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# CY WHITTAKER'S PLACE

The schoolhouse flag was napping in  
the wind. The scarred wooden pillars  
of its portico were hidden with bunt-  
ing. Simmons' front displayed a row  
of little banners, each bearing a letter.  
The letters spelled "Welcome Home!"  
Tad's barber shop was more or less  
artistically wreathed in colored tissue  
paper. There, too, a flag was draped  
over the front door. Yet not a single  
person was in sight.

"For goodness' sake," cried the be-  
wildered captain, "what's all this  
mean? And where is everybody?  
Have all hands?"

He stopped in the middle of the sen-  
tence. They were at the foot of  
Whittaker's hill. Its top, between the  
Atkins' gate and the Whittaker fence,  
was black with people. Children  
pranced about the outskirts of the  
crowd. A shout came down the wind.  
The horses, not in the least fatigued  
by their long canter, trotted up the  
slope. The shouting grew louder. A  
wave of youngsters came racing to  
meet the equipage.

"What—what in time?" gasped Cap-  
tain Cy. "What's up? I?"

And then the town clerk seized him  
by the arm. Peabody shook his other  
hand. Bos'n threw her arms about his  
neck. Bailey stood up and waved his  
hat.

"It's you, you old critter!" whooped  
Asaph. "It's you, d'you understand?"

"The appropriation has at last gone  
through," explained the lawyer, "and  
this is the celebration in consequence.  
And you are the star attraction, be-  
cause, you see, every one knows you  
are responsible for it."

"That's what!" howled the excited  
Bangs. "And we're going to show you  
what we think of you for doing it.  
We've been plannin' this for over a  
fortnight."

"And I knew it all the time,"  
squealed Bos'n, "and I didn't tell a  
word, did I?"

"Three cheers for Captain Whit-  
taker!" bellowed a person in the crowd.  
This person—wonder of wonders!—was  
Tad Simpson.

The cheering was, considering the  
size of the crowd, tremendous. Be-  
wildered and amazed, Captain Cy was  
assisted from the carriage and escort-  
ed to his front door. Amid the hand-  
kerchief waving, applauding people he  
saw Keturah Bangs and Alpheus  
Smalley and Angeline Phinney and  
Captain Salters—even Alonzo Snow,  
his recent opponent in town meeting.  
Josiah Dimick was there, too, appar-  
ently having a fit.

On the doorstep stood Georgianna,  
and—and—yes, it was true—beside her,  
grandly extending a welcoming hand,  
the majestic form of the Hon. Heman  
Atkins. Some one else was there also,  
some one who hurriedly slipped back  
into the crowd as the owner of the Cy  
Whittaker place came up the path be-  
tween the hedges.

Mr. Atkins shook the captain's hand  
and then, turning toward the people,  
held up his own for silence. To all  
outward appearance he was still the  
great Heman, our district idol, philan-  
thropist and leader. His silk hat  
glistened as of old; his chest swelled  
in the old manner; his whiskers were  
just as dignified and awe-inspiring.  
For an instant, as he met the captain's  
eye, his own faltered and fell, and  
there was a pleading expression in his  
face, the lines of which had deepened  
just a little, but only for an instant;  
then he began to speak.

"Cyrus," he said, "it is my pleasant  
duty, on behalf of your neighbors and  
friends here assembled, to welcome  
you to your—er—ancestral home after  
your trying illness. I do it heartily,  
sincerely, gladly. And it is the more  
pleasing to me to perform this duty  
because, as I have explained publicly  
to my fellow townspeople, all disagree-  
ment between us is ended. I was  
wrong—again I publicly admit it. A  
scheming blackleg, posing in the guise  
of a loving father, imposed upon me.  
I am sorry for the trouble I have  
caused you. Of you and of the little  
girl with you I ask pardon—I entreat  
forgiveness."

He paused. Captain Cy, the shadow  
of a smile at the corner of his mouth,  
nodded and said briefly:

"All right, Heman. I forgive you."  
Few heard him. The majority were ap-  
plauding the congressman. Sylvanus  
Caboon, whispering in the ear of Un-  
cle Bedny, expressed as his opinion  
that "that was about as magnanimous  
a thing as ever I heard said—yes, sir,  
mag-na-mi-ni-ous—that's what I call it."

"But," continued the great Atkins,  
"I have said all this to you before.  
What I have to say now—what I left  
my duties in Washington expressly to  
come here and say—is that Bayport  
thanks you, I thank you, for your tre-  
mendous assistance in obtaining the  
appropriation which is to make our  
harbor a busy port, where our gallant  
fishing fleet may ride at anchor and  
unload its catch, instead of transfer-  
ing it in dories, as heretofore. Friends,  
I have already told you how this man,"  
laying a hand on the captain's shoul-  
der, "came to the capital and used his  
influence among his acquaintances in  
high places, with the result that the  
\$30,000 which I had despaired of get-  
ting was added to the bill. I had the  
pleasure of voting for that bill. It  
passed. I am proud of that vote."

Tremendous applause. Then some  
one called for three cheers for Mr. At-  
kins. They were given. But the re-  
cipient merely bowed.

"No, no," he said deprecatingly—  
"no, no, not for me, my friends, much

as I appreciate your gratitude. My  
days of public service are nearly at an  
end. As I have intimated to some of  
you already, I am seriously consid-  
ering retiring from political life in the  
near future. But that is irrelevant; it  
is not material at present. Today we  
meet not to say farewell to the set-  
ting but to greet the rising sun. I  
call for three cheers for our commit-  
tee of one—Captain Cyrus Whittaker."

When the uproar had at last sub-  
sided there were demands for a speech  
from Captain Cy. But the captain,  
facing them, his arms about the de-  
lighted Bos'n, positively declined to  
orate.

"I—I'm ever so much obliged to you,  
folks," he stammered. "I am so. But  
you'll have to excuse me from speech-  
makin'." They didn't teach it  
afore the mast, where I went to col-  
lege. Thank you just the same. And  
do come and see me, everybody. Me  
and this little girl," drawing Emily  
nearer to him, "will be real glad to  
have you."

After the handshaking and congratu-  
lating were over the crowd dispersed.  
It was a great occasion; all agreed to  
that. But the majority considered it a  
divided triumph. The captain had  
done a lot for the town, of course, but  
the Honorable Atkins had made an  
other splendid impression by his ad-  
dress of welcome. Most people thought  
it as fine as his memorable effort at  
town meeting. Unlike that one, how-  
ever, in this instance it is safe to say  
that none, not even the adoring and  
praise chanting Miss Phinney, derived  
quite the enjoyment from the con-  
gressman's speech that Captain Cy did.  
It tickled his sense of humor.

"Ase," he observed irreverently when  
the five—Tidditt, Georgianna, Bailey,  
Bos'n and himself—were at last alone  
again in the sitting room, "it don't pay  
to tip over a monument, does it? Not  
out in public, I mean? You wouldn't  
want to see me blow up Bunker Hill,  
would you?"

"Blow up Bunker Hill!" repeated  
Asaph in alarmed amazement. "Ad-  
frey scissors, I believe you're goin'  
loony! This day's been too much for  
you. What are you talkin' about?"

"Oh, nothin'," with a quiet chuckle.  
"I was thinkin' out loud, that's all.  
Did you ever notice them imitation  
stone pillars on Heman's house?  
They're hollow inside, but you'd never  
guess it. And long as you do know  
they're hollow you can keep a watch  
on 'em. And there's one thing sure,"  
he added, "they are ornamental."

## CHAPTER XXIV.

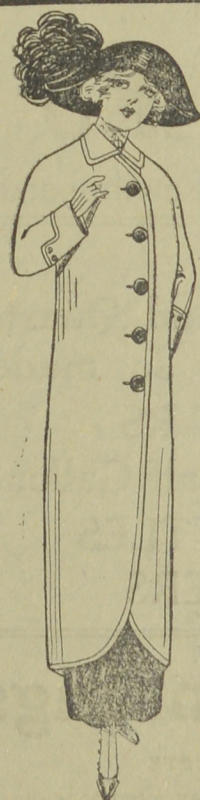
"W"ONDER where Phoebe went  
to," remarked Mr. Tidditt a  
little later. "I thought I  
saw her with Heman and  
Georgianna on the front steps when  
we drove up."

"She was there," affirmed the house-  
keeper. "She'd been helpin' me trim  
up the rooms here. What do you think  
of 'em, Cap'n Cyrus? Ain't they  
pretty?"

The sitting room and dining room  
were gay with evergreens and old  
fashioned flowers. Our living room  
windows in the winter time are usual-  
ly filled with carefully tended potted  
plants, and the neighbors had lent their  
geraniums and fuchsias and helio-  
tropes and begonias to brighten the  
Whittaker house for its owner's re-  
turn. Captain Cy, who was sitting in  
the rocker with Bos'n on his knee,  
looked about him. Now that the first  
burst of excitement was over he seem-  
ed grave and preoccupied.

To be Continued

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