

# A CONFUSION OF TONGUES.

By MARGARET JOHNSON.

"Known to us as a scream o' tartaric acid," explained Peter, aside, passing the plate to his cousin with a dry smile in his eye. "Have one, Hilda! And some butter? It's the best butter."

Hilda had not lived for three months in the Parlin household without learning to know her "Alice" as well as they did. "Thank you," she answered, with a twinkling eye.

"Too mild! Too mild!" deprecated Peter, shaking his head with an air of gentle rebuke. "Might mean thank you, yes, or might mean thank no, no. Generally say, 'Not on your life! Here, when we don't want anything. A little definiteness like that saves many mistakes. May I give you some more of these prunes, Hilda? No? I always try to look as if I liked prunes myself, when there's company, but I often hear Mr. Burbank could see his way back to turning them into—say, sashes. No reflection on Emily's bookkeeping, understand. Everybody knows that housekeeping without prunes is as bad as bricks without mortar."

"I suggested," said Rex to Letty, after down the table—Rex's air of staid and sprited earnestness was most as irresistible as his brother's and whimsical drawl—"I mistook that if we undertook a mission from the railroad, to land us out at the door. Good scheme, don't you think? It didn't seem to go to them, though. Isolated? In the contrary! In the very minutes I was there I saw every sign of the most advanced civilization—including that of Horton's ice-cream, the last refinement of—Yes, there's a saloon just moving out of one of the corner shops—the theological element for our enterprise, I should say."

Emily and the minister, sustaining at the head of the table a somewhat labored conversation on recent recoveries in Crete, were both aware of a difference—of the sparkling and recurrent which flowed beneath the other's talk, bubbling up spontaneously through its real earnestness wherever and whenever occasioned.

Emily caught its play with the intangible response of her bright face, mingling with amused dismay the blunt, comprehending gaze of the minister's dark eyes. She glanced from the robust and stocky figure—length and vigor in every line of as in the crisp growth of his black hair, the set of his determined chin, the ring of his resonant voice—her brother, slight, fair, wiry, with alertness of the nervous temperament and the slender fingers of the artist, and her mouth twitched.

They had all taken up the subject of the proposed mission now, and she was free to apply her mind to the more immediate and pressing problem of pillows and blankets. Would there be enough to go round, with such a family and on such a bitter night?

During the long, although not serious illness of Mrs. Parlin, her housemaid nobly in the hands of her children its reputation of being the most hospitable in the parish. It was as much a matter of course that the prospective new minister should and his Sunday there as that Aunt Helen, losing the last train home on Sunday, should appear just before supper and ask for a corner for the night. There always was a corner at the Parlins, even for Aunt Helen and her nerves; and the appearance of her on this occasion of Cousin Ruth, although a trifle more disconcerting, did not in the least diminish the warmth of her welcome.

As for beds—Emily thought it out quickly—Hilda could have a cot with her and Letty; that would leave Hilda's room for Cousin Ruth, and the spare room for Aunt Helen. The minister must have the boys' room, and one of them could go over to Mr. Pearson's, and—

"Somebody will have to sleep on the floor," said Letty, stopping for hasty consultation with her sister in the hall after supper.

The minister, coming out to get something from his coat pocket, overheard, and Letty was so upset by the wideness on his face that she hid her own for a moment of helpless pathos on Emily's shoulder.

"The confusion of tongues!" she murmured. "He doesn't speak our language, and I don't wonder he looks so crazy!"

"Well?" Mrs. Parlin smiled expectantly at the family, who, the minister having gone out, had gathered about her couch, as was their wont for meal-times.

Peter answered the question with cheerful promptness.

"No sense of humor," he declared, rolling to the window with his hand in his pockets. "Not a spark." There was a murmur of assent from the others.

"I had him out for a walk before he continued Peter, the whimsical look getting about his mouth, "and didn't get on for a cent. He asked—of course—what I thought about the problem of how to keep the young man in the church, and I suggested, with my well-known light and playful humor, that I thought of those escalating stairways that you see so merrily up and land you in the carpet department, and then suddenly disappear in the floor, leaving you with no visible means of getting down again, might be applied with such success!"

"Peter!" they all shouted at him.

"He looked at me just as earnest," said Peter, with an injured air, "and showed he didn't really think there was much use in mechanical devices."

"Peter!" they shouted at him again.

"He didn't say that!" "You're making it up!" "How could he, Peter?"

## An Enemy of Humanity.

Who who depresses wages, or makes the conditions of labor harder and the hours longer, is an enemy of humanity; who, for selfish ends, robs little children, defiles and degrades woman and debases man. Instead of love he sows hatred, distrust and dishonesty. Instead of lightening loads and relieving distress, he deepens misery and adds to the burdens of those who have already more than they can bear.

Prentiss knew this, and knew, too, that a whole group of other young people were influenced largely by the attitude of these same active and spirited young Parlins. How he had failed to strike the note of sympathy with them, sincerely as he longed to do so, he did not quite know.

Their home was delightful; they were delightful; Peter himself, with all his oddity, was delightful. They had been all that was courteous to him; he found evidence on every side of their interest in what interested him; and yet—

The young minister pondered over the question with bent brows as he went to bed that night in "the boys' room," while in the curtained alcove adjoining, Peter composed himself grimly to doubtful rest on the huge and clumsy old sofa, known immemorially in the family as "Behemoth."

Uneasy as were Peter's slumbers, they were deep. It was some time after his dreams had been disturbed that he really woke to hear the tapping at his door. A voice followed, cautious but desperate. "Peter! Quick! I want you!"

He sprang up and looked out to see Letty standing in the hall, her face pallid above her little pink wrapper.

"It's Emily—and the pipe in the laundry! She thinks it's broken—oh, not the pipe, Peter—her ankle! It froze, you see, and then burst—Peter!—the pipe! We heard it dripping, and we were so afraid we'd wake up mother or Aunt Helen or the minister—and Emily said she could turn off the water herself, and she slipped on the cellar stairs and turned her ankle, it isn't broken! Anyway, it's just pouring into the kitchen now!"

"I see," said Peter, with prompt though hazy reassurance. "Go down, Letty, I'll be with you in a second."

In not much more, wildly but sufficiently clothed, he appeared among the pallid group in the dining-room.

"What ho!" he cried, with nervous but rallying cheerfulness. "Hilda here, too? Come—Emily first! Ankle, is it? Let me see—there was something—wait!"

Dashing into the parlor, he rummaged blindly among the tables. "I'd give something pretty if Rex had stayed at home instead of me!" he groaned. "Of all the duffers in a case like this, I am—Now what do you do with a frozen ankle—I mean a broken—a burst—Ah!"

He pounced triumphantly upon a fat brown book which he vaguely remembered seeing his mother use in emergencies, and opened it at random as he dashed back. "Here you are, Letty! Here's the very thing! Tell you just what to do. Let's see. 'Beat the company in a circle around the room, and take two'—"

"Peter!" Letty's voice struggled with hysterical laughter. "That isn't it! That's 'One Hundred and One Parlor Amusements!'"

Peter cast the book from him. "It looks just like that!" he said, bitterly. "Why should I want to go and be something else—I shall have to call up a doctor, if it does rouse the house. Tell Emily to hold on till I go and turn the water off!"

"I've turned it off!"

The crisp, strong voice broke in upon them without prelude. The minister, standing in the doorway,

looked as cool as if turning off people's water for them in the dead of night was the most ordinary of attentions.

"May I come in?" he asked. "I couldn't help hearing Miss Letty, and I thought I might be able to help. I know something about it—"

"Ankle?" cried Letty, fervently.

"Ankle," he agreed, briefly. "If Miss Parlin will let me look at her's—"

He looked, surrounded by a respectful group. An unmistakable and consoling authority was in his eye, his touch, his vigorous and off-hand manner.

"Nothing broken," he declared. "A sprain only, and not a bad one. What? Oh, when I went into settlement work I found I had to know something about such things. I took two courses—evenings. You'll be all right, Miss Parlin, with a little rest, and—if I had something to make bandages of—"

The girls flew to provide him. They arranged that Emily should finish the night on the dining-room sofa, and sent Peter, subdued and obedient, to bring down pillows and wraps. Stealing out into the kitchen when all was accomplished, and Hilda and Ruth had gone back to bed, he found Letty mopping up the floor, big-eyed with a wonder of which he dimly suspected the cause.

"Where's the minister?" he asked.

"In the cellar," she replied. "Sh! Don't stop like that! He cornered me out here, Peter, and said, wasn't it going to be bad for us over Sunday, with such a family, and mother sick, and no fire and no water, and probably no chance of getting a pipe himself! And I asked him could he plumb, and he said he could—and he's down there doing it now!"

Her look was intense with the feeling she did not express.

"Great Scott!" said Peter. "The minister—plumb?"

He turned and marched past her down the cellar stairs.

"Mr. Prentiss!" he said.

The minister, heaving a mighty shoveful of coal, and preparing to plant it cautiously upon the furnace fire, turned an absorbed glance upon his visitor.

"I'm being as quiet about this as I can," he remarked, "but I've got to bris up this five a little to melt my lead. Lucky your last plumber left his chunk where Miss Letty could find it. If you could lay your hands on an old piece of canvas, now?"

"Mr. Prentiss! You're not going to—"

"Peter stumbled and stopped.

"Did you ever hear of 'wiping a joint?'" The minister's smile was still absorbed and earnest. "That's rather technical, perhaps, but I'm going to wrap this lead around the break in the pipe, if I can manage at this distance."

"But, sir—Peter's tone was stiff with remonstrance—"to-morrow—it's Sunday—you've got to preach!"

"I couldn't preach if I didn't live, could I?" demanded the minister, with cool good humor. "And living is—well, making a ladie at this moment. Will you hold the end of that wire, Mr. Parlin, if you don't mind being plumber's assistant for an hour?"

Peter opened his mouth once more and shut it again without speaking. His incredulous look fell before the minister's unconcerned open gaze. So entirely, so joyously competent looked John Prentiss, his sturdy figure and determined face lit up by the red firelight, that remonstrance seemed suddenly uncalled for and absurd.

"Plumber's assistant it is," said Peter, subsiding meekly.

Obedient to instructions, he sought out the needed tools and appliances, took his turn at holding the melting ladle, improvised from a piece of stout wire an old saucepan, over the fire, and pattered gingerly up and down the stairs with the melted lead.

"You took courses in plumbing evenings, I suppose, while you were at the seminary," he observed gently, watching, with the admiring Letty, the deft "wiping" of the broken pipe with the hot metal.

"No," said the minister. "No, I learned my plumbing first. That and carpentering—I'm a pretty fair carpenter—took me through high school and helped a lot at college. A little nearer, please, Mr. Parlin. One more trip and we're through."

"You're a wonder!" said Peter.

They were in the cellar again. The job was finished, Letty had gone back to bed. It remained only to test the repairs and leave the fire right for the night.

The minister stooped to shut the draft of the furnace. His face was gray, his clothes were covered with dust and soot, his hands black. Peter looked at them—the capable hands which had bound up his sister's ankle, shoveled the coal and mended the pipe, which should emphasize with oratorical grace the morrow's sermon—and at his own slender fingers, seldom stained with anything deeper than scholarly ink.

He was looking singularly small to himself in the light of the night's experience. A minister who could plumb as well as preach, whose masterful energy and resource were as ready and effective with pipes and ankles as with arguments and exhortations—

"You're certainly a wonder!" said Peter, and a tremor stirred his whimsical, grave mouth.

"No," the minister shook off the compliment in his vigorous, matter-of-fact way as he shook the thick black lead from his forehead. "No, not at all. I've had to go through a lot of things to get where I wanted to be, that's all. My people didn't want me to go into the ministry—op-

## WOMAN'S REALM

Most women in trying to make their fingers more tapering will stroke them from the base to the tip. A well known manicure has said that the process should be reversed.

Clasp the tip of each finger between the thumb and first finger of opposite hand, and stroke firmly but gently backward from the tip as when working on a glove. —New York Times.

Plaza Shoes.

Plaza shoes and walking shoes are to be of two quite distinct varieties. Those in which pretty feet are displayed on porches are much more elaborate than and not half so substantial as those intended to transport the same feminine trotters over the earth. Whether a girl is to say, "Just wait till I get my other shoes on before I step off the piazza," or whether she is to keep the other pair handy and make a lightning change in public, has not yet been announced. —New York Globe.

Anna Barnard's Will.

When Anna Barnard died in Paris, she left a will containing this provision: "Should my life become so intolerable that I be obliged to commit suicide, and in which case I shall not have the right to a religious service, I beg my friend, Mrs. Nevada Palmer, instead of singing at the church, to sing with her daughter, Miss Mignon Palmer, at my house, either the 'Mors et Vita' of Gounard or the 'Ave Maria' of Faure." She left 5000 francs to the Boston Children's Aid Society in memory of Mrs. Susan Livingston Barnard. —Hartford Courant.

Dull, Dark Colors.

The faded, washed-out dyes continue to be modish. In fact, nothing else is seen.

All the new frocks appear old from a color point of view, and every woman looks alike as if figure. She is long and lanky, no hips, no shoulders, and there must be absolutely no shape to anything she wears. That is grand chic.

Fleahy women are caricatures. But then thin ones are, too. The new dyes seem to take better in home-spun, serges, etc. The brighter dyes are seen in cashmere de sole, satins, mervilles, etc.

The latter styles are much prettier, because more vivid, yet by the side of the rusty shades they appear absolutely loud.

There is no doubt that an epoch of dark or dull colors is upon us, to remain perhaps some years. It began early in the autumn, when black and black trimmings were all the rage. This spring it has been continued, though in duller results.

There is no life whatever about the dark tones, and the lighter ones are faded and hard, yet quite attractive. —Philadelphia Ledger.

Girl You'd Hate to Trust.

She who is sugary sweet until she thinks she is alone. Far better be like an alligator pear with the roughness on the outside, than resemble the tempting wild plum with bitterness within.

The girl who is careless to return small loans. This habit may spring from heedlessness, but it bears watching.

She who flatters you, while she never has a good word for anyone else.

The girl who openly boasts of the married men who are in love with her.

The girl who gushes over her love for her parents, while she lets her overworked mother mend and launder for her, and spends more than her father can afford.

She who dresses lavishly on a small income. There is a distinction between looking well on little and cutting a splurge on nothing a year.

The girl who says she "dotes on children," but whose small brothers and sisters shun her.

She who is prinked out for show views—and a sight when caught unawares. The man who contemplates matrimony should make it a point to see his Angelina off guard.

The girl who is horrified at calling a spade by its "right name," but whose taste in literature is lurid.

She who has great tales of her prowess as a worker, but who never sees any work to be done. The real workers of the world rarely discuss what they do, and never need jogs for it doing. —New York Herald.

The Folly of Fretting.

"Taking the year together, dear, There isn't more night than day."

We all, especially the mother of the household, worry too much. We see old Mr. (or shall I say Mrs.) Trouble away down the road, and run with outstretched hand to meet him, oftentimes more than half way.

We worry about the children—Johnny has such a cold; surely it will develop into pneumonia. We're so afraid that Ethel or Rob will not pass the examinations and be promoted. Mildred's dress isn't more than half-finished; we shall never have it ready for her to wear to the party. We worry about the household expenses;



Beat up the yolk of one egg and mix with it one tablespoonful of finely chopped tomato freed from skin and seeds; add seasoning of salt and pepper. Beat up the white of the egg stiffly and mix in thoroughly, but lightly. Melt one teaspoonful of butter in a small, smooth frying pan. Pour in the mixture. Hold over a clear, brisk fire for half a minute till a nice brown color on the under side; turn and brown on the other side. Fold over and serve very hot. —New York Press.

Vegetable Curry.

Into a saucepan put one heaping tablespoonful of butter and in this place some slices of carrot. Turn these about in the butter and add turnip cut in dice or slices, potatoes sliced, also one onion cut up. Season with salt and add a little water.

When the water reaches boiling point add two teaspoonfuls of curry powder and a tablespoonful of flour moistened with cold water.

Stir it again till it reaches boiling point and allow it to simmer gently till the vegetables are perfectly tender.

If green peas are in season they may be added, or cooked beans make a nice addition, also cold boiled rice may be added to the curry. —New York Press.

Milk Soup.

Six potatoes, one white turnip, one parsnip, two onions, stalk of celery, one tablespoonful of butter, one tablespoonful flour, one teaspoonful sugar, two cups milk, two quarts of water, salt and pepper to taste.

Put the butter into a saucepan and let it melt, but it must not get brown. Put in the cut vegetables, and stir them until they are hot. Now put in the sugar, pour on the water, and let all boil for one and a half hours.

Dissolve the flour in a little cold milk, add pepper and salt, and stir it in. Let it boil for ten minutes to cook the flour.

Boil the milk separately, and add it last of all. Taste if it is salted enough, and serve hot.

It is a good plan to have dishes properly seasoned before they are sent to table. The first mouthful of anything new is enough to create prejudice if it does not exactly suit the palate. —New York Press.

English Meat Pie.—If you should some day, instead of getting a tender beefsteak, find yourself the possessor of a tough piece of beef, do not despair. There are wonderful possibilities in such meat when converted into a meat pie. Cut it into small pieces and put it on to boil, bones and all. Three or four slices of salt pork parboiled with it is an improvement. Put the meat on in time for it to get well cooked. Make a crust, and line the sides of a pan or dish with it. Select the best of the meat, excluding bones, skins and stringy pieces, and put a layer on the bottom of the dish. On this put a layer of dumplings cut from the crust dough. Now another layer of meat and more dumplings. Pepper the top, drop a few small pieces of butter and a little flour over it. Half fill the pan with the water in which the meat was boiled, and put on a top crust. It should cook with but moderate heat for almost an hour. —London Farm and Home.

## Our Cut-out Recipe.

Paste in Your Scrap-Book.

HOUSEHOLD HINTS

Put a bit of camphor away with silver not in use; it will prevent tarnishing.

To keep wooden bread boards in good condition scrub them with sand or salt instead of soap.

After greasing pans for small cakes dust with flour thickly, shaking out all that is loose. This treatment prevents sticking.

To revive flowers sent by post, plunge the stems into hot water and let them remain until the water is cold, then cut the ends of the stems afresh and put the flowers into fresh cold water.

Match marks on the kitchen wall will disappear if rubbed first with the cut surface of a lemon, then with a clean cloth dipped in whitening. Afterwards wash the surface with warm water and soap, and then quickly wipe with a clean cloth wrung out of clear water.

If water has a slight taste or smell it is impure. Filtering is then not quite enough. A small piece of alum to each bucketful will purify water wonderfully and conduce to health. Water should be all negative—without taste, smell, color or deposit after standing.

There are so many little things in one's work bag or basket that are apt to get gnarled together from much handling that it is well to have a little case which is a series of tiny pockets to hold the tapes, mending cottons, etc. Such a pocket is much appreciated by travelers.

Make your own night lights. If you run short of night lights try this plan: Take an ordinary wax candle and some finely powdered salt. Burn the candle so as to get it level, and then cover the top with a layer of salt, leaving only the blackened end of the wax exposed. Light the candle, and it will burn slowly, giving a faint, but steady light.

While maple sugar still has the delicate spring flavor remember to serve it at least once, as a hot syrup on plain vanilla ice cream or over crushed ice. The maple syrup should be boiled until it spins a thin thread, and then the dish containing it should be put in hot water to keep it at that stage. If crushed ice is used serve it in deep soup plates with a little pitcher of the syrup to each diner. In other cases turn the hot syrup over the errand or ice and eat it from the

## Household Matters

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