

A Measure of Success

an Easter Story

by Hope Darling

Francis Jerome looked from his newspaper with a yawn. The train, which had been passing through a scrubby forest where the snow still lingered, halted at a small town. One passenger entered the car, Jerome's wandering gaze was attracted by his face.

"He looks familiar. It—why, it is Tom Jones, my classmate at Cornell."

The next moment the two men were shaking hands and both talking at once.

"No, I don't live up here in this desolate wilderness," Jones said in response to the other's query. "I am practicing law at Molray. It's only a country town, but it has a future before it. I've been up this way on business for a client. Glad to get started for home, for it's Saturday, and I have been away from Nan and the boys all week."

He laughed gayly. Jerome's lips curled under his blonde mustache. It was easy to place his old friend. He was a country lawyer and a family man.

"What of yourself?" Jones asked, after a little. You know the class of 1881 expected great things of you."

Jerome shrugged his shoulders. "What fools we were! It took me two years to get rid of the idea that it was my mission to make the world better. Then I burned my manuscripts, locked up my pen, and went into the wholesale grocery business in Chicago."

"You! A wholesale grocer! I wish you hadn't told me; all these years I have thought of you as uplifting humanity."

His companion smiled cynically. "How are the mighty fallen! I am content. More than that, I am successful."



"CHRIST IS RISEN, RISEN TO-DAY."

"I've made a fortune, and that is the measure of success in these days."

"Perhaps so," a little doubtfully. "Still I'd rather have my wife and boys, my home and my dreams of the future than a fortune. Are you married?"

"No, no; time for that. My life has been a busy one. Just now I am taking the place of one of my traveling salesmen for a week. I often go on such a trip, visiting their regular customers and learning how well they do the work I pay them for. My next point is Monroe."

"We are almost there. It's a little box of a place, just a lumbering town."

"Yes, I'll get an evening train on to civilization. Well, good-by, Jones. Glad I met you. When you are in Chicago look me up."

An hour later Francis Jerome was in a decidedly bad temper. He had learned that there was no train out of Monroe until Monday morning, 36 hours later.

"What a beastly shame," he growled, picking his way along the uneven street. "I will come dangerously near starving at that apology for a hotel. And tomorrow! Wonder if there's such a thing as a novel in the town. Fortunately I've a box of cigars—good ones, too—in my case."

He made his calls upon the retail grocers. As he was on his way back to the hotel he heard music.

"That is no novice's hand," he thought as the organ pealed out a strong, triumphant melody. "The player is a musician, born and trained."

Glancing round Mr. Jerome saw that he stood before a modest church. The door was ajar, and he caught a glimpse of a dim light within.

The music had glided into a tender harmony that thrilled the listener's heart with a half-forgotten memory. Pulling the door open, he stepped within.

The small audience room was lighted only by two lamps in the further end. The elevated platform upon which stood the pulpit and the organ was heavily trimmed with evergreen branches and the wall at the back of the platform was covered with the same. Outlined against this dusky greenness were two stands each holding a magnificent Easter lily, the blossoms gleaming white and pearly in the dim light.

Jerome remembered that the morrow would be Easter. As he looked there was the sound of a side door opening, the music ceased, and the organist rose, saying:

"Ah, you are prompt, little girl."

"How beautiful the decorations are!" The newcomer was a young girl, and she went on: "Are you ready, Miss Mildred?"

"Yes, dear. You play it through once before I begin to sing."

"You must stop me if I go wrong. It makes me so happy to think that I can play for you to sing, you, my precious Miss Mildred, who have taught me everything."

There was the sound of glad tears in the fresh young voice. For a moment the two clung together. Then the girl sat down at the organ, while her companion took up a position between the lilies.

Francis Jerome drew a long breath. It was true, this woman, whose crimson-tinted, olive face showed but dimly against the background of pine and cedar boughs, was Mildred Blake, once his promised wife.

He sat still, his breath coming in short gasps. The girl played on. Mildred threw back her head, and the voice that had so often filled his heart with rapture rang out in—

"Christ is risen, risen to-day."

The unseen listener did not stir until the song was ended. Then he rose, opened the door softly, and stepped out into the night.

For an hour he strode along, going over the past. It had been so happy, so hopeful, yet his own hand had closed the door upon it.

Mildred Blake had been his fellow student at Cornell. She it was who had incited him to dream of a glorious and a useful future. When he graduated and went west to seek his fortune Mildred was his promised wife.

The estrangement had come slowly. At first he had struggled bravely, clinging to his lofty ideals through disappointments and rebuffs. When he began to turn from those ideals, to seek material success at any price, then his letters to Mildred were further apart and colder.

She was very patient, but there were lengths which even her gentleness could not go. There came a day when Francis Jerome received a letter giving him his freedom.

He accepted it gladly. Life was too busy for him to think of marriage. The years had gone on, and now—

"She must be the minister's wife," he concluded, as at last he turned his steps in the direction of the hotel. "She to be living here! Both voice and touch prove that her musical talent has fulfilled the promise of her youth. But married to a man who would be content to preach here! Bah! Her life is a failure."

The next morning Mr. Jerome went to church. He must know something more of Mildred, and he could not bring himself to question a stranger about her.

The little edifice was crowded with bronze-faced lumbermen and their prematurely aged wives. The stranger had no eyes for them. He even forgot to look for Mildred in his eagerness to see the man whom she had married.

The minister was a small, slight, thoughtful-faced man. It was apparent that he was educated and cultured. He threw himself heartily into the service, doing all in his power to bring home to his listeners a realization of the risen Christ.

And Mildred? Again standing between the snowy Easter lilies, dressed simply in black, she sang of the wondrous love that had broken asunder the bonds of death.

Francis Jerome listened with bated breath. Whatever of success or failure the years had brought Mildred, they had brought her a serene joy in life, to which he was a stranger. He saw this in her face and heard it in her voice.

The service over, he was hurrying from the church when Mildred met him. She gasped. For a moment her color fled. Then she greeted him with simple grace.

"Such a surprise! Ah! you must find the waiting tiresome," as he explained his presence in the town. Then she laid her hand upon the minister's arm.

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THROUGH HIS "ALFALFAS."

Speech Became Entangled and Lost Its Way in the Foliage on Speaker's Face.

At the live stock show recently held in Chicago, Secretary of Agriculture James Wilson was one of the speakers at a mass meeting of cattle men. Behind him on the same platform, relates the New York Herald, somewhat screened from observation, sat Norman J. Colman, the first man to hold the portfolio of agriculture.

Secretary Wilson made a happy speech, and because of his popularity with the western ruralist he was the shining, central figure of the gathering. When he had finished talking lusty lungs and sunburned hands gave him noisy approbation. The applause had not ceased when a Nebraska farmer, with whiskers like Senator Peffer's, arose in the back of the hall and said:

"Gentlemen, we are all mighty glad to hear Secretary Wilson and are ready to do him honor, but let us not forget the other great men we have with us. We have on the same platform tonight the alfalfa and omega of agriculture."

It was as far as the speaker ever got. His few remaining words were lost in the shrieks of laughter.

SHE SOWED LIVER PILLS.

But It Is Not at All Likely That She Waited for Them to Take Root.

There is a woman in Phoenix, Ariz., who has the correct idea all right, but whether it will work out remains for the future to disclose, states the Republican of that town.

Recently her husband bought a small ranch, and with him she has been much interested in planning improvements, especially in the growing lime, with which to adorn the place.

The other day beds were prepared for sweet peas, and the lady in question was busily engaged in sowing her seeds and carrying the little packets out of doors, where their contents were transferred to the beds in regular order. As each variety was planted, the name was placed on a small marker, as is the custom with gardeners.

In a particularly choice location the contents of a packet were laboriously dropped, one by one, until the row was filled and the earth nice and smooth over it. When the lady picked up the packet to properly write the marker she discovered that she had carefully planted her mother's package of liver pills.

For Growing Girls.

West Pembroke, Me., March 21.—Mrs. A. L. Smith, of this place, says that Dodd's Kidney Pills are the best remedy for growing girls. Mrs. Smith emphasizes her recommendation by the following experience:

"My daughter was thirteen years old last November and it is now two years since she was first taken with Crazy Spell that could last a week and would then pass off. In a month she would have the spells again. At these times she would eat very little and was very yellow, even the whites of her eyes would be yellow."

The doctors gave us no encouragement, they all said they could not help her. After taking one box of Dodd's Kidney Pills, she has not had one bad spell. Of course, we continued the treatment until she had used in all about a dozen boxes, and we still give them to her occasionally, when she is not feeling well. Dodd's Kidney Pills are certainly the best medicine for growing girls."

Mothers should heed the advice of Mrs. Smith, for by so doing they may save their daughters much pain and sickness and ensure a healthy happy future for them.

Kleptomaniacs will take anything but jokes.—Chicago Daily News.

Girls, don't seek husbands; go after the bachelors.—Chicago Daily News.

Chronic complaining makes tough luck all the tougher.—Chicago Daily News.

A person may be a kleptomaniac and yet not take a joke.—Philadelphia Record.

Where Ignorance Is Not Bliss.—(Gen. tleman with comic face has just finished very pathetic story). Brown (who is very deaf, and has been watching his expression)—"Ha! Ha! Very good! Funniest thing I've heard for a long time!"—Punch.

At the Dinner.—Charlie (who is carving)—"By so doing there is nothing but love, it's roast goose." Robert—"Well, Charlie, there's nothing to my mind so beautiful and touching as a proper affection among members of a family."—Pick-Me-Up.

Misnomer.—"So they call your country the land of the morning calm?" "They used to call it that," answered the emperor of Korea. "But this artillery they've been turning loose is worse than any alarm clock ever invented."—Washington Star.

"I cannot cure you," said Dr. Fox, "unless you promise to do exactly what I tell you. Do you solemnly promise?" "I do," replied the patient. "All right. Let me have your check for that old account that has been standing so long."—Philadelphia Press.

He—"You say there are no flowers for the dinner table. Where are the chrysanthemums I sent home?" She—"Oh, George, don't speak so loud. You might hurt Bridget's feelings. She didn't understand what they were, and has cooked them in milk."—Glasgow Evening Times.

"I want you to understand," remarked the indignant young broker, "that I am no ignoramus. I went through college, sir, and have my sheepskin to show for it." "So?" said the senior of the firm; "well, I didn't go through college, but I have taken several sheepskins to show since then—fleece and all. See?"—Cincinnati Times-Star.

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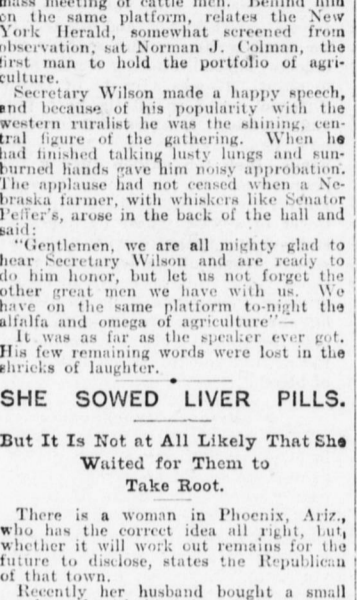
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"About the same time I wrote you about my own case of catarrh, which had been of 25 years' standing. At times I was almost past going. I commenced to use Peruna according to your instructions and continued its use for about a year, and it has completely cured me."

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CONSUMPTION

Easter Lilies

Easter lilies tall and slight and fair, Before I leave thee on the altar there Within the empty church this Easter day, Hast thou no lesson for me while I stay? To drink thy breath, to touch thy heart of gold? O! tell me what thy message, what of old He breathed unto thee for a needy world, What gem lies in thy waxen cup imperaled? Soft rousing from their dream of holiness, The spotless lilies bend my soul to bless, And murmur sweet and low ere I depart "Christ taught us Blessed are the pure in heart!"

HAT TIE HORNER.

YOUNG MEN'S ERA.