

first went. She was a good worker as a good girl, and a powerful help to me as well as a sight o' company. She sighed a little. "But she done well, and I can't complain. 'Twasn't to be expected she'd stay to home always. * * Jim's a good worker too. Stiddy as old sorrel Bob and twict as willin'. * * I guess he'll git on in the world if there is any sich thing as gittin' on. * * * He's got a good start."

She emptied the last pan and set it on top of the pile she had collected at one end of the table. Then ranging her clean pans in a row she began to strain the milk.

"Mollie seems as happy as a queen. Writes like she thought they never was sich another man before nor since. Wal, it's a good thing she c'n feel so Tain't always a wife lives two year with a man without findin' out he's a long way from perfect 'nd a long way from knowin' it all. * * Ain't you feelin' well tonight, father? You seem kind o' still like."

"I ain't feelin' jist to say spry, some way. I can't git around like I used to. I don't git the half done in a day 'nd I'm all played out at night. Things is layin' at loose ends round the place, too, 'nd nobody t' see t' anything. I found the back pastur fence all down t'day 'nd the cows all out into the corn field. The men was puttin' up hay in the back medder, but they never see nothin'. They don't pay no attention. Whaddy they care? That's another thing. They got enough hay layin' t' keep 'em all hustlin' fer a week, and rain likely t' come on any day 'nd spoil it, fore it's half up. 'Nd when I went down there t'day there they was runnin' two mowin' machines gittin' more down. They don't pay no attention to me. They think I'm old, 'nd they c'n do as they please. Lafe Moore as good as told me he was runnin' that hay gang. I've seen the day," continued the old man, raising his fist and bringing it down on his knee with a thwack, "when I wouldn't have had no sich doin's around me if I put up every fork full of hay on the place myself! But I'm past it, I'm past it."

He sat silent for a moment. "If George was here," he began, "I tell ye things 'ud be diff'ront. I want t' tell ye they hopped around lively when George was on hand. 'Nd if anything was needed he was the lad to fix it. Why, yistiddy when John broke a tooth out o' the buck rake, I'm blest if he didn't putter round the whole afternoon makin' a new one 'nd puttin' it in. Why if George'd been here, he'd had that rake tooth in, in no time. They wouldn't a lost a half an hour. * * * That's jist the trouble. George is gone and I've lost my holt."

"See if ye c'n git a holt on this lamp 'nd this milk pail," said Mother cheerfully, as she gathered up her pans. He took them silently and preceded her to the kitchen where he put the lamp on the table and sat down beside it, after he had filled his pail with hot water and carried it to Mother in the pantry.

Mother vibrated from pantry to range "scaldin' up the milk things" and rangin' them in a shining row on the pantry shelf.

"I guess," she was saying, "that things is a good deal at sixes and sevens, 'nd gracious knows! I hate to have you worryin' with the men 'nd the work, but we ain't either of us findin' fault with George fer doin' what he thought he ought to. 'Nd I don't know but he was right too. I wouldn't a stood in his way if I could. I didn't say a word, then, 'nd I ain't none to say now. I guess we can worry along if he c'n take the risk 'nd * * * Her voice broke and she clattered the tins.

Father rose and walked to the door. He had been a tall man but he was a little bent now, and his brown face was deeply lined. He walked heavily, and

stood with a wrinkled hand on either side of the door looking out and seeing nothing.

After a while he spoke proudly. "I ain't findin' no fault with George. I carried a musket myself in '61. They wasn't anything on this farm too good t' offer t' the old flag then 'nd they ain't now I guess."

Mother hung up her dishpan, washed her hands at the sink and dried them on the roller towel before she spoke. Then she said in a matter of fact tone, "I guess we'll go in the settin' room and rest a bit."

The "settin' room" was a step higher than the kitchen. A strip of striped rag carpet covered the step and ran across the gay flowered carpet of the sitting room to the front door. Mother put the lamp on the center table on the green moss mat which Mollie had made to protect the elaborate cover of red felt whose glories were to Mother Shekinah. Mollie had painted the big stork, insecurely balancing himself on one leg among wooden lily pads, and gazing inscrutably into the golden heart of an impossible lily with the intention of jabbing his long bill through it. When this work of art took the first premium at the county fair, nothing was left to be added to the sum of Mother's happiness. She kept the blue ticket conspicuously pinned in an ostensibly inconspicuous corner; and related with innocent joy to the curious visitor the tale of Mollie's triumphs.

A photograph of George in his uniform occupied the center of the cabinet organ. A large easel held a crayon picture of George and Molly in the days of kilts and long dresses; on the wall two life size portraits of George and Mollie grown up and arrayed in the glory of Sunday clothes, indicated that the room was a shrine where as in other shrines, there were signs and symbols to recall a Presence.

Mother sat down in the big rocker with its crazy patchwork decorations, and glanced contentedly about the room. Her eye lingered lovingly on the handpainted "throws" which decorated the pictures, the snow scene glittering with isinglass paint from the depths of a butter-bowl, the gilded fire shovel with its bow of blue ribbon on the handle. "Mollie was a great hand fer fancy-work," she said proudly. Father received the intelligence with his usual prompt appreciation and replied enthusiastically "She was that," exactly as if he had never said it before in his life.

Suddenly there was the sound of wheels in the road in front of the house. They stopped at the gate and footsteps crunched along the gravelled path. "I guess likely it's Tommy Landes with the mail," said Mother. "He was here yistiddy evening and I told him if he went up t' town t'day I'd like he should bring the papers. He said he'd be glad to. Open the door Father," she concluded as a loud knock rang on the panels. Father rose stiffly and threw open the door. The lamp light shone on the round good natured face of Tommy Landes.

"No, thanks. I can't stop. It's gittin' late 'nd a feller has t' git up early in hayin' times. There's the paper. Nothin' but a paper t'day. Wal, better luck next time. What say? Oh, no! not at all! glad to do it fer ye. Good night! good night!"

Father sat down at the table, laid the paper on his knee, looked in all his pockets, produced his glasses from the last one explored and settled them firmly in place. Mother rapidly folded and unfolded her hands. He picked up the paper and looked anxiously down the first page. Suddenly he began to tremble violently. The paper rattled and rustled. Mother took it from his hands. He rose and leaned heavily on her

shoulder. His shaking finger traced down the first column and stopped half way. With a face from which the life swiftly faded, she followed the trembling finger. George Wilson, Private, Fifty-first Iowa Volunteers, shot through the lungs. Will die. She looked into her husband's face. It was the face of an aged man, without hope in this world. He sat down in the nearest chair and bowed his face in his hands. Mother dropped down by the table and put her head on her arms. The hot tears fell unheeded on the red felt cover. The little clock on the shelf ticked noisily and insistently. The paper lay on the floor. The headlines stood out glaringly.

INSURGENTS AGAIN REPULSED.

OUR LOSS SLIGHT.
ONLY ONE SOLDIER.

The clock beat on the theme with maddening persistence. Only one! only one! only one! After a while Mother rose and went over to a stand which stood against the wall under the crayon portraits. She returned bringing a heavy Book. She opened it and placed it on the table. Hearing her movement the old man looked up. Seeing, he rose and sat down before the Book. "We will read," he said in a quavering voice, "for our evening lesson, in the fourteenth of John."

* * *

"Under the haystack little Boy Blue,
Sleeps with his head on his arm;
Sweet peace to his soul and rest to his limbs,
He'll never come back to the farm.
Little Boy Blue come blow your horn,
Sheep in the meadows and cows in the corn,
Where is the boy to look after the sheep?
He's under the haystack fast asleep."

FRENCH YELLOW JOURNALS

What Effect They Have on International Relations.

If one is to judge of French sentiment touching the United States from the Paris journals, says a writer in Harper's Weekly, the conclusion is inevitable that the traditional friendship between the two republics is of the holiest sort. More than that, it is apparently clear that the people of France, republicans though they may call themselves, are more the friends of a mediaeval monarchy whose cruelty and barbarism have shocked the civilized world than the are of the only republic, except Switzerland, which has yet attained a stable position in the world. For it must be remembered that chief among the political problems of France is still that of the continued existence of the republic. The French newspapers, however, do not necessarily represent French, or even Parisian, public sentiment. They are owned by money lenders and controlled by the owners of Spanish bonds; they are vile and venal, and are the models of the yellowest of our own yellow journals. Hardly a word that appears in them is trustworthy. But beyond these sensational newspapers there seems to be in France an antipathy to this country which needs explanation. Probably it is felt, as it is manifested, by those who are offended by the native bad manners of a democracy; and this feeling against bad manners is exaggerated in Paris, because the manners of democratic France are as much worse than the manners of democratic America as it is possible to conceive. The truth is probably that dignified and intelligent Frenchmen have come to hate democracy generally by reason of the antics of French Socialists and other French democrats. Therefore, some intelligent and reputable papers, like the Temps breaks out against us in vilification and even some officers of the navy indulge in criticisms of our own service, because they do not like to believe that the navy of a democratic power can be a strong one.

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