

STORIES IN PASSING.

He was a big fat Irishman—a three hunder pounder—from down in the country. He entered a clothing store, unbuttoned his uister, pushed back his cap and leaned across the showcase toward the furnishings man.

"And have ye any collars?" he said.

"Yes, sir; all kinds."

"And have ye any large ones?"

"Certainly. What size?"

"Well, give me a twenty-one."

"Twenty-one!" exclaimed the clerk, "they don't make 'em."

"And ye're a liar," the big Irishman howled, leaning still farther over the counter, "I'll have ye know I've bought a twenty-four—many a time."

And his build was such and his look was such that his statement went unchallenged.

It was getting dark between the houses. I was hurrying to supper, and nearly ran over two boys near the alley entrance. They seemed to be wrestling, but a sharp fist crack proved me wrong. I separated them and made them put on their coats. They did that looking at me doggedly. Then one climbed upon a white horse and rode away without a word. I took the other down town with me.

"Go to the same school, I suppose" I asked.

"Nope. Never saw him before," the boy jerked out.

"Well, that's queer. How'd you happen to get mixed up in a fight?"

"Called me a name as he passed, and I told him just to come off that horse and I'd make him eat dirt. He was just getting started when you pulled me off. He's bigger 'n me, but I'll learn him to call me names."

And just as the youngster turned the corner, he yelled after me, "But I'll catch him out yet and lick the tar out of him, too."

It was during the Mormon settlement in eastern Iowa. Joseph Smith had called an assembly of the brethren at the little town of Augusta, on Skunk river. It was announced that he would walk on the water.

An immense congregation of people gathered on the hillside sloping back from the stream. The prophet stood at the foot and addressed them.

"This is a miracle of the first degree," he said, "and requires greater faith than usual. Every person must have implicit faith. How many fully believe that the miracle can be done?"

Every hand went up.

"Well, then," said the prophet, as he turned away, "if you all believe it can be done, there is no reason for my proving it. Dismiss the assembly!"

They were walking past my window last evening—a curly-headed youngster of seven in golf cap and heavy reefers, and a little tot of five with long flaxen hair, laughing mouth, and a long black gown with yellow trimmings.

In the center of the crossing was a mudhole. They both stopped at the edge and looked at each other. Then she turned round and literally backed into the child's arms. He picked her up by the waist and deposited her dryshod on the opposite side. Then she drew his face down to hers and left a dainty little kiss upon his lips.

They both caught my eye just then and smiled.

"Laws sakes," said old man Brown of University Place, "you never can tell about gals. Those gals of mine are always doin' something. You know they have heaps of company, and some of them young dudes I don't like. Now the other night I went to the door and there were two of the biggest swells I ever saw. Just came out from the city I thought. They asked if the gals were

home, and I said they could come in and I'd see. So they sat down in the parlor and I went out to ma in the dining room and asked her where the gals were. She kind o' smiled queer-like and said she'd hunt 'em up, and for me to go back and entertain the company. So I went back and talked with them a bit. They seemed uncommon pleasant and polite, and kept talking 'bout things and people I knew, and me a-wondering and wondering who they be when, la! they jist burst out laughing fit to kill. And who d' you think they were—jist those two fool gals of mine dressed up like city chaps.

He stood on the corner—a hard looking specimen. His baggy grey trousers barely met his shoe tops. An old rusty frock coat was buttoned tight about him, the collar turned up, but not enough to conceal a dirty undershirt beneath. The rim of his stiff hat was torn loose in the back and there was a "stove" in the crown.

He "struck" me as I crossed the street, and walked a block with me.

"Say, pard," he said, touching his hat, "excuse me—one moment. I have a plan to make a fortune. Start with counter and four stools. Then expand. Small room, four tables, two waiters. prosper and expand again. "Dairy Maid Cafe," large room, linen, china, silver, waiters, cashier, electric fans. Branch out again. Hotel—moderate at first—then magnificent establishment—a Palmer House, Brown's Palace, Waldorf. But excuse—I weary you. Ten cents? Thank you. Great plan, though, big thing—and he shambled in a saloon with one eye on the free lunch sign beside the door.

The boy was skating along the sleety sidewalk one day last week, in front of a large brick house. For some time he skated up and down, looking longingly at the front windows. Then the girl's face looked out and smiled at him. Immediately the boy began to "show off." He "skulled backwards" and "cut the Dutch roll" with his hands on his hips, his head thrown back, his tongue crammed into his cheek. He circled faster and faster until suddenly his skruck a piece of brick frozen to the walk. The boy came down with a thump. Stars larger than the moon danced in his eyes. Pains darted up and down his spine. As he arose his head felt as big as a barrel. He glanced hastily toward the house to see a laughing face disappear behind the curtains.

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a runaway train

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