

The Story of Waitstill Baxter

(Continued from page 6, Col. 3)
mirably, Philip Perry as well as Marquis Wilson.

Young Perry's interest in Patty, as we have seen, began with his attention from Ellen Wilson, the first object of his affections, and it was not at the outset at all of a sentimental nature. Philip was a pillar of the church, and Ellen had proved so entirely lacking in the religious sense, so self-satisfied as to her standing with the heavenly powers, that Philip dared not expose himself longer to her society lest he find himself "unequally yoked together with an unbeliever," thus defying the scriptural admonition as to marriage.

Patty, though somewhat lacking in the qualities that go to the making of trustworthy saints, was not, like Ellen, wholly given over to the fleshpots and would prove a valuable convert. Philip thought, one who would reflect great credit upon him if he succeeded in inducing her to subscribe to the stern creed of the day.

Philip was a very strenuous and slightly gloomy believer, dwelling considerably on the wrath of God and the doctrine of eternal punishment. There was an old "pennyroyal" hymn much in use which describes the general tenor of his meditation—

My thoughts on awful subjects roll—
Damnation and the deal.
What horrors seize the guilty soul
Upon a dying bed!

(No wonder that Jacob Cochrane's lively songs, cheerful, hopeful, militant and bracing, fell with a pleasing sound upon the ear of the believer of that epoch.)

The love of God had, indeed, entered Philip's soul, but in some mysterious way had been ossified after it got there. He had intensely black hair, dark skin and a liver that disposed him constitutionally to an ardent belief in the necessity of hell for most of his neighbors and the hope of spending his own glorious immortality in a small, properly restricted and prudently managed heaven. He was eloquent at prayer meetings, and Patty's only objection to him there was in his disposition to allude to himself as a "rebel worm," with frequent references to his "flesh body."

Otherwise and when not engaged in theological discussion Patty liked Philip very much. His own father, although an orthodox member of the fold in good and regular standing, had "doctored" Phil conscientiously for his liver from his youth up, hoping in time to incite in him a sunnier view of life, for the doctor was somewhat skilled in adapting his remedies to spiritual maladies. Jed Morrill had always said that when old Mrs. Buxton, the champion convert of Jacob Cochrane, was at her worst—keeping her whole family awake nights by her hysterical fears for their future—Dr. Perry had given her a twelfth of a grain of tartar emetic five times a day until she had entire mental relief, and her anxiety concerning the salvation of her husband and children was set completely at rest.

The good doctor noted with secret pleasure his son's growing fondness for the society of his prime favorite, Miss Patience Baxter. "He'll begin by trying to save her soul," he thought. "Phil always begins that way, but when Patty gets him in hand he'll remember the existence of his heart, an organ he has never taken into consideration. A love affair with a pretty girl, good but not too pious, will help Phil considerably, however it turns out."

There is no doubt but that Phil was taking his chances and that under Patty's tutelage he was growing mellow. As for Patty, she was only amusing herself and frisking like a young lamb in pastures where she had never strayed before. Her fancy fled from Mark to Phil and from Phil back to Mark again, for at the moment she was just a vessel of emotion, ready to empty herself on she knew not what. Temperamentally, she would take advantage of currents rather than steer any time, and it would be the strongest current that would finally bear her away. Her idea had always been that she could play with fire without burning her own fingers and that the flames she kindled were so innocent and mild that no one could be harmed by them. She had fancied up to now that she could control, urge on or cool down a man's feeling forever and a day if she chose and remain mistress of the situation. Now, after some weeks of weighing and balancing her two swains, she found herself confronting a choice once and for all. Each of them seemed to be approaching the state of mind where he was likely to say, somewhat violently, "Take me or leave me, one or the other!" But she did not wish to take them, and still less did she wish to leave them, with no other lover in sight but Cephus Cole, who was almost, though not quite, worse than none.

If matters by lack of masculine patience and self control did come to a crisis, what should she say definitely to either of her suitors? Her father despised Mark Wilson a trifle more than any young man on the river, and while he could have no objection to Phil Perry's character or position in the world, his hatred of old Dr. Perry amounted to a disease. When the doctor had closed the eyes of the third Mrs. Baxter he had made some plain and unwelcome statements that would rankle in the deacon's breast as long as he lived. Patty knew, therefore, that the chance of her father's blessing

falling upon her union with either of her present lovers was more than uncertain, and of what use was an engagement if there could not be a marriage?

If Patty's mind inclined to a somewhat speedy departure from her father's household she could not carry any of her indecisions and fears to her sister for settlement. Who could look in Waitstill's clear, steadfast eyes and say, "I can't make up my mind which to marry?" Not Patty. She felt, instinctively, that Waitstill's heart, if it moved at all, would rush out like a great river to lose itself in the ocean and, losing itself, forget the narrow banks through which it had flowed before. Patty knew that her own love was at the moment nothing more than the note of a child's penny flute and that Waitstill was perhaps vibrating secretly with a deeper, richer music than could ever come to her. Still, music of some sort she meant to feel. "Even if they make me decide one way or another before I am ready," she said to herself, "I'll never say 'yes' till I'm more in love than I am now!"

There were other reasons why she did not want to ask Waitstill's advice. Not only did she shrink from the loving scrutiny of her sister's eyes and the gentle probing of her questions, which would fix her own motives on a pin point and hold them up unbecomingly to the light, but she had a foolish, generous loyalty that urged her to keep Waitstill quite aloof from her own little private perplexities.

(Continued next week.)

Last Resort.

"Do you think women should propose?" asked the passe lady. "I don't know," mused the young thing. "Have you tried everything else?"

Was Tolstoy's Vision Prophetic?

Reprinted from the Semi-Monthly Magazine Section of the Sunday Dispatch of Feb. 23, 1913.

In the autumn of 1910 the Czarina invited Countess Natalia Tolstoy to the summer palace at Peterhoff. On arrival the countess was informed by the Czar that he had a very peculiar, confidential mission for her that the Kaiser and King George of England were anxious to get a direct message from Count Leo Tolstoy and he wished the countess to obtain it. She immediately visited her grand uncle at his country estate. He heard her mission, said he would be glad to send a message to royalty, but the trouble was he had written all his life messages "to the mob." There had, however, been something that had haunted him for two years, a vision, he could not call it a dream because he had seen it often while sitting at his writing table. According to the account given by his grandniece, what he saw (curiously) prophetic in view of the events of the past few weeks, was told by him as follows:

"This is a revelation of events of a universal character, which must shortly come to pass. Their spiritual outlines are now before my eyes. I see them upon the surface of the sea of human fate the huge silhouette of a nude woman. She is—with her beauty, her poise, her smile, her jewels—a super-Venus. Nations rush madly after her, each of them eager to attract her especially. But she, like an eternal courtesan, flings all in her hair-ornament of diamonds and rubies is engraved her name: 'Commercialism.' As alluring and bewitching as she seems much destruction and agony follows in her wake. Her breath, reeking of sordid transactions, her voice of metallic character like gold and the look of greed are so much poison to the nations who fall victims to her charms. 'And behold, she has three gigantic arms with three torches of universal corruption in her hand. The first torch represents the flame of war, that the beautiful courtesan carries from city to city and country to country. It kindles answers with flashes of honest flame, but the end is the roar of guns and musketry. 'The second torch bears the flame of bigotry and hypocrisy. It lights the lamps only in temples and on the altars of false institutions. It carries the seed of falsity and fanaticism. It kindles the minds that are still in cradles and follows them to their graves. 'The third torch is that of the law, that dangerous foundation of all unauthentic traditions, which first does its fatal work in the family then sweeps through the larger worlds of literature, art and statesmanship. 'The great conflagration will start about 1912, set by the torch of the first arm in the countries of Southeastern Europe. It will develop into a destructive calamity in 1913. In that year I see all Europe in flames and smoke. I hear the lamentations of huge battlefields. About the year 1915 a strange figure from the north—a new Napoleon—enters the stage of the bloody drama. He is a man of little militaristic training, a writer or a journalist, but in his grip the most of Europe will remain until 1925. The end of the great calamity will mark a new political era for the Old World. There will be left no Empires or Kingdoms, but the world will form a federation of the United States of Nations. There will remain only four great giants—the Anglo-Saxon, the Latins, the Slavs and the Mongolians. 'After the year 1925 I see a change in religious sentiments. The second torch of the courtesan has brought about the fall of the church. The ethical idea has almost vanished. Humanity is without moral feeling. But then, a great reformer arises. He will clear the world of the relics of monotheism and lay the cornerstone of the temple of pantheism. God, soul, spirit and immortality will be molten in a new furnace, and I see the peaceful beginning of an ethical era. The man determined to this mission is a Mongolian-Slav. He is already walking the earth—a man of active affairs. He himself does not now realize the mission assigned to him by a superior power. 'And behold the flame of the third torch, which has already begun to destroy our family relations, our standards of art and morals. The relation between woman and man is accepted as a prosaic partnership of the sexes. Art has become realistic degeneracy. Political and religious disturbances have shaken the spiritual foundations of all nations. Only small spots here and there have remained untouched by these three destructive flames. The anti-national wars in Europe, the class war of America and the race wars in Asia have strangled pro-

gress for half a century. But then, in the middle of this century, I see a hero of literature and art rising from the ranks of the Latins and purging the world of the tedious stuff of the obvious. It is the light of the torch of Commercialism. In place of the polygamy and monogamy of today, there will come a poetogamy—a relation of the sexes based fundamentally upon poetic conceptions of life. 'And I see the nations growing wiser and realizing that the alluring woman of their destinies is after all nothing but an illusion. There will be a time when the world will have no use for armies, hypocritical religions and degenerate art. Life is evolution and evolution is development from the simple to the more complicated forms of the mind and the body. I see the passing show of the world-drama in its present form, how it fades like the glow of evening upon the mountains. One motion of the hand of Commercialism and a new history begins."

Medical.

Doubt Cannot Exist

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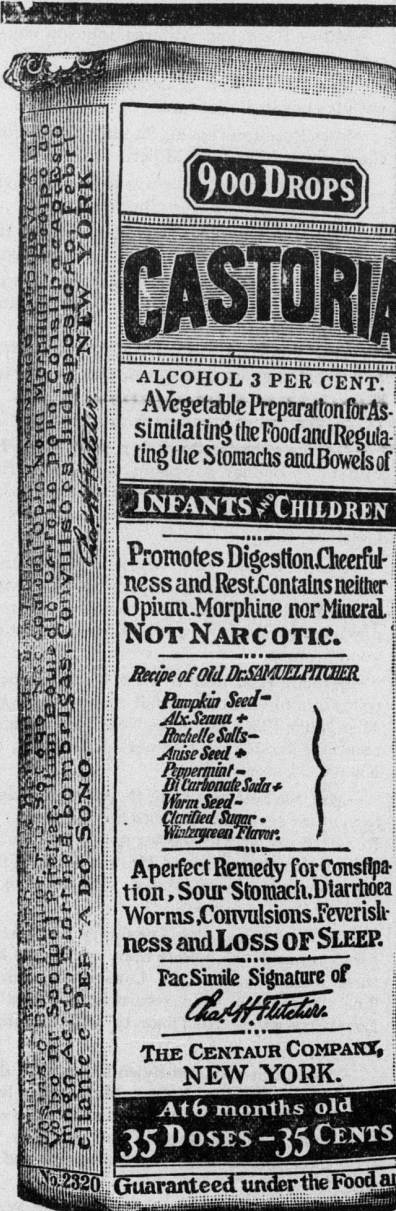
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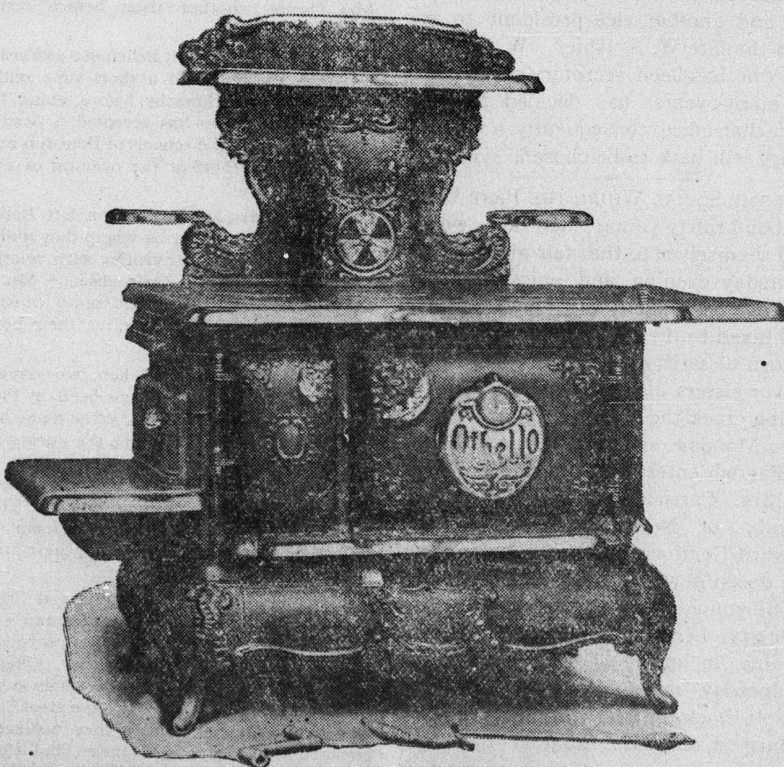
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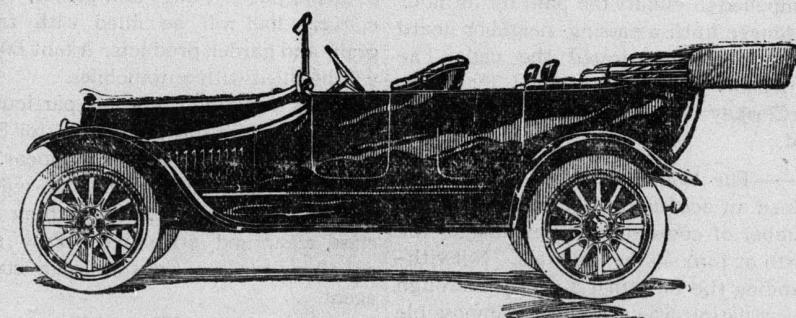
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