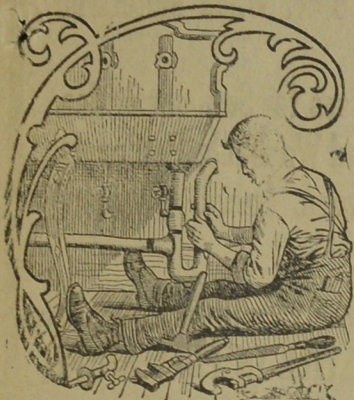


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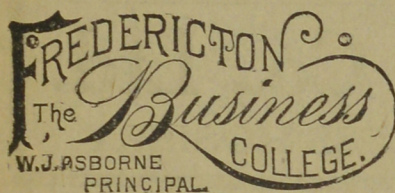
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## WHITTAKER'S PLACE

pocket a sheet of note paper and proceeded to read what was written on its pages. It was a letter which he had received nearly a month before and had not yet answered. During the past week he had read it many times. The writing was cramped and blotted and the paper cheap and dingy. The envelope bore the postmark of a small town in Indiana, and the inclosure was worded as follows:

Captain Cyrus Whittaker:  
Dear Sir—I suppose you will be a good deal surprised to hear from me, especially from way out west here. When you bought the old house of Seth he and I was living in Concord, N. H. He couldn't make a go of his business there, so we came west, and he has been sick most of the time since. We ain't well off like you, and times are hard with us. What I wanted to write you about was this: My cousin Mary Thomas—Mary Thayer that was—is still living in Concord, and she is poor and needs help, though I don't suppose she would ask for it, being too proud—false pride I call it. Me and Seth would like to do something for her, but we have a hard enough job to keep going ourselves. Mary married a man by the name of Henry Thomas, and he turned out to be a miserable good for nothing, as I always said he would. She wouldn't listen to me, though. He run off and left her seven year ago last April and, I understand, was killed or drowned somewhere up in Montana. Mary and I several words scratched out here] got along somehow since, but I don't know how. While we lived in Concord Seth sort of kept an eye on her, but now he can't, of course. She's a good girl, or woman, rather, being most forty, and would make a good housekeeper if you should need one, as I suppose likely you will. If you could help her it would be an act of charity and you will be rewarded above. Seth says why not write to her and tell her to come and see you. He feels bad about her, because he is so sick, I suppose. And he knows you are rich and could do good if you felt like it. Her father's name was John Thayer. I wouldn't wonder if you used to know her mother. She was Emily Richards afore she married, and they used to live in Orham. Yours truly, ELIZABETH HOWES.  
P. S.—Mary's address is Mrs. Mary Thomas, care Mrs. Oliver, 128 Blank street, Concord, N. H.  
N. B.—Seth won't say so, but I will: We are very hard up ourselves, and if you could help him and me with the loan of a little money it would be thankfully received.

(To be Continued)

Miss Lella Murchie is visiting Miss Jean Vanbuskirk.

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Hawthorn, sweet peas, and hedge roses are reported as being in favor in Paris for summer millinery.

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of the coats have martingale straps and lingerie collars and revers hemstitched and laid on those of the material.

A novelty in parasols has a ferrule end which is an exact reproduction of the top of the director walking sticks carried by the beauties of that period.

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"Stable critter, ain't she?" observed the captain. "Always willin' to help entertain. Comes and sets up with me till bedtime. Tells about her family troubles. Preaches about her niece out west and how set the niece and the rest of the western relations are to have her make' em a visit. I told her she better go—I thought 'twould do her good. I know 'twould help me consider'ble to see her start."

"She's got so now she finds fault with my neckties," he added. "Says I must be careful and not get my feet wet. Picks out what I ought to wear so's I won't get cold. She'll adopt me pretty soon. Oh, it's all right! She can't hear what you say. Are your dishes done?" he shrieked, turning to the old lady.

"One? One what?" inquired Mrs. Bensley.  
"They won't be done till you go, Ase," continued the master of the house. "She'll stay with us till the last gun fires. Tother day Angie Phinney called, and I turned Debby loose on her. I didn't believe anything could wear out Angie's talkin' machinery, but she did it. Angeline stayed twenty minutes and then quit, hoarse as a cow."

Here the widow joined in the conversation, evidently under the impression that nothing had been said since she last spoke. Continuing her favorable comments on the weather, she observed that she was glad there was so little fog, because fog was hard for folks with "neuralgia pains." Her brother's wife's cousin had "neuralgia" for years, and she described his sufferings with enthusiasm and infinite detail. Mr. Tidditt answered her questions verbally at first, later by nods and shakes of the head. Captain Cy fidgeted in his chair.

"Come on outdoor, Ase," he said at last. "No use to wait till she runs down, 'cause she's a self winder, guaranteed to keep goin' for a year. Good night!" he shouted, addressing Mrs. Bensley and heading for the door.

"Where you goin'?" asked the old lady.  
"No—yes. Who said so? Hooray! Three cheers for Gen'l Scott! Come on, Ase!" And the captain, seizing his friend by the arm, dragged him into the open air and slammed the door.

"Are you crazy?" demanded the astonished town clerk. "What makes you talk like that?"

"Might as well. She wouldn't understand it any better if 'twas Scripture, and it saves brain work. The only satisfaction I get is bein' able to give my opinion of her and the grub without hurtin' her feelin's. If I called her a wooden headed jumpin' jack she'd only smile and say no, she didn't think 'twas goin' to rain, or somethin' just as brilliant."

"Well, why don't you give her her walkin' papers?"  
"I shall when her month's up."

"I wouldn't wait no month. I'd heave her overboard tonight. You hear me!"

Captain Cy shook his head.  
"I can't very well," he replied. "I hate to make her feel too bad. When the month's over I'll have some excuse ready, maybe. The joke of it is that she don't really need to work out. She's got some money of her own—owns cranberry swamps and I don't know what all. Says she took up Bailey's offer 'cause she cal'lated I'd be company for her. I had to laugh even in the face of those beans when she said that."

However, at the end of the month Cyrus sent Deborah on her way with an extra month's salary in her pocket.

## CHAPTER V.

DAYS passed. Cyrus saw the house becoming woefully untidy. Something must be done. The captain drew his chair near the center table, took from his

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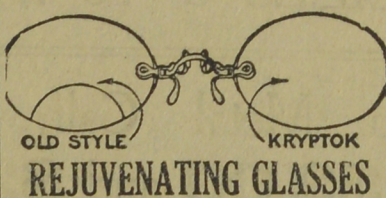
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