

# The Barleyville

## Sewin' Circle

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BY

ANNA ADAMS TINGLE.



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THE  
BARLEYVILLE SEWIN'  
CIRCLE

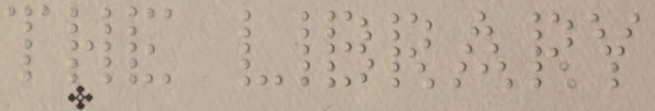
DISCUSS

"SYANCE WHAT AIN'T SYANCE"



BY

ANNA ADAMS TINGLE



ILLUSTRATED BY

C. S. HAMMOCK

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P U B L I S H E R S  
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DEDICATION

*“To them who air sick and to them who think they air, this book is affectionately dedicated by one who knows she is.”*

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*Anna Adams Tingle.*







# The Barleyville Sewin' Circle.



## FIRST MEETIN'.

THE CIRCLE HEARS THAT MRS. PICKENS HAS A  
NEW DOCTRINE.

"Well, it's jest this way neow," said Miranda Pickens, "my own brother John Henry's wife hez cum' hum' with the all-killin'est set o' notions I ever heered tell of in my born days."

"Yew don't say so!" exclaimed Mrs. Griggs.

"Indeed, and I do say so: the all killin'est notions anybody ever heered of."

"Dew tell," said Aunt Arimatha, breaking off a thread with a snap.

"Well, first she says, if you air sick you ain't sick; and if you have cramps fit to kill, in the stummuck, she declairs it's all in your head. Neow there, ain't them the beatenest notions?"

"Kindy queer." Giggled Libby Brewster. She always giggled and endeavored to say something if possible, so impossible to be misconstrued that she could be a good friend

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with every body and every thing in Barleyville, and she generally succeeded; she was always alluded to as "gigglin' Libby." No one ever said aught of her in praise or censure, and even if she was present, every one felt free to talk about any body, for Libby was perfectly harmless.

"Is them all the notions y'er sister'nlaw hez brung back?" queried Aunt Arimatha.

"Land, ain't them enough? I hit my finger with the hammer when I was a helpin' to open one of her boxes and it run pain clear to my big toe, and when I sed 'ouch' she just smiled and sed, 'O, when will truth conquer error?' I sed, 'what error?' I didn't see no error, onless it was a hittin' of my finger instead of the plank I aimed at. And there I was a suckin' that finger and the nail about mashed off, and she a sayin', 'It don't hurt you, Miranda; there's no sensation in matter.' I told her I know'd it wasn't matterated, it hedn't been hit long enough fer that; but I missed my guess, if it didn't gether an' the hull nail cum' off o' it. I asked her to git me a rag to tie it up, and what did she do but



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straighten up and inform me that it would be agin' her new superior enlightenment and do more harm than good."

"Dew tell!" said Aunt Arimatha, threading a needle. "Didn't she git you no rag?"

"No, nor nothin' else. I asked her fer some healin' salve. She used to make such good salve; but believe me, that woman hed throw'd out all her medicine and bottles and burnt the salve, boxes and all. She sed she would never again propigate error and help dethrone the truth, and was sorry she hedn't begun sooner, and then she smiled and sed she wasn't sorry, 'for sorry couldn't abide with truth.' By that time I hed my finger done up in my handkerchief and was unpack-in' the box, while she sewed a hem in her apern. I remarked to her thet it was a git-tin' late and quite dark, and reminded her thet as she didn't hev' on her glasses, she'd run off o' the edge o' the hem. She looked so pittyin'ly at me and sed: 'I don't blame you Miranda, I was so once myself; you are not to be blamed Miranda, you ain't had no such light as I have; you ain't never been re-

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vealed to like Mrs. Eddy.' I was all took back and I asked her what she meant, any how? And she sed: 'To them that sit in darkness, that is (to them that think they do,) a great light has come and revealed that there ain't any dark; light and darkness to me are one and I will never wear glasses again.' And she got up to light the lamp and I peeked at the apern and more'n half her stitches hadn't caught the hem at all. I asked her, if there weren't any dark, what she lit the lamp fer? She'd as well save the coal oil as not. She smiled again; I never see John Henry's wife smile so much. She explained, that 'the lamp was for them that sot in error, and not for them that reveled in truth.' "

"My she used nice landguige," said Mrs. Griggs. "John Henry's wife hez always used nice landguige and up to this time, I always thought that she was extra sharp, but I'm turrible took back to hear of her goin' on so."

"I wonder if it ain't something new and stylish she's got?" queried Deacon Pert's wife. "I guess I will go and call on her myself."

"My Almira Jane hez always thought a ter-

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rible sight of your brother's wife," chimed in Mrs. Stillman, whose daughter was the acknowledged belle of Barleyville.

Those words seemed to cast a spell over the Sewin' Circle, for there was very little more said about Mrs. Elizabeth Pickens, Miranda Pickens' sisterinlaw, and that little was said in careful undertones.

But no one could deny the fact, that a deep interest had been awakened, and the secretary numbered three pages ahead, for she knew every body that possibly could would be out to the next meeting.

Perhaps some other woman could have come from a visit, with a new religion, and awakened only a few curious remarks. But it was not so with Mrs. Pickens; for hadn't she been the acknowledged leader in Barleyville for years it might have been different.

Let any one who is skeptical about the importance of such a position try to supplant such a village leader and they will learn, that waging a successful presidential campaign is about as easy.

Now, Mrs. Pert had long been endeavoring

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to supplant the leader, and her highest aspiration was to become the chief woman of her own village. Though Barleyville never suspected such a thing, so amiable were they to each other. But Mrs. Pickens understood it and often remarked in the sanctity of her own home that "possession was nine points in law."

While Mrs. Pert often remarked to her uncommunicative kitten, "Speaking of mice, kitty, I would rather be the head of a mouse than the tail of a lion."

So the story meant something more to the people of Barleyville than was at first supposed. Though I must confess some may have suspected it, for each woman looked significant and departed rather hurriedly, when the Circle was dismissed for the day.

## SECOND MEETIN'.

### THE REPORT VERIFIED.

“Well, it’s all as true as preachin’,” said Mrs. Pert, laying aside her bonnet. “Mrs. Pickens has gone in for Christian Science, just as strong as she has for every other fad that has ever come along. I think so much driftin’ about, shows weakness of character.”

“They ain’t any weakness about John Henry’s wife, as you’ll find out; when she’s sot, she’s sot, and I never see her sotter in my life, than she is over this new doctern.”

“I jest pity John Henry and that little adapted ga’l o’ their’n,” said Miranda.

“She ain’t done nothin’ to the child, hez she?” inquired Aunt Arimatha.

“Well, I cain’t abide tellin’ tales on my own relation, but between you and me, I’m rale sorry fer the child. Last night she burnt her poor little han’ awful and John Henry’s wife looked stern and sed, ‘It don’t hurt you Dorothea, say ‘God is good.’ ‘Dod is dood,’ wailed

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the child. 'Hush, Dorothea, don't pervert truth, say God is all.' 'Dod is all.' 'Oh, my hand.' 'Say it don't hurt!' commanded John Henry's wife. 'But it do hurt me,' wailed the child. 'It do hurt.' At that moment Elizabeth gave her the hardest slappin' I ever see her give the child in my life."

"Oh, the heartless woman!" exclaimed the preacher's wife. "To slap that dear little child. Why, she isn't much more than a baby."

"Jest three old, come next Tuesday," said Miranda. "I couldn't stand it, and I up and said, 'If things don't hurt and they ain't no sensation in matter, what d'ye smack her fer?' At that she smiled sarific and sed, 'I was to be forgive.' Sometime I feel, you will be lifted out of error and sot in truth.'"

"Almira Jane was over to your brother's the other day, helpin' your sister'nlaw to cook for harvest hands, and she said Mrs. Pickens got so carried away a talkin' Syance, thet she clean forgot to put in any bakin' powder in the cake, and it was as flat and hard as a sand stune. Mrs. Pickens was all took back, fer

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they wan't no time to bake anuther. When, what did that little innocent Dorothea do but come and hold her little hand over the cake and say, 'Dod is dood.' 'All is Dod.' 'All is dood.' 'It's dood now mamma, tut it twick.' Almira sed she couldn't help it, she jest busted rite out laffin, and Mrs. Pickens took the cake out instanter and threw it into the pig pen."

"Why didn't she save it fer bread puddin' and not waste all the continents in it? I always save my poor cakes fer puddin, to save the sugar and flavorin," said Mrs. Grip-penny sarcastically.

"I seen something funnier than the cake over at Mrs. Widdle's quiltin' bee t'other day." Every body listened, for when Mrs. Dean spoke she most always had something to say. "Fanny Dunlavy sat just beside Mrs. Pickens and she took a long thread, so that every time she jerked it through, it stuck Mrs. Pickens somewhere."

"Did she wince?" they all asked in one breath.

"Wince? Why she looked madder than sin,

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but she didn't dare say anything, so Fanny kept a proddin' away every once in a while. So I said, 'Fanny, don't you know you're a jabbin' that needle into Mrs. Pickens about every two minutes?' 'Yes,' says she, 'but I don't see as there is any harm in it, so long as there is no sensation in matter.' 'Fanny,' said Mrs. Pickens sternly, 'Fanny, remember that I admire to be persecuted for the sake of truth.' But she got up and moved to an empty seat t'other side o' the quilt, as far as possible from the persecutin'. But as far as bein' consistent is concerned, I guess there is a good many that ain't. There's Miss Nancy Ashley over at the Corners; for four and twenty years she's been prayin' at every prayer meetin' night for an opportunity to do somethin' fer the Lord, and always sayin', 'Oh, that I might only be allowed to feed His lambs.' And when her widowed sister died, off in Californy last month, and they wrote to her that there were two little orphans left, she writ back that she 's'posed the Lord and the State of Californy could take care o' em.' So I guess all that are inconsistent ain't Sy-antists."



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“No,” said Mrs. Pert, “but I guess most all the Scientists are inconsistent.”

“He! He! !” giggled Libby Brewster, “that’s good enough for a proverb.”

“Well,” said Aunt Arimatha, breaking off her thread and folding up her sewing, “We’ve had a rale entertainin’ meetin’, but if we git around to the soshable, we’d better ajurn airly.”

So they unanimously adjourned to meet with Mrs. Stillman the next Wednesday.

## THIRD MEETIN'.

### THE CIRCLE REPORT THEIR CALL AT MRS. PICKENS'.

This meeting was at Mrs. Stillman's. Everybody came early and secretly hoped, that Mrs. Elisabeth Pickens wouldn't be present. For hadn't every woman in Barleyville called on her during the week, for the purpose of learning something more of her new religion?

"And why shouldn't we talk it over, I'd like to know?" ejaculated Mrs. Pert, as she tucked her mittens into the crown of her bonnet. "Miranda just expressed it: 'It is the allkillenest set o' notions I ever heard tell of.'"

"Does she talk it much?" ventured Mrs. Stillman, who had been too busy to call.

"Talk it much? Why, I should say so; she binds herself to ponder over it all the time; it's her one thought every waking hour. She calls it the theme of her life, and says it's

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very stylish in New England, one of the leading fads of Bosting. But, style or no style, I'll not take it up. I think too much of Mr. Pert and the children."

"Why, how in the world could it hurt Mr. Pert?" inquired Almira Jane.

"Mr Pert's not over strong, and if I quit lookin' after him, I don't think that he'd live very long."

"Dew tell!" exclaimed Aunt Arimatha, adjusting her glasses. "Elisabeth ain't quit lookin' after John Henry, hez she? She used to be lookin' after him every time he went down the street toward Dr. Garlick's."

"Well, I cain't exactly say that she's quit lookin' after him in that way, but as to seein' that he's properly wrapped up when he goes out in the cold, why, she don't pay no more attention than if he was a marbly stattoo. Well, I guess John Henry 'll be right glad of it; I think he used to resent bein' did up in mufflers and all kinds of crocheted flim-flobery; most men do."

"Yes, I know they pretend to, but laws 'a' me, that's done to make 'em appear strong

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like, and masterful," said Almira Jane.

"You can depend on it all the same, they like to be wrapped up and cuddled and told to take kier o' theirselves, and feel neglected when they ain't looked after."

That statement was from an authority; for hadn't Mrs. Leander Loomis had three husbands? Two dead and one living; besides seven own sons and five stepsons, that took great pride in calling her Ma and laughing at those same motherly attentions.

"Well, I ain't carin' so much about John Henry's wife and other men's wives, a lookin' after their men, as I am about what Mrs. Pickens hed to say about her new doctern," exclaimed Mrs. Stillman, who for once was aroused out of her customary indifference, and the conversation took on a lively turn, as each woman present gave a review of her visit with the very interesting Mrs. Pickens.

"The very first she said to me, took me so by surprise, that it didn't leave any room for further astonishment," explained Mrs. Griggs, whose social position and age gave her the best right to be first speaker of the day. "You

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know how she used to grieve over little Elim, and he was a dear child if I do say it. Well, she up and said, first thing: 'My dear Mrs. Griggs, you know how I used to grieve over the death of little Elim.' 'Yes,' said I, tender like, for I had lost a little one too, and felt the bond of sympathy. 'Well,' said she, 'I have mourned over a great delusion.' I didn't know what she meant, so I ventured to say: 'I know that it is wrong to mourn so for the friends that have gone, but it's hard to forget it all. 'Yes, it was once,' said Mrs. Pickens. 'But it was all a vain delusion, an error of mortal mind.' Not understandin', I jest waited fer her to go on. 'Oh, that the revelation hed come sooner, that light and love and peace had folded me then as it does now.'

"But speakin' of little Elim," said I, encouragin' like, "do you feel reconciled at last?"

"'Reconciled is not the word,' said Mrs. Pickens, settin' real still and lookin' up high and worshipful.

"'Oh, to feel the majesty, the might, the power, of human mind, the God-germ in man;

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I feel lifted above all sense, and set in high places; where to live, is love and joy and harmony.'

"And as lofty as it all sounded, I couldn't help laughin' inside and wonderin', if she hadn't been lifted above all sense, for I couldn't sense her meanin', to save my life. So I said again, 'I am more than glad that you have been reconciled about little Elim.'

"'Little Elim,' said she faintly, 'Oh, the vain delusions we build in mortal mind, before we learn elimination, illumination and peace.' 'I don't understand,' said I. 'No,' said she, 'and yet you might, for the new revelation is not for me alone, but for all; you only need to accept it, to have all the past erased, and the future made as clear as noon day.' 'But how?' sez I.

"'Just accept, believe, affirm, and the joy will be yours,' sez she, layin her hand on mine. 'But I don't see how,' sez I, 'always havin' been brought up orthodox.' So she give me a lot o' tracks and told me to read them and I'd 'soon see the dark disappear and the sun of Syance would rise and irradiate me all through.'

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"So bein' unable to understand about it, I took the tracks, and my departure simultaneously, thinkin' I could find out by readin' at home, but I can't."

"I know what she meant," said Miranda, "she avowed to me more than a dozen times, that little Elim wasn't and never hed been; that there is no such thing as the birth and death of a child."

"Oh, that is surely a mistake," said the minister's wife.

"No it isn't," affirmed Mrs. Pert, "she said the same to me. She also said, that if sorry could abide with truth, she'd be sorry for all the tears she had ever shed over little Elim. And I said, 'Don't you think, Mrs. Pickens, that such doctrine would make people selfish, cold and unsympathetic?' 'My dear Mrs. Pert,' she exclaimed tragically, 'for years I was a slave to mortal mind; I suffered pains and sickness and sorrows; saw my little boy sicken and die and taken away and buried. I came back to a lonely home, put away broken toys and little shoes, doing all the hard things that a mother generally does at such times.

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Was that a happy condition? I felt all the anguish that an orthodox believer, like yourself, could feel; but as real as it all seemed to me, it was after all only a delusion, and an error, a dream. Syance has revealed to me that there is no pain, no sickness, no birth, no death, and God is all; and all the earth, if it will, can be in perfect harmony; therefore, sympathy for people in error, is error; for it feeds the delusion and helps to bind the fetters on the slave. I have risen above it all, and can say with Paul, "None of these things move me." And I found that they didn't; for I told her about poor old Mr. Amos gittin' hurt down at the quarry last week, and how the family must have help or suffer, and she smiled as serific as an angel and said, 'I have risen above all error, and none of these things move me.' I told her that little Jimmie Amos was about little Elim's size, and asked if she wouldn't like to send some of little Elim's clothes to the poor child, seein' she hed no more use for them, and I thought that the Lord liked for us to do these things; and besides they would git moth e't if she kept 'em.



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'I have 'em in campfire,' sed she, forgettin' to be consistent; then rememberin', she blushed and tried to change the subject, but I wouldn't, so she finally said, 'I will do more than anyone: I will think for little Jimmie Amos, and perhaps—yes—I will give old Mr. Amos absent treatments.' Bein' in a hurry and anxious to git somethin' more substantial than thoughts for the Amoses, I hurried on."

Each had about the same experience to relate, but Mrs. Stillman announced tea, so the subject was dropped for awhile and the Circle discussed commonplace things and exchanged recipes. It was a very good and entertaining meeting, and many good and useful things found their way to the Amoses after the Circle adjourned.

## FOURTH MEETIN'.

### MIRANDY HAS A CLAIM.

“Do come in; do, every body, and take a cheer, and make yerselves comfortable,” said Mrs. Pert, the meeting being at her home.

“And if ther ain’t Mirandy! Law Mirandy, what hev ye been a doin’ with yerself? Ye ain’t been out, for two or three meetin’s, and you look peaked,” said Mrs. Loomis, who could always detect a change in any body’s looks, as quick as an Irishman can, a change in the weather.

“You ain’t been sick, hev’ you Mirandy, and not let a body know it?” And she looked as if she was regretting about all the tea, and poultices she could have made for her, if she could just have had a chance.

“Yes, I hev been sick, just awful sick, with one of my bad spells of noorralsy, and brown keeters.”

“It’s airly in the season to hev it,” said Mrs. Pert.

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"Yes," she said, "I was worser than usual."

"How did Mrs. Pickens act about it?" asked Almira Jane, but they were all aching to know.

"Well, the first day, she paid very little attention to me; but little Dorothea, bless the child, tried to heat cloths for my poor head. By night, I was in terrible pain, and I tried to git Elisabeth, to send for the doctor, but she said 'No apostle o' error should ever enter her irritated domicile.' But she said, 'I will demonstrate over you.' So she sot down, and sed a lingo or two, about every thin' bein' good, and comin' from God. 'Job's afflictions didn't,' sed I; 'Satan tormented Job, and I firmly believe, that noorralsy is a torment o' Satan.'

"'There is no such thing as you speak of, Mirandy. It is all an error o' mortal mind.' 'Well my head will burst with the error then,' said I, 'if somethin' ain't done to relieve it.' 'I am doin' somethin', I'm thinkin' for you,' sez she, as sweet as a seraff, and bein' in such pain, that I was a'most past thinkin' for myself, I riz up in bed, and told Elisabeth, that

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she hadn't any brains left to think for herself with, and she needn't agitate 'em, a thinkin' for me.

“‘I never get agitated Mirandy,’ said she; ‘I have risin above all such things; I will go out in the kitchen, and give you absent treatment.’

“After awhile I was gettin' easier, more due to the absence, than the treatment, I guess, and was just dozin' off like, when Elisabeth come in, a singin' like a blue-jay with the influenza. She never could sing, but she thinks she can, since she hez overcome mortal mind. Her singin' went through my head like a buzz-saw, and all the pain sot in again worse than ever.

“She see that I was quite flustered, so she said: ‘Mirandy you hev a claim.’ ‘A what?’ said I. ‘A claim,’ says she. ‘Sure?’ sez I, seein' she had some mail in her hand, and she hed just come from the Post Office. ‘I am,’ sez she. ‘Where?’ sez I, ‘and who took it up for me?’ ‘Is it proved up, and likely to be wuth the taxes?’ sez I, thinkin' maybe I'd move onto it, if 'twas. I'd about as lieve live in Kansas, as at John Henry's, since Elisa-

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beth got syance. 'I mean,' sez she, 'that you have a mental claim.' 'Law,' sez I, as disgusted as a cat, that's lost a mouse. 'Law; I don't suppose that I'll realize much on real estate o' thet kind; at least, not until we git some syantiffic real estate agents.' 'But, Mirandy, if you'd only acknowledge that it was nothin' but a claim, I could relieve you immediately.' 'Maybe it is,' sed I, 'and a rocky claim at that, with a lot o' imps blastin' 'em out with dynamite, and occasionally shootin' ten or a dozen charges simultaneously.' 'Oh Mirandy,' sed she, 'how unnecessary, how erroneous.' 'I wish you'd stop talkin' that nonsense,' sez I, 'and git me a hot iron or a bag o' hot salt; I'd do as much for a sick dog.' 'I'd only be propigatin' error,' sed she, 'and doin' more harm than good.' I was beginnin' to think that the milk o' human kindness hed all turned to whey, when little Dorothea brought in her little toy iron 'for po' Aunt Mirandy, 'tause Aunt Mirandy hurted.' It was a mighty little iron, but it warmed my heart considerable, and took out lots of the bitter feelin's that was accumu-

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lated there. I was awful bad off by night, the noorralsy hed gone to my stummick, and I do believe that I would hev died if John Henry hedn't a come hum."

"Why was he away?" asked Mrs. Pert.

"He was over to the county seat, a settin' on the Grand Jury, but he got hum just in time, and when he seen how sick I was, he just shet his lips like a steel trap, he wanted to say somethin', but he didn't say it. He just hustled around, and het two or three irons, and got me a bag o' hot salt, and begun huntin' around for some bone-set, or pennyroyal, or some thin' to make me a tea of. But he couldn't find none, so he put on his hat, and Elisabeth sed, 'Where are ye goin', John Henry? I won't have, no apostle o' error, a comin' into my house.' 'I am a goin' over to Ann Prouty's, fer some yarbs,' sed he, 'seein' all the nice fresh ones I gethered air used up.' 'They were disposed of,' sed she, 'but not used.' 'Throw'd away or burnt up, I suppose?' sed he. 'John Henry,' sez she, a showin' a little agitation, 'don't go to Ann Prouty's after yarbs; it'll git all over the country, and

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people 'll think, that I am inconsistent or falterin' in my new found faith.' 'I'll tell Ann Prouty, thet they are for Mirandy.' 'Don't go John Henry, it'll hurt my new faith.' John Henry most allus gives in to Elisabeth, but he didn't then. He just sed, 'You 'tend to yer new faith Elisabeth, and I'll tend to my old one.' Then he went out, and shut the door, quite a bit harder than was necessary. Ann sent over the yarbs, and he stopped at the Doctor's and got me some quietin' powders, and in a few days I was up and around again, but I don't feel real spry yit."

"I had no idea Mrs. Pickens would be so set as that." And Mrs. Pert looked real surprised.

"A doctrine of any kind, that hardens the human heart, so that it can ignore pain, and suffering, is a menace to society, and a danger to the community. I am surprised to see, how many there are accepting this strange fallacy. Mr. Earnest and I were counting them last night, and there are twenty-two adherents in this neighborhood alone, and it has not been more than five months, since it was first taught here."

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“Yes,” said Mrs. Pert, coming in to invite them out to tea. “The wealthy, and influential, are being carried away with it, and our church is in danger; for they are beginning to talk about holding regular services, and have been asking for the use of the church. In a larger place, where the church was strong, there would be no danger, but they almost outnumber us here in Barleyville now, therefore it will be very necessary, that we be alive and awake, if we are to hold our own in the community,” said Mrs. Earnest, the Minister’s wife.

The Society had cause to think of what the Minister’s wife said afterward, although they seemed to have paid more attention to the supper at the time. Mrs. Pert busied herself waiting upon the table, taking pride in the thought, that the nearest way to the heart of the community, was through the stomach.



## FIFTH MEETIN'.

### BEFORE THE LECTURE.

The Society had removed their wraps, and were inquiring of each other, if they had heard the news.

“What news?” asked Mrs. Loomis.

“A Christian Science lecturer, is comin' from Bosting, to talk to the Barleyville people,” was the answer, by a chorus of voices.

“It's a fact!” exclaimed Fanny Dunlavy, who had just come in. “D. K. just told me so, and he's already spoke for the hall, and she'll be here Friday night.”

“Are you sure, that she's from Bosting?” asked Mrs. Pert, who had manifested a great deal of interest, in the new doctrine.

“D. K. assures me that she is, and I am ashamed to own it, but D. K. is just as much took up with it, as his sister Elisabeth Pickens.”

“Well, them two allus did think alike, ever since they wore pinafores. I like to see a

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brother and sister think alike. I mind, when they wasn't much more'n babies, how we used to tease 'em about it arfterwards; one day, I asked D. K. how old they were, and he said 'Lizzie's five, and I'm five, five-six-eight-nineteen, we're ten, Mrs. Loomis.'"

"Accordin' to that, they must be mighty nigh sixty now; you chose purtty old company, Fanny?" said Almira Jane.

The Society did not laugh, at this remark, for they knew that Almira Jane was jealous of Fanny, and the Society loved Fanny so dearly that they would not do anything to hurt her feelings, for they knew very well that Fanny was hurt deeply, because D. K. had embraced "Syance." When no one was watching, Mrs. Loomis asked Fanny if she cared. She blushed like a school-girl and said:

"Law, why should I care, especially?" And looking up into the sky, she called the Society to the window to look at the beauty of the clouds. But Almira Jane was intent upon getting even with Fanny, and said:

"I wasn't one bit surprised, when D. K.

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took up 'Syance.' I never did think that he showed extra good taste, and bein' close, like all the rest of the Grimes', I suppose that he thinks that it will save doctor bills. I pitty the girl he marries."

"Oh, I don't see why people call D. K. close, just because he's forehanded, and got a good farm paid for; but I don't know as any body present is goin' to be his wife, unless it's you or Libby."

At this retort from Fanny, Libby giggled, and giggled, until Almira Jane felt as uncomfortable as a squirrel in a rat trap.

Mrs. Pert confessed, that she had been reading some tracts, that Mrs. Pickens had given her, and was greatly impressed, with what they contained. She said, "I found some very remarkable doctern, and what seemed to impress me most was the hypotheses in this track, and this little row of naughts; what do you suppose that Mrs. Eddy used 'em for?"

Mrs. Earnest said, "I suppose because there is nothing in it."

Mrs. Pert looked embarrassed, then she said, "I found in another track, a poem by

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Mrs. Eddy, which is wonderful, for I can't make out the entire meanin' of it, or why it was written, and yet I believe it is wonderful, if I can't understand it."

Mrs. Earnest asked her to read it, and this is what she read:

"I— I— Myself— I,  
The outside, the inside,  
The what and the why.  
I— I— Myself— I."

"Now what do you think of it?" asked Mrs. Pert.

"Oh, I don't feel much impressed with it; I think that I could do as well myself and not try very hard either," said Fanny.

"Do it then," said Mrs. Pert rather forcefully, for she was quite a little vexed at Fanny's remark.

"Oh, I could," stoutly declared the girl, and Almira Jane got her a blank sheet of paper, out of the secretary's book, and a pencil. The Society was not a little surprised, when Fanny took the pencil, and began writing at once. She was a resolute girl and what she

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undertook she usually carried out. While the Society sewed for a few moments Fanny confined herself to the writing, but it was not long until she said:

“Listen Sisters o’ the Sewin’ Circle, my lay is ready.” Then she began reading:

“If I wore my mittens—inside outside—  
I should have to wear them  
Hair side outside—skin side inside.  
If I wore them outside inside,  
Hair side inside—skin side outside,  
I would wear them outside inside.  
But I wear them right side outside,  
Skin side inside—hair side outside.  
I always wear them right side outside.”

“There you are,” said Fanny.

“Why Fanny Dunlavy, you’d astonish the man in the moon,” said Mrs. Pert. “I never seen sich a girl. Where on airth, did you ever get hold of sich a lingo as that?”

“That isn’t a lingo, that’s ‘Syance,’ plain everyday ‘Syance’—‘Syantiffick Syance.’ I hev’ been revealed to, since we last met ladies, I’m inspired. Some time I shall write a book,” said Fanny.

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“Then let it be a cook book Fanny. Your puddin’s air better’n your poetry.”

Such a long speech from Aunt Arimatha, was a great surprise to the Society, and so they forgot to say anything more about Mrs. Eddy’s poem.

The Society were busily engaged in their work, when they were interrupted by little Kittie Pert saying, “I dess it’s doin’ to wain, ze c’owds is barkin’.”

Mrs. Loomis hurried the Society out to tea and they had not more than finished eating before dark lowering clouds were seen hurrying across the sky, while lurid flashes of lightning lit up the distant hills, and nearer, and nearer came the rumbling of the thunder.

The Society adjourned at once and hastened homeward, inwardly wondering, as they went, what Mrs. Eddy’s poem could mean. And no doubt they are wondering still.

They all regretted deeply that they were interrupted in their talk and longed for the time of the next “Meetin’ ” to arrive.

## SIXTH MEETIN'.

### DISCUSSING THE LECTURE.

“And why shouldn't it be in our minds?” cried Mrs. Griggs in an unusually loud tone of voice for her. “I'd like to know how people of any brains could sit there and listen for two whole hours to such a lingo as that was. Why you couldn't tell head or tail on't to save ye.”

“I could make most of it out easy enough,” said Mrs. Dean. “I thought some parts was real impressive.”

“So did I,” said Fanny Dunlavy, and she smiled one of her most innocent little smiles. The Society knew very well that Fanny had been up to some mischief and they all listened very attentively when Mrs. Dean asked her, “What impressed you most?”

“Oh, nothin' much, only when she was declarin' there was neither heat nor cold, I jist opened the window to the right of the platform, so the wind could come in good and

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strong. She looked like as if she was warm, and I jist wanted to see, so that if it was so, I wouldn't have to be careful in the future about sittin' in drafts. Jist about the time she got to the fallacy and error of catchin' cold, she sneezed out good and proper, and by the time she got through discussin' drafts she was real hoarse and very figity. This little test fully satisfied me and I rose up and put down the window. It wasn't much, but it was real impressive," said Fanny.

"It seemed to me that the poor woman had a deal to contend with," said Mrs. Leander Loomis, whose sympathetic nature was so well cultivated, that it flowed out toward any body; even to people who did not approve of sympathy any more than they did of any other kind o' error.

"I just felt plumb sorry for her, when she was a makin' that point about there bein' no such thing as pain. For God was the creator of all, and was All; therefore there was no sensation in matter. It seemed like fate or somethin' was agin' her, for when she brought her hand across her heart to indicate the joy



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she felt when she found there was no sensation in matter, there happened to be a mean pesky pin a stickin' straight up in the trim-in' of her waist, and it run plump into her hand and dug a great crooked gouge. I heard the little 'ugh!' that escaped her, for I set close, and it was all the poor thing could do to keep from breakin' down; for she had caught cold and hurt her hand and the audience was out of harmony with her, even if she did say that 'all was love and joy and harmony,' it wasn't, and I felt plumb sorry for her, and told her so too, just as soon as the thing was out."

"Oh Mrs. Loomis, you didn't, did you? You didn't darst tell her that you were sorry for her after all she had said about there bein' no such thing as sorry, did you?" asked a half dozen of her neighbors in one breath.

"And wasn't I jist sayin' I did?" replied Mrs. Loomis.

"Oh what did she say and how did she take it?" asked Mrs. Griggs.

"Oh she jist smiled and said 'Thanks awfully, I know what you mean; you are a very

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sympathetic person, you do not mean to, but you weaken motive and do much to propagate error. You are too sympathetic; I was once so myself.' 'Indeed,' said I, 'I'm very sorry you got over it; it's a grace I've prayed and striven for a long time,' sez I, who am the mother of so many."

"Was that all?" asked Mrs. Stillman.

"Laws, wasn't that enough?" giggled Libby Brewster, who would have as soon thought of bearding the lion in his den as talking to a female lecturer from "Bosting."

"I'd 'a given a great deal to have heard what the Minister's wife was a sayin' to her," said Fanny, "but I couldn't get close enough for others wanted to hear too."

"I heard," said Mirandy. "I was right by her, and proper proud I am of her too."

"Dew tell!" said Aunt Arimatha, felling a seam.

"Well the Lecturer came up to be introduced to Mrs. Earnest, and as soon as she was, she said: 'I understand that you are the Minister's wife; that your husband pretends to be the spiritual leader of these people.'

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'My husband is pastor of the Barleyville Church,' said Mrs. Earnest, like as if she was proud of it."

"And well she might be," said half a dozen. "We pay \$650.00 a year and there ain't another village in the country pays more'n \$600.00."

"But go on Mirandy, what did she say then?" asked Mrs. Griggs.

"She jist half closed her eyes, and bent her head and said with a deep sorry accent, 'When the blind lead the blind both fall in the ditch.' 'Well I guess it won't hurt them any according to your way of thinking,' said Mrs. Earnest, a trifle quick for a Minister's wife. The Lecturer pretended not to hear, and began again. 'He surely has no influence for good in this community, or a man wouldn't get up in a public meeting and interrupt a lady.' 'My husband is not to blame if "God has chosen the weak things of this earth to confound the mighty." "

"What was meant by that?" asked Mrs. Pert, for the Deacon had been so sick that she could not attend the lecture.

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“Why Jim Barlow got up during the lecture when she was talkin’ about the inability of fire to burn the believer and said, ‘Is that so neow? kin a Chrystyun Syantist put thur han’ on a stove an’ not git burnt?’ ‘I was a saying,’ says she, ‘that it is possible for mind to rise triumphant in its might, to take the throne and rule and guide in and over the lives of all; to hold sway over matter, so that cold can not freeze nor heat burn the subject who is willing to obey the mandates of ‘Sy-ance,’ and throw off the sheckels of error that binds him a cowering slave to circumstance.’ ‘Do you mean,’ said Jim Barlow, ‘that fire won’t burn ye?’ ‘I mean,’ said she, interruptin’ him and lookin’ mad. ‘But I mean to know,’ says he, gittin’ excited. ‘Come on old lady and put yer han’ on the stove; I’ll hold mine there as long as you will; come on, it won’t hurt you mum, you’re a b’leever, and mebbly it won’t hurt me, and mebbly it will; but I’ll try it fer the good o’ the cause.’

“Of course we know’d he didn’t know any better, bein’ simple in his mind. Finally Mr. Stillman and Mr. Dean got him to sit down

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and be quiet. But he says he is going to try it, and I am afeard he will, and mebbly ruin his hands, not bein' smart in his mind."

"So that is what our Minister's wife meant, was it, when she spoke of the weak things of this earth confounding the mighty?"

"Yes that was it, and proper glad I am she said it," continued Mirandy.

"The rest of you git some fun out o' this new business, but I don't. It's a mighty serious matter when your own brother's wife gits a set o' notions like them, and don't do nothin' but ponder on 'em night and day. I guess I'll have a sorry time of it for awhile, fer the lecturer is goin' to stay with Elisabeth two or three weeks, and of course I'll have the work to do, and I expect it'll take as much chicken and pie and cake to keep the table a goin' as if they was real individual bein's instead of small billows on the great Ocean of Genus-Homo."

"Well speakin' of chicken reminds me I'd better git to the kitchen or mine 'll be a mass of coals if they ain't already," said Mrs. Griggs. "You may come out and help if you

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want to," she said smiling at Fanny, who always seemed to be ready at such times for her sewing was all folded and pinned ready for Aunt Arimatha to put in the basket. The Society had such a splendid supper at Mrs. Griggs' that when they sat down to it they forgot all about the discussion of things "Syantiffic" and enjoyed the things material.

The Society soon adjourned, but they did not forget to fill a large basket and take to the parsonage, for they knew that some of the Minister's family must be sick or else they had company, for Mrs. Earnest was always present to preside if something did not happen to keep her away.

## SEVENTH MEETIN'.

### THE LECTURER PRESENT.

“Do come in! Do!” cried Mrs. Pert with unusual emphasis, as half of the Sewing Society arrived simultaneously.

The laying aside of wraps and the exchanging of greetings had hardly subsided, when they were thrown into an unusual commotion of feeling by the arrival of Mrs. Pickens and the lecturer from Boston, followed now and then by late arrivals, each noticeably vexed that for one more week at least they must refrain from discussing the all absorbing topic of interest in Barleyville.

But as the unexpected usually happens the lecturer opened the subject by saying abruptly to the hostess:

“I don't remember your face; did I have the pleasure of seeing you at the lecture last week?”

“I regret to say that I was not present. I desired very much to go, but the Deacon was

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suffering with a terrible sick headache, and I could not leave him."

"Ah! how erroneous, how unnecessary," exclaimed the lecturer tragically.

"I do not quite understand," said Mrs. Pert, blushing perceptibly.

"And that is just the trouble with the great masses of the people, they do not understand; they simply will not understand."

"They might if they were properly explained to."

Everybody looked up, for the Minister's wife had spoken.

"I do not object to explaining my doctrine; I am more than willing to do so whenever an occasion presents itself. Our hostess referred to the condition so often found among unbelievers and characterized by them as sick headache, one of the most erroneous and unnecessary conditions in the world and the easiest to cure."

At this very interesting and inopportune moment I was compelled to leave the meeting, and calling the Secretary aside I told her what I had been doing, and asked her to



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kindly keep a perfect record of the happenings and discussions of the meeting for me.

And she did it so carefully, and in such an interesting manner that not even a sentence was lost, and moreover she was so original in her comments that the following records are nearly taken from her book:

“I was turribly upset by our most intelligent member askin’ me to keep track o’ the doin’s in Barleyville while she was away; it was somethin’ to be proper proud of, and I’m a goin’ to do it—but land, I expect it ’ll be a sight o’ trouble, an’ jes’ like enough she’ll work it up into a story o’ sum kind, they say she’s gittin’ plumb carried away with sich doin’s and is tryin’ to be an orther; but land, I don’t believe it, and she raised right here in Barleyville. But land, she won’t git much help out o’ me if I don’t git to writin’ down somethin’ besides my own ideas.”

The lecturer had jes’ got done talkin’ to Mrs. Pert when Mrs. Earnest says:

“I would like to ask if you deny that there is any such thing as sick headache?”

“I do, most assuredly.”

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"Then may I ask how you can cure a thing that does not exist?"

"You may," said the lecturer, with the most seriphic smile.

"I have," said the Minister's wife, almost petulantly.

"Indeed!" said she, lookin' more seriphic than ever. But our Minister's wife was not a goin' to be turned aside by no sich tactics, so she said point blank in a way to be understood:

"How can you relieve a condition that does not exist?"

She figited some and then said:

"When you bring a light into a dark room you do not destroy the darkness, but dispel it."

"But you said at the lecture that there was no such thing as light and darkness; now you say that light dispels darkness. How can you harmonize those statements?"

"All is love and harmony and joy and peace," replied the lecturer in an' awe-some an' worshipful voice. An' our Minister's wife clear spiled the quilt block she was a cuttin'

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out, she was so disgusted. But Mrs. Huffman that had lately been remembered in her brother's will an' was so set up over it she didn't go to the sewin' circle or church either very often, looked rale impressed, an' I seen the lecturer a lookin' at her an' I knowed that minute that Syance hed got another convert in Barleyville. But Mrs. Pert was cured o' the hankerin' she hed for it, an' said right out she should continue to care for the Deacon whenever he had the sick headache, whether it was a delusion or not. For she considered it a wife's dooty to care for a sick husband and not go gallivantin' off to lectures even if she wants to.

"As to a wife's duty," said the lecturer in sublime axents, "there is no people or race of people that set a higher value on wifely duty than the Church of Christ Scientist; we even recognize the female attribute in the God-head. Oh the mystery of science and health with a key to the scriptures. Oh the mystery of the light and life revealed to Mrs. Eddy."

"I will admit that there is plenty of mystery in her books—or fog—or whatever you

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call it, for I have read them and they are all fog to me.”

“I felt the same at first, they were so far above me. Last summer I was in Colorado and we went to see Pike’s Peak, but it was so wrapped in fog that we could not see it, but it was there. Bye and bye the fog disappeared, and there stood the magnificent mountain.

“Ah indeed,” said Mrs. Earnest, “and I have seen a valley full of fog, and bye and bye it lifted only to reveal stagnant pools whose miasma poisoned the atmosphere of the whole valley. And through the fog of Mrs. Eddy’s writings I see no mountain of scriptural truth, but the poison miasma of pantheism covered and hidden by beautiful sentences, half truths and borrowed metaphor, but there with all its dangerous tendencies lies the pit into which they must inevitably fall who as blind leaders lead the blind, who are both ignorant of the spiritual danger into which they are going.”

I kept wishin’ that Mrs. Pickens would say somethin’, but she didn’t, and the lecturer

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didn't, and the rest of us didn't da'st to, so we yawned sum an' sewed sum, then we had tea an' went home all kind o' disappointed. It wasn't a very entertainin' meetin', but we was all glad we was there, and proper proud we was of our Minister's wife; she didn't seem a might afeard to talk right up to the lecturer from Bosting, an' I don't say it to boast, but she is the best of the two at it.

## EIGHTH MEETIN'.

JIM BARLOW BURNS HIS HANDS.

We jes' got nicely started in with the meetin', Mrs. Earnest had read and prayed and we was through cuttin' out and begun bastin', when Fanny Dunlavy come runnin' in most out of breath, a sayin' "I told you so; I knew just how it would be; he up and did it this morning before anybody had time to stop him."

"Who did?" "Done what?" "When?" said all of us at once, gettin' up and droppin' everythin' in our excitement.

"Why Jim Barlow," said Fanny. "You all know that I told you that he would." And Fanny glared at us as if we were some how to blame for somethin' or other.

"Dew set down Fanny," said Aunt Arimatha, pickin' up things. "Dew; and tell us what yer flustered about."

"Well it 's enough to fluster a saint," cried the excited girl, "and things has no business

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to be said that will cause such dreadful things to happen."

"I presume that you refer in some way to the harmonies of life and light," said Mrs. Huffman, the new convert—who was out again fer a wonder—imitatin' the high look and religious tone of the lecturer from Boston.

"I refer to the horrible happening over at Barlow's this morning, that has more pain and death in it than life and light, according to my way of thinking."

Do tell us about it we urged, jes' et up by curiosity. Do tell.

"Well, Barlow's butchered yesterday, and with all the other work on hand Mrs. Barlow didn't get the lard rendered out, so she put it into the kettle early this morning intending to get it off in time to come to the Sewing Circle this afternoon. You know that she always tries to come when it meets here, for she doesn't have far to walk, and she has not been very strong lately. Well her lard was all done and ready to strain and she was fixing the sieve over the jar, when Jim came jabber-

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ing something about having a revelation and fearing no evil for evil wasn't and pain couldn't be; then catching sight of the boiling lard he cried out, 'Cold can not freeze or fire burn?' and before Mrs. Barlow could reach him he plunged both arms elbow deep into that kettle of boiling lard."

"Oh Fanny!" "Mercy!" "Oh goodness sakes!" "Land! O land o' gracious!" "Poor, poor boy!" ejaculated the whole Sewin' Circle, just as sorry as they could be.

"Dew tell!" cried Aunt Arimatha tryin' to thread a needle at the point end. "I will go right over at once and see what can be done."

And Mrs. Loomis riz up and put on her bonnet. If there is a thing any of us can do come right back and let us know, and promisin' to do so Mrs. Loomis left at once.

"I guess there isn't much more to be done," said Fanny. "Ma and I have been there ever since it happened, Doctor Goodman was there and dressed his arms in linseed oil and lime water, but he says that the burns are so bad that Jim will either die or lose the use of his arms. He suffered terribly until the doc-



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tor gave him quieting powders. I stayed and got dinner and did up the work for them. I feel so sorry for his mother that it just makes me sick.”

“What did Mrs. Loomis do with the lard?” faltered Mrs. Grippenny.

“I don’t know and I don’t care; I had something else to think of.”

“I only hoped that she had not wasted it; I would be willing to buy it cheap for soap grease, and the Barlows are poor and can’t afford to waste things you know.”

“Well you had n’t better say anything to Mrs. Barlow about it—at least not for quite a spell.”

It was Mrs. Stillman’s voice, a little harsher than we ever heard it before.

“Maybe you could buy Jim’s arms too, if they have to take them off,” snapped Fanny, who was so nervous she ort ’a bin at home in bed.

“Oh, I didn’t mean nothin’ only to be kind and help ’em out.”

And Mrs. Grippenny seein’ the feelin’s she had kindled blushed an’ seemed to shrink up

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littler than ever. The Minister's wife—bless her heart—took pity on her an' changed the subject by asking if Mrs. Pickens, or the lecturer, had heard of the accident yet.

“I met Mrs. Pickens at the Post Office as I came up, and *she heard of it*, and that's what made me feel so riled up when I first came in.”

Did she act as if she cared? says I.

“Cared? She looked at me as if I were talking Hebrew, and said, without the least bit of feeling, ‘it was all an error of mortal mind.’ ‘It was all an error in permitting that woman to talk such stuff in a public meeting, and she is to blame for this, and so are you,’ I said, getting madder and madder. ‘You are because you brought that woman here.’ But I might as well have yipped at the gate post for all the interest she manifested in it. She only said, ‘I admire to be persecuted for truth's sake.’ ‘But it is not for truth's sake, it is for the sake of an abominable fad, that's what it is.’ ‘You'll see different some day Fanny,’ says she. ‘Oh when will truth conquer error?’ ‘Never,’ says I, ‘as long as fool

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women go galavanting over the country teaching error and calling it truth; not long ago, Mrs. Pickens, you would have been first to sympathize with the sick and suffering.' 'Yes,' says she, ruminating like, 'but I have risen above all that now—none of these things move me.' ”

At this we all looked at Mrs. Huffman, an' she said she could see just how Mrs. Pickens felt; she thought it must be *real swell* to live so far above such common things.

“It's strange how quick they get on to that new doctrine,” whispered Mrs. Pert, just as Mrs. Stillman opened the dining room doors. We all stayed, but Fanny; she did not feel like eatin' after so much excitement. We all felt kind o' squamish; it was too bad too, for we always git extra good eatin' at Mrs. Stillman's.

After the meetin' adjourned Aunt Arimatha and Mrs. Pert carried another basket full to the Amos's, who got all the more fer our lack o' appetite.

They likewise took some shirts fer the boys. They're gettin' along fine now (the Amos's) since the Society takes care o' them.

## NINTH MEETIN'.

### D. K. RIDES A WHEEL.

"Well of all the ridiculous performances I ever heard tell of in my born days, the ridiculousness has jest happened!" ejaculated Mrs. Dean.

"Dew tell," said Aunt Arimatha cuttin' out a sun bonnet. "Well you know D. K.?"

"Well of course I know D. K. Everybody knows D. K. Did you ever talk with Mrs. Pickens two minutes in yer life without hearin' o' D. K.? I never did."

That was a turrible long speech for Aunt Arimatha, and she broke it off by pilin' her mouth full o' pins.

"Well D. K. has been so carried away by 'Syance' that he is now worse than his sister, and that's sayin' a good deal."

"I thought he kinder give it up after the lecture," said the Deacon's wife.

"Give it up? You catch D. K. givin' up anythin'? You don't know the Grimeses as well as I do," replied Mrs. Dean.

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“Well I do know them—I’ve lived by ’em four and twenty years come next Aprile. If you’ll tell us what you started out to, I’ll quit runnin’ the machine and baste fer a little spell,” said the Deacon’s wife, sort o’ encouragin’ like.

Well, he read some wheres in a Syance Maggazine, thet if you’d eliminate all doubt frum yer conscious and sub-conscious mind, you can jest do any thin’ whatever you set out to do. He’s been talkin’ it to me and Nathan (Nathan’s Mr. Dean, whispered Mrs. Griggs to our Minister’s wife). D. K. hez allus wanted to ride a By-Sickle. So he sot too and commenced eliminating doubt, and he had Nathan order him a new Twentieth Century Model, but he come around next day and con-tramanded the order, and hed Nathan send for a Victor. Fer, said he, “I’ve gained a vict’ry. All doubt is eliminated. With Em-erson I can say, ‘As fer me I ride.’”

Well, the By-Sickle cum yesterday, and Nathan set it up, and D. K. cum down by our house to mount. A whole posse o’ boys and men cum down to see how it ’d go. And the

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wimmin cum over to get patterns and other errands till the windows was full o' wimmin peekin' out to see how he'd git on. Mrs. Pickens was standin' by the gate and the Healer from Bosting was a standin' by her. They was both a smilin' serene and encouragin' D. K. to let mind hev' her perfec' work.

When Nathan said, "Yer already, D. K.?"

The next thing I seen was thet man a clingin' on to the handle bars as if his life depended on it, and thet machine was a cuttin' circles and didos to shame a circus performer.

"Don't give up the ship, D. K.," called Mrs. Pickens, heroically.

"Eliminate your doubts," cried the Healer, tragically, scootin' out o' the way. "Eliminate 'em immediately." And I don't know how 't would have ended if an old yaller rooster hadn't o' run in front of D. K. before he got 'em eliminated; but the wheel struck the rooster and D. K. went sailin' endwise into the air and struck the Healer in the left side as she was a backin' off, and she tumbled into



C.S. Hornumok

"ELIMINATE YER DOUBTS," CRIED THE HEALER TRAGICALLY, SCOOTIN'  
OUT OF THE WAY.





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some old barbed wire that was a layin' there, and sich a time as we hed a untanglin' her and D. K. out o' thet wire.

And she went into the house a moanin' and a tryin' to hold her poorty silk dress onto her. And a sayin' it was all on account o' the perversity of the on lookers whose minds bore down too heavy onto poor dear Mr. Grimes.

And I (who was a tryin' to stanch the blood and pin up the dress) just set myself firm for once, and I said: "No sich thing; the on lookers didn't hev nothin' to do with it, and they didn't ask Mr. Grimes nor nobody else to git onter a wheel 'ithout learnin' how, an' go cavortin' around knockin' down ladies inter barb wire."

At thet she swished herself away from me and rushed inter her own room.

An hevin' my dander up a little I said to Mrs. Pickens as I left fer home, "If you'd hev picked up that wire as I suggested yesterday, fer fear somethin' would git hurt on it, this wouldn't hev' been so bad; but you jist said, "Ill wasn't and evil couldn't be. Well," said she, still lookin' serific, "Time and truth and

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light revealed will conquer error." She didn't even act anxious over D. K., who was a layin' on the sofy where the on lookers hed tenderly placed him, and where I left him a woebegone Victor vankished by a lean ugly old rooster, who went and hid hissself under a bush, like Elijah in the desert."

"Dew tell," said Aunt Arimatha, who hed used up her mouth full o' pins.

"Have you heard anything further concernin' Mr. Grimes' injuries?" asked our Minister's wife gently, and it was answered that minute by Fanny Dunlavy, who hed come in late, and said as she set down on a cheer 'ithout takin' her bunnet off: "No, I can't stay; I'm too mad to stay anywhere."

"You mean indignant," suggested Mrs. Pert, glancin' wisely at our Minister's wife.

"I don't," declared Fanny stoutly. "I said mad and meant it too. I've just come from Mrs. Pickens' and she and that healer is demonstratin' over Mr. Grimes, and his head is all swelled up, and he's ramblin' in his talk and groanin' awful. I went up to him and took hold of his hand and his arm is

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broken; broken, I tell you; one bone is sticking through the skin, and he's hurt very bad I know, for his eyes looks like Brother John's did just before he died."

And Fanny began to sob and said, "Can't nobody do anything for him?"

And I knowed plainer 'n if she'd a told me that D. K. Grimes was more to Fanny Dunlavy than an ordinary neighbor, though I wisely kept it to myself, and set too a tryin' to comfort her.

"I will go over," said the Minister's wife, rollin' up her sewin'.

And Fanny loved her from that minute.

Poorty soon Fanny riz and I see she was a tremblin', so I hurried her off from enquirin' eyes, for I do set great store by Fanny Dunlavy, and bein' sort o' tired out over the happenin's of the day, we just come to an abrupt close, and so we adjourned, for we couldn't git down to sewin' after Fanny come in.

## TENTH MEETIN'.

THE SEWIN' CIRCLE MEETS WITH MRS. EARNEST  
—DISCUSS D. K. AND JIM BARLOW.

We all got there before the time, for there wan't one of us but what 'd 'a been ashamed to be late, when the Circle met with the Minister's wife, and we was divided in our curiosity between learnin' news of the sick folks and wonderin' if Mrs. Earnest could cook as good as Mrs. Talkim, our other Minister's wife, and most of us hed kindly hinted to each other thet we ort not to expect much and ort to be charitable, havin' learned thet she was a graduate of a college, and sort o' givin' to paintin' and writin' o' po'try and sich.

"We all hev gifts differin'," declared Mrs. Loomis to me and Mrs. Pert, "and you like her well enough to eat her jumbles if they was flatter than pancakes, I do believe," said Mrs. Pert, laughin' good natured like.

"I do that," said the dear soul, "and I shall

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be expectin' to find somethin' to praise if its nothin' but the dishes. Praise don't cost no more than censure, and it's a lot more upliftin'."

"You're right, Mrs. Loomis," sez I, "it don't dew no good to find fault with nothin', not even the weather," sez I, gittin' out the quilt blocks and carpet rags, and we got to work with such vigor that I most thought they wouldn't be any conversation at all to speak of, when Mrs. Pert asked Mrs. Stillman how the Amos's was a gettin' along.

"Oh they're all right now; the deacon took them over some apples and vegetables yisty-day, and Mr. Amos was up and around, and they all looked more prosperous than common. Mr. Stillman 'lowed maybe it was Mrs. Pickens' absent treatment, but old man Amos sed it was the doin's o' the wimmin in the Sewin' Circle. That's one case where charity has done more good than harm," said Mrs. Stillman, who always stood up for charity.

"I love charity the best of the three graces," she continued, "and always have."

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"Maybe that it's because you're better acquainted with her than you are with her sisters," said Fanny, winkin' at Mrs. Loomis. We all knowed that Mrs. Stillman hedn't a mite o' faith, poor soul, but there wa'n't a one of us would have hinted it fer nothin'.

"You're right Fanny," sez she, "but it's better to be acquainted with her than none o' the family at all," sez she, not a mite offended.

"Oh I know all of them," said Fanny. "There's Mrs. Loomis, she is Hope; and Aunt Arimatha is Faith; and you're Charity; and the rest of us are your satellites, just revolving around you doing what we are told to do."

I do believe Fanny Dunlavy could give anybody a dose of castor oil and make 'em believe it was honey, if she jist opened up them big blue eyes o' hers and smiled at 'em.

Jist then little Johnny Rankin brought a note to the door fer Fanny; she turned white at first when she read it, and then blushed and sed, "I guess you will have to excuse me a minute, as Mrs. Pickens has sent for me to

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come over, as D. K. has become rational and wants to see me real bad."

I brung out her hat fer her and follered her to the door. "You'll be committed afore you git back, Fanny," sez I, and may the Lord bless you, child; and when I kissed her I sez, "Fanny, make him give up 'Syance' afore you promise anythin'," sez I.

"I will," sez she, "I certainly will." And I hoped she wouldn't fergit it, fer the Grimes's air as good at keepin' a promise as they air about keepin' anythin' else.

We talked about the weather and fall crops, and most everythin' we could think of, pretendin' not to be curious about Fanny bein' called over to Pickens'.

"Hev' any of you heard how Jim Barlow is since they sent him to the hospital?" sez Almira.

"I stopped there on my way over," sez Mrs. Loomis, "and Mrs. Barlow hed jist got a letter from the Superintendent and one from the nurse. They hed to take off the right arm, fer earrysipolis hed set in, or somethin', I fergot jist what they called it, and the left arm

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's gittin' along now, but it will be drawed all out o' shape and stiff. His ma feels awful. She sed it was bad enough to have him the way he was before he was scalded, but he was strong and could work good, he could have made a livin' anyhow. But now he's crippled so he won't never be able to do nothin'."

"He'll be helpless now and an awful burden to his poor old mother," sez I.

"Yes," sez she, "and mebbly hev to be sent to the home fer the feeble minded."

"Mrs. Barlow sez she'll never fergive herself fer lettin' him go to the lecture; if it hedn't have been fer that it would never hev happened. But I don't think that Mrs. Barlow ort to blame herself," sez I; "she didn't know what the lecture would be like."

Jist then Fanny come back and none of us asked any questions, but seein' how anxious I was, Fanny sed: "D. K. is better, but his arm has gone so long without being set that it is in a dreadful condition now. John Henry is going to take him to the hospital, as Elisabeth and the lecturer objected to let-



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ting a doctor come to the house, so he thought he had best go to the hospital. He still spits blood, and I feel dreadful uneasy about him."

"Is there any danger of him a losin' his arm?" sez I.

"Well, no. Doctor Goodman thinks not, although it may be left stiff in the joint; but if it is D. K. says he will rent the farm and go back to teaching."

"Oh he'll make a livin' all right," sez Almira Jane. "I believe a Grimes could make money if they hadn't any arms, or legs either."

"It isn't wicked to make money," sez I, "if you make it honorable, and the Grimes' air honorable."

Jist then Mrs. Earnest opened the dining room doors and I spied Mr. Earnest taken off an apern; but whoever got it, him or her, or both of 'em, it surprised the society. The table was beautiful with dorleys and a boquet o' posies, not to be e't but to be admired, but there was enough to be e't. When Mrs. Loomis took a big flakey biscuit she looked at Mrs. Pert and winked.

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There was ham and chicken and vegetables and salad and jelly wafers, and cake and fruit and salted almonds and the most delicious chocolate puddin' with whipped cream, and macaroons and cocoanut puffs and home made candy, jist like Christmas.

I was glad of it, and so was all of us, though she needn't to hev gone to so much trouble and expense. We didn't expect it.

We remarked about it as we went home.

"That woman can do more than any one woman I ever saw," sed Fanny.

"And do it better," sez I, feelin' proud.

## ELEVENTH MEETIN'.

THE HOFFMANS MOVE IN A STORM—BABY HOFFMAN DIES WITH THE CROUP.

“I hear the Hoffmans hev bought the Lancaster property,” remarked Mrs. Pert soon after we had got settled down to a comfortable we was tackin’ fer Mrs. Barlow, who hed been put back dredful in her work by Jim’s misfortune.

“Yes, that’s so. They have; they made out the papers week before last,” replied Mrs. Stillman. She was in a position to know, Mr. Stillman bein’ the Square and Notorious Republic, etcetrey.

“I knew they moved last week,” said Fanny, “but I supposed that they had only rented the place so the children could go to school in town. I saw them driving in, and everything was just covered with snow, and it being the first snowstorm of the season, it did look dreadful cold.”

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“And it was dreadful cold.” And Mrs. Loomis actually shivered when she sed it. “And I knew there hedn’t been a fire in thet house all fall, and I thought they ’d be half froze’ afore they could git the stoves set up and a fire made. So I sent Dan over right off to tell Mrs. Hoffman and the children to run right over to my house and stay until the men folks got it het up over there. But she sent word back thet it wouldn’t be necessary to bother me. I supposed right off mebbly she didn’t feel togged up and hated to come, so I put my shawl over my head and went myself to git her. ‘Law me, Louisa,’ sez I, half out o’ breath, don’t stand onto no ceremony with me; come right over jist as ye be. Anybody knows you can’t hev’ on yer best when you’re moovin’, and you must be tired and half froze,’ sez I, ‘and the children are cold, too.’”

“Oh no,” sez she, “I am neither tired nor cold; the time was when I would have thought myself both,” sez she, lookin’ weary enough to drap. Then it all come over me in a minute that the reason she didn’t come was because she thought it would be incon-

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sistent with her new doctrine. "Oh shaw, Louisa," sez I, "come on; it don't make no difference whether you're tired or cold; I know it 'll be more comfortable over there for a spell." "Es do, mama; es do," pleaded little Elsie. "Oh no, dear; mama isn't cold." "Es it is told mama, ossy told; es do, mama." "No, Elsie," sed Mrs. Hoffman, and I knew better than to urge her any farther; but I sed, "let Elsie go over with me, Louisa; you know your ma and me were like sisters, and I never hed no girls, and I do love 'em; it would be a real treat to hev' her over 'till bed time; then I'd bring her back." Louisa hesitated, and little Elsie came over and took my hand and sed, "me doin' to dit warm now." But that ended it. Louisa set herself and sed, "no, Elsie, you must stay with me. I am afraid, Mrs. Loomis, that the child will git the inception of an error if I let her go. You know early impressions on the mind always are hard to overcome; I realize it more than ever, since I hev' realized thet mind was all. No, I guess she hadn't better go; she might git an inception of error."

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“Oh shaw, Louisa,” sez I; “she hed better git it than to git her death o’ cold stayin’ here, and she’s sure to,” sez I, “for her little hands air like ice.” But it didn’t do no good to argy, and as I hed left bread in the oven I hed to go back. But I soon sent Dan over with a basket o’ hot rolls and some butter and honey and a pot o’ bilin’ coffee already creamed. I’ve moved, and I know how acceptable a bite o’ hot victuals air, and how hard it is to git ’em when you don’t know where anythin’ is.

“I don’t know as you needed to cream it,” sez Mrs. Grippenny, regretfully; cream’s scase this season, and butter’s a powerful good price.”

“I don’t know as she needed to send anything,” sez Fanny, “but the milk of human kindness in her character is not the skim-milk variety.”

“It shorely ain’t,” giggled Libby.

“And she didn’t let that little Elsie go with you?” mused Mrs. Stillman. “How strange; Louisa Hoffman used to be the kindest hearted mother, almost too indulgent at times.”

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"I expect it's because she got that pile o' money when her brother Silas died," sed Almira Jane.

"No," sez Mrs. Loomis, "the bible sez money's the root of all evil; but money wasn't at the root o' this; it's the fruit o' this new doctern so many's been carried away with lately."

"It's a wonder some o' em ain't carried out o' existence," Mrs. Griggs added, comin' in out o' the hall, where she hed been takin' off her wraps. She was dredful late fer her.

"I guess they air all over to Hoffman's to-day to some doin's o' theirs. As I come by I seen most all o' 'em, and they acted awful funny. I stopped to speak to Mrs. Pickens, but she didn't hev much to say, so I come on. As I come by I seen 'em a takin' in a big box thet looked like a coffin box, but I supposed it was somethin' they hed left over to the farm when they moved in."

We all looked at the speaker. Mrs. Norman hardly ever sed anythin'.

"Air you sure it looked like thet?" sez I, hatin' even to mention the name.

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"Yes," sez she, "it did, very much; but I hev'n't heard of any o' 'em bein' sick."

"No," sez I, "neither hev I, and surely nobody could be very sick here and none of us not hear about it."

"Miranda told me yistyday," sed Libby, "thet Mrs. Pickens said Elsie Hoffman hed a claim, and she was givin' her treatments, and if she didn't overcome the error soon she would send for the Heeler from Parksburg, thet bein' the nearest Heeler."

"Oh, law me! law me!" sez I. "Then Elsie's sick; they call it a claim to be sick."

"I ain't surprised," sed Mrs. Loomis; "I've been so worried about that child I couldn't sleep; I can jist hear her sayin' over and over, 'Es do, mama; es do; I'm told.'"

"Poor thing; Louisa ort to 've knowed better," sez I. "All her children air subjec' to croup. I jist expect it begun croup and run into newmony; that's the way those children air most every winter. Many's the time I've gone over and made onion poultices fer their lungs, and greased them with goose grease, and Louisa know'd how; I've show'd her lots o' times."



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"Yes, but she wouldn't 've done it," offered Mrs. Pert. "She'd 've been too set."

"Oh, I suppose she would 've done some-thin' in case o' croup," sez I.

"I don't think so," sed Mrs. Loomis. "She hed too sot a look when she wouldn't let Elsie come home with me."

"But how earnest you're all talkin'," sez Mrs. Stillman, "when you haven't anything to talk about but surmises."

"We jist as well talk," sez I. "We'll get this comfortable done long afore it's time to quit; it's rolled twice now, sez I, "justifyin' myself like they did in the parable." At thet everybody laughed but Libby, and she giggled. Jist then Mirandy come in lookin' worri't like, and sed: "I don't see how you can laugh; I feel more like settin' down and cryin'."

"Why! Why!" sez five or six o' us at onct. "What's the matter?"

"W'y, Elsie Hoffman's dead."

"Dead?" sez Mrs. Loomis, beginnin' to cry.

"Why, Miranda, surely tain't so?"

"It is so. Oh, my sakes, what are we com-

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in' to? Elisabeth wouldn't have told me if she could 've helped it. She died last night, and they're goin' to bury her this afternoon. Elisabeth is goin' now."

"Oh, the dear, sweet child; and I loved her so much." And Mrs. Loomis give way and sobbed, and we all felt so bad we didn't know what to do, but we kept on workin' kind o' mechanical like.

"Yes," said Mirandy, "she took cold when they moved, and hed croup, and then I guess newmony set in, for Elisabeth said she hed a claim on her lungs, and I hev good reason to know what a claim is."

"Ain't they goin' to hev no funeral?" sez I.

"They have a service they read, and a song or two to sing; they practiced over at John Henry's; but it ain't a very comfortin' service."

"I thought they sed nobody could die," sez Mrs. Pert.

"They don't say she's dead; they say she hez jist passed away," sez Mirandy.

"Well, I can't see the difference," sez I. Jist then I looked out and saw the people turnin' the corner east o' the Post Office.

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“It’s the funeral,” sez Fanny, and we got up and looked out o’ the winder and seen ’em goin’, jist ten or a dozzen o’ ’em toward the cemetary. Most all o’ us was cryin’, and Mrs. Earnest sez, “Let us pray.” And her heart overflowed in fervent and sympathetic petition to our Heavenly Father for the bereaved, and all the more because they hed neglected the means at hand fer the sick one. It was a tender, earnest prayer, and I felt that God would hear it and in His own good time remove this delusion from our native village.

It was gittin late and we were all glad thet we had told Mrs. Barlow previous thet we couldn’t stay to lunch, and we all dispersed and went home quietly, and most of us a prayin’ fer our afflicted neighbor in her terrible delusion.

## TWELFTH MEETIN'.

ABNER GROVE TAKES "SYANTIFIC" TREATMENT  
FOR CANCER.

We was all kind o' late and flustered, and all talkin' to once; we got our wraps off, but meanwhile purty near every one of us hed asked some body else if they'd heard about it? And who it was? For that very afternoon Mrs. Earnest hed sent a note sayin' she wouldn't be back in time fer the meetin', fer they was a goin' to a weddin' and didn't know jist when they'd be back.

"A weddin'?" sez I. "A real live weddin', right here under our very noses, and we none the wiser?"

Fanny laughed and sniffed; then she said: "You must be mistaken; I can not smell spice nor anything nice; and I am sure that I could if there was a wedding right under my nose."

"Oh, Fanny," sez I, "you do beat all. I wish you'd hurry and count them quilt blocks and see how many there is now, and kind o'

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pull and stretch them a little, fer some folks takes their seams so deep."

"That's me," sez she, grinning; "I'm so generous."

"And some takes them too narrer," sez I.

"That's Mrs. Grippenny," sez she, still grinnin'. "She's so saving."

"Why didn't you say stingy, Fanny?" said Mrs. Grippenny, smilin' up at her; it was the first smile that I ever see her smile in my life.

"I began by bein' savin'," said Mrs. Grippenny. "We began awful pore, Hiram and me, and skimped and saved to git a home; now I guess we've got more'n we need, but early habits ain't easy broke off, and so we jist keep on skimpin' and savin', and it don't seem as if we know how to enjoy what we've got. Don't you never go to gittin' savin', Fanny, not too savin'; I shouldn't like to hev you."

I hed never heard her use that much language all at once before, and I never hed a view from her side before, either; and I know'd she sed it because she loved Fanny Dunlavy, and I ain't yet and I never will hev'

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quite so small an opinion of Mrs. Grippenny again.

Jist then Mrs. Loomis asked if we hed ever heard of Abner Grove, that lived over across the river and up in the hills some wheres near La Croix.

"No," sez I, "I hev'n't; is he sick?" I supposed he was, or Mrs. Loomis wouldn't hev been interested in him.

"I have, often," sez Mrs. Stillman, "if you mean that young Grove that has a cancer on his face."

"Yes," sez Mrs. Loomis, "I mean him. "Isn't he an awful lookin' sight, too, poor man! with one whole side o' his face e't off with it?"

"Dew tell," sez Aunt Arimatha, shiverin' like.

"Law me," sez I, "there ain't nothin' I dread like cancers. I've always been afeard they run in our family; my Great Aunt Martha Babbitt's first cousin, Emiline Parker, died with one."

"Well, this young Grove was over to Pickens's all last week, and he's took up Syance," continued Mrs. Loomis.

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Then we all got interested.

“Go on,” sez I.

“Well, he sez now that he ain't got any cancer. He hed the coverin' all off of it and was goin' down street, when me and Mrs. Pert come up unexpected, and sich an awful sight I hope never to see again to my dyin' day. All the teeth showed, and the tongue! And Oh! I couldn't tell how awful it did look.”

“Did Mrs. Pert see it?” sez I.

“Oh yes,” sez she, “Mrs. Pert come purty near faintin', and she couldn't seem to git it off her mind after we got home.”

Two or three of us looked sorry and shook our heads. Mrs. Loomis looked at me and I nodded. Then she said:

“Poor, dear woman; I hope nothin' will happen, but it was the awfulest sight I ever see in my life.”

“I saw him yesterday morning,” sed Fanny; “he was just going home, and the cold air on his face very nearly killed him; one could easily see that it did, and papa offered him his scarf. ‘I ain't cold,’ he said. ‘I am

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livin' now to deny error. Mr. Dunlavy, I've an awful delusion, and I can't seem to overcome it, but Mrs. Pickens sez I will soon. She is givin' me absent treatments now.' And he just trembled, he was in so much pain. 'Oh, Abner Grove!' exclaimed papa. 'You haven't taken up Christian Science, have you? You ought not to have that raw face exposed to this cold air.' 'I did kinder want to keep the cloth over it,' and there were tears in his eyes, 'but she said thet I mustn't, it wouldn't go away if I kept a believin' it was there.' 'Why, it is there,' I said, and your believing it is, or is not, will not make any difference. The best thing for you to do is to keep as comfortable as you possibly can the short time you will have on earth and prepare for the home where they have no such afflictions.' 'No, Fanny, I ain't goin' to give in; I'm goin' to keep denyin' error' 'No, I thank'ee, Mr. Dunlavy, I won't take the scarf; thank'ee jist the same.' And he drove on without it."

We was still talkin' about Abner Grove, when Mrs. Earnest came in; we all began



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askin' her at once who hed been married, etcetrety.

"Why, Mrs. Earnest, how peaked you look, and pale; be ye sick?" asked Mrs. Loomis. And we all looked up and seen our Minister's wife almost ready to faint.

"I am sick—sick at my stomach—and sick at heart—and when I tell you, you will understand. The wedding today was out at Groves', near La Croix."

We looked at each other, but did not interrupt.

"The girl's brother has the most dreadful cancer, I can not describe it. I did not see him until we went down to dinner, and he was placed opposite me. Oh, I never suffered so in all my life; I still feel so sick that I don't feel as though I could eat another bite while I live. I believe everybody there was sick. They had everything that you could think of to eat, but how could we eat it?"

We didn't answer, fer we didn't know nothin' to say.

"Mrs. Grove came to me just before I left and explained, with tears in her eyes, that

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Abner had just taken up Christian Science, and insisted upon acting the way he did, just as if there was not anything the matter with him. She said that he firmly believed that if he did, Mrs. Pickens would cure him. He says, 'Remove the delusion;' he won't say cure. At first I refused, and then the poor boy plead so hard I could not say no any longer. It's little enough we can do for him, poor boy, and he hasn't long to stay with us." And the mother broke down and cried, she was so sorry that he had got such a notion. I consoled her as best I could. But what are we coming to? They are increasing every day in numbers. I thought that Barlow affair would stop it. Is it a craze? Or is it hypnotism? Or what?"

"It must be an or what," laughed Fanny.

"No, I won't stay for tea, Mrs. Griggs," said our Minister's wife. "I will appoint the social committee, and then I must go. Mrs. Loomis will explain."

And I do declare, just our afternoon's talk upset our stomachs so that there was mighty

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nigh as much on the table when we riz up as when we sot down.

“So much better for the Amos’s,” sez Mrs. Stillman, as we put on our wraps.

“That basket is dreadful heavy, Fanny; I’ll go with you and help carry it,” sez Mrs. Loomis, and she did.

## THIRTEENTH MEETIN'.

### THE SYANTISTS TRY TO TAKE POSSESSION OF THE CHURCH.

Every body was so agitated and yet kind o' pleased lookin' as they begun to arrive by twos and threes, all talkin' kind o' confidential. And my! nearly every member was out, partly because we met at Dunlavy's, and partly because we wanted to git together and talk things over. There was sixteen present when Mrs. Earnest read the chapter, and two or three come in while she was prayin'—I don't mean clear in—jist into the entry out o' the cold, and then come into the settin' room afterwards. Our Minister's wife hez got mighty good sense; if it's cold out and anybody comes into the entry while she is prayin', she jist shortens up and groups all the heathens together, instead o' sayin' our missionaries in Asia, and our schools in China, and our workers in Japan, and our laborers in Africa, and our sufferin'

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representatives in Turkey, she jist sez 'Bless our work at home and abroad,' and I tell 'em that the Lord knows jist what she means. But two or three o' the wimmen think Mrs. Talkim's way was more devotion-al, and most o' 'em like to see the Minister's wife devotional and some different than other wimmen. Mrs. Earnest is different, we all feel it, but the difference is not like the difference o' most Minister's wives. I can't tell jist what it is myself, but I love her for it, anyhow. Fanny sed:

"She has the divine gift of suiting herself to her surroundings. She is a child with children, but not childish; a young woman in age, and loved by all the young folks; but the old people thinks that she is one of them."

"Yes," sez I, "she always makes you feel that she is one o' ye, but some like a more distant way—a kind o' haughty, devotional bearin'. But we've learned that she's got lots o' sense in her head. It all come out jist like she thought it would about the church," and then we all remembered what she hed said about it.

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"Well," sez Mrs. Loomis, when we got to talkin' about it, "they had a mighty nice little scheme on hand, didn't they?"

"Yes," sez I, "but it didn't work."

"It worked all right as far as any body around here was concerned," snapped Mrs. Stillman.

"What do you mean?" sez I.

"She means what she says," put in Fanny. "Mr. Earnest stood alone last Sunday against the trustees and deacons, and even the State Superintendent of Missions."

"Why, Fanny," sez I, "you must be mistaken. I am sure that none of us wanted them to come in and git possession o' the church property."

"I know that we didn't, but it is just what we would have let them do if Mr. Earnest hadn't taken the stand he did."

"What I didn't like," sed Mrs. Stillman, "was the State Superintendent writing to the trustees to let them have the church. I say it was a burning shame, and I never will believe in that man again."

"Perhaps he didn't understand the condi-

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tions at all," sez Mrs. Earnest. "I suppose that he thought that the Christian Scientists here were like they are in so many villages, only a little handful that could do no harm. I am sure that he laughed at Mr. Earnest's letter about the matter, and I am afraid that Mr. Earnest is so hurt over the reply that he received that he will never explain it to him."

"Then somebody ought to, and I will if I ever see him again," said Fanny.

"He did wrong, just the same," maintained Mrs. Stillman, who had to have pretty strong convictions before she'd stand up fer 'em like that.

"Yes," sez Mrs. Earnest, "I will admit that it was very wrong, and put my husband in a bad light before his people; yet I do not like to think that it was an intentional wrong upon his part. We must not be too severe in our judgment, or allow ourselves to become prejudiced against him."

"Prejudiced nothing!" sez Fanny. "I am not prejudging him; an after judgment is all right, and I should think that you would be vexed with him if any body would."

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"I was vexed; at first I felt positively disgusted with him; then I considered that he had a hard place to fill, and knows little or nothing about the conditions or needs of these smaller places."

"Then I would like to know why he don't find out before he advises. A doctor generally knows something about a disease before he prescribes for it," sez Mrs. Stillman.

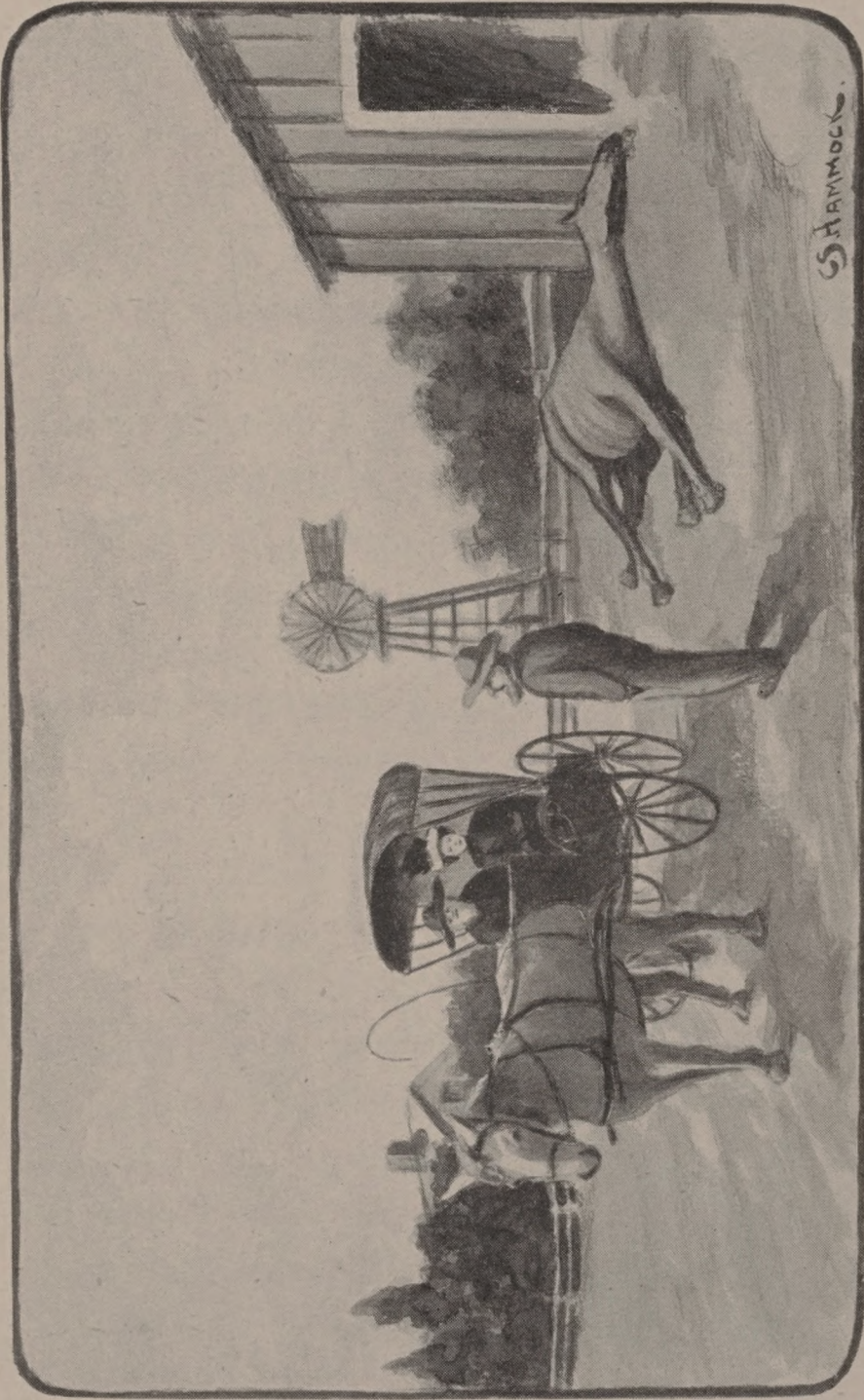
"Not always;" and Mrs. Earnest smiled. "Mr. Earnest and I were driving past Mr. Volland's yesterday, and he was dragging out a dead horse. 'Why, Mr. Volland!' exclaimed Mr. Earnest. 'I see that you have had some very bad luck; how did it happen?' 'Oh, dot Sthorey Ceety dockther, he cure him for de wrong disees, so he die.' "

"Dew tell!" sez Aunt Arimatha.

"Did he say what he was wuth?" sez Mrs. Grippenny. And we all laughed.

But Mrs. Stillman was not to be got off o' the subjec' with jokes nor nothin', fer she sez: "Yes, and that's jist the way the Superintendent would 've cured this church, too, if we'd 've taken his advice."





“OH, DOT STHOREY CEETY DOCKTHER HE CURE HIM FOR DE WRONG  
DISEES, SO HE DIE.”



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“Speaking of doctors,” sez Fanny, “I remember hearing pa tell about a quack doctor that was being examined at an inquest concerning his treatment of a patient who had died. ‘I gave him ipecacuana,’ he said. ‘You might as well have given him the aurora borealis,’ said the coroner. ‘Indeed, your honor, and that is just what I would have given him next, if he hadn’t died.’”

We all laughed ag’in. “What’s the point, Fanny?” sez I, who never was good at seein’ through jokes.

“I was only thinking, that if we had taken the Superintendent’s advice, and died, he would have advised a change of pastors next.”

“Not too hard, Fanny,” sez Mrs. Earnest, who hez a forgivin’ spirit as well as good sense.

“Did ye ever see a chicken hen with a mixed brood?” asked Mrs. Loomis.

We hed, but we didn’t jist see her meanin’, and waited until she went on with her story.

“Last summer I hed a few chickens, two or three ducks, two turkeys and four little

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guineas, all hatch at about the same time, and I jist put 'em all with one motherly old hen. The very best hen on the place if ye give her a brood of chickens. But, law; she wore herself out raisin' that mixed brood; tryin' first to keep the ducks out o' the water, and then seein' how much faster they grew than the chickens, she tried to get the chickens in also, and if she was a settin' down to keep the turkeys and guineas from runnin' all over creation, the ducks would git too warm, and when she would rise up to cool the ducks the turkeys would start on the run, and the guineas would follow the turkeys, and the ducks would run for the water to cool off and the old hen would only be left with her few chickens. Then she would run this way and that, tryin' to collect her brood again. It was dreadful hard on the old hen, and when autumn came she had lost so many feathers and all her meat, she was jist a rack o' bones, and when the first freeze came it took that dear old hen. I wouldn't have took a dollar fer her. But it's hard work raisin' a mixed brood."

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"That is just it," sez Mrs. Earnest. "Our State Superintendent is a very good superintendent, one of the very best, but his churches are a mixed brood."

"What do you mean?" asked Fanny; and Libby giggled and giggled.

"Well," sez Mrs. Earnest, "one church we served was made up of Presbyterians, Baptists, Disciples and Methodists, with just three original Congregationalists."

"Wasn't there a few Christians? And are Congregationalists more original than other people?" asked Fanny.

"You are, Fanny," sez Mrs. Earnest, "and as I was saying, that church was a mixed brood."

"Are we a mixed brood? And if we are; who is the turkey, and who is the duck?"

"Oh, be still, Fanny," sez I, "and let Mrs. Earnest finish explainin'."

"Oh, I was through," sez she.

Then Mrs. Pert spoke up and said:

"Will you please explain jist what the Syantists intended to do, and what their scheme was, and how Mr. Earnest stopped it?"

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“You know,” sez she, “I don’t find out much, as the Deacon ain’t much of a talker. Well, the first Mr. Earnest knew about it, he saw Mrs. Pickens and old Mr. Pickens and Mrs. Newlady going into the church with buckets and mops, and afterwards he went and looked, and they had scrubbed all out.”

“Wasn’t it imaginary dirt, and imaginary mops?” asked Fanny.

“That was on Tuesday afternoon,” continued Mrs. Earnest. “So Mr. Earnest commenced to look into the matter. He asked old Mr. Pickens what they intended to do, and he replied that ‘Most of the Scientists hed paid liberly toward building the church, and they meant to use it.’ ‘At what hour do you wish it?’ asked my husband. ‘We intend to begin using it at 3 o’clock in the afternoon.’ ‘But,’ said Mr. Earnest, ‘that is the hour the Junior Endeavor meets.’ ‘Well,’ the old man said, kind of mysterious like, ‘we’ll soon be using it at all hours.’ My husband didn’t say much, but he got the old gentleman to tell him their plan. ‘You are aware that we have not a permanent title to the church

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property; it is to be held by our denomination as long as we exist in sufficient numbers; but there is a clause stating that it can be made over to any other denomination by the majority vote of a regular church meeting, and the consent of two trustees, provided that another denomination has been holding regular services. Now you know that twelve of our members have become Scientists, but they have not withdrawn from the church. One trustee is a Scientist, and another has no church preference, but is favorable to the Scientists on account of business relations with them. They expected to use the church awhile, announce a business meeting of the church as quietly as possible, get the twelve Scientists out to the meeting and the two trustees, and vote the church over to the Scientists before our people realized what was going on. Mr. Earnest went to the trustees Tuesday evening and told them not to let the Scientists have the church, and they said that they had already consented. Then Mr. Earnest said that they must withdraw their consent, but they refused to do so. Then Mr.

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Earnest looked up the deed and found that only recognized Evangelical denominations could hold the property, and he held that the Scientists were not recognized as such. Then the trustees wrote the State Superintendent, and he wrote them to let the Scientists have the church. So on Sunday morning, immediately after Sunday school, Mr. Earnest got a quorum of the members that were at Sunday school and stated the matter clearly to them, and they voted not to let the Scientists in. Then two of the trustees resigned, and we elected church members to fill their places, and it was all settled before the Scientists were dreaming of it. But they said that they would come in anyway. So Mr. Earnest and the trustees locked the church until time for evening services." And Mrs. Earnest smiled when she remembered how smoothly it was done.

"I guess that they did not have all their doubts eliminated," said Fanny.

"I don't see why they can't think a church fer themselves," sez I.

"They might all think a different kind o'



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architecture," sez Almira, "and hev a kind of a crazy lookin' effect."

"Well, you see now why I feel vexed at our Superintendent, don't you?" And Mrs. Stillman recurred to the old grievance.

"Well, seein' there was no harm done, I don't know as you should," sez I.

"Law me!" said Fanny, "it's 5 o'clock; I must go and help ma."

"There won't be much fer them to do," sez I. "Mrs. Dunlavy is a master hand at havin' every thing done before it 's needed."

We had an excellent supper, and Fanny hed some new doilies like Mrs. Earnest's. I expect Mrs. Earnest helped her to make 'em. My! but they was poorty. The supper tasted awful good, and there was lots left, even if there was so many more present than usual. Mrs. Dunlavy sent a lovely basketful to the Minister. It was enough for two or three meals, for I peeked in when Fanny was coverin' it up.

## FOURTEENTH MEETIN'.

D. K. GIVES UP SCIENCE, THE FIRST THING HE  
EVER DID GIVE UP.

"Well," sez I to Fanny the minute I arrove, bein' late, and every body there that was a comin', "I suppose that you be glad enough that D. K. is at home again, lookin' as well as ever."

"I be," sez she, kind o' mimicin' and comical, but she blushed redder than a poppy, and looked so confused that I was sorry thet I sed it, and sot down to work with my gloves on, so that everybody would look at me and laugh and fergit to look at Fanny. We sewed awhile, sayin' nothin', when Mrs. Griggs sez:

"I suppose that you all know that his arm will always be stiff."

"Dew tell!" sed Aunt Arimatha, measurin' a ruffle.

"I wonder if rubbin' with arnica wouldn't help it? Or if anybody could do anything?"

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sez Mrs. Loomis, and she was so interested that she actually laid down the apern she was hemmin'.

"Oh, no," sed Mrs. Griggs, "nothin' can ever be done; it is perfectly well, but it will always be stiff, there is no help for it."

I looked at Fanny, but her face was bent over her work, and she didn't look up.

"He has rented his farm to Philemus Silvernail and intends to go back to teaching," continued Mrs. Griggs.

"Silvernail?" sez I. "Philemus Silvernail; where hev' I heerd that name?"

"It is the young man Mr. Earnest married last fall," sed Mrs. Earnest.

"Not the one that Abner Groves' sister married, is it?" sez I.

"Yes," sez she, "that was the young man's name, and I am so glad that they are going to move. I think it was very unpleasant for her at home."

"It must have been," sez I, rememberin' how Abner's face looked.

"But haven't you heard?" asked Mrs. Griggs, in astonishment.

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“Heard what?” sez I.

“Why, Abner Groves has been dead three weeks. He took cold in his face when he was going home from Mrs. Pickens’, and some kind o’ acute throat trouble set in, and he died.”

“Poor boy,” sez I. “So his sufferin’ is over. I can’t help thinkin’ that it is a blessin’ when sich sufferers are taken out o’ their misery.”

“That may be true,” sez Fanny, “but Christian Science was no blessing to him. He suffered untold torment because he wouldn’t have a thing done to relieve him. Pa was over one night and sat up with him, and he said that his suffering was terrible.”

“Yes,” continued Mrs. Griggs, “he was worse after that. Mr. Silvernail was telling us that he went clean out of his head, and jist tried to gnaw his hands, and then they had the doctor come and give him something to keep him quiet and relieve the pain, so he died quite peaceful.”

“I wonder if he was prepared,” sez Fanny, and her eyes filled with tears. “I remember I said to him, ‘You had better spend what

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time you have left getting ready to go where there is no more suffering.' It was the very last thing that I ever said to him."

"I wish we could all remember of sayin' as much," sez I. "It seems as most of us are afraid to talk about our soul, or other people's, either."

"That's because we're too busy talkin' about 'em in other ways," sez Mrs. Dean, scrapin' the gathers in a check apern.

"That reminds me," sez Almira Jane, "that D. K.'s scrapin' together money enough to finish that new house."

"It's a good thing that he has it to scrape together," sez Fanny, half vexed.

"And I hear," sez Mrs. Dean, "that he hez give up Christian Science."

"Give up Christian Science!" sez Almira Jane, holdin' up both hands in astonishment. "Give up Christian Science! Well, it's the first thing he ever did give up."

At that Fanny flared up and sed right out, to the surprise of everybody but me:

"You can make all the fun you want to of him; it was foolish the way he did, but the

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best of folks make fools of themselves once in awhile, and some even twice in awhile; but he got punished bad enough, and has been bored over it so much, that he fairly despises the name of a bicycle; but he has give it all up and has come to his senses, and he will join the church if he is treated right, and not made fun of. He promised me that he would join right away after we are married."

We jist dropped our sewin' and stared. She was a lookin' right up, with her face shinin', and little pink flushes sweepin' over the white, sweet face, and such a glorious love light in her eyes, that none of us ever forgot it.

"You'll be a wife to be proud of," sez Mrs. Loomis.

"I wouldn't have told it," sneered Almira Jane, "if I was goin' to git married."

"If I am not ashamed to marry him, I don't see why I should be ashamed to own it," sez Fanny, pickin' up her work.

"Nor I," sez Mrs. Loomis. "If there's anything any of us can do to help you git ready, why don't be afraid to tell us."

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“Every thing is ready,” sez she, laughing, as she went out to help Mrs. Griggs set supper. While she was out we put our heads together and voted to give her the purtiest quilt we hed ever made in the Sewin' Circle, and Almira Jane made the motion, so she ain't spiteful like she appears to be. Mrs. Grippenny hesitated.

“We could 've got ten dollars for that quilt,” sez she, “but seein' it is fer Fanny Dunlavy I guess I kin vote to give it—I guess I kin.”

And we all laughed in spite of ourselves.

Mrs. Grippenny always reminds me of a flannin shirt that's been biled and then dipped in ice water. She's that shrunk up and narrer she ain't good fer much of anythin', and it makes me feel bad, seein' what a useful and comfortin' member o' sossociety she might hev' bin ef she hedn't shrunk up so.

While I was a thinkin' about it, the door opened, and Mrs. Griggs asked us out to as good a supper as I ever sot down to. Fanny and me took what was left to the Amos's,

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and we talked all the way about the weddin',  
and I suppose that is what the rest talked  
about on their way home. I suppose it was,  
but of course I don't know.



## FIFTEENTH MEETIN'.

FANNY AND D. K. MARRIED.

Fanny wasn't at this meetin,' but most o' the members was.

"Well," sez Mrs. Loomis, "I suppose she that was Fanny Dunlavy is now Mrs. D. K. Grimes."

We was all glad she introduced the subjec', fer we all wanted to talk about it.

"I suppose it was a fine wedding; I was so sorry I couldn't be there," and Mrs. Pert hove a deep sigh, and we believed all she sed was true.

"Yes," sez Mrs. Loomis, "it wuz a fine weddin.' Leander sed Fanny looked so sweet he forgot to notice any o' the decorations."

"That's jist like the men!" exclaimed Mirandy, who didn't approve o' the judgment o' men.

"But," sez Mrs. Griggs, "did you ever hear tell of a woman' lookin' so much at the groom that she didn't notice everything in the house? I never did."

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"Do tell me about how everything looked; then tell me about everything." And Mrs. Pert looked so interested that we all tried to tell her to once.

"The poortiest thing was the heart," sez Almira Jane.

"The heart!" exclaimed Mrs. Pert, astonished like.

"Yes; over the place where they stood was a beautiful heart covered with smilax and white roses, and stuck through it was the cutest dart, all trimmed in smilax and red carnations. My, it was jist too cute fer any thing. Mrs. Pickens was standin' next to me, and she whispered:

"How erronious! How misleading!" The human heart has no emotions—it is the mind—all is mind."

"How would you represent it?" I asked. "What kind of an emblem would you use?"

"There are no emblems needed in the exalted realm of which I speak."

"But," sez Mrs. Loomis, "I thought that fixin' over the table was pootier than the heart."

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“What was it?” interrupted Mrs. Pert, who waz so interested that she couldn't wait to hear it told.

“Oh,” continued Mrs. Loomis, “it was a wreath o' the sweetest smellin' carnations, with red and white ribbons alternatin', leadin' from the wreath down to each plate, and each one waz to pull their ribbon, and two long stemmed carnations came to them to keep. Oh! but they was nice. I'm goin' to keep mine always; and Mrs. Pickens set next to me; she pulled her ribbon and whispered to me and sed: ‘I do it to keep from looking odd; I have no need to, for there is no material, and I can have mental flowers at all seasons.’”

Then Mirandy spoke up and sed:

“She still has her house plants and takes as much care o' 'em as ever. Her Hibiscus she sot sich store by got full o' scaly bugs and she give it mental treatment regular fer three or four weeks, but it kept a lookin' worsen and worsen. I come in on unexpected t'other day and she was sousin' it good in soapsuds and kerocene. I didn't say nothin',

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nor she didn't; I jist elevated my nose and sniffed, and then I laughed and she blushed, and that was all; neither of us sed anythin'."

We all smiled sum.

"But about the weddin'," interrupted Mrs. Pert.

"Oh, her dress was lovely," began Almira Jane.

"Oh, don't tell me about the dress," sez Mrs. Pert, "I saw it; Fanny brought it in fer me to see. She's that kind hearted and thoughtful; she knows that I love pretty things, and she had promised long ago that I should be one o' the first to see her dress."

"Did she show you her veil and slippers?" sez I.

"Oh no, jist the dress."

"Well, she had a lovely veil and white slippers, and real orange blossoms."

"Dew tell!" sed Aunt Arimatha, droppin' the scissors.

"Did you hear what Mrs. Pickens said to her when she kissed her?" asked Mrs. Dean.

"I did," sez I; "I was so close that I heard plain, fer I listened. She sed: 'Fanny, the

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Great All has deigned to make you my sister. You have led my dearly beloved brother out o' the path o' light and revealed truth, as Eve led Adam out o' the Garden; but I will lead you both back into the paths o' Divine Science, into light and love and harmony with the Great All.' ”

“What did Fanny say to that?” asked Mrs. Pert.

“Oh, she jist smiled as sweet as could be and sed, ‘I hope instead, that D. K. and I will succeed in leading you back, sister Elisabeth, to be the dear, kind, sympathetic woman you used to be.’ ”

“Fanny didn't da'st say that, did she?” sez Mrs. Stillman.

“Law, yes, jist as easy and natural; and Elisabeth looked so funny; then she sez: ‘I will never waver, Fanny; Light and Life and Love revealed will conquer error.’ ” Fanny didn't answer, she was too busy talkin' to others. I went with her after supper, when she went into the hall to see the presents. There was a nice lot, more than any girl around here ever got before. When she see the quilt the Society give her, the tears come

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in her eyes, and she squeezed my hand and sez, 'Everybody is so good to me, and always have been.' "

"When are they comin' back?" asked Mrs. Dean.

None o' us seemed to know. Then Mrs. Earnest sez:

"They will only be gone three or four weeks, and then they are comin' to Mrs. Pickens' for awhile, and Mr. and Mrs. Dunlavy are going to California."

"Yes," sez Mirandy, "and proper glad I'll be to hev Fanny with us fer awhile. It poorty near seems as if she's relation to me, now."

"I wonder if you'd all make sich a fuss over me if I was to git married?" sed Almira Jane, pretendin' to pout.

"I guess you'll soon see," sez I, "if the new teacher"—but she put her hand over my mouth.

Jist then Mrs. Griggs asked us out to tea and I never got that sentence finished.

We chatted about Fanny durin' tea time, and went home feelin' happier and younger than when we come.

It does old folks good to sympathize with the joys o' the young folks.

## SIXTEENTH MEETIN'.

MR. AND MRS. DUNLAVY GO TO CALIFORNIA—  
DISCUSS MRS. PERT'S BABY—WE MET AT  
MRS. BURNS' AND ALL MISSED FANNY.

“There won't be many out,” sez Mrs. Dean; “Fanny has gone, and Mr. and Mrs. Dunlavy started for California yesterday.”

“Yes,” sez Mrs. Griggs, “and Mrs. Loomis can't come; she has been with Mrs. Pert since last night.”

“Yew don't say so?” sez I.

“Dew tell!” sed Aunt Arimatha, droppin' her thimble.

“And I don't know as Mirandy 'll be here; she's goin' out to visit her brother in New-braskey the last o' this week,” continued Mrs. Griggs.

“My! It'll cost lots; it must seem like a waste o' money, ridin' on railroad keers,” lamented Mrs. Grippenny, usin' up the last wee bit o' thread in her needle.

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"I do not like to have Fanny come back to Mrs. Pickens's when Mirandy is away," sez Mrs. Earnest, who beats anybody lookin' ahead.

"Oh, Fanny is so healthy," sed Almira Jane, "there ain't no danger o' her gettin' sick; besides, D. K. will be there, and Mr. Pickens."

"No they won't; John Henry's goin' up into Dakota to look at some grazin' land, and D. K.'s goin' rite over to Pawnee to look after a school. They sent fer him and he is goin', and he is goin' to rent his new house."

"Law me!" sez I; "yew do beat anybody to find out things," and Mrs. Griggs looked pleased. I like to give a compliment as well as to git one.

"There comes Mirandy," giggled Libby, who was lookin' out o' the winder.

"What are you gigglin' at?" asked Almira Jane.

"Miranda walks so funny," sez she, gigglin' again.

"I don't know as it makes any difference how she walks," sez I, "so as she gits over the ground."



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"She certainly does that all right," sez Almira Jane, and Libby giggled again.

"What made me walk so fast?" sed Miranda, comin' in all out o' breath, and Almira and Libby both hoped that she hadn't heerd what they sed, "was to tell you that Mrs. Pert hez got a baby boy."

"Dew tell!" sed Aunt Arimatha, gittin' up and settin' down on to her glasses. "Dew tell!" she again ejaculated.

"Law me! I expect the Deacon is tickled out o' a year's growth," sez Mrs. Stillman.

"I expect he feels bigger than ever," sez I. "The first boy! Law! but they'll be proud o' him. Let's see; three girls and one boy. I expect they'll spile him."

"It costs less to raise a boy," sez Mrs. Grip-penny. "Ye kin dress 'em plainer."

"But they eat enough to make up the difference," affirmed Mrs. Dean, who hed raised four o' each, and ort to know.

"We lost a little calf last night," sed Miranda, and we laughed at the change o' subjects. Miranda laughed, too; then she went on: "The calf was sick all day, and Dorothea

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went out and gave it a mental treatment. 'You must fink fo' it, papa,' she said, and it was just too funny. 'You may have it, Dorothea,' John Henry said, winkin' at me. 'You can think for it.' And that poor little young one tried to stay awake all last night thinkin' for that sick calf, and sayin' a lingo that Elisabeth hes taught her. But she finally dropped to sleep. The first thing she did this mornin' was to run out to the barn. She looked so funny when she came back. I asked her if it was dead. 'Yes, Aunt Manna, it's dieded. I dess an erro' dot into my finker, or mebbly it des died; 'tause it died.' 'I guess that was it,' said John Henry, and we all laughed, even Elisabeth."

We were laughin', too, when Mrs. Loomis came in; but we all stopped when we see the expression of her face.

"What's the matter?" we asked. "Is Mrs. Pert—?"

"No," sed she, not waitin' fer us to finish the question, "but the baby is dead."

"Dead!" we exclaimed.

"Yes, and it's better off; we were so thank-

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ful when it was over; it only lived a few hours."

"Why! Why!" sez I. "How could you be—?"

"Oh," sez she, "it wasn't right; it was the most awful lookin' sight! There wa'n't no coverin' over one whole side o' its face and neck."

"Law me!" sez I. "What a shame!"

"Yes," sez she, "and it was sich a nice boy baby. Mrs. Pert don't know it; we laid it out with that side on the pillow, and put a lace cap on, so you can't see it at all; and the other side is so poorty."

"What a shame!" sez I. "How did the Deacon take it?"

"He feels bad enough," sez she, "but is thankful that his wife don't know."

We talked quite awhile, askin' questions, and wondered how it happened, and feelin' sorry for the Deacon and hopin' that Mrs. Pert would never learn anything about it.

"A birth mark is one of the strangest things there is," sez Mrs. Earnest, "and one of the laws of nature I can not understand."

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"I don't see why God lets 'em happen," sez Mrs. Griggs.

"But seein' He does let 'em happen," sez I, "people ought to be made stay out o' public places thet hev any kind o' horrible thing the matter with them."

"Yes," sed Mrs. Loomis, "they ort. If Abner Groves had stayed to home—"

"If them Syantists hedn't told him to on-cover his face," sed Mrs. Dean, contemptuous like, "it wouldn't 've happened. Don't blame poor Abner—put the blame where it belongs, I say."

"Well! Well! I guess you'd better ajourn yer meetin'," sed Mrs. Loomis, "seein' there is so few out. I hev' to go home, and Mrs. Pert wants Mrs. Earnest to come over, and Mrs. Griggs, if she feels like it."

So we folded up our work and ajourned, but before we went Mrs. Dean insisted on us comin' out to tea, as she hed it a'most ready, and we did; fer it wouldn't 've been right to go away without eatin' when she'd gone to all the trouble o' gittin' it fer us. We didn't hardly know what to do with the things that was left, since the Amos's got well. I expect there was some things left thet'll spile—but maybe not, it bein' cold weather.

## SEVENTEENTH MEETIN'.

### FANNY'S DEATH.

We were all glad that the meetin' was to be at Mrs. Earnest's, fer some how it seemed more fittin' thet it should be there.

You could see the sorry look in Mrs. Earnest's eyes when she opened the door fer us to come in, and as fer me, I hedn't no more 'n got my wraps off, when I just begun cryin', fer I couldn't help it to save my life.

"She allus use to be here among the very first," sez I.

"Yes, the blessed dear; but she won't meet with us no more in this world." And Mrs. Loomis wiped her eyes on the corner o' the apern she was makin'.

"Don't do that," sez Mrs. Grippenny, "it won't sell fer so much if it's soiled."

But none o' us took any notice; we're gettin' more charitable than we used to be.

"I wish I had back all the spiteful things I used to say," sez Almira Jane, goin' to the

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winder and lookin' out toward the cemetery, while the tears fell down onto her best waist, and she takin' no notice.

“You ain't the only one, Almira Jane, thet looks toward the cemetery with regretful eyes.”

And we looked up to see who spoke. It was Mrs. Griggs, and I knew by her eyes she meant herself; but what she was regrettin' none of us will ever know.

“What's done can't be ondone, Almira Jane,” sez I, and I know Fanny never remembered 'em a moment after they was sed.”

“Oh yes, she did,” sez she, and she broke down and sobbed. “I was in the day before she died, and she was out o' her head, and she tossed her arm up so tired like, and sed, ‘I don't think D. K. is stingy,’ and then she looked so glad fer a minute; ‘not with me, he isn't; he's good to me.’” I went up and kissed her, and she kind o' moaned like and said: ‘D. K. never made a fool of himself but once, Almira, and now he's going to join the church.’ I know she did remember, for I

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don't think she knew me when she was talkin'."

"Well, our regrets can be nothing compared to some people's," sez Mrs. Stillman.

"I don't believe sich folks are capable of regrets," replied Mrs. Griggs.

"Oh yes they be," maintained Mrs. Loomis. "I know Elisabeth Pickens is consumed with regrets and self reproach, but she's that sot she'd die before she'd own it. Just before the funeral I went into her bed room; she calls it her 'bow-door' since she got Syance. You know from the time D. K. got home she's staid in her bed room. Well, I went in and sot down by her, and I sed: 'Elisabeth, I am jist as sorry fer you as I can be; I know that you meant to do right; it's the fault o' your doctern, Elisabeth, and I beg of you to give it up. Come out with me and see Fanny,' sez I, 'and, standin' by her coffin give up this delusion that has cost her her life, and she'll look down from heaven and be glad,' sez I. Oh! Mrs. Loomis, I can't!" she cried, "I can't!! don't ask me; I can't bear to see her eyes.' 'They're closed now,' sez I, 'and her face is

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settled into a look o' glory, and the pinched and sufferin' look hez all gone.' 'Oh, Mrs. Loomis!' she cried, again layin' her head on my bosom. 'Her eyes looked just like the eyes of a pet fawn I had when I was a girl, that pa accidentally shot, and it came and fell down and died at my feet. I have never forgotten the look in its eyes, and Fanny just kept looking at me like that. Oh! I can never forget her eyes.' "

"Don't tell me Elisabeth ain't regrettin' what she done."

"What she didn't do," corrected Mrs. Dean, who hasn't much sympathy fer the errin'.

"To think," sez Mrs. Griggs, that last meetin' we was all talkin' so gay about her weddin', and her future prospects, and now she is in the grave dressed jist like she was fer her weddin'. It seems the saddest thing that has ever happened to us."

"In the midst of life we are in death," replied Mrs. Earnest. "Do you remember what Fanny's last words to Abner Groves was? I often think of it. Surely Fanny, as young as she was, was the best one to be taken away."



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And some how we all felt that Mrs. Earnest's words were true.

"Yet she needn't hev been took," sez Mirandy, with some warmth. "If I hed been there and anything hed been done in time, she 'd have lived to be a blessin' to this town and this church fer years and years." And Mirandy jerked the bastin' threads out with a snap.

"How was she when you first got home?" asked Mrs. Dean.

"Mrs. Loomis knows well enough how she was." Mrs. Loomis nodded and Mirandy went on. "I found her in the spare bedroom, where there ain't been a mite o' fire this winter, and her eyes were a shinin' like stars, and her cheeks were as red as blood, and she was coughin' herself to death. 'Why, Fanny Dunlavy,' sez I, fergittin' her name was Grimes. 'What on the yarth's the matter?' 'Please, Elizabeth, do something for me, anything.' 'Ma! Oh ma! I'm sick. Ma, why don't you give me a drink?' 'There, D. K., how does that look? Ain't that pretty?' and she toyed with the quilt and moaned and

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coughed. I seen how it was in a minute, and remembered how it was when I hed a claim. So I flew around and got her some water, and went fer Mrs. Loomis as fast as my legs would carry me. When we got back John Henry hed come home. I pinto to the bed room, and he looked in. 'Doctor been up?' sez he. I shook my head. 'How long have you been home?' sez he. 'Jist come,' says I. He turned around and went out, and in about ten minutes he got back with the doctor. I expected Elisabeth to interfere, but she jist went into her bed room, a sayin' as she went: 'The great All-Wise, the All Good, the One Universal Mind, knows that I have been faithful to revealed light, and done nothing to encourage error. I've given her treatments faithful every day, and now I am not responsible.' And we was glad thet she give in without a scene. Mrs. Loomis hurried around doin' what the doctor sed to do. 'What is it?' sez I. 'Newmonnia,' sez he. And I knew by the way he looked that it was too late. 'Where is D. K.?' sez he, a lookin' at John Henry. 'Over at Pawnee a lookin' after a

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school,' sez John Henry. 'Send for him,' sez the doctor, 'and send an urgent telegram to Mr. and Mrs. Dunlavy. Tell them to start home at once. Make it very plain, Mr. Pickens. Do you understand?' John Henry nodded and went out. 'What does this mean? Why was I not called sooner?' And I thought that the doctor would bite my head off. We told him how it was, and he jist glared. 'It is too late,' sez he, lookin' at Fanny, who hed dropped into a kind of stupor. 'Oh, doctor! She ain't dyin', is she?' sez I, every bit o' strength a oozin' out o' my jints. 'Not yet,' sez he, 'but there's little hope.' And Mrs. Loomis nodded again, and Mirandy went on. "We did what we could, and set up that night."

"Then I come," sez I, wishin' the people to know it. Mirandy nodded.

"But the wust was when D. K. come, jist a little before day light on that 3 o'clock train," sez Mrs. Loomis, wipin' her eyes. "Fanny didn't know him. She kept moanin' and tossin' and callin' her ma, and askin' somebody to do somthin', anything, fer her.

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D. K. went up to the bed and knelt down and put his arms about her and his face down close to her. 'Don't you know me, Fanny?' sez he. 'I've come; I 'll do anything for you, dear one. Don't you know me, sweetheart?' She opened her eyes wide, but they wan't the right look in 'em. He see it and choked. Poor feller, it broke his heart; you could see it did. I walked out and let him be with her a while. I knew it wouldn't harm her none; she didn't notice nothin' and couldn't get excited. When I went back in her head was layin' on his arm, and one of her hands was cuddled up into his neck and the other holdin' his sleeve, and she was asleep, with the look o' heaven on her face. And he didn't da'st to breathe scasely, fer fear o' wakin' her. I hoped that it was a turn fer the better, but we soon knew it wan't, fer she awoke moanin' again. 'She knew me,' sed D. K. 'She kissed me once and asked me not to go away again, and I never will. I'll never leave again,' sez he, 'while I live, if the Lord will only spare her to me.' I didn't say anythin'; I couldn't. 'I know'd there wan't any hope,' sed I, 'as

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soon as I seen her. When the doctor come the second time he kept askin' how soon we thought Mr. and Mrs. Dunlavy would git home, and he didn't leave, but took off his great coat and asked Mirandy to git him some hot coffee; he hed jist come in from a long, cold drive. He sed that maybe we could keep her alive with stimulants until her father and mother came, and he didn't leave us all that night."

"He is the kind of a doctor I like to see," sez Mrs. Earnest, "one that has a heart and isn't ashamed of it."

We all said so, too. We love our doctor next best to the Minister; maybe more, seein' he's older and hez always lived with us.

"But jist before day light," continued Mrs. Loomis, "doctor motioned to me, and I see that our efforts hed failed. D. K. was kneelin' by the bed; he hedn't left her hardly a minute since he got home. She opened her eyes; I think she knew us. She put her hand on D. K.'s face and then said plain enough fer us all to hear, 'Forgive Elisabeth, and try—to get her—to join—church; and you join,'

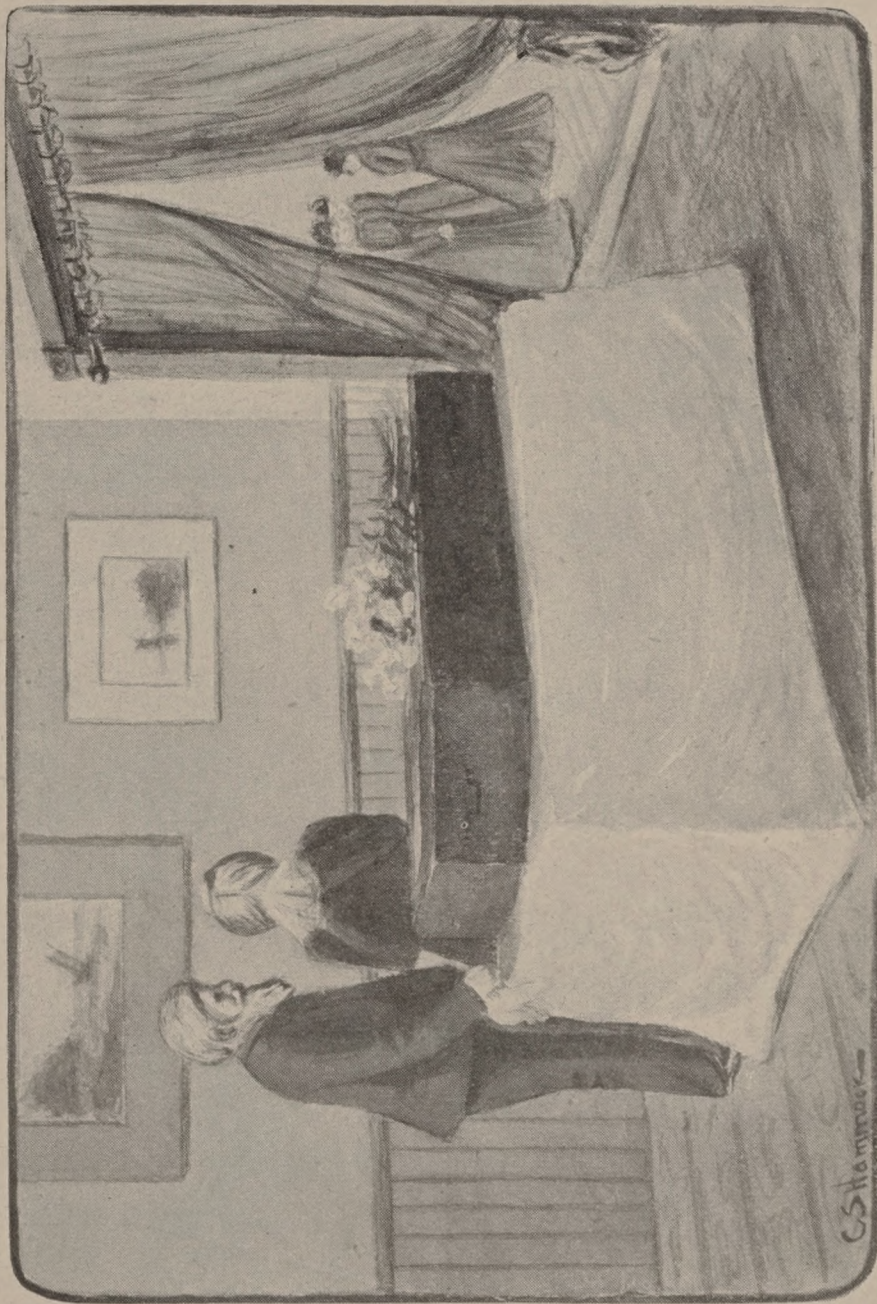
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she said, lookin' up at D. K. 'Yes! Yes, love, I will,' he sed, 'I surely will.' 'Everybody is so good to me,' she said, and then moaned and tossed a little, and the grey look spread over her face again. She opened her eyes wide—wide with that glory look in 'em—and sed: 'As for me, I shall be satisfied—when I—awake in—Thy—like—ness.' We all stood with our heads bowed, while her spirit left her poor sufferin' body, and felt as if we'd been close to heaven—poorty near clost enough to see in. The doctor twitched D. K. hard, and he rose up and tried to steady himself. 'God help you,' sed the doctor as he led him out o' the room."

Here Mrs. Loomis broke down, and we all cried softly.

"Then," sez I, beginnin' where she left off, "Mrs. Loomis went and told Elisabeth. Mirandy and me and Almira Jane did what must always be done at such times, and when every thing was arranged, and the house put to order, we see a carriage drive up, and it was her pa and ma. They'd come to LaCroix to save time, and driv over."





“OH LORD, WHY WAS MY DAUGHTER, MY ONLY CHILD, SACRIFICED  
TO THIS MODERN MOLOCH?”



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"Yes," sez Mrs. Loomis, "and ye did wrong sendin' me out to tell 'em; I hed already hed all I could bear."

"But you've the kindest way," sez I; "that's why we sent you."

"Well," sez she, "I shall never fergit how they looked, and when Mrs. Dunlavy looked at Fanny and said: '*Oh, Lord! Why was my daughter, my only child, sacrificed to this modern Moloch?*' It seemed as if my heart would burst. And when Mr. Dunlavy said: 'The law shall put an end to this abomination.' I told 'em what Fanny said almost the last thing she spoke on earth."

"It was the saddest funeral I ever attended," sez Mrs. Dean.

"But what a good sermon Mr. Earnest preached," sed Mrs. Stillman. "I will never forget how he read the last part o' the fifteenth chapter of I. Corinthians. And the text was Fanny's last words. I remember how she said: 'As for me, I shall be satisfied when I awake in Thy likeness.'"

So we kept talkin' over the sad events of the past week, and sheddin' honest tears o'

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sympathy, and as we folded up our sewin' and laid it away we made new resolves to live worthy to meet the dear one that we missed so much. Mrs. Earnest carried in a tray o' hot coffee and a plate o' simple cake; it seemed more fittin'. And again we was thankful that the meetin' hed been at her house.

## EIGHTEENTH MEETIN'.

### TWO OR THREE GIVE UP SCIENCE.

We met at Mrs. Pert's, as she hed especially invited us, and Mrs. Pert is now the acknowledged leader of Barleyville. Mrs. Pickens used to be, but she ain't any more since she took up Syance.

Mrs. Pert looks awful bad, but she is such a sweet woman, and we like her better than ever.

"God blesses sorrow to some people," said Mrs. Griggs to me in a whisper, as we took off our wraps.

"Yes," sez I, "if it don't turn them to stone it makes them more lovin' en kind."

"I was afraid that it would turn D. K. to stone; he looked so bad for awhile, and he looks bad yet, but more resigned like," sed she.

When we got to sewin' and talkin' Mrs. Pert remarked that she was so thankful to hear that D. K. had joined the church. She

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said that she was afraid that he would put it off and then back out entirely, as so many do who promise things to a friend on their death bed.

“He promised Fanny long before that,” sez I; “he promised her before they wus married.”

“I was so surprised when I see Mrs. Huffman git up and go for'ard, when Mr. Earnest asked if they were others ready to come,” sed Mrs. Dean.

“Did she?” asked Mrs. Barlow, who don't git out much since Jim was burned.

“Yes, and Mrs. Newlady got right up and follered her; and then Mrs. Huffman's oldest boy went; then Mr. and Mrs. Silvernail, thet's moved on to D. K.'s farm.”

“Dew tell!” exclaimed Aunt Arimatha, breakin' her needle. “I wish I could have been there to give 'em the right hand o' fellowship; but little Cephus was threatened with croup, and I couldn't leave.”

“You do wonders fer them children,” sez I.

“And to think,” sez Almira Jane, “they are only step-sister's children.”

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"And five of 'em," sed Mrs. Stillman.

"They were orphans," Aunt Arimatha replied simply, fer she was a woman of few words but many deeds. She was bringin' up them five children of her dead step-sister's. And she hez to work fer their livin', too, not havin' any property to speak of (jist a cute little mite o' a house and garden). But the Lord prospers her, and them children is all doin' well.

"You can give them the hand o' fellowship any time," sez Mrs. Loomis. "I often tell Leander a helpin' hand in time o' trouble is the best hand o' fellowship I know of."

"Well, I am thankful that they are givin' up their Syance," sed Mrs. Griggs, complacently, "and I am willin' to give 'em a helpin' hand any time."

"As Mr. Earnest and I were coming up on the train last week from the District Association, I heard the funniest conversation. An old lady was telling her experience to a friend, and I learned that there were people outside of Barleyville giving up their belief in Christian Science."

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“What was she a sayin’?” asked Mrs. Griggs. I wanted to know myself, but I don’t believe in actin’ as if you was e’t up with curiosity.

“The old lady said that she had read Science and Health, with key to the scriptures, and quite a number of magazines, and had attended several lectures, and could embrace a great deal of their teaching, but she could ’nt quite believe that there was no existence or reality in matter; nor that Christ’s suffering and death was purely a mental condition. But she wanted to be convinced, so she got ready one morning to attend a lecture that promised to be unusually clear. Being obliged to have dinner on time, she put a four pound roast of beef in an iron pot on top of the hard coal burner to cook while she was gone. She came home two hours later convinced that all material existence was a delusion. But she said: ‘When I opened the door the awfulest odor came out; and dear conscience! that beef had boiled dry and burned up, and the rooms were full of smoke—and that

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smell! that awful smell! I grabbed up two woolen holders and run for that pot, but they hadn't more than touched the sides than sizz! scorch! they curled up crisp as a fried cake. And if the smell in that house was bad at first, it was indescribable now. I made another effort, and with an old cotton apron I managed to carry it out of doors. It wasn't many seconds until I saw all the neighbors closing their windows, and some of them had been Scientists a good while longer than I; but they preferred to keep that smell out rather than to eliminate it afterwards. Well, that odor, bad as it was, did me good; well, there may be no existence in that beef, but it has certainly emitted its share of smell, and really I do not think six inches square of imagination could ever have penetrated everything in the house as that did.' Then the old lady leaned over and said very confidentially: 'I had to use four ounces of the best perfume to make that house endurable, and I haven't been to a Christian Science lecture since.' And the dear old lady leaned her head back contentedly, and never once

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suspected that her experience had been more of a comedy than a tragedy."

"Either is good in its place," sez I, "if it only fetches folks to their senses."

"But I am really glad that so many here are giving up their delusions and joining the church. We must never allude to anything that will wound them, or recall any unpleasant things in their presence."

"Land, no!" sez I. "They wouldn't be any use doin' that; besides, most everybody makes fools o' themselves once in a while," as Fanny used to say, and some o' them twice in awhile."

"We hed some fun with Dorothea last night," said Mirandy. "She hed her first spell o' toothache, and Elisabeth made her say that same old lingo about God bein' good—as all Christians know and always hev'—and bein' all, and all bein' good. 'Now,' said Elisabeth, 'say it don't hurt.' 'But it do!' she cried. 'But you must deny it, pet, and say that it don't hurt.' 'But it do hurt, mama, and you telled me 'at I musn't yie, and my Aunt Manna' says it's wicked to yie,' and



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she wouldn't say it, either. And Elisabeth was jist spankin' her to make her say it, when she was taken suddently with jumpin' toothache herself. I was plum glad, though I tried to feel sorry fer her. She set and read Syance 'n Health with key to the scriptur' till midnight, but not gittin' any comfort, she took a hot iron and went to bed. This morning her face was all swelled up, and she took Dorothea and went to Pawnee to the dentist. I'll tell you all about it next time we meet," sez she.

Then we put away our work and Mrs. Pert served light refreshments, consistin' o' angel cake an' tea, fer we hed asked her to not go to the trouble o' gittin' a supper, not knowin' she hed a hired girl.

## NINETEENTH MEETIN'.

MRS. PICKENS HEZ SOME DENTAL WORK DONE.

Well, most of us hed heard off 'n on thet Mrs. Pickens hed a purty hard time of it at the dentist's down at Pawnee, and we knew good and well thet Mirandy 'd tell us all about it at the Society. So we come fairly early. Mrs. Griggs didn't hev her dishes done when I arrove, so I turned in and wiped them, and swept up while she took off her wrapper and got into a good dress. She hedn't more'n got ready when the whole Society arrived simultaneously together; that is, all but Mirandy; she wan't with 'em. I could see a disappointed look in every face, but I wasn't goin' to let on, but Almira Jane did, fer she sed right out:

"I do wish Mirandy 'd 've come; I'm jist dyin' to hear how Mrs. Pickens got along gettin' them teeth fixed."

"I guess she won't spank no more little folks fer cryin' with the toothache; at least

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not fer quite a spell, if all I hear about it's so," said Mrs. Loomis.

"Did she git' em plugged or pulled?" asked Mrs. Grippenny, who was as savin' o' words as she was o' anything else.

"Well, she had quite a bit done," answered Mrs. Dean, who hed been down to Pawnee to the same dentist the next day after Elizabeth hed been there.

"She had two or three nerves taken out and some fillings put in, and a jaw tooth pulled."

"I don't believe in fillin'; I allus git mine pulled if they ache; Mr. Grippenny allus says it's lots cheeper, and saves time."

"Law me," says I, "what's five or six dollars if ye ken save a tooth? And besides, false ones cost more 'n keepin' the old ones fixed."

"I ain't aimin' to git any false ones; I eat soft vittels mostly; Mr. Grippenny lows false teeth ain't wuth what they cost."

We was all kind o' still a minute, and she looked at us kind o' agitated. Then she busted right out and owned up, thet she jist

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did want a set powerful bad, an' would git 'em, too, if Mr. Grippenny was willin'. I was jist on the p'int o' askin' her what they intended to do with all their money, when they got starved to death a eatin' soft vittels, but before I got to it Almira Jane saw Mirandy a comin', and we all felt so glad that we forgot everythin' else, fer we could hear how Mrs. Pickens was; and thet's what we come fer; leastwise it was partly thet.

"I declare to goodness," sez she, takin' off her bonnet, "I'm that flustered; I thought I was not goin' to git to come."

"Hev company?" asked Almira Jane.

"Land, no! But Elisabeth 's that bad, I hated to leave her; but I was so tuckered out, that John Henry said that he would stay in and let me come, for he thought it 'd do me good."

"You needn't sew, if you're thet beat out." And Mrs. Loomis took the apern thet Aunt Arimatha hed handed to Mirandy.

"How is Elisabeth?" sez I.

"Oh, Elisabeth's bad off, powerful bad off. She's been to Pawnee four or five times, and

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hed the awfulest time; she was gittin' some crown work done, and the shakin' and jarrin' got the tooth all out of fix, and he hed to pull it out and put it back in again."

"Dew tell!" interrupted Aunt Arimatha, droppin' her patterns.

"When I get one out it will stay out," sez I.

"Did he charge extra fer puttin' it back?" faltered Mrs. Grippenny, as she rolled the last bit o' bastin' thread back on the spool.

"We ain't got the bill yet, but I expect it 'll be enough; it most generally is. Her face is all swelled up, one eye is swelled shet, and she ain't slept two whole hours together fer three days n' nights. John Henry's that uneasy he can't rest a minute, and I've nigh about wore my feet off runnin' from the stove to the bed with sacks o' hot salt and bricks dipped in vinegar."

"Does she complain much?" enquired Mrs. Dean.

"Not very much; but she don't deny the pain, and she cried yesterday when little Dorothea climbed upon the bed and patted her face and said, 'Po' mama do hurt,' and 'My

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mama won't yie, tause it's wicked to yie.' I slipped out then, fer I thought Dorothea would do better without an older person around makin' a blunder and spilin' the works o' providence.

"I wish every one was as thoughtful," exclaimed Mrs. Earnest, who was extra fond o' quotin' "a little child shall lead them."

"I'm sorry as I can be that Elisabeth is sick, and I'm goin' home early; then I'm comin' over with some hops and a little Japanese stove that Leander's oldest brother's youngest boy Sammy Loomis, sent to me from Californy, and I'm goin' to stay all night and let you git a rest. Yer eyes are as heavy as lead now, and you will be gittin' another spell o' newralgy."

And Miranda looked at Mrs. Loomis awful grateful. We could hev' any of us offered to do the same thing, but some how Mrs. Loomis is one of the kind that does things instead of thinkin' about doin' them.

"Do you think that Mrs. Pickens would like to have callers?" asked Mrs. Earnest, who was always willin' to do things but felt a little shy, bein' almost a stranger.

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"I think Elisabeth is well nigh past thinkin' what she does want; but I'd be mighty pleased to hev you come, and so would John Henry."

"You don't mean the first o' thet, Mirandy?" sez I.

"Well, yes, I do; I think Elisabeth is threatened with brain fever or some bad kind o' sickness, and I jist feel powerful uneasy about her, powerful uneasy."

And Miranda wiped a tear on the corner of the sheet she was hemin'. She insisted on doin' somethin', so we let her hem a sheet. We're makin' it to send to the Old Ladies' Home, and we're usin' nice bleached muslin, too.

"Old ladies can feel," sez I, "if they can't see." So we voted to git bleached.

Jist then Mrs. Griggs come in and asked us out to supper. It was the best supper we ever had at Mrs. Griggs'; not but what they was allus good, but this 'n was better 'n good, it was extra-or-dinary. A niece of hers was there from Chicago, and she made a jelly-tin salad, 'n some froze stuff called frap, some-

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thin' like ice cream, and somethin' like old fashioned floatin' island, and lady fingers to be e't with it. But I don't believe no lady ever hed sich long brown crumbly fingers as them. But law, they tasted good, and that's the main thing. There was so much left that Mrs. Loomis and Almira Jane carried a basket full over to Mr. Crandle's. His aged ma hez come to live with him, and we don't mean to fergit the aged in our own midst, while we kin send so much away to other old ladies that we ain't been introduced to. So we jist do both, and feel better accordingly.



## TWENTIETH MEETIN'.

### MRS. PICKENS LOSES HER MIND.

We thought that Mrs. Barlow would begin to feel bad, it hed been so long since we met to her house, so we kind o' got together and concluded to meet with her, without lettin' her know that we was comin'.

So we jist took a basket apiece, thinkin' it wouldn't hurt us to furnish our own refreshments, and we all knew that we'd feel some like bein' refreshed, after walkin' away down there, and sewin' all afternoon.

"Nobody can beat Mrs. Barlow when it comes to makin' coffee," panted Mrs. Stillman as we tried to catch up with Mrs. Dean and Mrs. Griggs, who was a little ways ahead.

"Yes," sez I, "we'll git our hot coffee all right at Mrs. Barlow's, and so we jogged along, not bein' able to catch up. We was the last ones there, and didn't git to see whether Mrs. Barlow was surprised or not;

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but she had a real glad look; but land o' mercy, she's aged awful since Jim got burned. I whispered to Mrs. Dean when I got a chance, "She's purtneer white headed. But she's hed lots o' trouble in her time," sez I, thinkin' more o' her recent trouble than I hed fer a long time.

"How is Jim, now?" asked Mrs. Earnest.

I hated to hear her ask, fer I jist thought it would make Mrs. Barlow feel bad; she hez always been so sensitive about Jim. But somehow she seemed anxious to tell us, and I wondered at it, until she said: "The heart of a woman is some like a bottle of fermentin' liquid—it's got to hev' an outlet, or jist bust plum to pieces."

And we all knew thet was so.

"Jim's failin," sed she; "since he can't work he's goin' into a decline; he won't ever git well. I guess the Lord knew how I worried about him and lay awake nights wonderin' what would become of him if pa or me was took. So the Lord's a goin' to take him first, and seein' how helpless he is, I've come to feel thankful—kind of fearful and sick at

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heart. He's been sich a care; I'll miss him so. But it's all love and kindness on the part of the Lord, and—and—"

She sobbed right out. Then I see Mrs. Earnest reach over and take her hand in a warm, sisterly way, thet did her lots o' good. We didn't say any more about Jim, and I soon got Mrs. Barlow out to the kitchen to make the coffee, fer I know'd that would help to git it out o' her mind.

We all knew thet somethin' awful hed happened in Barleyville, worse then Jim bein' burnt, or anything, but we didn't like to talk about it, and wouldn't hev' if Mrs. Barlow hedn't come back in to ask why Mrs. Loomis hedn't come to the meetin'. So we hed to tell her. That is, Mrs. Dean did.

"Why, Mrs. Barlow," sez she, "hain't you heard about Mrs. Pickens yet?"

"Land, no!" sez she. "Has she got another doctern?"

"O, no; but the poor thing has been sick, awful sick."

"Dew tell!" sed Aunt Arimatha, upsettin' the work basket.

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“Why, ain't you heard it, either?” sez I, thinkin' every body knew it.

“Why, no; I ain't heard only about her teeth.”

“Well,” sez I, “thet beats me. I thought everybody knew it.”

“What's happened?”

And Mrs. Barlow trembled, rememberin' what she'd suffered on account o' Elisabeth's doctern.

“She never got over that work on her teeth; her nerves were all unstrung and she took brain fever; that is, she had something like brain fever, but much worse. I was there when Dr. Goodman told them what the trouble was.”

And Mrs. Griggs wiped her eyes, and two or three more did the same.

“John Henry took it awful hard, and Miranda was jist hart-broke.”

“I don't understand what you mean,” sed Mrs. Barlow.

“Why, Mrs. Pickens hez lost her mind, or gone crazy, as it's called fer commin,” sez I, who am too much to speak out when others is talkin'.

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“Yes,” sez Mrs. Dean, “Your trouble was bad enough; Mrs. Hoffman’s was sad; and it was hard to give up Fanny; and Mrs. Pert had her share. But of all the trouble that Syance has brought on to Barleyville, their trouble is the worst. I was in yesterday, and there lay Elisabeth, apparently as well as ever, and yet there was such a difference. It was like a body without a soul—or not exactly like that, either—it was like bein’ in a nightmare forever and bein’ unable to wake up.”

“What did she lose her mind over?” asked Mrs. Barlow.

“Why, she thinks that she was the cause of Jim’s accident, and Fanny’s death, and she imagines that she can see Abner Groves carryin’ Mrs. Pert’s little baby ’round and ’round the bed, and hearin’ Fanny beg for a drop of water. And she just wears herself out cryin’: ‘I can’t come to you, Fanny; I can’t; I can’t.’ Oh, it was awful. I can see her and hear her yet.”

And so we talked on and on, fergittin’ all o’ Elisabeth’s faults and rememberin’ her as

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the Elisabeth we used to love and respect before she took up Syance. We hed our refreshments and our cup o' good coffee, and went quietly home, thinkin' of the great sorrows and changes that was taken place in Barleyville.

## TWENTY-FIRST MEETIN'.

### MRS. PICKENS CURED.

It hed been so stormy fer quite a spell, thet we hedn't been havin' our regular meetin's, but this bein' a fair day we was most all present. And a happier, more rejoicin' set o' women it 'd a been hard to find anywheres. Miranda was the first to speak.

"It jist seems too good to be true. But seein' 'tis true, I might jist as well go on bein' thankful.

"God still works in mysterious ways His wonders to perform," breathed Mrs. Earnest, softly.

"Law, yes," sez Mrs. Loomis, "He surely does. Six months ago we would have every one sed sich a thing was plum impossible. And now every one but poor Fanny has lived to see it."

"I believe she sees it, and is glad," sed Mrs. Dunlavy, softly, who hed been comin' to the

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meetin's regularly, though she hed never much to say since Fanny's death.

"Barleyville seems more like itself than it hez for more'n a year." And Mrs. Stillman's smile o' satisfaction was reflected on every one of our faces.

"What we need to do now," suggested Mrs. Earnest, "is to get Mrs. Pickens interested in church work, and help her to forget the past, with all its unpleasant associations."

"Law, yes," sed Mrs. Loomis, "and Elisabeth will be good help in the Society. She's been missed powerful by most all of us."

"And to think thet she got cured so quick, when me and John Henry was jist grievin' our hearts out, and cryin' some every time little Dorothea asked, 'When is mama tumin' home?' and we a tellin' her that it might be a long, long time."

And Miranda's face shined like anybody's does when the Lord gives them a bigger blessin' then they hev hed faith to ask fer.

"What did the big doctor at the institution say about her?" asked Mrs. Griggs.

"O, he said it all come along a readin' an'



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thinkin' on one thing, an' tryin' to live consistent to her perfeshin'; when there wa'n't nothin' consistent in it to live up to; an' then, he said, that things jist got to runnin' in her mind 'till they made her a 'Money Maniac,' though I didn't quite believe that, but may be 'twas so. She acted awful queer fer a long time, an' was awful hard to live with, but I never see her show no extra interest in money; leastwise only on'c't, an' that was when Jimmie O'Bryan come over to pay his rent on thet house o' her'n that her pa giv' her. He jist sot there a spell. Then he sez, sez he: 'Mrs. Pickens, would ye be afther givin' me a resait? It's a blissid hurry I'm in th' day to be shure, with the woife o' me wantin' her supper, and the childer as hungry as pigs.' 'But, Mr. O'Bryan, you haven't paid me yet,' sed Elisabeth. 'Shure now, an' ai'n't it yersilf that has been tellin' me woife that if ye belave a thing, an' kape right on belavin' that same, it would be thrue? "An' shure," says I to mesilf, 'Jimmie, ye are ow-in' the darlint more'n ye'r able to pay,' so says I to mesilf, "I'll jist be afther takin' up

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with the new doctern of 'em, God bliss 'em," an' so I'm afther belavin' it's been paid, Mrs. Pickens,' sez he. I laughed; I couldn't help it."

And Mrs. Grippenny, knowin' the value o' money, asked breathlessly: "What did Elisabeth do?"

"Well, fust she acted as if she'd hev' to giv' him the receipt in order to git a new convert to her doctern; but I see her a considerin' the matter; twenty-five dollars was a good deal to pay fer a convert, and besides, Jimmie O'Bryan hed the house fer a year, an' might keep right on believin' that the rent was paid till the crack o' doom. The Grimes' blood in Elisabeth couldn't see no sich waste o' good money. So she up and told him that he didn't understand the matter, and she couldn't possibly give him the receipt until she got the money. 'Shure an' if ye'll only think ye've got that same, it's a happy man ye'll be makin' o' Jimmie O'Bryan.' But Elisabeth come down purty firm, and that's the only time I ever see anything that could have been the cause o' 'Money Maniac.'"



C. S. HAMMOCK

"I'M AFTHER BELAVIN' IT'S BEEN PAID, MRS. PICKENS," SEZ HE."



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"I think you must have misunderstood the doctor," sed Mrs. Earnest. "He probably meant a monomaniac—a person with one idea."

"O, as fer that," sed Miranda, "she hed two or three idees, but they all run in the same directshun."

"I am more interested in knowin' how she feels now," sez I.

"Well, she don't say much about it to me; but she talked fer quite a spell to Mrs. Earnest, the other day, more than she hez to anyone else since she come back, and I think it might do some good if Mrs. Earnest would tell you how she feels."

"I do not like to repeat private conversations," sed Mrs. Earnest. "And I never betray a confidence that any one reposes in me; but I think that Mrs. Pickens would be glad to tell you how she feels; in fact, she said that she would like to have me explain some things to you, as she did not like to do it herself."

We all listened closely while Mrs. Earnest told us that Mrs. Pickens hed felt fer a good

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while before she went to Boston as if she was a goin' to break down. Her head hed ached fer a long spell, and she was some uneasy about her mind then, but she thought if she took up Syance she could be saved from all trouble, both mental and physical, but the first year hed been an awful struggle, with terrible results and a final break down.

She hadn't hardly finished sayin' it before the doctor's wife asked if that was why they all took it up. It reminded her of "Homeopathy." She's sich a strong "Alleypath" thet she loves to slur all the other 'paths. We don't blame her, fer we love the doctor and think thet his wife ought to stand by him.

And so we talked and talked, about docterns and 'pathies, till Mrs. Griggs asked why Almira Jane didn't come. Strange how we are learnin' to love Almira Jane most like we used to Fanny. She's gittin' so sweet and thoughtful, it makes her purtyer then ever.

"I guess Almira is quite busy these days," sed Mrs. Dean, significantly.

"Dew tell!" sed Aunt Arimatha, seein' the drift emegiately.

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“It’s no secret,” sed Mrs. Stillman. “She believes like Fanny did, that if a girl ai’n’t ashamed to marry a man, she oughtn’t to be ashamed to own that she’s goin’ to.”

This giv’ us somthin’ to talk over and look forard to. So after supper we adjourned early, each plannin’ what we could git to make Almira happy, thinkin’, o’ course, that we’d be invited.

## TWENTY-SECOND MEETIN'.

ALMIRA JANE MARRIED.

"Come in," sez Mrs. Loomis with that glad look I like to see on anybody's face when I arrive at their house. The tone an' the look make ye feel at home before ye git yer bunnet off.

"Law me!" sez I, "am I first again?"

"I'm rale glad," sez she, "fer I wanted to tell you, that Almira Jane an' her man 's goin' to be missionaries."

"Law!" sez I, "I ain't as surprised as I'd 've been a short time back. Almira hez been different ov late."

"We all hev," sez she softly.

Just then the others began droppin' in— Aunt Arimatha with the basket, an' Mrs. Griggs, an' Mrs. Dean with the quiltin' frames.

"Law me!" sez they in one breath, "I wish we met at the same house every time."



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"We might run out o' vittels," sez I, helpin' 'em to unload.

"When I hev' a load like thet to pack, I most wish I was a Syantist," sez Mrs. Griggs, breathless like.

"Ye might hev' a heavyer load than thet to carry if ye was," sez Mrs. Loomis. "Besides, we hev' seen it purty well proved thet denyin' one's burdens hez more of a tendency to add to 'em than it does to make 'em lighter."

"Thet's so," sez she, "but when I git kind o' played out I sometimes wish some o' their doctern wuz so."

"Some of it is," sed Mrs. Earnest. "I suppose that you have never heard that Mrs. Eddy borrowed almost all the logic there is in her book from the research of Mr. P. P. Quimby."

"No," sez I, "I never did; but I heard Mr. Earnest say she got it from the Panthers that lived in the dark ages."

"But," sez she, "you most likely misunderstood Mr. Earnest."

"Most likely I did," sez I, "I don't always hear good, and I ain't easy at gittin' new names."

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“There used to be a people or set of philosophers that taught nearly the same doctrine that Mrs. Eddy teaches, and they called themselves Pantheists,” sez Mrs. Earnest.

“There,” sez I, “that’s what Mr. Earnest sed; I remember now.”

“And Mrs. Eddy read Vedantism until her mind was all worked up, then when she met Mr. Quimby, who taught that mind controlled matter, and established the mind-cure treatment for all diseases, Mrs. Eddy combined his teachings with the old Hindoo philosophy (Pantheism) and called the result ‘Christian Science,’” sez Mrs. Earnest.

“I thought she had a revelation,” sed Aunt Arimatha.

“She saw the way revealed to make a fortune, and in my opinion that’s the only revelation she ever had.”

And Mrs. Pert expressed just what lots o’ folks think, but feel a little afeared of expressin’.

“I have no doubt,” continued Mrs. Earnest, “that Mrs. Eddy felt sure that she would make money out of her works. She is a

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woman that could have done good in the world, if she had called things by their right names and have laid emphasis upon the power of mind over matter, instead of denying matter altogether; but she has gone so far as to deny that Christ had ever lived in the flesh, or suffered for sinners, and how she could call such a dogma Christian is a mystery to me. I believe that a great many have been attracted to it on account of its supposed 'cures,' and still influenced by their early Christian training, they have not allowed her false philosophy to wreck their Christian hope."

"May be they ain't got their own wrecked yit, but if sich things hez happened every where else, as hez happened here, they're mighty apt to wreck a lot o' other people's hopes."

"True enough, Mrs. Griggs," said Mrs. Dunlavy, "or break their hearts, and yet, no one could be more willing than I am to welcome them back into the church and forgive all that is past."

"That's the Christian spirit, and if you kin

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do it, I guess the rest o' us ought to. I heard Mrs. Barlow say at Almira's weddin' that she hoped that Mrs. Pickens would come back into the church."

We'd all been thinkin' about the weddin', but nobody know'd how to git to talkin' about it without interruptin' Mrs. Earnest; but once we got started, we sed enough nice things to spoil any bride; but she wa'n't there to hear 'em.

"And besides," sed Mrs. Loomis, "if female societies must talk about absent members, it's a sight more sensible to talk good."

"I thought it lovely of Almira to give up wearing orange blossoms and using roses instead, just because she thought it would remind me of Fanny." And Mrs. Dunlavy dropped a tear on the block she was quiltin'.

"It was kind of her, and no bride in Barleyville ever carried orange blossoms except Fanny, and I hope that no one else ever will."

Mrs. Pert sed jist what we all felt like sayin', but hated to.

"But law!" sez I, "wasn't she pleased with the quilt we give her?"

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"She had as many nice presents as a girl could wish," added Mrs. Griggs, pleasantly.

"How glad I am to know that they are going to devote their young lives to the Master," said Mrs. Earnest.

"Well," sez I, "I heard they was goin' to study and be missionaries, and I don't see how they can. All he had was what he hez been earnin' in the school room, and her pa and ma can't help 'em much."

"I kin tell ye." And Mrs. Griggs laughed softly, she was that glad to tell us somethin' we didn't already know. "Mrs. Hoffmann and Mrs. Newrich went over and offered to pay their way if they really wanted to be missionaries, and they didn't fly off the handle or act proud and foolish and spile the Lord's plans; but jist said it seemed that the Lord hed opened up the way, and all they hed to do was to accept it in His name, and be jist as good missionaries as they could be."

And we was jest sayin' how proud we'd be of our own missionaries, when they was away off over the sea, when Mrs. Loomis asked us out to supper. Mrs. Loomis is a good cook,

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any body kin tell that by lookin' at them boys and step boys o' her'n, and we jest enjoyed eatin', although I believe we'd like to meet there if they wa'n't nothin' at all to eat. After we adjourned, Mrs. Earnest and me carried another basketful to old Mr. Crandell's ma. No difference what's a goin' on in Barleyville, the Circle don't fergit the sick or the old people.

## TWENTY-THIRD MEETIN'.

LAST AND BEST MEETIN' OF THE YEAR.

"O," sez Mrs. Earnest, openin' the door, "it was so stormy that I was afraid that you wouldn't come."

"Oh, it isn't as bad out as it looks." And Mrs. Pert shook her cape and helped me to find the hat pin, that I couldn't locate, head nor p'int of to save me.

By 2 o'clock poorty near every member was there. Mrs. Earnest called us faithful women, and acted as pleased and surprised as if some societies stayed at home every time they had a shadder of an excuse, and she seemed to think we was some different, with the difference in our favor. We left the quilt over at Mrs. Loomis', so we sot to makin' a batch o' aperns fer the Childern's Home.

"If every Sewin' Circle sends sich a variety o' colors as ours do I think them orphans 'll look like they come from the rainbow," exclaimed Mrs. Griggs, as she unrolled a dozen

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different packages with as many different kinds o' gingham and calico.

"Dew tell!" exclaimed Aunt Arimatha, unwrappin' the poortiest roll o' dimity. "Now them little ones will all be a wantin' this."

"Land sakes!" Aunt Arimatha, if you was the matron of an Orphaned Asylum you'd worry yerself plum to death, tryin' to see that every thing was divided even."

"I wonder who give it?" sez I, and Mrs. Grippenny got red in the face and so confused that she dropped the scissors, and when she looked up I most screeched I was that astonished, fer in her mouth I saw two rows of pearly white teeth. "Land sakes alive!" sez I, and every body looked up. Mrs. Grippenny jest sot down trembly like; then she sed: "Everything and everybody seemed to be changin' in Barleyville, and me and Mr. Grippenny kinder wanted to change some too, so we went over to Pawnee last week and got some teeth and a new carryall and a carpet and some new rockin' cheers, and a suit o' store clothes fer him and a black alapacca fer me; and some dimity, because—"then



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Mrs. Grippenny stopped, she was all breathless and excited, as much so as if she hed been confessin' a crime.

“Dew tell!” said Aunt Arimatha, pattin' that dimity kind o' lovin' like—as ef dimity could feel.”

“It all comes 'long o' Fanny Dunlavy,” continued Mrs. Grippenny, when she found her breath. “Fanny used to be so honest and say sich pinte things, thet I couldn't git over 'em, and it hez done me and Mr. Grippenny a sight o' good. The store keeper over at Pawnee asked me ef Mr. Grippenny hed been sick, and when we got home that night Joe—thet's Hiram's little boy—sed he was afeard thet Grandpa was a goin' to die, but I tole him he was just beginnin' to live.”

And Mrs. Grippenny laughed softly and then she sighed.

“The laugh was because I'm happy, and the sigh because I didn't begin sooner,” sez she, takin' her place at the machine. We always let her stitch, she takes sich little seams and never fergits to tie the thread at the ends o' the ruffles.

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"Mr. Earnest preached a mighty good sermon Sunday," remarked Mrs. Griggs, as she measured an apern string.

"And the text just suited. I often tell Griggs that Mr. Earnest is better on texts than any preacher we ever hed."

"I couldn't go agin' last Sunday, on account of the children," sed Aunt Arimatha. "And I ain't even heered yet what the text was; but I was goin' to ask, fer I always put down the texts and think about them all week."

"And live by 'em," sez I. "And we'd all be better if we did the same."

"The text was: 'Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.' And Mrs. Griggs went on to tell how Mr. Earnest made everybody feel as if they was all beginnin' over, and Mrs. Pickens couldn't feel as if she had been singled out, to be preached at or looked at either.

"If every preacher hed that knack there'd be more wanderers returnin' to the fold than there now is," affirmed Mrs. Loomis, who hez always believed in preachers bein' consider-

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ate as well as elokent, and I don't know but she's right. "Fer we never hev' hed a preacher to win so many as Mr. Earnest hez."

"We never had a better service than we did last Sunday. I told the deacon when we got home that if I had been a Methodist, I'd a shouted when Mrs. Pickens went forward to join."

"You could 've done it, Mrs. Pert," said Mrs. Loomis. "The Methodists would 've been willin', and I guess none o' us would 've objected."

"Dew tell!" exclaimed Aunt Arimatha. "Did Elisabeth and John Henry join?"

"Land yes," sez I, "the whole posse o' 'em jined. They met last Saturday and disbanded, and Sunday they all jined the church. It didn't seem so lonesome fer 'em, all comin' in together."

"Dear me, how I should 've liked to hev' been there to 've welcomed them."

And Aunt Arimatha looked troubled, like most folks do when a big duty keeps them from doin' a little one.

"It was certainly a day of rejoicing. God has certainly blessed His church."

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And Mrs. Earnest looked up as if she wished us to give the credit to God.

"It is strange," sez I. "Six months ago they would hev' taken the church fer their own services; now they are all members with us, and we will hev' all the time we want to make 'em feel welcome, and I hope we'll do it, too."

"Amen!" said Mr. Earnest, comin' in from the study, where he hed been thumpin' away the whole afternoon.

"Hev you been makin' us another good sermon?" asked Mrs. Griggs, who once in a while lets her curiosity git away with her manners. But Mr. Earnest didn't act as if he keered; he even looked kind o' pleased. I guess it tickles a preacher to hev' the women brag on their sermons. I guess servin' spiritual food ain't much different from servin' other kind o' vittils. It's kind o' restful like to hev' 'em bragged on once in a while.

"No, I was not typewriting my sermon," sez he, "I was copying a poem that Mrs. Pickens wrote for me last week."

"Elisabeth can't write poetry, can she?" sez I.

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“Read it to the ladies while I get supper,”  
sez Mrs. Earnest, goin' out to the kitchen.

So he sot down and read:

“Long I've wandered heavy hearted,  
Seeking truth devoid of prayer.  
Wandering farther, farther, farther,  
Into darkness and despair.

Vowing God was All, and hoping  
By denying sin and pain,  
To prove that Christ, the world's Redeemer,  
For our sins was never slain.

Yet while vowing all, kept feeling  
Sin and sickness filled the earth.  
Found the Doctrine so enticing,  
One of little daily worth.

Found that pain still racked my body;  
Found that sin was in my heart;  
Yet like Ephraim to his idols,  
I was joined in every part.

Fear of ridicule and laughter,  
Kept me from confessing all.  
That, in all life's crucifixions,  
Is the vinegar and gall.

But at last I came repentant,  
To the Christ who died for me,  
Though the world may scorn—I triumph  
In the hope that makes me free.”

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“Did Elisabeth write that?” sez I.

“Yes, she writes quite well,” sez he. “I think that she will do great good in Barleyville if she remains faithful.”

“Oh, she’ll be as faithful as a Baptist,” sez I, “with conviction, fer when Elisabeth is sot, she’s sot.”

After supper we concluded to give the dimity aperns to the Amos’s, so there wouldn’t be any jealous children at the orphantage. Then we hed an election and put Elisabeth in fer president, and Mrs. Grippenny in fer treasurer, fer she is so keerful with the money. Miranda sed she was so happy that she felt like as if she was dreamin’.

“May be it is all a dream,” sez I, but catchin’ sight o’ Mrs. Dunlavy’s black dress and Mrs. Barlow’s gray hair, and Mrs. Grippenny’s new teeth, I know’d it wasn’t.

Mrs. Earnest read a ’sam; she called it a “’Sam o’ Rejoicin’,” Then we all riz up and sung “Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow,” and went home wonderin’ if there ’d ever be another as interestin’ a year in Barleyville or anywheres else.



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