

The Home Reading Circle

DOROTHY.

The judge had dined and was enjoying an after-dinner cigar before turning to a pile of papers that lay on the table at his elbow. Yet even as he watched the flickering fire and puffed dreamily at his cigar, luxuriating in a little relaxation after a hard day's work in a close and crowded court, his mind was busy formulating the sentences in which he intended to sum up a case that had been tried that day. There could be no doubt as to the guilt of the prisoner, who had been accused of a most impudent fraud, and although it was a first offense, the judge intended to pass the severest sentence which the law allowed.

The judge was no believer in short sentences. He regarded leniency to a criminal as an offense against society—a direct encouragement of those who hesitated on the brink of vicious courses and were only restrained by fear of punishment. The well-meaning people who got up petitions to mitigate the sentence upon a justly convicted thief or murderer, were, in his eyes, guilty of mawkish sentimentality. There was no trace of weakness or effeminacy in his own face, with its grizzled eyebrows, somewhat cold gray eyes, thin lips and massive chin. He was a just man, just to the splitting of a hair, but austere and unemotional.

He had conducted the trial with the most scrupulous impartiality, but now that a verdict of guilty was a foregone conclusion he determined to make an example of one who had shamelessly abused the confidence placed in him.

Stated briefly, the situation was as follows: The prisoner, Arthur Maxwell, was cashier to a firm of solicitors, Lightbody & Duffon. The only surviving partner of the original firm, Mr. Lightbody, had recently died, leaving the business to his nephew, Thomas Faulkner. Faulkner accused Arthur Maxwell of having embezzled a sum of \$1,250. Maxwell admitted having taken out a blank check and had filled it and signed it at his private residence. He could, however, produce no proof of this assertion, and all the evidence available was opposed to his unsupported statement.

"Arthur Maxwell," colloquized the judge, you have been convicted on evidence that leaves no shadow of doubt of your guilt of a crime which I must characterize as one of the basest—

The chattering of voices in the hall brought the colloquy to an abrupt conclusion. The judge required absolute silence and solitude when he was engaged in study, and the servants, who stood in constant awe of him, were extremely careful to prevent the least disturbance taking place within earshot of his sanctum. He jerked the bell impatiently, intending to give a good winking to those responsible for the disturbance.

But the door was thrown open by his daughter, Mabel, a pretty girl of 12, who was evidently in a state of breathless excitement.

"Oh, papa!" she exclaimed, "here's such a queer little object that wants to see you. Please let her come in."

Before the judge could remonstrate a little child, a rosy-faced girl of between 5 and 6, in a red hood and cloak, hugging a black puppy under one arm and a brown paper parcel under the other, trotted briskly into the room.

The judge rose to his feet with an expression which caused his daughter to vanish with a remarkable celerity. The door closed with a bang. He could hear her feet scudding rapidly upstairs, and found himself alone with the small creature before him.

"What on earth are you doing here, child?" he asked irritably. "What are you possibly want of me?" She remained silent, staring at him with round, frightened eyes. "Come, come, can't you find your tongue, little girl?" he asked more gently. "What is it you want with me?"

"If you please," she said timidly, "I've brought you Tommy."

Tommy was clearly the fat puppy, for as she bent her face toward him he wagged his tail and promptly licked the end of her nose.

The judge's eyes softened in spite of himself. "Come here," he said, sitting down, "and tell me all about it."

She advanced fearlessly toward him, as animals and children always did in his unofficial mood.

"This is Tommy, I suppose," he said, taking the puppy on his knee, where it expressed its delight by ecstatic contortions of the body, and appeared to consider his watch chain a fascinating article of dress.

"I've brought you other things as well," she said, opening the brown paper parcel and revealing a doll with a very beautiful complexion, large blue eyes, and hair of the purest gold, a diminutive Noah's ark, a white pig, a woolly sheep, a set of crayons, a small paint box, a picture book or two, and what bore some faint resemblance to a number of water color sketches. She seemed particularly proud of the last named.

"I painted them all by myself," she exclaimed.

The judge thought it not unlikely, as he glanced with twinkling eyes at the highly unconventional forms and daring colors of these strikingly original works of art.

"Well," he said, "it is very kind of you to bring me all these pretty things, but why do you want to give them to me?"

"I—I don't want to give them to you," she faltered.

The judge regarded her with friendly eyes. He was so used to hearing romantic deviations from the truth from the lips of imaginative witnesses that frankness was at all times delightful to him.

"Come," he said with a quiet laugh, "the honest at least. Well, why do you give them to me if you don't want to?"

The judge made no reply. He bent still more closely over the scarlet animal straying amid emerald fields and burning under trees, of a singularly original shape.

"That's a cow," said Dorothy proudly. Don't you see its horns?—and that's its tail—it isn't a tree. There's a cat on the other side. I can draw cats better than cows."

In her anxiety to exhibit her artistic abilities in their higher manifestations, she took the paper out of his hands and presented the other side. At first he glanced at it listlessly and then his eyes suddenly flashed and he examined it with breathless interest.

"Will, I'm blessed!" he exclaimed excitedly.

It was not a very judicial utterance, but the circumstances were exceptional.

"Here's the very letter Maxwell declared he had never written," he said, along with the check. His references to it, as he could not produce it, did more harm than good; but I believe it's genuine, upon my word, I do. Listen; it is dated from the Holmes, Lightbody's private address:

My Dear Mr. Maxwell—I have just heard from the doctor that my time here will be very short, and I am trying to arrange my affairs as quickly as possible. I have long recognized the unostentatious but thorough and entire devotion to duty in which you have discharged your duties, and as some little and perhaps too tardy recognition of your long and faithful services, and as a token of my personal esteem for you, I hope you will accept the enclosed check for \$250. With best wishes for your future, believe me, yours sincerely,

Thomas Lightbody.

"What do you think of it?" I'll send it round to Maxwell's solicitor at once."

"Oh Matthew, then the poor fellow's innocent, after all!"

"It looks like it. If the letter is genuine he certainly is. There don't look so miserable again. I'm sure it is. If it had been a forgery you may be sure it would have been ready for production at a moment's notice. Where did you get this letter, little girl?"

Dorothy blushed guiltily and hung her head.

"I took it out of papa's desk—I wanted some paper to draw on, and I took it without asking. You won't tell him, will you? He'll be ever so cross."

"Well, we may perhaps have to let him know about it, my dear, but I don't think he'll be a bit cross. Now, this lady will take you to your mother, and you can tell her that papa won't go to prison, and that he'll be home tomorrow night."

"I say good-bye to Tommy, please," she faltered.

"You sweet little thing!" exclaimed his wife, kissing her impulsively.

"Tommy's going with you," said the judge, laughing kindly. "I wouldn't deprive you of such a faithful friend. Tommy's weight in gold. I fancy there are limits to the pleasure which Tommy and I would derive from each other's society. There, run away, and take Tommy with you."

Dorothy eagerly pursued the fat puppy, captured him after an exciting chase and took him in her arms. Then she walked toward the door, but the corner of her eye rested wistfully on the contents of the brown paper parcel. The judge hastily gathered the toys, rolled them in the paper and presented them to her. But Dorothy looked disappointed. The thought of giving them to purchase her father's pardon had been sweet as well as bitter. She was willing to compromise in order to escape the pang that the loss of Tommy and the loss of her father would inflict, but she still wished—poor little epitome of our complex human nature—to taste the joy of heroic self-sacrifice. Besides, she was afraid that the judge might after all refuse to pardon her father if she took away all the gifts with which she had attempted to propitiate him.

COST OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Differences in Expenditures for Educational Purposes in Various Cities.

Exclusive of \$1,150,000 which is paid to the state, the city of New York, according to the Sun, is expending this year \$6,000,000 for purposes of education, and about \$4,000,000 of this sum goes for salaries of teachers and school employees.

There are about 5,000 school teachers in the city of New York, and the rate of pay varies from \$3,000 a year salary paid to the larger number of principals of the male grammar schools down to \$500 a year, the amount paid to teachers of the lowest grade in the primary schools. Roughly speaking, the average rate of pay of a school teacher in New York is about \$675 a year, and it is estimated that the cost per capita of the education of children in New York is about \$25.

By a recent inquiry into the cost of tuition in public schools in American cities it has been found that only St. Louis and Philadelphia paid more than New York, the maximum cost per capita being \$44.09 in Philadelphia and the minimum \$12.70 in Rochester. The difference is largely due to the salaries.

In Philadelphia, principals receive from \$3,000 to \$4,000 a year, professors in the boys' school \$2,500, teachers in the boys' school from \$800 to \$1,000, and teachers in the girls' school from \$600 to \$800. In St. Louis the maximum for principals is \$2,000, for assistant principals \$2,200, and for assistants \$1,500 to \$2,000, according to grade. At the other extreme are Indianapolis and Minneapolis, where high school teachers receive \$1,200 as the maximum, and of Pittsburgh, where the salaries range from \$300 to \$1,700. Philadelphia spends \$2,500,000 a year on her schools. Chicago's schools cost \$5,000,000, the schools of Boston \$3,800,000, the schools of Brooklyn \$3,500,000, the schools of Baltimore \$1,200,000, the schools of San Francisco \$1,100,000, the schools of Washington \$1,000,000, the schools of Buffalo \$950,000, the schools of Milwaukee \$700,000, and the schools of Louisville \$575,000. Among the small cities which spend comparatively little in proportion to their size for school purposes, New Orleans is perhaps the most conspicuous, and one probable explanation of the small expenditure of public money there is to be found in the fact that a considerable portion of the population is colored and the item of expense for the rudimentary instruction of colored children is, it is well known, very small.

There are in the United States 422 colleges of universities having 7,000 male and 1,500 female students. There are 150 theological schools with 1,000 instructors and 9,000 students. There are 100 law schools with 9,000 students, of whom 100 are girls. There are 200 medical colleges with 25,000 students of whom 1,800 are female. Of these medical schools more than half are allopathic and only 25 are homoeopathic. There are in the United States 5,000 high schools with 7,000 male and 8,000 female teachers, and 2,600 private schools with 1,500 male and 1,500 female teachers. About 10 per cent. of the number of private schools in the United States are to be found in the city of New York. There are more medical

colleges and law colleges in this state than in any other, but Pennsylvania has a larger number of theological colleges than New York. In respect of the number of law schools, Ohio stands first among the states of the Union and in the number of so-called colleges and universities Virginia stands first.

KNOWLEDGE KEPT ON TAP.

All Sorts of Questions Sent to the Smithsonian—Fifty Thousand Inquiries Answered Yearly for People All Over the United States.

Washington Letter to the New York Sun. One branch of the work done by the Smithsonian Institution is little known, and yet it is probably the most important from a popular standpoint. This is the answering of questions received from people all over the United States. When a Sun reporter called at the National museum yesterday he found Prof. Otto T. Mason with a number of letters all dealing with the same subject.

"I am engaged," said Prof. Mason, "in finding a suitable name for a country seat for a lady in California. This is an example of the work we do in this line. Some time ago I received a letter from the lady telling me that she desired a name for her country seat in Marin county, Cal. She wanted a name taken from the Indian language, and yet it was to be a name of the Indian tribes of California. She replied that she would prefer to have a California name and would accept any but one from the Indians, in whom she had no sympathy. She wanted a name indicating 'mountain rest,' 'mountain retreat,' or something else of that kind. I have been going over our books and dictionaries and will find her the name."

"It takes a great deal of labor to answer these questions, but the Smithsonian makes it a point to answer every sensible or well-intended question which is propounded to it. We receive fifty thousand inquiries a year, and none of them is neglected. It is a question that can be answered. This is the only government that does such a thing. Such questions as that I have shown you, if sent to the British museum, would be thrown into the waste paper basket. Prof. Henry inaugurated the system in vogue here some forty years ago. He held that a well-informed man was a much better citizen than an ignorant one, and that it was his duty to impart information whenever requested if such information was obtainable."

"You must have a marvelous fund of information," said a friend to him one day.

"Not at all," he replied; "only know the men who have it."

INFORMATION SEARCHERS.

"Prof. Young said that in the course of his long experience at the Smithsonian he had never had a question propounded that somebody in Washington was not able to answer. All these questions go to Prof. Langley, secretary of the Smithsonian, and are referred by him to the proper departments. A few days ago I had one from a man in Kansas, who wanted to know if at one time the letter 'V' was not included in a numeral system. He could not find it in his Chambers nor in the Encyclopedia Britannica, but I dug it up out of an old British encyclopedia for him. The letters 'U' and 'V' in the Roman alphabet are the same, so it was in that way that his attention had been attracted to it. Another case was that of a young girl in Maryland, who wanted to know how to study Maryland grasses. I told her that a book fully explaining these grasses and giving copious illustrations had been written by one of the scientists of the department of agriculture and referred her to him. A few days ago two young boys, Sunday school scholars, came to the museum and asked for the 'widow's mite.' They had been reading about it in the Bible, and the Holston expert took them to the case in which we keep the specimens of the 'widow's mite' and took the coins from the case. He allowed them to examine the coins minutely and they went away very happily."

book, and if left to himself would have a hard time to distribute the copies advantageously. So he sends them to us in bulk. From here we redistribute them to all corners of the world, as we keep a record of scientists engaged in different lines of work and are thus able to reach them at will. Sometimes we receive books from one scientist which are to go to another scientist in the same country, the Smithsonian being the medium of exchange. On these books the institution pays the expense of transportation. In France books sent to the minister of public instruction go free, but in England we cannot frank them anywhere. This system of international exchange is extremely beneficial. By it many scientists are saved from spending their time in making what they believe to be original researches by the knowledge that some one else has already done the work. You know that soon after Darwin had completed his work on the 'Origin of Species' he received from Wallace, in the Malay archipelago, a letter giving the same idea and leading to the same results and asking his opinion. If Darwin had had his book published in Borneo or some out-of-the-way place, we would now have the Wallace theory of natural selection instead of the Darwinian?"

INTERESTING FIGURES.

The Feet Per Second Covered by Trains, Horses, Sprinters and Bicyclists.

Some enterprising mathematician has made some interesting comparisons, based on Michael's wonderful ride at Boston. The fastest mile of the fifteen was in 1:47 and the slowest in 2:02. The comparisons follow:

A railroad train traveling 76 miles an hour covered 111 1/4 feet in one second.

An iceboat sailing 50 miles an hour covered 73 feet in one second.

Salvator, running a mile in one minute 35 3/5 seconds, covered 53 1/2 feet in one second.

John R. Gentry, pacing a mile in 2 minutes 15 seconds, covered 43 1/2 feet in one second.

W. G. George (man), running a mile in 4 minutes 12 1/2 seconds, covered 29 1/2 feet in one second.

In a fifteen mile race at Charles River Park track, in Boston, Thursday, Jimmie Michael, cyclist, averaged 51 feet in each second.

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AN OPEN LETTER TO MOTHERS.

WE ARE ASSERTING IN THE COURTS OUR RIGHT TO THE EXCLUSIVE USE OF THE WORD "CASTORIA," AND "PITCHER'S CASTORIA," AS OUR TRADE MARK.

I, DR. SAMUEL PITCHER, of Hyannis, Massachusetts, was the originator of "PITCHER'S CASTORIA," the same that has borne and does now on every bear the fac-simile signature of *Chas. H. Fletcher* wrapper.

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and has the signature of *Chas. H. Fletcher* wrapper. No one has authority from me to use my name except The Centaur Company of which Chas. H. Fletcher is President.

March 8, 1897. *Samuel Pitcher, M.D.*

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