seek with all the dingy surroundings of her home. A little ray of sunshine and hope crept into her sore heart as she went to the door and called her brother to breakfast.

"Your ma took a little grain o' broth las' night, Tommy," said the woman kindly as he came in. "I wouldn't wonder if she was a grain better today and eat some of that partridge. A little brandy would stimulate her some, I sh'd say."

"Tae boy flashed hotly, and laid down the nicely-browned bit of fish he was about to eat. "Joe was saying he'd like to buy my boat. Do you—do you suppose he'd pay down for it?" he stammered.

"Why, ye-es," cautiously, "if you didn't ask too high. My man always pays cash down. You might ask him; 't wouldn't do no harm."

By noon Tom brought the brandy, some beef extract, and a few other things the druggist told him were especially nourishing.

Joe Jenkins owned the 'Sylph.' Tom groaned aloud when he remembered how proud he was when he painted her white, with a red stripe and the name in black.

"An' I never thought how mother would like things o' her painted an' fixed up," he said piteously, to himself, as he resumed the white-washing.

Liz made no remark when she went out to feed the hens and saw a gable end and side of the house glistening in snowy whiteness, from a very liberal application of the wash by an unpracticed hand.

Tom hoped she would say it looked as well as Mrs. Thorn's. She was thinking too intently of the worn form that swayed and fell before the washtub, with the foamy suds on the thin hands as she was returning from the pasture with a sack of dry limbs in her arms. "An' hour off pleasure," she said with a dry sob.

By night the widow Wilcox's house really rivalled the widow Thorn's in its pure white surface, and Tom had begun a furious onslaught on the rubbish in the yard. Liz came out with her broom and began sweeping around the doorway.

"Doctor says mother's a little better today. If she should get well, how pleased she'd be! with a glance at the transformed dwelling, while tears ran unheeded down her cheeks, reddening her high cheek bones and glistening on her long lashes.

Tom's face worked convulsively, but he only pounded the gatepost into a semblance of uprightness and nailed on a few stray pickets.

"Gin't to whitewash the fence?" she asked, timidly, for she hardly knew her brother in this new, strange guise.

"Yes, I be."

Mrs. Thorn made an errand to the well to interview the doctor as he passed home-wards.

"Seems to me there's queer doings up to Miss Wilcox's aint there? Poundin' and whitewashin' when there's sickness in the house; what does it mean, doctor?"

"It is the outward expression of an awakening soul; or rather, seeing the mystified expression on her face, 'the reformation of Tom Wilcox.'

"I hope 't will last," in a way that said I know it won't. "I t'ime he give up card-playin' his time away an' want to work."

"Who gives a whit party twice a year?" retorted Dr. Barry, as he drove on. "If his mother lives it will," he mused; "God grant she may."

"Tom," he called, "your place looks real well, 't will suit your mother when she gets around again."

Tom grasped the fence to steady himself. It was possible, then!

"But I guess I wouldn't do any more poundin' now. You might mak' her nervous. I've got ten cords of hard wood to saw and split. I'll give you a dollar a cord, or a dollar and a half and your dinner to saw, split, wheel in, and tier up in my shed."

"Yes, sir; can I begin today?"

"Any time," smiling at his eagerness.

Tom found other jobs. Miss Delaney South, who sold dry goods and millinery in her front room, gave him a piece of bright blue calico, flowered with orange, slightly faded in the folds, for cleaning out her cellar and back yard, and his sister made



but they don't show it. For clothes washed with Pearlina last longer.

Beware Peddlers and some unscrupulous grocers will tell you, "this is as good as" or "the same as Pearlina." IT'S FALSE—Pearlina is never peddled, if your grocer sends you an imitation, be honest—send it back.



a gay wrapper from it for the invalid, and full drapery curtains for the kitchen windows, right side out, giving the house a festive appearance at least.

When the wood was all in, Tom found a job with the coalman, and the first whole barrel of flour, that had been in the house since its master died, was rolled into the back door by the grocer, the first day the invalid was able to sit up.

It was a proud moment for the children when they pushed her rocking-chair to the blue draped window, and she looked out on the neat yard, the snowy paling, and the L, which was visible, as white and tidy looking as the widow's Thorn's.

"What a comfort you are, Tommy," she cried, "I never realized before what a good boy you was," she said with moist, happy eyes, "and Lizzie is the best daughter in the world."

Liz swallowed something hard in her throat. She was always second in her mother's affections. But Tom needed the most love to keep him straight, and she impulsively drew the two dear faces together and kissed them. With the protecting instinct once aroused in Tom's heart, his old loutish ways fell away from him like his poor companions, and when their frail little mother first walked out, leaning on his arm, Mrs. Thorn actually addressed him as Mr. Wilcox. While Liz, with the hard lines gone from her young face, walked behind, beaming with joy, and planning how to get a shawl to match the gorgeous wrapper.

THE VALLEY OF PAIN.
HOW ONE WOMAN MADE HER ESCAPE.

A LIFE OF TORTURE CHANGED TO A LIFE OF COMFORT AND HAPPINESS BY KOOTENAY CURE.

Of all the intense and persistent forms of pain one can scarcely conceive of anything more agonizing than Neuralgia. Its victim is one of those that draws forth our sympathy and pity as all efforts to effect a cure by the ordinary remedies signally fail to do anything more than give the merest temporary relief. Unbounded joy should fill the hearts of neuralgic sufferers at the announcement that in Kootenay the "new ingredient" is effecting miracles in the way of banishing the excruciating agony which has rendered their lives a curse, perhaps for years.

Mrs. William Judge, of Crumlin, P. O., in the County of Middlesex, went before C. G. Jarvis, a notary public of Ontario, and made a solemn declaration (so firmly did she believe in Kootenay) to the effect that for many years she was an intense sufferer from Neuralgia. She says that the pains in her head and neck were so severe she thought she would lose her reason.

She has taken Ryckman's Kootenay Cure and willingly testifies it has been her salvation, and believes that without it she would now be in the asylum.

This lady has had the deep shadow of suffering lifted from her life. She has been transported from the Valley of Pain to the Hill Top of Health—and all through Kootenay.

Mrs. James Kenny, of 30 York St., Hamilton, Ont., and many others testify under oath how they were released from suffering through the agency of Ryckman's Kootenay Cure.

Full particulars of these cases will be mailed you by sending your address to the Ryckman Medicine Co., Hamilton, Ont.

The remedy is not dear, one bottle lasts a month.

What he is Like.
Some Europeans who have seen the African King of Benin are reported to describe this murderous sovereign, the author of the recent massacre of Englishmen, as 'cordial, intelligent and amiable.' It was long ago remarked by an observer of human nature that 'one may smile, and smile, and be a villain.'

Must Be Dissolved.
Kidney Disease Can Only Be Cured by a Remedy Which is in Liquid Form—Common Sense of Science.

For a disordered stomach or sick headache, pills and powders are not without effect, but when these same remedies are said to cure kidney disease the common sense of science rebukes the claim. This insidious and growing disease will not be driven from the system unless a medicine is given that will dissolve the hard substance—uric acid and oxalate of lime—that give rise to the distress and pain that is common to all who suffer from kidney complaint. South American Kidney Cure is a kidney specific. It dissolves these hard substances, and while it dissolves it also heals. The cures effected leave no question of its merit.

Served Him Right.
The Philadelphia Record tells how a travelling man taught a cab driver of that city a lesson about the importance of attending to business.

The traveller approached the driver at the Broad Street station, and asked to be driven to the Continental Hotel. He was quickly inside of the carriage, and the driver was about to start when he got into an argument with another driver about working overtime. The argument lasted nearly five minutes, and then the man who

had the passenger mounted his box and opened the door with a merry 'Here we are, sir!'

To his astonishment, there was no one inside. Bewildered and disgusted, he drove back to the station, and told one of his friends about the queer circumstance. On hearing the story, the friend, who had witnessed the whole affair, told him that the man became disgusted at having to wait while the two drivers argued, and getting out, jumped into another cab, and was driven to his destination while the two men were still quarrelling.

HAMILTON.
Restoration.

A Hamilton lady undergoes an experience and relates the history of a severe trial.

Mrs. James Graham, 280 James-Street north, Hamilton, wife of the well-known grocer at that address, relates the following circumstances. Mr. and Mrs. Graham have resided in Hamilton for the past 14 years, and are very well favorably known.

Mrs. Graham says: "During the six months prior to taking Milburn's Heart and Nerve Pills I had a serious trouble arising from the wrong action of the heart. One of the symptoms was that I could not lie on my left side, for if I did so my heart throbbed so violently as to give me great pain. The smallest noise or the slightest exertion would start my heart palpitating terribly. It was impossible for me to go up a short flight of stairs without having to rest and regain my breath. I was excessively nervous, and my limbs would tremble as it with ague. My hands and feet were unnaturally cold, and I suffered from sharp pains in the back of my head. The slamming of a door would nearly set me wild. Frequently I would wake up frightened, and then was unable to get to sleep again. I lost flesh and became very weak and despondent. I felt miserable in mind and body."

"For six months I have been constantly taking medicine, trusting that it would help me, and for a time was under the care of a physician, but all the efforts I made towards a cure were of no avail. My physician finally told my husband, 'You know there is no cure for heart disease,' which made me more despondent than ever."

"Six weeks ago I was induced to try Milburn's Heart and Nerve Pills, and from that time my restoration to health dates. I have taken four boxes, which I bought at John A. Barr's drug store, corner James and Merrick streets. These pills are the only medicine that has done me any good, or given me any relief. I am happy to say that they proved that heart disease could not be cured. Since I commenced taking Milburn's Heart and Nerve Pills I have been daily getting better. I can now go upstairs without trouble and attend to my daily duties with out the slightest distress. I have gained in flesh, in health and in strength. My blood circulates more freely. Lying on my left side causes me no inconvenience or pain and I enjoy health and restful sleep. My nerves are strong and vigorous, and there has been such a radical change for the better in my condition that I can say these wonderful pills have practically made a complete cure."

"I recommend them without the slightest hesitation to all sufferers from similar complaints. (Signed) Mrs. Jas. Graham, Hamilton, Ont."

A Trick that Failed.
The dishonest man is pretty sure to overreach himself sooner or later, as in the following story, borrowed from an exchange:

In a hotel in Berlin there was a night-watchman who did not take kindly to the system, adopted a few years ago, requiring him to go through the hotel at certain hours and touch a set of electric buttons.

After much thought he rigged up an automatic arrangement on several of the buttons, so that they would report at certain hours. Soon the button system got so out of order that the management abolished it, and a pedometer was given to the watch man, which would register every step he took.

All went well the first two nights; but on the third morning the old man was missing. On search being made, he was found sound asleep in the engine-room, and the pedometer so attached to the piston-rod of the engine that with every stroke it registered a step. It had been travelling all night, and when taken off it registered two hundred and twelve miles.

PILES CURED IN 3 TO 6 NIGHTS
Dr. Agnew's Ointment will cure all cases of Itching Piles in from three to six nights. One application brings comfort. For blind and bleeding piles it is peerless. Also cures Tetter, Salt Rheum, Eczema, Barber's Itch and all eruptions of the skin. 35 cents.