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WHITTAKER'S PLACE

"What's the matter, Heman?" asked the captain anxiously. "Ain't sick, are you?"

The congressman started. "Oh, no!" he said hurriedly. "Oh, no! But I'm afraid I've soiled your cloth. It was awkward of me. I—I really—I apologize—I—"

He wiped his face with his handkerchief. Captain Cy laughed. "Oh, never mind the tablecloth," he said. "I callate it's too soiled already to be hurt by a bath, even a lemon one. Well, you've all heard the toast. Full glasses now. Here's to you, Bos'n! Drink hearty, all hands, and give the ship a good name."

If the heartiness with which they drank is a criterion, the good name of the ship was established. Then the assembly adjourned to the sitting room and—yes, even the front parlor. Not since the days when that sacred apartment had been desecrated by the irreverent city boarders, during the Howes regime had its walls echoed to such whoops and shouts of laughter. The children played "postoffice" and "Copenhagen" and "clap in, clap out," while the grown folks looked on.

"Ain't they havin' a fine time, cap'n?" gushed Miss Phinney. "Don't it make you wish you was young again?" "Angle," replied Captain Cy solemnly. "don't tempt me—don't! If they keep on playin' that Copenhagen and you stand right alongside of me there's no tellin' what'll happen."

Angeline declared that he was "turrible," but she faced the threatened danger nevertheless and bravely remained where she was.

Mr. Atkins went home early in the evening, taking Alicia with him. He explained that his long railroad journey had—er—somewhat fatigued him and, though he hated to leave such a—er—delightful gathering, he really felt that under the circumstances his departure would be forgiven. Captain Cy opened the door for him and stood watching as, holding his daughter by the hand, he marched majestically down the path.

"Hum!" mused the captain aloud. "I guess he has been travelin' nights. Thought he ought to be here quick. I shouldn't wonder. He does look tired, that's a fact, and kind of pale, seemed to me."

"Well, there, now!" exclaimed Mrs. Tripp, who was looking over his shoulder. "Did you see that?"

"No. What was it?"

"Why, when he went to open his gate one of them arbor vity bushes he set out this spring knocked his hat off. And he never seemed to notice, but went right on. If Lida hadn't picked it up that nice new hat would have been layin' there yet. That's the most undignified thing ever I see Heman Atkins do. He must be tired out, poor man!"

The next day Cyrus was sitting at home conferring with his supporters. There came a knock at the door of the dining room. The captain went to answer the knock. They heard the door open, and then a man's voice asked:

"Is this Cap'n Whittaker?"

"Yes," was the short answer.

"Well, cap'n, I guess you don't know me, though maybe you know some of my family. Ha, ha! Don't understand that, hey? Well, you let me in and I'll explain the joke."

The captain's reply was calm and deliberate.

To be Continued

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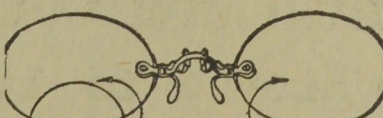
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DAVID ALICE accepted the invitation with a rustle of silk and an ecstatic squeal of delight. During this affecting scene Asaph whispered to Bailey that he "cal'lated" Heman had a hurry up distress signal from Simpson, to which sage observation Mr. Bangs replied with a vigorous nod, showing that Captain Cy's example had had its effect in that they no longer stood in such awe of their representative at Washington.

CHAPTER X.

HOWEVER true Asaph's calculations might have been, Mr. Atkins made no mention of politics. He was urbanity itself. He drew up to the table, partook of the ice cream and cake and greeted his friends and neighbors with charming benignity.

"Wasn't it sweet of him to come?" whispered Miss Phinney to Keturah. "And him so nice and everyday and sociable! And when Cap'n Whittaker's runnin' against his friend, as you might say."

Keturah replied with a dubious shake of the head.

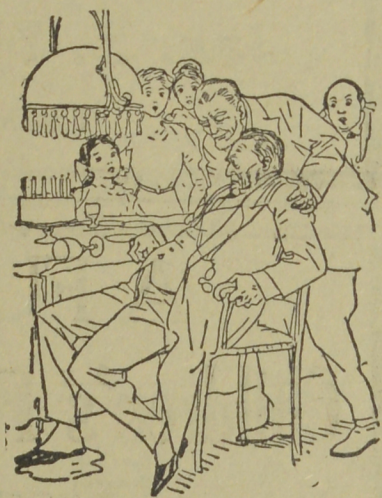
"I think Captain Cyrus is goin' to get into trouble," she said. "I've preached to Bailey more 'n a little about keepin' clear, but he won't."

"Games in t'other room now," ordered Captain Cy, but Mr. Atkins held up his hand.

"Pardon me just a moment, Cyrus, if you please," he said. "I feel that on this happy occasion it is my duty and pleasure to propose a toast." He held his lemonade glass aloft. "Permit me," he proclaimed, "to wish many happy birthdays and long life to Miss—I beg pardon, Cyrus, but what is your little friend's name?"

"Emily Richards Thayer," replied the captain, carried away by enthusiasm and off his guard for once.

"To Em!" began Heman. Then he paused and for the first time in his public life seemed at a loss for words.



"WHAT'S THE MATTER, HEMAN?" ASKED THE CAPTAIN ANXIOUSLY.

"What?" he asked, and his hand shook. "I fear I didn't catch the name."

"No wonder," laughed Mr. Tidditt. "Cy's so crazy tonight he'd forgot his own name. Know what you said, Cy? You said she was Emily Richards Thayer! Haw! haw! She ain't a Thayer, Heman. Her last name's Thomas. She's Emily Richards Thayer's granddaughter, though. Her granddad was John Thayer, over to Orham. Good land, I forgot! Well, what of it, Cy? 'Twould have to be known some time."

Every one looked at Captain Cy then. No one observed Mr. Atkins for the moment. When they did turn their gaze upon the great man he had sunk back in his chair, the glass of lemonade was upset upon the cloth before him, and he, with a very white face, was staring at Emily Richards Thomas.