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Germany is now the best educated Nation of the continent.

South Carolina has passed the most stringent vagrant dog law of any State in the Union.

A Boston dealer says that there is more steel used in the manufacture of pens than in all the sword and gun factories of the world.

Civilization is hurrying Alaskaward with long strides. There is a great rush this year to the practically unknown region about Cook's Inlet, in the far North.

It is said in Toronto that the burning issue at the next Canadian election will be independence of England. The dominion is being flooded with circulars declaring that England is robbing Canada.

England is to try her hand again at the conquest of the Soudan, despite the unfavorable issues of modern attempts by European Nations to conquer the so-called savage tribes which still control so large part of the African continent.

It would seem to the New York Sun that there is little further conquest possible for the bicycle when it supplants the horse in the esteem of the red men. A few days ago Little Black Bear, a Nez Perce Indian Chief in Oregon traded thirty head of horses for a bicycle.

The Baptist ministers of New York have determined that they will not undertake to dictate the vote of their congregations by advising them whom to vote for; they will just tell them the exact truth about the political situation and leave them to use their own intelligence.

An agitation has been started by a number of scientists urging the appointment of a permanent director-in-chief of the scientific bureaus and investigations conducted under the charge of the United States Department of Agriculture, this officer to be a broadly educated and experienced scientific administrative officer, who should hold office during good behavior.

The New York Tribune says: "Japan is buying her steel rails at the Pennsylvania mills, finding them cheaper there than in England, and of better quality. At the same time our furnaces are shipping pig iron to the British market underselling the home product, to the amazement and consternation of the producer there, who would have smiled at such a prediction a few years ago."

London leads the list of cities in its number of women who are either domestics or skilled workers. New York is next. The workingwomen over fifteen average about 300,000 in New York City, as against 73,000 a quarter of a century ago. There are probably about 600,000 women of working age in a city like New York, with its 2,000,000, and this shows that half of them are obliged to toil.

American beef in England may now secure full recognition of its excellent merits from consumers as well as dealers, if a measure just introduced in Parliament becomes a law, remarks the American Agriculturist. This proposes to compel dealers in foreign meats to so mark them. Well and good. Too long have conscientious English tradesmen labeled our prime beef "Scotch," enabling them to ask a fancy price because of this.

The Speaker of the South Carolina House of Representatives and the President of the Senate call the clerk "clerk." This excites surprise in strangers, but it is good old English orthoepy of the Elizabethan era. This pronunciation is not often heard in the cities nowadays, even in the South, where, according to the Detroit Free Press, more of the old forms of speech linger than in the North, but it is frequent enough in Tennessee, Virginia and Carolina mountain districts.

While so many scientific persons are trying all sorts of experiments with the Roentgen rays, how is it, asks the New York Times, that nobody seems to have thought of ascertaining what effect would be produced on the direction of these mysterious vibrations by sending them through lenses made of platinum, aluminum and other more readily permeable substances? Now that Professor Rood has proved that X rays, like ordinary light, can be reflected by at least one of the metals, it is not unreasonable to suspect that they can also be refracted and so focused as to produce, not the present unsatisfactory shadows on the photographic plate, but a real image.

LIFE.

"What is life but what a man is thinking of all day?"—Emerson.
 If life were only what a man thinks daily of—his little care;
 His petty ill; his trivial plan;
 His sordid scheme to hoard and spare;
 His meagre ministry; his small unequal strength to breast the stream;
 His large regret—repentance small;
 His poor, unrealized dream—
 "Twice scarcely worth a passing nod;
 Meet it should and where it began.
 But it's not so. Life is what God is daily thinking of for man.

—Julie M. Lippmann, in Harper.

TWO SWAINS AND A MAID.

BY KATHARINE TYNAN.

MY Jane was one of the old-fashioned class of domestics, worth her weight, and a substantial weight it is, in gold. She had been with my mother-in-law sixteen years before she transferred her allegiance to me, and did so then, I believe, because of my superior helplessness.

To say that my interests were as dear to her as to myself would be to understate grievously the case. Jane was ever a fighter; and the pitched battles which went on all day and every day between her and the tradespeople, the laundress, the sweep, and every one who supplied the wants of my small household, served but to increase her zest for battle.

I thought for long that Jane would never leave me. She is a comely woman, with hard, bright red cheeks, black hair, black eyes, and a vigorous manner. But far back in her girlhood, away in her native green island, Jane had had a tragedy. The man she was to have married had been pitched from a load of hay on the very eve of their wedding, and had been killed on the spot. The memory had gone so deep with her that she never spoke about it; but if any one rallied her carelessly, as people will, about her maiden condition and the stern front she presented to insinuating bakers' and butchers' boys, Jane's black eyes would cloud over, an inexplicable change take place in the unwinking brightness of her visage, and she would leave the room without a word.

We had long consecrated Jane to her virginhood, when one day, to my horror, she announced that she had accepted the least likely of her admirers.

The fellow was ugly, shambling, ill-built and ill-mannered. How he had ever gained his siego of Jane I have not yet fathomed. He seemed to me incapable of really caring for a woman, or of making any woman care for him. I believe myself that it was Jane's baffled maternal instinct—one had only to see her with a child to appreciate her as one of Nature's mothers—which suggested to her a tenderness for this scoundrel. He had been doing a job of some kind about the house, and had somehow managed to convey to Jane his attachment for her—how I do not know; he was bovine without the pathos of the beast, and I could better imagine one of the red-and-white bullocks out in the pastures than launching into sentiment than Jane's lover.

Jane, I could see, was prepared for opposition. She had evidently no illusions about Fry's personal charms, but had doggedly made up her mind to stand by him against all comers. She stood on the other side of my study table after she had given me her surprising news, with a spark in each of her black eyes which I knew meant temper and obstinacy.

"But Fry!" I said, after a silence of dismay. "Why Fry of all men?" "Why not Fry, ma'am?" said Jane, doggedly. "There's nothing against the boy's character."

"Oh, certainly not," I said, feebly. "Of course it's your own affair, Jane; but I must say I don't think him good enough for you. Are you determined to marry him, Jane?"

"Quite, m'm."

"Why, Jane, surely you're happy with us. I'm not selfish about it, Jane. I shouldn't mind giving you up to a man worthy of you; but don't, don't throw yourself away on Fry."

My appeal was answered by a fierce sob from Jane.

"Happy! I'm as happy as the day's long. It's tearin' at my heart strings in strangers, but it is good old English orthoepy of the Elizabethan era. This pronunciation is not often heard in the cities nowadays, even in the South, where, according to the Detroit Free Press, more of the old forms of speech linger than in the North, but it is frequent enough in Tennessee, Virginia and Carolina mountain districts.

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Jane sobbed more fiercely than ever. When she had controlled her utterance somewhat, she broke out: "No, ma'am. There'll never be another man. Denis Farrell is many a year in his grave, but his face is as fresh before me as if I saw him yesterday. He has put me from the others always, an' always will. 'Tis different with Fry. I'll be giving him nothing o' Denis's. I'll just take care o' the creature, an' make the

world easier to him. 'Tisn't his fault he was born ugly an' queer."

After that I expostulated no more, and a dead silence fell between me and Jane on the subject of her marriage. Fry was a good deal about the house, and I could see from his brushed-up appearance that Jane had already begun to take care of him. But it was only his clothes were changed; the lout was there under the clothes, and wearing a sleek, self-satisfied appearance which made him in my eyes less tolerable than ever.

Time went on, but we heard nothing of Jane's marriage, from which I concluded that, brave woman as she was, she was glad of the "long day, my lord," for which the poor condemned used to plead. I also concluded that Fry was in no hurry, for Jane was of the stuff not to shirk the thing if it had to be gone through with. She kept up a great appearance of cheerfulness, but I used to think her Irish hangs, as she went to and fro at her work, had rather a heart-broken wail about them. For myself, I was well content the marriage should be postponed indefinitely. I had a vague hope that something might happen in time to prevent it, or what were all Jane's saints doing in their places in Heaven?

Well, at last something happened, and the something threatened poor Jane's peace of mind more than ever. At church Jane made a new acquaintance, a countrywoman of her own, a clean-skinned, brawny, bright-eyed fellow, with white teeth and a merry laugh. He came from Jane's own village, which was a reason for his being received on terms of intimacy. Jane had him to tea in the kitchen on Sunday afternoon, and passing the open door on my way to the garden, I saw the party at tea, the inevitable Fry sitting gazing at Jane's new acquaintance with a slow-witted enjoyment of some recent pleasantness. I stopped to say "Good evening," and could not help being struck by the difference between the two men. The Irishman sprang to his feet and bowed, displaying a crown of fine, curly hair. Fry grimed more hopelessly vacuous than ever in answer to my greeting.

Time passed, and Jane's new friend, Willy O'Connor, came and went as freely as Fry himself. Whenever they had an outing he made the proverbial third person; but I could not help imagining that it was not the usual invidious position. I was sure he made those outings enjoyable, for he seemed as capable as he was pleasant. He was a cabinet maker by trade, and by degrees all the invalided furniture of the house began to come back to active service, quite restored in efficiency. I spoke to Jane about making her countryman some little recompense, but my proposal was promptly negatived.

"Let the boy alone," said Jane. "He likes to be employed and to make himself handy. What would he do, he says, in this big, desolate London, if he hadn't the corner by the kitchen fire to drop into for a chat, an' myself and Peter for friends."

"Peter" was Fry. I had my doubts about Peter being in any sense the magnet; but Jane being a sensible person of thirty-three, I did not feel it my duty to remonstrate with her over the two strings to her bow as I should have done with a younger girl. I said nothing, but waited upon events.

Six months passed, when all of a sudden I missed Willy. Two or three Sundays went by with a lugubrious silence in the kitchen where he had made merriment. Then one evening, after I heard Fry's slouching footsteps crunch away down the gravel path, I rang the bell for Jane, and since she failed to answer it, I went to seek her in the kitchen.

When I opened the kitchen door, there was my poor Jane with her face down on the kitchen table, her cap off, her hair disheveled, and her square shoulders shaken with the altar rags.

"What is it, Jane?" I cried in alarm.

Jane lifted up a distorted, tear-stained visage, and tried vainly to set her cap straight and dab away her square shoulders shaken with the altar rags.

"Are you in trouble, Jane?" I asked again. "Please tell me, and I'll see if we can't put it straight."

My affection for Jane is a genuine thing, as hers is for me. I put a hand on each shoulder as I spoke, and suddenly Jane caught my hands and roughly kissed them, relapsing into tears as she did so.

"My trouble's of my own making," she said, "and I'll have to abide by it. No one can do anything to help me, and the sooner it's through the better."

A little later I lost Jane's invaluable service. I see her occasionally, and she very happy—happier than she has any right to be, she says herself, seeing she was so near to flinging away her happiness. I don't think the wretched Fry ever put himself in such a position as Jane's avenging finger-nails.

New Day I heard Jane singing like a lark, and was not surprised a little later by a shame-faced request that she might have company for tea.

"Tis Willy, the poor boy," she said. "I sent him word yesterday of what had happened, an' glad enough he was to come an' make it up."

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A little enough to tell, ma'am," she said in a dull voice, and looking down. "I never thought there was any fear for myself or him. I thought my own heart was in Denis Farrell's grave, an' that him, always seeing Peter about him, was the cause of all the trouble."

"Little enough to tell, ma'am," she said in a dull voice, and looking down. "I never thought there was any fear for myself or him. I thought my own heart was in Denis Farrell's grave, an' that him, always seeing Peter about him, was the cause of all the trouble."

"But you won't go through with this marriage, Jane? It would be

wicked to marry one man thinking so much of another."

"I'll never see Willy again, an' I'll make Peter a faithful wife. I've to pay for my own foolishness, like many a one before me."

I found it impossible to move Jane from this position, and after a time I saw the futility of my efforts and gave up. All the following week Jane went about looking like Medea, or some other heroine of tragedy. It made me quite wretched to see her. She had stipulated for the quietest of weddings, as she was not going to leave me till, as she said, I was suited. Peter, apparently, was quite content with this arrangement.

"He'll just come an' go," said Jane, "an' be no more trouble than before. I'll slip out to the early mass an' be married, an' come back in time to get the breakfast. I'd rather, if you please, 'm, there wasn't any talk about it. I'd like it to be kept as quiet as possible till after I'm out of the house."

We respected Jane's wish, except that I insisted on paying for her modest wedding gown and bonnet.

I got up on the Sunday morning to assist at Jane's wedding toilet and send her off with all possible good wishes. As soon as I saw her I knew she hadn't slept all night. Her ruddiness had faded to a dull yellow, with purple streaks in her cheeks. There were rings round her eyes, and her aspect was supremely wretched. Even then I was moved to make a last appeal to her; but she only shook her head dumbly. I watched her go forth much as she might have gone to her execution.

An hour later she came back in a cab, and alone. The household was scarcely stirring, but I was at the door to receive the poor bride. Her veil was pulled down over her face, but there was something odd about her figure and her step. Was it joy? She certainly stepped lightly and briskly, and dismissed the cabman with an airy gesture very unlike the Jane who had gone forth. Once inside the hall and the door shut upon her, she subsided into a chair. She flung up her veil suddenly and as suddenly began to laugh, though the tears were running down her cheeks.

"Why, Jane," I said—"or I suppose I ought to say Mrs. Fry—this is a change! What in the name of goodness are you laughing at?"

For Jane's laughter had increased to such a violence that at first I thought it was a bad fit of hysteria. At last she gasped out:

"No more Mrs. Fry than you are, ma'am, begging your pardon, an' never will be now, thank God."

Well, the explanation of this remarkable affair was that when Jane had stood up with her oaf to be married by Father Dempsey, and when Peter was required to say if he would take this woman for his lawful wedded wife, instead of "I will," the reply was, "That requires a lot o' thinkin' on." Whatever the creature had got into his head—whether he was jealous of Jane's other swain, or, as people said, had been jolted by some facetious members of the Workingmen's Club into asserting his independence—never transpired. After Jane had listened a minute or two in stupid amazement to Father Dempsey's efforts to make her bridegroom behave properly, she took the matter into her own hands. "There'll be no marriage to-day," Father said. "An' sorry I am for exposing your reverence to this man's folly." And so saying, she walked with dignity from the altar rails.

She afterward confided to me that it was only respect for his reverence and the sacred edict which kept her from giving Peter a wife on the ugly face of him that 'd send half his teeth down his throat. "Let him show himself in my kitchen," she declared, vindictively, "an' he'll get a mark he'll carry to his grave."

Next day I heard Jane singing like a lark, and was not surprised a little later by a shame-faced request that she might have company for tea.

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