

How Sarah Was Converted

So Hetty Granger's dead," observed Priscilla Pipp, solemnly, laying aside her bonnet and sinking comfortably into a rocker. "God rest her soul," she said, devoutly.

"And her tongue," added Sarah Potts, tartly.

"Well—I suppose it will rest, now she's gone," admitted Priscilla. Then she added: "I low it's earned a rest, anyway."

"It wasn't exactly in need of exercise," observed Sarah dryly.

"It seems strange to think of Hetty gone—that we won't see her coming out of the back way any more with a plate to borrow butter on," Priscilla continued. "I remember her coming over one afternoon when she had company to tea, unexpected like, with that old blue plate—you remember that old blue chiny one her great-grandmother handed down—no, you don't either, because you ain't ever been inside of their house as I know of—but anyway I let her have a piece of my last pint of butter an' me not gettin' any more till Saturday, which was Dave Jenks's reg'lar time to bring it in, an' Hetty goin' back home so careful like an' slippin' here some one throwed out dishwasher, and losin' the butter an' breakin' th' chiny plate all to pieces an' her lookin' all around to see if any one was lookin' an' then pickin' up the butter and wipin' it off on her apron. But the plate was too fur gone for savin' although I believe she did afterward gather up the pieces and glue 'em together. Poor Hetty! It seems strange to think of Hetty gone—in Paradise."

"It does seem strange," Sarah admitted.

"What?" said Priscilla, absently.

"To think of her—in Paradise," Sarah said. "I don't s'pose she'll make any great stir in Paradise?" she continued, in a half inquiry.

"Well, mebbe not as much as she will after she gets her bearings," Priscilla agreed with qualification. "Hetty's bound to be busy, in the flesh or in the sperrit. Her's ain't no sperrit to sit by with folded hands and watch things takin' place. It's my belief she'll be active even in the sperrit. She was a powerful cleaner, Hetty was. I don't know of any one in the neighborhood that had rugs an' curtains out on the line oftener 'n Hetty did."

"An' certainly no one had her tongue out oftener," observed Sarah litgly.

"We don't want to be too hard on them as is departed, Sarah," Priscilla said, with mild rebuke.

"Truth don't hurt nobody, livin' or dead," Sarah declared, epigrammatically.

"Well, it ain't so apt to hurt th' dead as it is th' livin'," Priscilla agreed.

"An' it ain't told about th' dead as often as it is th' livin', either," Sarah retorted.

"Sarah," she began, "you won't mind if I talk to you like a sister o' yours, will you?"

"If you talk like a good many sisters do, mebbe you better not," answered Sarah, with a frown and a drawing down of the corners of her mouth.

"I wouldn't feel hard toward her, now she's dead," Priscilla volunteered, feeling her way along cautiously. "I know she—she did you a lot o' wrong, but mebbe she liked him better'n you did, an' it was a'ter years an' years ago, an' she's dead an' he dead, an'—"

A tear trickled down Sarah's cheek. "Mebbe she did," she admitted; "she talked faster'n I did, anyway." She brushed the tear away impatiently and left a shiny streak on her face.

"That ain't neither here nor there," Priscilla declared.

"Well, there was a good deal of it here when she was," observed Sarah, "an' thers apt to be a good deal of it there—if sperrits talk, an' I fancy they do—when they get rested-up, anyway," she finished sharply.

Priscilla rocked again.

"You've got nice things, Sarah," she said, looking about her through the big room. "I remember when you an' me was girls together how we used to build dollhouses an' wonder about all the nice things we'd have when we grewed up an' got—married—the last word came with an effort."

"An' then when we got along about the marryin' age, who should come along but Peter Pipp, with nothin' but poverty an' prospects, an' before I knew it we were married, an' while we ain't had no money to brag of, we've always been comfortable, an' Pipp's made a good husband, aside from his mother's intererin'—sometimes. An' afterwards I remember how you an'—well, you fell in love an' somehow it got broke off an' he married Hetty, an' you lived with your father on th' old place for, an' many years, an' then he died an' left you comfortable for the rest of your days."

"I never knew what broke it off, Sarah," Priscilla said, suggestively.

"I'm goin' to give 'em to th' guild when I get 'em all hemstitched," Sarah volunteered this much in the way of information.

Priscilla went back to rocking.

"Hetty's left a girl, too," she went on, as though the destiny of the nappkins did not impress her. "They say she looks more like him every day, it's too bad, ain't it—ust the time she needs a parent's care the most, an' both of 'em gone an' nothin' left in th' way of money or property. I wonder what she'll do," she ventured.

"What she can, mebbe—like th' rest of us," Sarah suggested harshly.

"They say she ain't got no relatives," Priscilla added.

"Which ain't always an unmixed affliction," retorted Sarah.

"If it wa'n't for Minnie an' Mamie an' Willie an' Jimmie an' Little Peter I'd take her myself," Priscilla continued, passing Sarah's tart observation unnoticed. "It would be a mercy to take her in an' give her a home. Still, I s'pose th' Lord'll provide a way for her, but blessed if I can see it now."

Sarah folded the nappkins up and put them on the chair beside her.

"I should think you'd get lonesome in this big house with not a soul around but a boy doin' chores an' goin' to school," Priscilla said.

"It ain't always them that's around you that keeps you from bein' lonesome," Sarah remarked, looking hard at something out of the window that seemed to have a mist about it.

"No, I s'pose not," Priscilla said softly.

There were a few minutes of rocking and looking out of the window.

"Only fourteen years old," Sarah mused, half to herself.

"What did you say Sarah?" Priscilla asked.

"Nothin'—I was just thinking," returned Sarah.

"You know," Priscilla said, after a pause, "if anything was to happen that my Minnie was to be left alone I wonder if I could send down a prayer that would go into somebody's heart and not let 'em rest until they went an' found her an' took her in an' gave her a good home—like your'n, for example," she said.

"I don't know," Sarah returned, slowly. "A good many prayers are sent on wild goose chases—like some I've had to do with. I used to pray, night after night, but I guess they went up when everybody was out," she added somewhat bitterly.

"You mustn't, Sarah, you mustn't," cried Priscilla, "it's a blasphemy."

"What—prayer?" Sarah inquired.

"No, talkin' like that," said Priscilla.

"Well, ain't I goin' to give th' nappkins to th' guild?" Sarah retorted.

"It ain't nappkins th' Lord wants," suggested Priscilla.

"What is it, then?" inquired Sarah.

"It's hearts—good, lovin', tender human hearts—that's what it is."

"Well, mine was good an' lovin' an' tender once," Sarah said, slowly. "But it's old an' hard an' dry now like an old cheese rind."

"Mebbe He's tryin' to make it lovin' an' tender again an' give you somethin' to put into it that'll take it back to where it used to be," Priscilla suggested.

"How?" Sarah asked.

"Oh, I don't know," Priscilla responded. "He works in a mysterious way—that's what the poet says."

"You mean for me to take her—that girl of Hetty's?" demanded Sarah, fiercely.

"No; I mean for you to take her—that girl of Robin's," Priscilla answered her.

"I forgot," Sarah responded, less bitterly.

"Her name is Robin, same as his," Priscilla informed her. "It's the kind of a name you can give to a girl or a boy either—th' boys after Robin Hood an' th' girls after Robin Redbreast, mebbe."

"She told him lies," Sarah cried, her bitterness returning. "She told him lies and he—"

She rested her chin on her hands and her elbows on her knees and looked hard out of the window, where everything was misty.

"I know," said Priscilla soothingly. "But she is dead an' he is dead an' you an' me are here."

"I never knew about her fallin' down with th' butter," Sarah said. Then she added: "Was it true that they got pretty poor before she died?"

"I guess they were in bad straits," Priscilla said. "They say little Robin ain't hardly got clothes enough to keep soul an' body together."

"Her mother should a talked less an' sewed more," Sarah ventured.

"Hetty Granger wa'n't idle," Priscilla objected. "Give th' dead her due. She was always busy, but a woman can't do much in th' way of earnin' th' way things go."

"I suppose not," Sarah said. "Does she look any way like her mother?"

"They say she's th' image of her father, she's all alone in th' house up there, with nobody but Kate Adams, an' Kate's been havin' such a time mournin' openly for Hetty I'm afraid she'll have poor little Robin scared to death before night. Kate's a good soul but she's a powerful mourner, so I'm goin' up to get Robin and bring her home for a few days with me. Jimmie an' Willie an' Little Peter can sleep together in the three-quarter bed, an' that'll make room for her with Nellie."

"I don't think I ever saw her," Sarah mused. "I ain't looked at one of 'em for fifteen years."

"You better peek out when we're goin' by," Priscilla suggested.

"I'll rattle my parasol stick against th' fence pickets."

"I don't s'pose she'll look at me. Hetty probably filled her up with stuff about me."

"Hetty never told her a word," responded Priscilla. "She told me so on her dyn' bed, and th' truth will out on then."

"Which is some better than never," said Sarah. "Well, mebbe I'll peek too hard. They're fresh painted."

"It'll crowd Jimmie an' Willie and little Peter to sleep three in a three-quarter bed, but it's crowdin' in a good cause," Priscilla suggested. "It must be strange to live without crowdin', Sarah. We can't turn around home without runnin' into a trunk or a table or a chair or a baby."

"If you think she'd come"—Sarah hesitated—"if you think she would care to come Priscilla I will let her have the front room upstairs—for a night or two."

Priscilla rose from the rocker and touched Sarah's forehead with her lips.

"It's like when we were girls again," she said.

"I don't s'pose she could help what her mother did before she was born," admitted Sarah.

"I don't exactly see how she could," admitted Priscilla, cautiously. Sarah's glance went out of the window and away off up a green slope to the top of a hill where white shafts rose.

"Priscilla," she said, "if you think she would care to come an' live with a dried-up old maid—"

"Yes," eagerly.

"Well, you can bring her in when you go by and leave her here for a while, anyway. I'll try to do right by her, although I ain't sayin' by that I forgive Hetty Granger. An' I don't know as I ever will unless you come around again talkin' about girls together, and silly things like that. I ain't doin' it for Hetty Granger, either, but for Robin's sake—"

"For Robin's sake," Priscilla assented.

"No, not for Robin's sake, either, but for the sake of Willie and Jimmie and little Peter, an' to keep 'em from crowdin' three in a bed," said Sarah, wiping her eye with a corner of one of the guild's nappkins. "An' it'll save you scrapin' on th' fence pickets, too. They're fresh painted."—N. Y. Times.

Wedding Customs.

The custom of throwing a shower of rice over newly wedded couples comes to us from India, and originated in the idea that rice was an emblem of fecundity. The Hindu bridegroom, at the close of the marriage ceremony, throws three handfuls of rice over the bride, and she replies by throwing the same over him. With us the rice is thrown by outsiders. The "old shoe" custom is generally supposed to come from the Hebrews, and is supposed to have originally implied that the parents of the bride gave up all authority over her. The Germans had long a custom, which perhaps they have not wholly given up even now of putting the groom's shoe on the pillow of the bridal bed, and in Anglo-Saxon marriages the father gave a shoe of the bride to the bridegroom, who touched her on the head with it to remind her who was now master. The wedding ring was used among the ancient Hebrews primarily with the idea that the delivery of a ring conferred power on the recipient, and thus the wife, wearing her husband's ring, shared his authority. The ring in the Roman espousals was a pledge of loyalty, and the idea that it should be worn on the third finger of the left hand because "a nerve connects this finger with the heart" originated with the Romans. Orange blossoms were worn by brides among the Saracens because they were held to symbolize fruitfulness; the very general use of these flowers in Europe and America for bridal adornment is comparatively a modern custom. The use of a bridal veil is a relic of the far-off time when the husband was not allowed to see his bride's face till after marriage.

It is said to be a curious fact that the wedding cake, that elaborate, indispensable at the modern marriage ceremony, is the direct descendant of a cake made of water, flour and salt, of which, at the Roman high-class weddings, the married couple and the witnesses partook at the time of the signing of the contract.

An African Night.

There is nothing as black as an African night, and I think that it is because the earth, being a deep red, offers no reflection to the faint starlight such as we wet in other lands. Instead it swallows up what slight glow there may be, and gives to the darkness a dense, velvety quality not to be found anywhere else. Overhead the stars glare more brilliantly than in northern latitudes, but they seem to cast no light and the night is palpable, suffocating, appalling, and filled with a nameless horror which is quite indescribable.—From "African Highways."

Bridge Built in Forty Minutes.

An unusual feat in pontoon bridge building has been accomplished by a company, a hundred strong, drawn from four cavalry regiments of the Berlin garrison. Arrived at a point where the Spree is very wide, the guardsmen, assisted by a dozen pioneers, constructed in forty minutes a bridge of steel boats and plates 108 feet long and ten feet broad. A squadron of cuirassier guards was the first to try it, riding twice across. Then a loaded baggage wagon weighing fifty hundredweight, drawn by six horses, traversed the bridge repeatedly.

Request for Calendars.

A British mercantile firm in Pekin recently received the following request for some of its calendars: "The Chinese calendar in your company is glance in looking, to be sure surpassing all the others, and also it is gigantic beyond example in connection with its fine spectacle while I look at it. I shall be very much obliged, if you will kindly give me some pieces, as I have great deal of interest of it."

Women Best Chauffeurs.

"Ladies learn to drive much more quickly than men," said a principal of a motor school, "and the reason is that they pay more attention to what they are told, and do not start with the preconceived notion that they know all about it already."

Notes and Comment

Of Interest to Women Readers

YERKES FIGHT IS SETTLED.

Widow Under Agreement is to Receive More Than \$2,000,000.

Under the arrangement for settling the \$11,000,000 estate of the late Charles T. Yerkes, street railway magnate, Mrs. Mary Adelaide Yerkes, his widow, will receive slightly more than \$2,000,000.

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Salesmanship.

"It makes you look small," said the saleslady to the elephantine woman who was trying on a hat.

Sold!

"It makes you look plump," she said to the cold, attenuated dame.

Sold!

"It makes you look young," she said to the fair-fat-and-forty female.

Sold!

"It makes you look older," she said to the slate-and-sums miss.

Sold!

"It makes you look short," she said to the very thin lamp-post lady.

Sold!

"It brings out your color," she said to the pallid feminine ghost.

Sold!

And of course, the hats were all exactly alike.—The Sketch.

Suffrage or Race Suicide.

Mrs. Catherine Wayne McCullough, lawyer and a Justice of the Peace in Chicago, asserts that women are justified in refusing to bear children until they have equal rights in the guardianship of their offspring. She told the girl students in Downer College that it took the women of Illinois thirty years to have the laws of that State changed so that mother and father have an equal right to their children, and pointed out that only by the same kind of hard and unceasing effort could women hope to gain equal suffrage. She expressed herself as against the militant methods of the English Suffragettes until it is seen that other means have failed. Her plan is publicity and work. She would flood the stage with suffragist plays, the newspapers with "vote for women" articles, editorials and poems, the mails with postcards calling for the ballot and public meetings and discussions at all times.

Woman with the Serpent's Tongue.

A Scotchman stood beside the bed of his dying wife, and in tearful accents asked was there anything he could do for her.

"Yes, Sandie," she said; "I'm hopin' you'll bury me in Craeburn kirkyard."

"But, my lass," he cried, "only think of the awful expense! Would ye no be comfortable here in Aberdeen?"

"No, Sandie; I'd no rest in my grave unless I was buried in Craeburn."

"It's too much you're askin'," said the loving husband, "and I cannot promise ye any such thing."

"Then, Sandie, I'll no give you any peace until my bones are at rest in my native parish."

"Ah, weel, Maggie," said he, "I'll just gie ye a three months' trial in Aberdeen, an' see how ye get along."

Be Natural.

First Porter.—"Gee, dat man gib me a large tip."

Second Porter.—"Yep. An' done gib yo'self away by thankin' him and smilin'."

First Porter.—"Why, ain't dat all right?"

Second Porter.—"No, sah. If yo' had acted natchul he'd felt obligated to do it next time. See?"

Her Pa Was a Planter.

A Kentucky girl whose father was an undertaker was sent to a fashionable New York boarding-house for a finishing term. One day one of the girls asked what business her father was in, and, fearing she would lose caste if she told the truth, she carelessly answered: "Oh, my father's a Southern planter."

Buttonholes in Strips.

The home dressmaker or the seamstress who dislikes to work buttonholes will find joy in the fact that they can be bought by the yard and in all kinds of fabrics. They come on muslin or silk strips and can be easily attached to the edge of a blouse which is to fasten under a fly.

Miss Violet Asquith, Daughter of the British Prime Minister.

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Shopping in Sassafras.

Quaint Way of Buying Supplies in a Remote Village.

Mrs. Maude Darrell Hoffman, a pioneer of country week work, was praising in Hartford the country vacation.

"A country vacation is better than a seashore one," she said. "You see things so much quieter. And the further into the country you go the quieter become the things you see."

"I once spent August in a village called the Head of Sassafras, a village down in Maryland. The postoffice there was the general store. The morning after my arrival I went to the general store for my mail."

"A little girl preceded me with an egg in her hand."

"Gimme an egg's worth of tea, please. I heard her say to the postmaster-storekeeper; 'an' ma says ye might weigh out an egg's worth of sugar, too, for the black hen's a-cluckin', and I'll be up again in a minute.'"

Made His Own Teeth.

Charles Bennett, aged 60, a Franklin county convict serving five years in the Ohio penitentiary for burglary, not only pulls his own teeth but he makes new ones and puts them in himself.

He makes the teeth out of rosin, beef bones obtained in the kitchen, using only a little saw and a pen-knife. He has been using two of the teeth several months and is now at work on others.

He pulls his old teeth by means of a fiddle string and then makes the new teeth the shape of the ones pulled out. They are grooved so they fit to the gum and also to the teeth on each side.

Bound in Gold.

In the jewel house of the Tower of London there is a book bound throughout in gold, even to the wires of the hinges. Its clasps are two rubies set at opposite ends of four golden links.—London Tit-Bits.

Irregular Declension.

Mama—So you've been learning all about grammar at school to-day. Can you tell me the plural of sugar?

Tommie—Why — er — lumps, of course.

Expiation by Proxy.

A recently appointed woman supervisor of the public schools one day happened in a school where a young incorrigible was being punished.

"Have you ever tried kindness?" inquired she of the teacher. "I did at first, but I've got beyond that now," was the reply.

At the close of the lesson the supervisor asked the boy to call on her on the following Saturday.

A boy arrived at the hour appointed. The hostess showed him her best pictures, played him her liveliest music and set him a delicious luncheon, and then thought it time to begin her sermon.