

**NOT WHOLLY VANITY**

**Why Joe Purchased \$10 Worth of Agony.**

**BY MARTHA McCULLOCH-WILLIAMS.**

"Buy a story, please, sir—a teeny, weeny story," Josephine Mablin called to Latimer half in, half out of his door. "You don't want to be constructively guilty of cruel and unusual punishment—that I know," she ran on, coming inside and moving a little tentatively toward his desk.

Latimer sprang up, set a chair for her, and made to seat her, but she shook her head. "Dassent—I'd never, never have the courage to rise again," she said, then holding out a small foot in a shoe still smaller. "Johnny—do believe this isn't wholly vanity—the girl who sold them was a hypnotist."

"Where were you going to need such fine foot-feathers?" Latimer interrupted almost savagely.

The offending foot-feathers were fine, indeed—the latest cry of the mode as to shape and stuff. At rest, Joe's foot did look pretty in them—when she walked or tried to, her elastic instep became wooden, her pinched toes were alternately dead or full of savage prickings.

"Sit down!" Latimer ordered, "and tell me the whole story. You surely have not been out with that Parish gang again?"

"The shoes contradict you—that's just why I suffer from them," Joe said with something betwixt a frown and a pout. "Ten dollars' worth of agony! Isn't that tough?"

"Not as tough as the Parish gang," Latimer exploded. "See here, Joe, you know I'm your big brother by appointment—cut them out! I say it! And I mean it—down to the ground."

"I wish I could," Joe said half under breath, then more articulate: "Johnny—I must make you understand. I promised I wouldn't—but you are my other self—"

"What's to understand?" Latimer interrupted.

Joe reached for his hand. "The truth," she said. "I don't like tough ways, nor people—but I have to make a pretense of it—because you see, if I get the story—all my hard times are over. Beckwith himself has promised it."

"But what is the story?" Latimer demanded.

Joe put her lips almost upon his ear, as she answered, "What's behind the Norwoll divorce? Parish knows, you see—he's the only one who does know, except the principals. He—he thinks a lot of me, in his way. If I keep letting him think so—and more—he'll surely tell me—when he knows what it will mean."

"You infant!" Latimer interrupted. "Surely you can't think Parish will give away his patron's secrets, even for your beautiful eyes? Why if he did—"

"You can't think I'd sell the story even if I knew it, unless he was willing?" Joe cried, trying to rise, but falling back with a grimace.

Latimer took both her hands. "That shows how fit you are for newspaper work. You can't and won't forget that you're a lady born—above sneaking and sleuthing, and dirty pryings generally. Give it up, child. Let me send you home. Tell me, how are you off? Need money? How much?"

Joe turned away her head, fumbling for her purse. Her eyes were so dim she could barely see to open it. From it she shook into her palm three coppers, a dime, a half dollar and a five-dollar gold piece. "Behold my worldly wealth," she said, trying to speak gaily. "And I can't spend the gold—it's my christening money, you know. I kept for luck. But—if only you'll buy a storylet so I can get some shoes—"

"I suppose you can go hungry," Latimer interrupted curtly. "Why won't you give up and go home? You know you can marry Billy Mason—"

"Thank you—I don't want Billy Mason—I would rather be a free lance in New York town with one square meal a week than roll round in the Mason auto all the days of my life," she cried, rising and shutting her lips on a groan. Uncertainly balancing she smiled a gallant smile, saying: "Sorry we can't do business—must hop along to some other office."

"We can do business—we have got to," Latimer said doggedly, pulling some bills from his pocket and trying to thrust them upon her. "Take it—just an advance, you know—you can bring stuff when you get round to it," he said, looking carefully over her head.

She smiled at him; but shook her head, saying as she pushed away the money: "Johnny, don't you know charity is demoralizing? Besides you can't afford it—any more than I can afford to take it. Don't worry—my rent is paid to the week-end—and I'm going to dine with Parish—and a chaperone. Think 'll let him propose to me, then tell him I can't say 'Yes,' unless he gives me the story and so makes me independent?"

"If I thought you meant that—I'd shoot him," Latimer growled.

From the door Joe called to him saucily, "I'll let you know how I speed in the morning—I don't have to pay cash for my phone calls."

When she was out of hearing he dropped his head on his desk a minute, swearing great silent oaths. Looking down he saw that she had dropped her story—a pitiful wisp of paper, less than common. He knew it would not do—that was the trouble. Her stories never would do, even for the cheap and uncritical

magazine which claimed his services. Their very virtues fought against them—Joe knew good literature, no less good breeding. The broad splashy effects that thrilled his public were not for her. If her people lacked life they were at the least decently tailored. Yet she was set as the hills on making her way, here in the boiling town, rather than go back to the nagging of a step-mother—nagging whose root was the prosperous Billy Mason.

Latimer had known her from her cradle. Indeed, he had carried her pig-a-back several miles at least. He had never thought of her as a sweetheart. Sweethearting for him, indeed, had always meant Agnes Ware. If she had not thrown him over for his rich uncle he should never have seen New York. His coming had a cogent reason—why under heaven had that willful Joe come likewise?—why, finding herself so unfit, did she foolishly stay?

He bought the poor little story—paying for it from his own spare pocket, but through the mask of the magazine. After the check had been sent by messenger, he felt a bit easier, though still he could not settle steadily to his work. Joe's face, wearing that gallant smile above the pain-marks, came between him and the page he read. She stayed with him so persistently; indeed, he shut his desk half an hour early, and went scowling to the tiny chambers he had managed to find in a quiet eddy of the town.

They looked desolate enough, yet he had thought them cosy. Joe was the matter—even there she haunted him. He went out quickly, made his way to the park and walked there with swinging strides, until almost midnight. Then suddenly he felt himself faint with hunger, found an eating place and fed himself decently. Afterward there was another stroll. The moon had come up transforming magically even the sordid town. It was late—after midnight—when he came again to his own door and sat down upon the steps for a last bask in the moonshine, a last cigar.

At first he barely noted a huddled limp figure upon the farther end of the topmost step. It gave him a turn to have it suddenly slip down beside him. Next minute Joe was saying in breaks:

"Johnny—I—you'll have to send me home—after all. I've found out—I won't do—I'm too big a coward."

"How did you make the discovery?" Latimer asked teasingly, laying his hand on her arm.

She drew away from him ever so gently. "Why you see—this way. I got the story—all right—and Parish said I could use it. But—but I found I couldn't do that. Why? Johnny the whole secret is—Mrs. Norwoll loved her husband so she wouldn't stand in the way of his happiness after she found out he loved somebody else. And she—she made believe to flirt with the other man—so her husband would have a clear conscience. Could you—could anybody, crucify a woman who would do that?"

"I know you couldn't," Latimer returned, his heart beating fast. He had heard more than the words—a subtly vibrant sympathy. Joe must know what that other woman felt—was it possible she had loved him, Latimer, all along? She was standing unsteadily upon her poor pinched feet.

"It was so kind of you—sending the check," she murmured. "I had to come and tell you—when they said you were out, I waited. Please fix it so I can go home Saturday—but understand I won't marry Billy."

"No—because you are going to marry me instead," Latimer answered, tucking her hand over his arm. "I am coming for you early in the fall—think you can be ready?"

"I'm ready now—unless you want to send me away," Joe said, so low, so sweetly, Latimer had to kiss her then and there, regardless of time and place.

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**Christianity in China.**

An army lieutenant held a prayer meeting in a Red Cross hospital in the intervals between fighting at Hankow. At Shanghai a society has been formed, including many of the local leaders, with the object of translating Christian belief into practical politics under the new government; and of its members, all Christians, one of the most prominent is Alexander Y. Ting, trained in an American Missionary college, M. A. and LL. B. of Manchester university, barrister at law of Lincoln's Inn and doctor of law by examination at the hands of the late government in Peking.

To considerations like these add the fact that at least one-third of the members of Dr. Sun's cabinet were Christians, and it is seen that Christianity is already a force in China. One of the five highest officials in the new government recently received a letter of congratulation on his appointment from a missionary of world-wide reputation. In his reply he said that he hoped "that by obeying the voice of heaven and the people he might be able to help to establish a kingdom of God on earth and make the government of the republic pure and righteous."

These details may help one to realize what Christianity in China must mean in the future.—Leslie's Weekly.

**Salt the Best Preservative.**

After many tests under government supervision in Germany, salt has been found the best preservative for butter.

**Tip to Husbands.**

A woman can stand a lot from her husband, so long as he treats her courteously.—Detroit Free Press.

**INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON**

(By E. O. SELLERS, Director of Evening Department, The Moody Bible Institute Chicago.)

**LESSON FOR OCTOBER 6. JESUS WALKING ON THE SEA.**

LESSON TEXT—Mark 6:45-56. GOLDEN TEXT—"But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid."—Matthew 14:27.

The miracle of the feeding of the five thousand marks a crisis in the life of Jesus. (John 6:15). The humanity of Jesus is shown in that as soon as he had performed that miracle he first sends away his disciples, then sends away the multitude, while he departs "into a mountain to pray." To pray the prayer of thanksgiving, to pray for strength to withstand this new temptation, (John 6:14, 15); to pray for those whom he had fed; and surely to pray for his chosen ones that they might understand him and his mission.

Jesus had taken his disciples into the mountain for their own good. (Mark 6:31) and now he sends them away lest they yield to the advice, the importunities, of the crowd and consort with them in their desire to make Jesus a temporal rather than a spiritual king. Such a course would have precipitated matters. But in his solitude as he prayed, Jesus was watchful of his own.

He had sent them into the storm to avoid a greater danger, would he not watch over them? So with many a testing in our lives. They seem severe, but how little we know of the greater danger we have missed. He saw (v. 48) their distress long before they saw their relief (v. 49). Jesus knew the need of prayer. Jesus knew the need of solitary prayer as he must pass this crisis, so it was that while he lingered in prayer they were distressed till "the fourth watch,"—near daybreak.

**Ill Considered Test.**

It is not strange that they did not recognize Jesus. He often comes to us in ways we do not at first recognize, in ways that at first terrify us, but he does not leave us long in suspense. We read, he "straightway" rescued them "it is I; be not afraid." Notice he assures them first that it is he, then, "It is I." They recognize the tones of his familiar voice and then they were ready for his words of confidence, "be not afraid." So God speaks to us in the hour of our darkest trial, saying "Lo, I am with you always,"—"be not afraid."

From the parallel account by Matthew (Matthew 14: 28-36) we read of Peter's attempt to walk upon the water. His rash and ill considered test of the reality of Jesus' presence. Then we see him as he too compares himself with the angry storm and taking his eyes off of Jesus begins to sink. Peter's sharp, piercing cry; his clear, definite, appeal is at once answered and Jesus leads him safely back into the boat.

How different is the picture once Jesus was in the boat, and how soon they reached the goal toward which they had been struggling, (John 6:19, 21). If any one is at sea, if any one is fruitlessly tolling against wind and wave, only let them take Jesus on board and soon they will reach a safe landing place.

The disciples were amazed and their hearts were hardened (v. 51, 52), and this even after the creative miracle of feeding the five thousand—why so? It is evident that even those nearest to him did not apprehend the true meaning of this miracle, on the contrary their hearts were hardened, e. g., blind.

**Spiritual Application.**

The real interpretation of Christ's miracles is not that we are to be amazed at the material manifestation but that we are to see the spiritual lesson and application.

It was a different reception Jesus received when they reached Gennesaret (v. 53-56). There he is recognized at once. There they flock to him with their sick ones and Mark with a few deft strokes shows us the picture of a vast deed of healing. None is disappointed, for we read that as many as touched him were made whole. His healing is not confined today to a single person, nor limited to a peculiar place or shrine.

In this lesson we see Jesus directing his disciples. We see the disciples obeying that direction even though it led them into contrary winds. We see him as he walks into them bringing relief, superior to boisterous wind and wave. His presence brought peace as it always does to storm tossed humanity. His assurance is that of his own presence (Matt. 28:20), "It is I; be not afraid." We see Jesus answering the fear of the disciples.

This is a lesson of many applications. The story is clear and simple. Its values are for our comfort and help. The unseen Christ is by our side. Miracles? They are only wonderful things, that is all. Something beyond our ordinary experience. Shall we discredit the sunlight because a pin point enters to blind the eye? Miracles to the Christian are the manifestations of a loving God, they are what one would expect of the Christ. If he be the Christ. Let us look them squarely in the face and pass on "waiting the light of a clearer and more beautiful day.

**EVIDENTLY OUT OF PLACE**

Indignant Frenchman Had Some Fault to Find With Postmaster, and Said So.

A Frenchman with a name spelled a la Paris and pronounced something like Ca-choo had never learned to read or write, but he managed to disguise the fact pretty well until he moved to a new community where the name was not common. Going to the postoffice one morning he inquired: "Got any mail for Joe Ca-choo?" "What's the name?" inquired the clerk.

"Ca-choo, Joe Ca-choo."

"How do you spell it?"

"Can't you spell Joe Ca-choo?"

"No," said the clerk, "I never heard it before."

Then the disgust of the Frenchman, which had been constantly rising, boiled over and he snorted:

"Well, if you can't spell, why don't you sell your old postoffice to someone else that can?"

**BABY IN MISERY WITH RASH**

Monroe, Wis.—"When my baby was six weeks old there came a rash on his face which finally spread until it got nearly all over his body. It formed a crust on his head, hair fell out and the itch was terrible. When he would scratch the crust, the water would ooze out in big drops. On face and body it was in a dry form and would scald off. He was in great misery and at nights I would lie awake holding his hands so that he could not scratch and disfigure himself. I tried simple remedies at first, then got medicine, but it did no good.

"Finally a friend suggested Cuticura Remedies, so I sent for a sample to see what they would do, when to my surprise after a few applications I could see an improvement, and he would rest better. I bought a box of Cuticura Ointment and a cake of Cuticura Soap and before I had them half used my baby was cured. His head is now covered with a luxuriant growth of hair and his complexion is admired by everybody and has no disfigurements." (Signed) Mrs. Annie Saunders, Sept. 29, 1911.

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**The First Toast.**

Wilson, Mizner, the well-known vivreur, explained, on a New York roof garden, the origin of the word "toast"—toasting a lady.

"You will remember," he began, "that in olden times it was the custom to serve punch with toasted—that is to say, roasted—apples floating in it. These apples were called the toast. The toast—remember that.

"Well, it happened at Bath one day that a celebrated beauty stood in the Cross Bath, surrounded by a throng of admirers, and one of these admirers, intoxicated with admiration, took a glass of the water in which the beauty stood, and holding it aloft, drank her health, draining the water to the last drop.

"'Beau Nash, who stood near by, shouted: 'I like not the punch, but I would I had the toast!'

**Appointed Day of Judgement.**

A horse-dealer in an English town had lent a horse to a solicitor, who killed the animal through bad usage. The dealer insisted on payment, and the lawyer, refusing cash, said he would give a bill for the amount, but it must be at a long date. The lawyer drew a promissory note, making it payable on the day of judgement. An action was raised, and the lawyer asked the sheriff to look at the bill. Having done so, the sheriff replied: "This is the day of judgement, I decree you to pay tomorrow."

**Swallow's Home.**

The teacher in natural history had received more or less satisfactory replies to her questions. The Delineator asserts, and finally she asked: "What little boy can tell me where the home of the swallow is?"

Long silence, then a hand waved. "Well, Bobbie, where is it?"

"The home of the swallow," declared Bobbie, seriously, "is in the stummock."

**Sweeping Statement.**

"Scribblets is going to quit being a press humorist."

"Did he tell you that?"

"No, but he said he was not going to write any more jokes about mother-in-law, bald-headed men, women's hats, intoxicated husbands and family fights."

**The Anxious Seat.**

Father—Johnny, go fetch me my slippers.

Johnny (nervously)—Do you want both of them or only one, dad?—Exchange.

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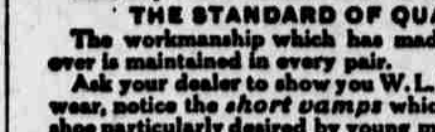
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