

LIFE.

Life, how slight! A little sweet, A brief delight, And then—no more! O life, how valial A little spite, A little pain.

A WHITE ONE.

The air was thick with steam and impregnated with the smell of soap, and the temperature was by no means low, more especially as the sun was streaming in through the uncurtained windows.

The only exception to the universal untidiness was manifested in the person of one whom the girls called 'Liza' (the 'i' being pronounced as if it was the diphthong 'ai'). This 'Liza,' the preliminary 'e' of whose name was invariably dropped by her acquaintances, was a hunchback, and her face, though it possessed the merit of cleanliness, was almost repulsively ugly.

There was a moment's silence, Miss Callender sat looking thoughtful; then she rose and followed 'Liza' into the next room, closing the door.

'Liza' was usually silent and was considered morose, but her affliction had made them kind to her in their rough way, though she was certainly not a favorite among them. But now that they realized that she had a romance in her life the love of sentiment, which is in every woman, made them feel a sympathy for her hitherto unknown.

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'Oh, Miss!' cried 'Liza.' 'Oh, Miss!' 'So you see,' said Miss Callender softly, 'you and I must be a comfort to each other.'

'Liza did not speak. She began to pull at her apron-strings, then getting them into a knot, busied herself undoing it. 'It don't seem as I could do anything,' she said presently. 'You always seem happy and bright-like. You're mostly smiling. I don't see how you can be it when any one as has cared for yer has died.'

'God helps me to be happy, said Miss Callender simply. 'Besides, I have many things to be grateful for.' 'Ah, there yer are,' cried 'Liza, almost passionately; 'you ain't poor and lonely and huffy. You could have love if yer wanted to; you don't go longin' and longin', and a pain in your heart mostwhiles. I wouldn't tell any o' them,' (pointing to the door) 'for they wouldn't understand, but you ain't like them, and you won't make a mock at me, but there's times, specially in the evenings, when I ache for some one to say quite gentle-like to me. 'Liza,' and just to look at me a bit lovin'. Why shouldn't I have what others do? Cause I ain't pretty? Ain't my heart as good as Polly's there? Wouldn't I be truer than her? Maybe I won't mind later on, but I ain't so old now as all that come to, and And natur's natur, whether we're ladies or poor girls. Ain't it nat'ral to want to be loved?'

'Most natural, dear,' said Miss Callender to whom 'Liza' was just then a revelation. 'Then,' went on the girl, emboldened by the sympathy which was rather in manner than words, 'when folks are kind to me it's mostly pity as makes 'em; and I hate to be pitied. It ain't because they want me with 'em; there's even some, I suppose, as wouldn't care to keep company with me in case folks should stare. And, oh, I'm proud, I am—I'm awfully proud. There's none so proud as them as is despised, you know.'

'I don't despise you, Eliza,' said Miss Callender, spontaneously. 'And I'm sure others don't.' 'If I thought you liked me a bit, not because you pitied me, I'd be uncommon glad,' said 'Liza, shyly. 'I s'pose,' she went on, half-ashamed at her own confidences, 'it wouldn't make no manner o' difference to you, me likin' you?'

'Indeed it would,' Miss Callender answered, and she bent forward and kissed 'Liza on the forehead.

they expressed pity, perhaps scorn. She grimaced. There was a momentary lull, so that they all heard her when she said in a peculiarly loud, harsh, defiant voice: 'Mine isn't lish'; mine isn't.'

'Yours? Did you have a sweetheart once?' asked the married woman, not ungenerously, though there was the slightest perceptible accent on the pronoun. 'And why not?' asked 'Liza, and her voice was louder than before. 'It isn't no pretty girls as has people caring for 'em. There's other things besides looks.'

'Of course there are, dear,' said Miss Callender, soothingly, for 'Liza's eyes flashed ominously. 'Goodness is worth much more to a man.' 'What was his name, 'Liza?' asked Polly Blaines.

Polly was conceited, and 'Liza, hypersensitive, scented patronage. 'I ain't going to tell yer,' she said. Then, with swift contradiction, 'his first name was Charlie.'

'Was he handsome?' asked Polly, pinching her neighbor under the table, so that the latter, a high-colored, coarse-looking girl, gave a little squeak. 'I never see anybody better looking,' said 'Liza, with promptitude. 'He wasn't any of your pink, dolly men.' (Polly's favored suitor happened to be fair.) He was dark and his nose was straight, like a gentleman's, and his teeth was white, and 'Liza warmed to her subject.

'He used to wear a red silk tie with a pin in it. And,' she went on, 'he always gave me lots of presents—lots, and he loved me so, as he couldn't bear me out of his sight. Oh, she cried excitedly, 'he did love me, and we was so happy, keepin' company, and he was a-go'in' to marry me—' She paused abruptly. Indeed, her shrill voice had got almost beyond her control.

'What did he die of?' asked one of the girls, with genuine compassion in her tones. 'Liza looked at her—gasp—hesitated a moment—then rose and pushed back her chair. 'That don't matter to no one,' she said, in a hard voice that yet had a catch in it. 'He's dead, and that's enough; and you needn't any of you ever talk to me about him. So there!' And she went back into the laundry.

There was a moment's silence, Miss Callender sat looking thoughtful; then she rose and followed 'Liza' into the next room, closing the door. The other girls regarded one another with some surprise.

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'Liza' was standing by her wash-tub, and she had already plunged in her hands and begun to vigorously soap one from the heap of towels she had to wash. Her lips were set tight together, her bosom was heaving, and a tear had rolled down her cheek and dropped off it on her coarse apron. She put up her arm, her hands being soapy, and laid her elbow across her eyes for a minute.

'Eliza,' said a soft voice, in accents more tender than she was wont to hear, so that her name sounded quite musical. She looked up. 'Eliza,' said Miss Callender again, and then she came close up to the girl, and drew her toward her.

'Liza' was unused to any such demonstration. Perhaps that was why she half-pulled herself away. 'My dear,' said Miss Callender, 'we must be great friends, you and I, for we have a sorrow in common. Nothing binds people so close together as to be linked by mutual trouble. Two years ago I was engaged to be married, and he who was to have been my husband was shot in Afghanistan.'

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'Indeed it would,' Miss Callender answered, and she bent forward and kissed 'Liza on the forehead.

'Liza turned away quickly. 'I reckon I'd better get on with my work,' she said, huskily. And at that minute the door was opened, and the others came trooping in. Miss Callender exchanged a few words with them and then went back to get her things.

From that day began a new era for 'Liza. Whether it was that Miss Callender singled her out for special attention, or because they were really capable of a lasting impression themselves, it is impossible to say, but it is certain that she was differently treated by the other women and equally certain that this treatment had a salutary effect upon her. Repellant at first, she grew daily more approachable, less suspicious, more gracious, and her better qualities came into play. Perhaps the influence of Miss Callender had not a little to do with this, for from the beginning 'Liza had loved her, and now her feeling was little less than worship. And to love another is so good for a woman's soul that it works like magic on her whole being. It made possible to 'Liza the comprehension of a love higher than Miss Callender's; and the little London hostess, being taught by her dear lady concerning those things of which she had been ignorant hitherto became what the girls called 'religious.'

Toward the end of the summer, she consented to be confirmed, and went to classes, and this secured the others to make 'Liza more important, especially when she explained that 'there was ladies at the classes.'

'Liza' was nearer being happy now than she had ever been in her life, and yet she seemed sadder too. Often she heaved great sighs that made her neighbor turn and look at her, and frequently there were marks of tears on her face; so that by-and-by it grew evident to the others that there was something weighing upon her.

As the time for her confirmation drew near 'Liza looked graver than ever, and more worried. At last it came to the day itself. She had obtained a holiday from the laundry, through the influence of Miss Callender. What was the surprise of that lady, and of the others, therefore, when, in the midst of the mid-day meal, in rushed 'Liza. She had on a clean print dress, made for the occasion, but her hair was disordered, her face pale from fatigue and excitement, her eyes shone brightly.

'Hullo,' exclaimed the girls in a breath. 'My! ain't she a swell!' They thought she had come to show off her dress. 'Eliza,' exclaimed Miss Callender. 'What do you want? You will be late for your confirmation.'

'Oh, Miss,' gasped 'Liza, almost breathless, as she was, 'I had to come. I've tried and tried to say it, and I never could; and at first it seemed a white one. But, lately, it's come 'twixt me and God. And I've thought on it at night, in bed, and when any of you had been kind to me, it has cut me like a knife. And, oh, Miss, when you've spoken of him, I've been a near fallin' down and explainin' to yer, but somethin' held me back. And I told God, but he seemed to say it wasn't any use my just tellin' you. I don't care now what you think of me, or if you despise me. I can't go to church until I've told yer. Him as I talked of was only what I dreamed about when I was lonely, evenings and times; and there wasn't no Charlie, really, and no one ain't never loved me, nor wanted to marry me.'—[Ludgate Monthly.

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THE JOKER'S BUDGET.

JESTS AND YARNS BY FUNNY MEN OF THE PRESS.

Left his Address—Needed Finishing—'Twas Ever Thus—It Doesn't Pay—At the Club.

Bank teller—Well, sir, Tramp (at the window)—Sary, I picked up part of the paper called the Banker's Bugle to-day. Saw a queer thing in it. The paper is reliable, eh? Teller—Perfectly. Its financial news may always be relied on. Tramp—Jimmy! I'm glad o' that. Say, that paper says money is so easy that the bank will soon be seeking borrowers, and I merely wish to remark that when 't' hunt begins you'll find me on seat No. 226 Washington square.—[Good News.

Call—Your daughter is at home now, is she not? I heard she had graduated at the Artistic Literary and Scientific University. Hostess—She is not at home. She has gone to a finishing school. 'Why, what for?' 'Oh, to learn how to enter a room, and sit down, and hold a fan, and blush, you know.'—[New York Weekly.

When a maiden is vivacious. Men applaud and call it chic; But if she's an old back number, They will whisper: 'That's no chic.'—[Truth.

Little Daughter—I'm awful sorry we had our old piano tuned. Mother—Why so, my dear? Little daughter—Cause when I play now I can't blame the discords on the piano.—[Good News.

Gay Bachelor—Do you think there is anything in the theory that married men live longer than unmarried ones? Henpecked Friend (wearily)—Oh, I don't know—seems longer. First Damsel—But I thought he said he would never speak to you again. Second Damsel—Oh, yes; but he saw I had a cold, and he couldn't resist the temptation to tell me of a sure cure.

Scholastic Hardup—I am a college student, and I want a place to work in your hotel this Summer. Hotel Proprietor—What experience or qualifications have you? Scholastic Hardup—I am the champion boxer and wrestler of my class. Hotel Proprietor—Ah! then you will do very well to whip cream.—[Boston Courier.

She (gushingly)—And do you write poetry? Oh, I could live on it! He—You could? Well, I can't. I merely write it. I'm in the wholesale grocery business.—[Truth.

The church-bells have a joyous sound Of peace and good-will bring'ng; And sleigh-bells, when the moon is round, Have music in their ringing; But, after all, I must agree That maidens are the belles for me.—[Judge.

Snooter (returning to his native town)—Do you remember me, Jay? Jay—Well, no, I can't recall you name, but I well remember lending you five dollars in 1840, which you never returned. Do you happen to have that amount with you now? HARD ON SOPHIE. 'I am very sorry for poor Mrs. Sophie.' 'Why?' 'She has so little to live for.' 'How is that?' 'They say she lives only for her husband.'

'Oh,' exclaimed Miss Bondelipper, 'what a clever man that Mr. Gilhooly is! He is really quite a physiognomist. I was telling him last evening that I had become quite proficient in painting, and he said: 'I am sure of it, madame; your face shows it.' Chorus—Indeed.—[Texas Siftings.

I've scribbled many a tender note, In language soft and sweet; I've written many a loving verse, In different kinds of feet. I've shaken the girl I wrote them to, And oh, it gives me pain To think of how silly and cheap I'll feel, When I hear them in court again.—[New York Herald.

Landlady—I s'pose you noticed that long-whiskered old gentlemen who sat opposite you at dinner to-day? That is Prof. Drichones, and you can have his room, as he is going West on a scientific exploration—strangest thing you ever heard. New Boarder—What is it? Landlady—The object of his tour. He has been told that a pre-historic cave has been discovered out West, and in it sat ten skeletons around a petrified table. New Boarder—Well! well! Why didn't the fools change their boarding-house sooner?—[New York Weekly.

Mamma's Diaries. Little Girl—The teacher says I must get a diary, and write in it all I do every day. Will you buy me one, mamma? Mamma—There are plenty of them up stairs in the lower bureau drawer, fifteen or twenty, I think. Little Girl—But isn't those ones written? Mamma—Only the first pages of each.

AN ENCOURAGING CHANGE.

Tramp—Please mum, I'm nearly starved inum. I'm so week I can hardly crawl. Housekeeper—Tramps in that condition are not so dangerous as the other sort. Go on with your starving, please.—[Good News.

Boutdown—Here comes Sappy, one of the neat fellows that ever lived. Downtown—Lends you money, eh?—[New York Weekly.

'She was so much attached to her first husband that she would not marry again till she went to his grave and asked his consent.' 'How foolish! Of course she couldn't get any reply.' 'No, but she married again, nevertheless; she remembered the proverb, 'Silence gives consent.'

Little Dick—Did you ever see half a boy? Little Dot—No; did you? Little Dick—Not yet, but we both will next week. A cousin of ours what we never saw is comin' here from the West, an' mamma says he's half orphan.—[New York Weekly.

Kind Lady—If you did not drink liquor you would have more to eat. Tramp—Oh, no, mum; no, indeed, mum; it's just the other way. If the barkeeper didn't see us buyin' a drink once in a while we'd soon starve.—[New York Weekly.

Young Wife—I don't like that cooking-school teacher at all. She has neither patience nor consideration. She actually cried. Husband—Great snakes! She doesn't really make you eat the things, does she?—[New York Weekly.

Spacer—Isn't your little attic room awfully cold these days? Lina—Sometimes it is; but (cheerfully) the chimney catches fire sometimes.—[New York Herald.

He—I don't see what people keep diaries for; I can keep all my affairs in my head. She—That's a good way, too; but not every one has the room. WORTH THINKING OF. Customer—Isn't that a pretty good price for a porous plaster? Druggist—Yes, but think how long it will last. Dell—I wonder if Maggie Morrison brought home one of those spoons from Chautauqua with her? Bill—Oh, yes; I saw her with him at the social last night.—[Epoch.

Old Resident—Yes, sir, I'm eighty years old, and I walked thirty miles 'other day. Kin you do that? Average Man—N-o, not yet. I'm not forty. WINKING AT CRIME. 'Oh, not a whole bird on my hat,' She cried; 'I couldn't think of that. It's wrong to kill the dainty things. Just use the head and pair of wings.'—[Chicago Times.

Snooter—I'm afraid we'll lose young Harris. He's a very capable man, and we are not paying him much. I'm afraid some other firm will tempt him away.' Swayback—Just tell him that if he accepts another situation, we'll discharge him on the instant.—[Epoch.

The Shopper (in china and queensware store, to salesman)—You don't break these sets, I presume? The Salesman—No'm; but our errand boy does, sometimes. A SAFE PURCHASE. 'I've just mortgaged my house for \$5,000,' said a New Yorker to his broker friend. 'Can you give me a pointer on something that's a purchase?' 'I can,' replied the broker; 'buy that mortgage on your house.'—[Harper's Bazar.

'When we were in the north seas,' said the whaling captain, 'we frequently traded blubber for sealskins.' 'That's nothing,' said Bond; 'down in the North River region my wife worked the very same racket on me.'—[New York World.

She—I wouldn't marry the best man living. He—Then there is no hope for me. It was because I thought you would that I proposed to you. Russian Servants. We have a pleasant way of growling and grumbling over the indelicacy of our Mary Anns and Elizas, and consider ourselves very badly used because they do not come nearer the pinnacle of perfection, but the Russian servant double discounts ours in voracious incompetency, and the Russian mistress has trials beside which our fade into insignificance. Every household has a host of retainers. They go off to sleep at any hour in the day. They annex anything within reach, and truth is an unknown virtue to them. A lady cannot help about her house or she loses all caste with and authority over her servants. She can only scold and wait for the spirit of the domestic to move her toward the accomplishment of her duties. The servant is expected to provide her own mattress, and usually sleeps on the kitchen stove in winter and out in the yard in summer. The idea of providing a room for servants never occurs to the Russian housekeeper.—[St. Louis Republic.

THE YOUNG FOLKS.

FAIRY TALES.

The time I like for fairy tales, Is when the day begins to die, Just as the brilliant sunset peeps, And twilight shadows gather nigh. When I can lie before the fire That blazes with a ruddy light, And hear the tales that never tire Of imp and fairy, gnomes and sprite, And sometimes as the shadows fall Across the floor from every side, A goblin dances on the wall, And gnomes within the corners hide.

Then as the fire-light blazes high We see the shadows run away, And silently again draw nigh, Like spirits of the wood at play.

And when the embers faintly glow, Upon the smoke I see ascend The little folk I love to know, Who vanish at the story's end. —[Harper's Young People.

Holla, which means 'the friendly, the benignant one' is the name of the supposed patroness of agriculture and domestic life with all its customary duties and tender offices. Sometimes it is spelled Hulla, but however spelled it is always attended by happy, cheerful thoughts. In the long ago, busy house-mothers would say when snow fell, Hulla is making her bed.—[Detroit Free Press.

The Dinka tribes of Africa reverence snakes. An officer once had to pay a fine of four goats for killing one snake. These tribes domesticate snakes and keep them in their homes, their pythons they bathe with milk and anoint with butter. In most of their huts snakes may be seen crawling in search of mice. Other Africans have equally peculiar attachments. On the east of the Nile there is a tribe that is partial to lions. It is told in Stanley's "In Darkest Africa" of how a lion fell into a pit prepared for other prey, and how his whippers cut poles and laid them slantwise to the bottom and thus rescued the fallen "king of the beasts," as this cowardly animal, the lion, is sometimes misnamed.—[Pittsburg.

A mockingbird in Marion, Ga., that had been taught by its female owner to whistle a topical song incorrectly, recently heard an itinerant band play the air. The bird at once noticed the difference, and, as though to rebuke the musicians, rattled off the song in its own incorrect way, high notes being frequently used for low ones, and vice versa. Again the band, which had moved a few houses further on, played the tune, and again the bird endeavored to correct them. After a third and fourth attempt the bird gave up in disgust, and perching itself in a corner of the cage remained there quiet and motionless until the music no longer reached its ears. Then, says the Macon Telegraph, through which the story comes, the bird promptly jumped from the perch, and assuming a dignified attitude, once more rolled the only song it knew.

When Boulot and Boulotte, the little piny-wood twins, had reached the dignified age of twelve, it was decided in family council that the time had come for them to put their little naked feet into shoes. They were two brown-skinned, black-eyed crole roly-polies, who lived with father and mother and a troop of brothers and sisters half-way up the hill, in a neat log cabin that had a substantial mud chimney at one end. They could well afford shoes now, for they had saved many a piny-wood through their industry of selling wild grapes, blackberries, and success to ladies in the village who "put up" such things.

Boulot and Boulotte were to buy the shoes themselves, and they selected a Saturday afternoon for the important transaction, for that is the great shopping time in Natchitoches Parish. So upon a bright Saturday afternoon Boulot and Boulotte, hand in hand, with their quarters, their dimes, and their piny-woods tied carefully in a Sunday handkerchief, descended the hill, and disappeared from the gaze of the eager group that had assembled to see them go.

Long before it was time for their return, this same small band, with ten-year-old Seraphine at their head, holding a tiny Seraphin in her arms, had stationed themselves in a row before the cabin at a convenient point from which to make quick and careful observation.

Even before the two could be caught sight of, their chattering voices were heard down by the spring, where they had doubtless stopped to drink. The voices grew more and more audible. Then, through the branches of the young pines, Boulotte's blue sun bonnet appeared, and Boulot's straw hat. Finally the twins, hand in hand, stepped into the clearing in full view.

Consternation seized the band. 'You bot crazy done, Boulot an' Boulotte,' screamed Seraphine. 'You got buy shoes, an' come home barefoot like you was go!'

Boulot flushed crimson. He silently hung his head and looked sheepishly down at his bare feet, then at the fine stout brogan that he carried in his hand. He had not thought of it.

Boulotte also carried shoes, but of the glossett, with the highest of heels and brightest of buttons. But she was not one to be discouraged or to look sheepish; far from it.

'You spee Boulot an' me we got money fur wa'e-us?' she retorted, with withering condescension. 'You think we got buy shoes fur ruin it in de dus? Comment?'

And they all walked into the house crossfallen; all but Boulotte, who was mistress of the situation, and Seraphin, who did not care one way or the other.—[Harper's Young People.

The styles of many so-called Paris bonnets seen on this side of the Atlantic are totally unknown in the French capital.