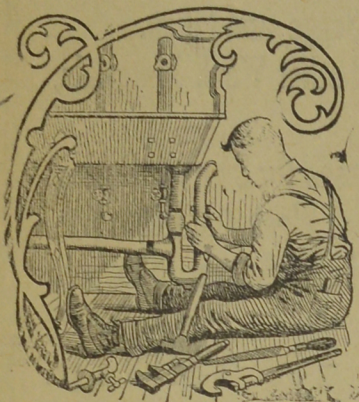


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the remainder of his days among
his boyhood friends; read of the
quaint little waif who came
to him unbidden and of the place
she won in his heart; read of the
pretty schoolteacher, the sancti-
monious congressman, the grown-
up boys Asaph Tidditt and Bal-
ley Bangs; read of Keturah and
Cap'n Josiah Dimick and Lem
Myrick and all the other quaint
folk of Bayport and you will
find entertainment a-plenty.
There was only one Charles
Dickens, but in character de-
lineation Joseph C. Lincoln has
a touch worthy of the master.

"Ase," he said, "I've always been a
great hand for tryin' experiments.
Had one of my cooks aboard put rais-
ins in the flapjacks once just to see
what they tasted like. I judged He-
man had had his own way in this
town for thirty odd year. I kind of
wanted to see what would happen if
he didn't have it."

CHAPTER IV.

WHEN Captain Cy had notified
Mrs. Bangs that the perfect
boarding house would shelter
him no longer than the coming
week a new problem arose.

"Whit," said Asaph earnestly,
"you've sartin made the place rise up
out of its tomb; you have so. It's a
miracle, pretty nigh, and I cal'late it
must have cost a heap, but you've done
it—all but the old folks themselves.
You can't raise them up, Cy; money
won't do that. And you can't live in
this great house all alone. Who's goin'
to cook for you and sweep and dust
and swab decks and one thing a'noth-
er? You'll have to have a housekeep-
er, as I told you a spell ago. Have you
done any thinkin' about that?"

And the captain, taking his pipe
from his lips, stared blankly at his
friend and answered:

"By the big dipper, Ase, I ain't! I
remember we did mention it, but I've
been so busy gettin' this craft off the
ways that I forgot all about it."

The discussion which followed Mr.
Tidditt's reminder was long and seri-
ous. Asaph and Balley Bangs racked
their brains and offered numerous sug-
gestions, but the majority of these
were not favorably received.

"There's Matildy Tripp," said Balley.
"She'd like the job, I'm sartin. She's
a widow, too, and she's had experi-
ence keepin' house along of Tobias,
him that was her husband. But, if
you do hire her, don't let Keturah know
I hinted at it, 'cause we're goin' to
lose one boarder when you quit, and
that's too many, 'ordin' to the old
lady's way of thinkin'."

"You can keep Matildy, for all me,"
replied the captain decidedly. "Come-
outer religion's all right for those that
have that kind of appetite, but havin'
it passed to me three times a day,
same as I've had it at your house, is
enough; I don't banker to have it
warmed over between meals. If I ship-
ped Matildy aboard here she and the
Rev. Daniels would stand over me,
watch and watch, till I was convert-
ed or crazy, one or the other."

"Well, there's Angie, She"—
"Angie!" sniffed Mr. Tidditt. "Stop
your jokin', Balley. This is a serious
matter."

"I want't jokin'. What?"—
"There, there, boys!" interrupted the
captain. "Don't fight. Balley didn't
mean to joke, Ase. He's full of what
the papers call 'unconscious humor.'
I'll give in that Angie is about as seri-
ous a matter as I can think of without
settin' down to rest. Humph! So fur
we haven't gained any knots to speak
of. Any more candidates on your
mind?"

More possibilities were mentioned,
but none of them seemed to fill the
bill. The conference broke up without
arriving at a decision.

Monday morning after breakfast
Captain Cy's trunk was put aboard the
depot wagon, and Dan'l Webster drew
it to its owner's home. The farewells
at the perfect boarding house were af-
fecting. Mrs. Tripp said that she had
spoken to the Rev. Mr. Daniels and
he would be sure to call the very first
thing. Keturah affirmed that the cap-
tain's stay had been a real pleasure.

"You never find fault, Cap'n Whit-
taker," she said. "You're such a man-
ly man, if you'll excuse my sayin' so,
I only wish there was more like you,"
with a significant glance at her hus-
band. As for Miss Phinney, she might
have been saying goodbye yet if the
captain had not excused himself.

WHITTAKER'S PLACE

Asaph accompanied his friend to the
house on the hill. The trunk was un-
loaded from the wagon and carried
into the bedroom on the first floor, the
room which had been Captain Cy's so
long ago. Gabe shrieked at Dan'l
Webster, and the depot wagon crawled
away toward the upper road.

"Got to meet the up train," grumbled
the driver—"not that anybody ever
comes on it, but I cal'late I'm s'posed
to be there. Be more talk than a lit-
tle if I want. Git dap, Dan'l! You're
slower'n the moral law."

"So you're goin' to do your own cook-
in' for a spell, Cy?" observed Asaph
a half hour later. "Well, I guess that's
a good idea till you can find the right
housekeeper. I ain't been able to think
of one that would suit you yet."

"Nor I either. Neither's Balley, I
judge, though for awhile he was as
full of suggestions as a pine grove is
of wood ticks. He started to say some-
thin' about it to me last night, but Ke-
tury hove in sight and yanked him off
to prayer meetin'."

"Yes, I know. She cal'lates to get
him into heaven somehow."

"I guess 't wouldn't be heaven for her
unless he was around to pick at. There
he comes now. How'd he get out of
wipin' dishes?"

Mr. Bangs strolled into the yard.

"Hello!" he hailed. "I was on my
way to Simmons' on an errand, and I
thought I'd stop in a minute. Got
somethin' to tell you, Whit."

"All right. Overboard with it! It
won't keep long this hot weather."

Balley smiled knowingly. "Didn't I
hear the up train whistle as I was
comin' along?" he asked. "Seems to
me I did. Yes! Well, if I ain't mis-
taken somebody's comin' on that train
—somebody for you, Cy Whittaker."

"Somebody for me?"

"Um—hum! I can gen'rally be de-
pended on, I cal'late, and when you
says to me, 'Balley, you get me a
housekeeper,' I didn't lose much time
I got her."

Mr. Tidditt gasped.
"Got her?" he repeated. "Got who?
Got what? Balley Bangs, what in the
world have"—

"Benny, Ase," ordered Captain Cy.
"Bangs, what are you givin' me?"

(To be Continued)

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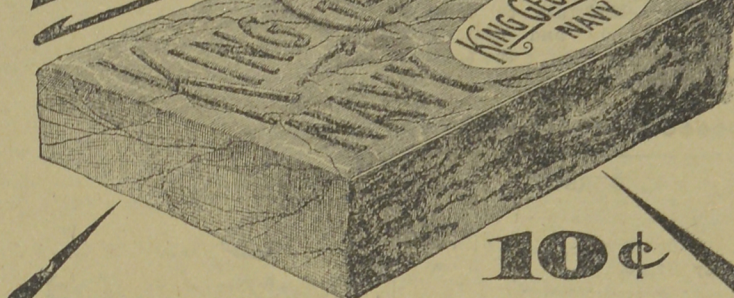
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