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# CY WHITTAKER'S PLACE

"Why, no," replied Phoebe, throwing  
open her wet jacket. "There's no  
news in particular. But I wanted to  
ask if you had seen the Breeze."

"Um—hum!" was the listless an-  
swer. "I presume likely you mean  
the news about the appropriation and  
the editorial dig at yours truly? Yes,  
I've seen it. They don't bother me  
much. I've got more important things  
on my mind just now."

Congressman Atkins' pledge in his  
farewell speech concerning the mighty  
effort he was to make toward secur-  
ing the appropriation for Bayport har-  
bor was in process of fulfillment—so  
he had written to the local paper.  
But, alas, the mighty effort was likely  
to prove unavailing. In spite of the  
Honorable Heman's battle for his con-  
stituents' rights it seemed certain that  
the bill would not provide the \$30,000  
for Bayport—at least not this year's  
bill. Other and more powerful inter-  
ests would win out and, instead, an  
other section of the coast be improved  
at the public expense.

So, at Simmons' and the sewing  
circle and after meeting on Sunday,  
Cy Whittaker was again discussed and  
derided. And this week's Breeze, out  
that morning, contained a sarcastic  
editorial which mentioned no names,  
but hinted at "a certain now notorious  
person" who had boasted loudly, but  
who had again "been weighed in the  
balance of public opinion and found  
wanting, for he had been a self ap-  
pointed committee of one, who had  
promised to succeed if Atkins might  
fail."

Miss Dawes did not seem pleased  
with the captain's nonchalant attitude  
toward the Breeze and its editorial.  
"Captain Cyrus," she said, "if you  
intended doing nothing toward secur-  
ing that appropriation, why did you  
accept the responsibility for it at the  
meeting?"

Captain Cy looked up.  
"Well," he said, "before this Thomas  
business happened, to knock all my  
plans on their beam ends, I'd done  
considerable thinkin' about that approp-  
riation. It seemed to me that there  
must be some reason for Heman's  
comin' about so sudden. He was sartin  
sure of the thirty thousand for a  
spell; then, all at once, he begun to  
take in sail and go on t'other tack. I  
don't know much about politics, but I  
know he knows all the politics there  
is. And it seemed to me that if a live  
man, one with eyes in his head, went  
to Washington and looked around he  
might find the reason."

"But you still believe that you might  
help if you went to Washington?"

"Yes, I guess I do. Anyhow, I'd  
ask some pretty p'inted questions.  
You see, I ain't lived here in Bay-  
port all my life, and I don't swallow  
all the bait Heman heaves overboard."

"Then why don't you go?"

"Hey? Why don't I go? And leave  
Bos'n and?"

"Em'ly would be all right and per-  
fectly safe. Georgianna thinks the  
world of her. And, Captain Whit-  
taker, I don't like to hear these people  
talk of you as they do. I don't like  
to read such things in the paper—that  
you were only bragging in order to be  
popular and meant to shirk when the  
time came for action. I know they're  
not true. I knew it."

Captain Cy was gratified, and his  
gratification showed in his voice.

"Thank you, Phoebe," he said. "I  
am much obliged to you. But, you  
see, I don't take any interest in such  
things any more. When I realize that  
pretty soon I've got to give up that  
little girl for good I can't bear to be  
away from her a minute hardly. I  
don't like to leave her here alone with  
Georgianna and?"

"I will keep an eye on her. You  
trust me, don't you?"

"Trust you? By the big dipper,  
you're about the only one I can trust  
these days! I don't know how I'd  
have pulled through this if you hadn't  
helped. You're different from Ase and  
Bailey and their kind, not meanin'  
anything against them, either. But  
you're broad minded and cool headed  
and—and— Do you know, if I'd had  
a woman like you to advise me all  
these years and keep me from goin' off  
the course I might have been some-  
body by now."

"I think you're somebody as it is."

"Don't talk that way. I own up I  
like to hear you, but I'm afraid it ain't  
true. You say I amount to somethin'.  
Well, what? I come back home here  
with some money in my pocket, think-  
in' that was all that was necessary  
to make me a good deal of a feller.  
The old Cy Whittaker place, I said  
to myself, was goin' to be a real Cy  
Whittaker place again. And I'd be a  
real Whittaker, a man who should  
stand for somethin', as my dad and  
granddad did afore me. The town  
should respect me, and I'd do things  
to help it along. And what's it all  
come to? Why, every young one on  
the street is told to be good for fear  
he'll grow up like me. Ain't that so?  
Course it's so! I'm!"

"You shall not speak so! Do you  
imagine that you're not respected by  
every one whose respect counts for  
anything? Yes, and by others too.  
Don't you suppose Mr. Atkins respects  
you down in his heart—if he has one?  
Doesn't your housekeeper, who sees  
you every day, respect and like you?  
And little Em'ly—doesn't she love you  
more than she does all the rest of us  
together?"

"Well, I guess Bos'n does care for  
the old man some, that's a fact. She

says she likes you best, though.  
Did you know that?"

But Miss Dawes was indignant.

"Captain Whittaker," she declared,  
"one would think you were a hundred  
years old to hear you. You are always  
talking yourself an old man. Does Mr.  
Atkins call himself old? And he is  
older than you."

"Well, I'm over fifty, Phoebe." In  
spite of the habit for which he had  
just been reproached, the captain  
found this a difficult statement to  
make.

"I know. But you're younger than  
most of us at thirty-five. You see, I'm  
confessing, too," she added, with a  
laugh and a little blush.

Captain Cy made a mental calcula-  
tion.

"Twenty years," he said musingly.  
"Twenty years is a long time. No;  
I'm old. And, worse than that, I'm  
an old fool, I guess. If I hadn't been  
I'd have stayed in South America in-  
stead of comin' here to be booted out  
of the town I was born in."

The teacher stamped her foot.

"Oh, what shall I do with you!" she  
exclaimed. "It is wicked for you to  
say such things. Do you suppose that  
Mr. Atkins would find it necessary to  
work as he is doing to beat a fool?  
And, besides, you're not complimen-  
tary to me. Should I, do you think,  
take such an interest in one who was  
an imbecile?"

"Well, 'tis mighty good of you. Your  
comin' here so to help Bos'n's fight  
along is?"

"How do you know it is Bos'n alto-  
gether? I"— She stopped suddenly,  
and the color rushed to her face. She  
rose from the rocker. "I—really I  
don't see how we came to be dis-  
cussing such nonsense," she said—  
"our ages and that sort of thing! Captain  
Cyrus, I wish you would go  
to Washington. I think you ought to  
go."

But the captain's thoughts were far  
from Washington at that moment. His  
own face was alight, and his eyes  
shone.

"Phoebe," he faltered unbelievingly,  
"what was you goin' to say? Do you  
mean that—that?"

The side door of the house opened.  
The next instant Mr. Tidditt, a drip-  
ping umbrella in his hand, entered the  
sitting room.

"Hello, Whit!" he hailed. "Just run  
in for a minute to say howdy." Then  
he noticed the schoolmistress, and his  
expression changed. "Oh! How be-  
you, Miss Dawes?" he said. "I didn't  
see you just off. Don't run away on  
my account."

"I was just goin'," said Phoebe, but-  
toning her jacket. Captain Cy accom-  
panied her to the door.

"Goodby," she said. "There was  
something else I meant to say, but I  
think it is best to wait. I hope to  
have some good news for you soon,  
something that will send you to Wash-  
ington with a light heart. Perhaps I  
shall hear tomorrow. If so I will call  
after school and tell you."

"Yes, do," urged the captain eager-  
ly. "You'll find me here waitin'. Good  
news or not, do come. I—I ain't said  
all I wanted to myself."

He returned to the sitting room.  
The town clerk was standing by the  
stove. He looked troubled.

"What's the row, Ase?" asked Cy  
cheerily. He was overflowing with  
good nature.

"Oh, nothin' special," replied Mr.  
Tidditt. "You look joyful enough for  
two of us. Had good company, ain't  
it?"

(To be Continued)

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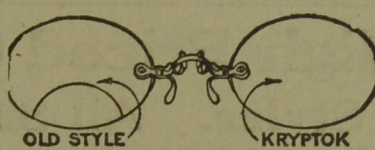
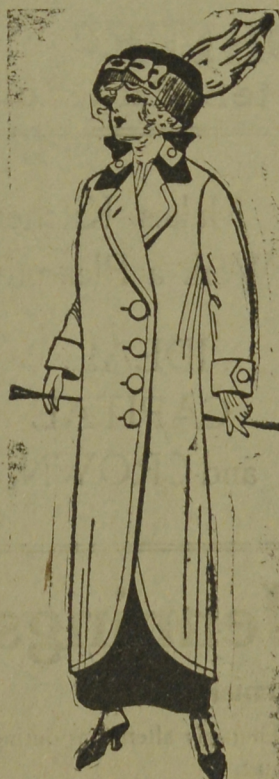
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