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JOE GORTON'S PASSENGER.

The day was drawing towards its close, chill and raw. Lake village was almost always gusty, but just now the wind was having its own way more than usual, and any passer through the long, bleak street, happening to glance in at the window of the little water-side tavern, might well have been tempted by bright fire and good company inside the bar.

They were the usual afternoon loafers, with the exception of one small, wiry-looking man, a stranger, who had stopped to take a glass of something hot, and who, at the moment, was evidently the centre of the general interest.

'But what is it you know, any how, stranger?' asked one of the group. 'Come, now, among friends.'

'Never you mind,' answered the addressed, 'I know enough to shut up John Sawyer a pretty spell, if not to make him swing, and I know how to tell it when the right time comes, don't you be afraid for that. The day's getting on,' he added abrubtly, rising and turning toward the window, 'and your duck-pond there don't look over agreeable just now. Who's a good boatman hereabouts? for, if I'm spilt, I can't swim.'

'Joe Gorton's your man,' was the answer; 'he couldn't tip over if he tried, couldn't Joe.'

'Why don't you wait until to-morrow, stranger, if you're afeared o' the weather? and them clouds over there do look kinder pesky,' said the landlord of the Lakeside House, turning a practised eye on the gray mingling outlines of lake and sky.

'Well, fact is,' said the other, 'I'm acquainted over in Milham, and, if it's all the same to you'—with a wink—'I'd rather be there than here; so if you'll hunt up this Joe What's-his-name, I'll be obliged.'

The landlord, resenting the wink and the implied insinuation, opened the door and called out, rather sulkily, to some one in the next room: 'Margy, run down to the water and tell Joe there's a passenger here.'

In another minute the house-door closed, and a tall, slight, girlish figure, with a shawl over its head, might have been seen hurrying down to the water-side.

Joe Gorton, busy about his boat, heard his name called, and looking up, saw the girl Margy. The sharp wind had blown out stray locks of her crisp, black hair, from under the red shawl, but the hectic in the cheeks, and the feverish brightness in the dilated eyes, were not all the wind's work. She came close to the boatman, who raised himself up, facing her.

'Joe,' she said, 'there's a passenger waiting up to the house,' she laid her hand on his arm and glanced cautiously round before adding in a whisper: 'Joe, if once that man reaches the other side, it's all up with father.'

'What's that, Margy?' asked the boatman, looking wonderingly at her.

'I tell you I heard it; he'll bring it home to him, he says so, he's come a-purpose. It's father's chance clean gone, if you take him across.'

'Do you mean I should refuse to take him, Margy?' said Joe, slowly.

'What good would that do?' said the girl, impatiently. 'Kelley or some of 'em would take him fast enough; what's father's life against a fare? No, it's you must take him, Joe, and then, if anyting happens,' sinking her voice to a meaning whisper, 'nobody but you and me's the wiser.'

Joe started back.

'Margy, what's that you're thinking?'

'I can't help it!' cried the girl, passionately twisting her fingers in the shawl-fringe so that it snapped; 'he's my father, and never was a better but for drink—you know yourself, everybody says so—and, if you could hear that man up there laughing and boasting he'll hang him! Joe, you'd find it hard to keep your hands off of him; but I don't ask you to do so much as touch a finger to him, only, if the boat turns over, he can't swim. I heard him say so, and then father's saved, and nobody the wiser, for the best boatman that ever was might have an accident on a squally evening like this.'

'There, there, Margy, be still, poor girl, you don't know what you're saying,' interposed Joe.

'Yes, I do,' said she, passionately; 'never you think that. Joe Gorton. I tell you it lays with you to save father or to kill him; yes and me too, for if they hang him I'll never live over the day, and that I swear, so you choose between us.—Hark!' she turned to listen. 'I can't stay.' She pressed her hand hard on his shoulder, looking up piteously in his face. 'Joe, if ever you care I for me, save that poor old man!' And before he could answer she was gone, leaving him looking after her like a dream. The clouds were getting lower and heavier as the boatman set off with his passenger.

'Looks as if we should have a spell of weather,' said the latter, glancing from the leaden sky to the leaden water. 'Hope you're what they crack you up to be, for if I get a ducking here, I shouldn't find myself again in a hurry.'

'Well!, I'm as good as they'll average, I reckon, mister—, I didn't hear your name, said Joe, looking up inquiringly.

'Peter Groom is my name, and one I ain't ashamed of; it'll be pretty well known in these parts by this day week, I'm thinking,' and the man smiled a smile not pleasant to see.

'How's that?' said Joe, anxious to betray no previous knowledge.

'I've come to give evidence in a trial that's coming off in your county town,' answered Groom, motioning toward the Milham shore. 'I've traveled nigh five hundred miles on purpose to do it, and I'd travel five hundred more if 'twas needed.'

'Is it the Sawyer trial you mean?' asked Joe, carelessly. 'People have been saying there ain't evidence enough to make a case, but I 'spose then there's something new turned up?'

'I should rather think so; something that'll make a case that'll hold John Sawyer as tight as his coffin.'

Joe clenched his hand on his oar. He was beginning to understand Margy's hatred for this man, with his open exultation in the ruin he was going to work.

'I'm sorry for the old man,' he said, after a pause, 'and so are most folks about here. Wilson was known for a bully, and, if Sawyer really done it, 'twas that—that and the drink, for when he's himself, he wouldn't hurt a worm.'

'You've no need to tell me what John Sawyer is,' said the other, shortly. 'I knew him before you was born, before ever he came into these parts.'

'Well,' said the boatman, 'you've a queer notion of old acquaintance' sake, then, that's all.'

'I'll give him a swing for old acquaintance' sake, if I can,' replied Groom, with a scowl.

Joe drew a quick breath.

'Can you do that?' he said.

'That or lifer. I tell you, my man, I saw it done.'

'You saw Sawyer kill Wilson?' exclaimed Joe, stopping short on his oars.

'I saw him strike the blow that killed him; and that comes to pretty nigh the same thing, I take it.'

'But how is it you have kept back all along?'

'Well, it's like this,' said Groom, who appeared to be in a more communicative mood than a while before. 'The day of the murder—to begin with the beginning—I happened to be passing through Milham, and stopped over a train there to see a man I had dealings with. He lived a little out of the town, a lonesome road, part of the way across some fields. I did my business, and started back again alone, as I had come. Half way, or thereabout, I heard a kind of cussing and quarreling in the next field—right close to my ear it sounded, only I couldn't see any thing for the high hedge. 'What's up?' thinks I, 'might as well take a peep.' 'Twas an uncommon fine evening; moonlight you could almost read by, and I knew Sawyer as soon as I set eyes on him. His face was turned exactly to me, and ugly enough it looked then. The next minute I saw him strike out, and the other man went down like a log.'

'And you let him lay?' interrupted Joe, in excitement. 'You never called for help, nor nothing?'

'What for?' said Groom, carelessly. 'I thought it was just a drunken quarrel—I knew what Sawyer was—and I left 'em to settle it between themselves. I had to look sharp for the next train, so I hurried back to the hotel, and none too soon either. I never thought again about the matter, till the other day I happened to hear that John Sawyer was going to be tried for murder, and, talking this way and that, I found the time and the general circumstances agreed with that evening—so, then, I knew I had seen the thing done.'

Groom paused a moment, and when he resumed it was in an abstracted tone.

'Twasn't particular convenient for me to leave my business just then; if it had been anybody else, I'd likely have left the poor devil to sink or swim as might be, but John Sawyer! I tell you,' he continued, through his set teeth, as, catching the boatman's eye, he appeared suddenly conscious of a listener, 'I'd let all i've got go to rack and ruin for the pleasure of seeing John Sawyer stand there, a disgraced and convicted man, and saying to him, 'Twas me that did it!'

There was something in Joe Gorton's breast on which the fierce words and manner jarred painfully. He was no preacher, this poor, untaught boatman; he did not know how to tell the man before him that his promised revenge was cruel and cowardly; but yet he felt that even setting aside Margy's interests, there was something in it which roused all his instincts of resistance. He shook his head as he thought about it.

'That's a feeling I can't make out,' he said, half aloud.

'Can't you?' said Groom, shortly, supposing the remark addressed to himself. 'Have you got a sweetheart, young man?' he added abruptly, after a short pause.

'A sweetheart?' repeated Joe, starting at the associations connected with the question, and the man who put it.

'Well, you're no cause to be shy of owning it,' said Groom, who had noticed the movement. 'A sweetheart, when she's the right sort, is what no man need be ashamed of. I had one myself when I was your age—' he stopped a moment—'I don't 'spose you'd often see her like, I never did. There was a girl up at that place, that tavern there, had a kind of look of her about the eyes and forehead, but nothing to compare— I had a friend, too—well, it ain't much of a story,' Groom broke off with a dry laugh, 'and I don't hardly know why I tell it at all, only, maybe, it'll help you make out what seems to puzzle you. The long and the short of it is, that my friend—mind that, youngster, my friend cheated me out of my sweetheart. I ain't much to look at, I know, never was, but I could care for a woman just as much as if I'd been six foot high, and fresh as a rose, and I'd take my oath she cared for me too, till he come between us with a false tongue enough to turn any girl's head. Well, he came off first best; she left me and went away him. I swore then, boy,' said Groom, looking darkly in his listener's earnest face, 'that if ever my day come, I'd be even with John Sawyer; I never thought 'twouid, but it has, and do you think I'll let my chance slip now? No, by God;' and the man brought down his fist with a force that shook the boat-side.

'That was hard lines, sure enough,' said Joe, thoughtfully. 'but, Mr. Groom, you was speaking just now of a girl up at the tavern there? She's my sweetheart, and,' added the boatman, slowly, 'she's Sawyer's girl, his only child.'

'No!' exclaimed Groom, evidently moved by the intelligence. 'Hetty's child,' he muttered to himself, 'Hetty's child!'

'Yes,' said Joe, eagerly, 'don't forget whose child she is, and that you'll make her suffer along with the old man.'

'Ah,' said Groom, 'that's all very well, but I don't forget, neither, whose child she is on the other side. No! I'm sorry for the girl, and for you, youngster, since you've an interest in her, but I'd have my pay out of John Sawyer now, if I was to die for it.'

Joe's grasp tightened convulsively on his oar. Was the man crazy thus to make a boast of the misery he would cause before one whose advantage and opportunity it was alike to insure his silence? who had him almost as completely at his mercy here on the unfamiliar element as if they too had been alone in all the earth? If he were to die for it! Every plunge of the dark water seemed to be repeating those words. The boatman roused himself with a start at the sound of his passenger's voice

'You're a pretty feller, ain't you, now,' said the latter, resuming the subject in a lighter tone, 'wanting to persuade me to cheat justice after that fashion?'

'As for that,' answered Joe, 'you said, yourself, if it had been anybody but Sawyer, you wouldn't have troubled to hunt him down, and I can't see as that's any better notion of justice than mine. Besides,' he added gravely, 'the old man's got his death-sentence already, if that's what you want; what with the drink, he ain't the man he used to be, and the night of the quarrel he got a cough that's tearing him all to pieces; the doctors say he can't live long, nohow.'

'He'll live long enough to make the acquaintance of a rope's end, I reckon,' said Groom, with a coarse laugh, 'and that's all I care about.'

The brutal words and manner roused the lurking devil in Joe Gorton's heart. He stammered out a curse, inarticulate for passion.

'Eh?' said Groom, catching the sound, but not the words, 'what's that you say?'

The boatman stopped rowing, and leaned forward till he almost touched Groom where he sat.

'Just put yourself in the old man's place for a minute,' he began, with an effort, speaking quietly. 'S'pose there was somebody'd got the chance and the will to get shut o' you, just as you have of old Sawyer—'

'What are you driving at now?' interrupted Groom. 'There ain't anybody, as I know of, has got either—more luck for me!' he ended, with a laugh.

'Ain't there?' said the boatman, slowly. 'You talk about justice, Mr. Groom,' he resumed, 'but it ain't justice you've set out to do—it's murder. You've got the law on your side, as it happens, but all the same, as far as you're concerned, it's murder,—as bad, for what I can see, as if somebody—as it might be me'—said Joe, looking fixedly in the other's face through the growing dusk, 'somebody with a motive, no matter what, for wanting to be rid of you, getting you all alone—as it might be here—out of sight or help, should just put you quietly out o' the way—'

'Hey! d'ye mean to threaten me?' cried Groom, springing up. Just then the breaking gust struck sharply on the boat's side that, left to her own guidance, had drifted round; she gave a lurch and a bound that sent Groom, who, starting back, had lost his balance, overboard like a shot.

Joe stared for an instant at the empty place opposite, hardly comprehending what had happened so quickly, and then, sudden as the lightning darting through the black sky above him, it flashed into his mind that here were silence and safety, and that through no act of his. 'Why not profit by the accident? Why not, in the man's own spirit, in his very words, 'leave him to sink or swim, as might be?'' But Joe could be no more deceived by his own than by others' sophistries; a voice within him cried: 'If you leave this man to die, you are his his murderer!' A great surge of horror and remorse for the thought that had been in his heart, seemed to sweep him away, and before the second lightning could tear the clouds, he had thrown himself after Groom.

When the two rose together the boat was nowhere in sight. There was nothing now for it but to strike out for the shore. Luckily, the Milham [illegible] was not now very distant; still it was a [illegible] stretch through the numbing water, [illegible] as he was, with his heavy clothes [illegible] the weight of Groom, who moreover [illegible] himself completely helpless, held him [illegible] a nervous clutch that half strangled [illegible] By the time they neared the shore [illegible] was pretty well spent, but the [illegible] lights gave him heart again; [illegible] an instant for the final pull, and [illegible] it was that the gust seized him, [illegible] ed, and whirled him away fro[illegible] toict he was making for to the [illegible] ting into it, that caught and [illegible] —Poor Joe.

He was conscious when they took him up, but there was a look in his face that foretold the end, even before the doctors did. As for Groom, he had been shielded by Joe's body, and, tough and wiry as he was, was scarcely the worse for the whole adventure. When he heard what they were saying about Joe, he burst out with an oath, and hurried to where he lay.

'Well, Gorton, and how is it with you?' he said, affecting to speak cheerfully, though struck at once by that look of death in the face.

'About as bad as it can be, Mr. Groom,' answered Joe, feebly. 'The old boat and I'll go down together, I reckon.'

'Now, never you talk that stuff, my man,' said Groom, in almost a blustering way, perhaps to conceal a certain unsteadiness of voice, 'I owe you a life, and I ain't one to rest till I've paid it, if it takes all the doctors from here to Jerico. I've got means, I tell ye.'

'No, use Mr. Groom,' said Joe, 'there's no doctor could patch up what's smashed inside of me. But look here,' and he instinctively lowered his voice, with a glance at the attendant, though there was little fear of that broken whisper reaching any ears but those close to it, 'it's what I wanted to speak to you about—you owe me a life, you say; mine ain't yours to give—but old Sawyer's is—'

Groom's face darkened. 'I swear I'd almost rather you asked for my own,' he muttered.

'But you' ll promise, Mr. Groom?' said Joe, in his eagerness, managing to half raise himself, 'you'll promise?'

'Well I s'pose I ain't got no choice,' answered Groom, still reluctantly; 'Yes I do promise; there's my hand on it.'

A gleam of intense delight for the moment almost drove the death-look from Joe's face. 'It's all right, Margy,' he whispered to himself, and laid his head back again.

Yes, it was all right as Heaven sees right. When John Sawyer had been discharged for want of evidence, when the Lake Village gossips, wondering over the strangers disappearance, concluded that his boasts had been mere idle talk to make a sensation, Margy could have told them better. She knew how it was Joe had died; she knew that a life had been paid for her father's; and in a heart softened by pain she acknowledged that her prayer had been answered in God's own way.—*Appleton's Journal.*

A GREAT BENEFACTOR.

Parton says, in his interesting history of the Sewing Machine, written for the *Atlantic Monthly*, and published in its May number of 1867: 'In the year 1854, after a long trial, Judge Sprague, of Massachusetts, decided that 'the plaintiff's patent is valid, and defendant's machine is an infringment.' The plaintiff was Elias Howe, Jr.,—the real infringer, I. M. Singer.' Judge Sprague further observed that 'there is no evidence in this case that leaves a shadow of doubt that, for all the benefit conferred upon the public by the introduction of a Sewing Machine, the public are indebted to Elias Howe, Jr.' How great that benefit is we can form some idea when we consider the vast amount of work necessary to be performed by the needle, and remember that of all the various branches of labor it is the most wearing upon the human system.

The Howe Machine is now offered to the public on such easy terms that persons of the most limited means can procure one with but slight economy, and thus the benefit conferred by the great inventor, at first confined to a few, is now within the reach of the poorest.

Bear in mind the 'Howe' is the only Machine offered at five dollars per month and at New York prices. G. A. Simms, Agent, Leonardtown.

SUMMER PLAY.—Nothing can be more cruel and nothing more foolish than to place children where they must be dressed every day in fresh and fashionable clothes, and their freedom to play curtailed for the sake of appearances. What childhood needs is perfect freedom among the things of nature—freedom to romp, to make mud-pies, to leap fences, to row, to fish, to climb trees, to chase butterflies, to gather wild flowers, to live out of doors from morning until night, and to do all those things that innocent and healthy childhood delights in, in cheap, strong clothes provided for the purpose. Exactly that which childhood needs, manhood and womanhood need—perfect liberty and perfect carelessness. So whether the dweller by the sea go inland for his summer play, or the resident of the inland city go to the sea, he should seek some spot unvisited by those devoted to fashionable display, and pass his time in unrestricted communion with nature, and in those pursuits and amusements which, without let or hindrance, perform the office of recreation.—*Scribner's for July.*

(Written for the Beacon.)

There is a little lady fine,
Her name I cannot tell,
But then, indeed, I'm half inclined,
Methinks 'twould be as well.

I met her out the other day,
She looked so bright and fair,
But had the queerest—what shall I say—
Arranged upon her hair.

Her hair, you know, was not arranged,
But rather a disheval,
Although it looked uncommon strange,
'You bet! her head was level.

She passed me by, with steps so gay,
Ye stars! she did look slashin',
She smiled, and bowed, as if to say,
You see I'm in the fashi'n.

She tried to make a great display,
Her silk, how it did rustle,
And then, beneath her *polonaise*—
That everlasting bustle.

She little knew how lookers on
Had eyed her in the hustle,
Had ridiculed her pet *chignon*
And criticised *that bustle.*

But then, she knew, she was complete,
Or thought so in her mind,
And felt at ease upon the street—
Was not behind the time.

AN OBSERVER.

THE WIDOWS & THE STRANGERS.

Once on a time two poor old widows lived in the same hamlet and under the same roof. But though the cottages joined, and one roof covered them, they had each a separate dwelling; and although they were alike in age and circumstances, yet in other respects they were very different. For one dame was covetous, though she had little to save, and the other was liberal, though she had little to give.

Now on the rising ground, opposite to the widows' cottages, stood a monastery, where a few pious and charitable brethren spent their time in prayer, labor and good works. And with the alms of these monks, and the kindness of neighbors, and because their wants were few, the old women dwelt in tolerable comfort, and had daily bread, and lay warm at night.

Now one evening, when the covetous old widow was having supper, there came a knock at her door. Before she opened it she hastily put away the remains of her meal. 'For,' said she, 'it is a stormy night, and ten to one some belated vagabond wants shelter, and when there are victuals on the table every fool must be asked to sup.'

When, however, she opened the door, a monk, with his cowl pulled over his head to shelter him from the storm, stepped into the cottage. Much disconcerted at having kept one of the brotherhood waiting, the widow loudly apologized, and dusted a chair for her reverend guest; but the monk stopped her string of regrets, adding: 'I fear I cut short your evening meal, my daughter.'

'Now, in the name of ill-luck, how came he to guess that?' thought the widow, as with anxious civility she began to press the monk to take some supper after his walk; for the good woman always felt hospitably inclined toward any one who was likely to return her kindness seven fold.

The brother, however, refused to sup, and as he seated himself the widow looked sharply through her spectacles to see if she could gather from any charitable distention of the folds of his cloak whether a loaf, a bottle of cordial, or a new winter's cloak were most likely to crown the visit. No undue protuberance being visible about the monks person, she turned her eyes to his face, and found that her visitor was one of the brotherhood whom she had not seen before. And not only was his face unfamiliar, but it was utterly unlike the kindly but rough countenances of her charitable patrons. Not that she had ever seen boasted the noble beauty, the chiseled and refined features of the monk before her. And she could not but notice that, although only one rush light illuminated her room, and though the monk's cowl went far to shade even from that, yet a bright light always seemed to be on his face, making his clear skin almost transparent. Her curiosity must have been greatly stirred, had not her prevailing passion of greed made her more anxious to learn what he brought than who he was.

'It's a terrible night,' quoth the monk, at length. 'Such tempest without only gives point to the indoor comforts of the wealthy; but it chills the very marrow of the poor and destitute.'

'Ah, indeed,' sniffed the widow with a shiver. 'If it were not for the charity of good Christians, what would poor folks do for comfort on such an evening as this?'

'It was that very thought, my daughter,' said the monk, with a sudden earnestness on his shining face, that brought me forth even now through the storm to your cottage.'

'Heaven reward you!' cried the widow, fervently.

'Heaven does reward the charitable,' replied the monk. 'To no truth do the Scriptures bear such constant and unbroken witness even as it is written: 'He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord, and look, what he layeth out it shall be paid him again.'

'What a blessed thing it must be to be able to do good,' said the widow, piously wishing in her heart that the holy man would not delay to earn his recompense.

'My daughter,' said the monk, 'that blessing is not withheld from you. It is to ask your help for those in greater need than yourself that I am come to-night.' And forthwith the good brother began to tell how two strangers had sought shelter at the monastery. Their house had been struck by lightning, and burned with all it contained; and they, themselves, aged, poor and friendless, were exposed to the fury of the storm. 'Our house is a poor one,' continued the monk. 'The strangers' lodging-room was already full, and we are quite without the means of making these poor souls comfortable — You at least have a sound roof over your head, and if you can spare one or two things for the night they shall be returned to-morrow when some of our guests depart.'

The widow could hardly conceal her vexation and disappointment. 'Now dear heart, holy father,' cried she, 'is there not a rich body in the place, that you come for charity to a poor widow like me, that am in a case rather to borrow myself rather than to lend to others?'

'Can you lend us a spare blanket?' said the monk. 'These poor strangers have been out in a storm, remember.'

The widow started. 'What meddling busy-body told him that the Baroness gave me a new blanket at Michelmas?' thought she; but at last, very unwillingly, she went to an inner room to fetch a blanket fron her bed.

'They shan't have the new one, that's flat,' muttered the widow, and she drew out the old one and began to fold it up. But though she had dwelt upon its thickness and insufficiency to the Baroness, she was so powerfully affected at parting with it that all its good qualities came strongly to her mind.

'It's a very suitable size,' said she to herself, 'and easy for my poor old arms to shake or fold. With careful usage it would last for two years yet; but who knows how two wandering bodies that have been tramping miles through the storm will kick about in their sleep? And who knows if they're decent folk at all? Likely enough they're two hedge birds that have imposed a pitiful tale on the good fathers, and never slept under anything finer than a shock of straw in their lives.'

The more the good woman thought of this, the more she felt sure it was the case, and the less willing she became to lend her blanket to 'a couple of cheating tramps.' A sudden idea decided her.—'Ten to one they bring a fever with them,' she cried, 'and dear knows I saw enough good bedding burnt after the black fever, ten years ago. It would be a sin and a shame to burn a good blanket like this. And repeating 'a sin and a shame' with great force, the widow restored the blanket to its place.

'The coverlet's not worth much,' she thought; 'but my good man bought it the year after we were married, and if anything happened to it I should never forgive myself.' The old shawl's good enough for the tramps.' Saying which she took a ragged old shawl from a peg, and began to fold it up. And even as she brushed and folded, she began to grudge the faded rag. 'It saves my better one on a bad day,' she sighed, 'but I suppose the father must have something.'

And accordingly she took it to the monk.

'It's not so good as it has been, but there is warmth in it yet, and it cost a pretty penny when new.'

'And is this all that you can spare to the poor houseless strangers?' asked the monk.

'Aye, indeed, good father,' said she, 'and that will cost me many a twinge of rheumatics. Folk at my age can't lie cold at night for nothing.'

'These poor strangers,' said the monk, 'are as aged as yourself, and have lost everything.'

But as all he said had no effect in moving the widow's compassion, he departed and knocked at the door of her neighbor. Here he told the same tale, which met with a very different hearing. This widow was one of those liberal souls whose possessions always make them feel uneasy unless they are being accepted, or used, or borrowed by some one else; and she blessed herself that, thanks to the Baroness, she had a new blanket fit to lend to the king himself, and only desired to know what else she had with which she could serve the poor strangers, and requite the charities of the brotherhood.

The monk confessed that all the slender stock of household goods in the monastery was in use, and one after another he accepted the loan of almost every thing the widow had. As she gave them he put them out through the door, saying that he had a messenger outside; and having promised that everything should be duly restored on the morrow, he departed, leaving the widow with little else than the chair in which she was to pass the night.

When the monk had gone the storm raged with greater fury than before, and at last one terrible flash of lightning struck the widow's house, and, though it did not hurt the old woman, it set fire to the roof, and both cottages were soon ablaze. Now, as the terrified old creatures hobbled out into the storm, they met the monk, who, crying, 'Come to the monastery,' seized an arm of each and hurried them up the hill. To such good purpose did he help them that they seemed to fly, and arrived at the convent gate they hardly knew how.

Under a shed by the wall were the goods and chattels of the liberal widow.

'Take back thine own, daughter,' said the monk; 'thy charity hath brought its own reward.'

'But the strangers, good father?' said the perplexed widow.

'You are the strangers,' answered the monk, 'and what thy pity thought meet to be spared for the unfortunate, Heaven in thy misfortune hath spared to thee.' Then turning to the other widow, he drew the old shawl from beneath his frock and gave it to her, saying, 'I give you joy, dame, that this hath escaped the flames. It is not so good as it has been, but there is warmth in it yet, and it cost a pretty penny when new.'

Full of confusion, the illiberal widow took back her shawl, murmuridg 'Lack-a day! If I had but known it was ourselves the good father meant!'

The monk gave a shrewd smile.

'Aye, aye, it would have been different, I doubt not,' said he; 'but accept the lesson, my daughter, and when next thou art called upon to help the unfortunate, think that is thine own needs that would be served; and it may be thou shalt judge better as to what thou canst spare.'

As he spoke a flash of lightning lit up the ground where the monk stood, making a vast aureole about him in the darkness of the night. In the bright light his countenance appeared stern and awful in its beauty, and when the flash was past, the monk had vanished also.

Furthermore, when the widows sought shelter in the monastery, they found that the brotherhood knew nothing of their strange visitor.—*Aunt Judy's Magazine.*

WHERE A THIEF WAS FOUND.—An Indianapolis wag a few days ago was standing in front of the Young Men's Christian Association building in that city, when he was hurriedly accosted by a strange man, who asked if he had seen such a looking fellow pass within the last minute. No, he hadn't seen him. 'But you must,' persisted the stranger, and then went on to say that the fellow was a thief from Greencastle, whom he had tracked, and was positive was somewhere in the vicinity, having seen him as he turned the corner.

The joker suggested the fellow was upstairs, pointing to the Y. M. C. A. hall. Greencastle wanted to know what kind of a place it was, and on learning was ready to affirm his man was not there.—Then the wag facetiously offered to bet he was, for, said he, 'all the thieves go there.' Greencastle accepted the wager, and, like the doubting Thomas, crept up the stairway, peered into the reading-room, and sure enough, there was the thief calmly poring over a paper.

☞ Here is a curious story of the old slavery times, from a western Carolina newspaper. In the gold mining regions of Burke County lived an industrious, well-to-do free colored woman, named Nancy Boyce. She was engaged to marry Jack, a slave, and, in order to have everything pleasant, she put her hand in her pocket and bought him of his master. But she was shrewd enough to take a bill of sale for him, fortunately, as it happened, for Jack turned out to be utterly worthless, and a perfect sot. But little need was there for Nancy to go to the courts for relief by divorce. She knew a better way than that. She owned her man, and she simply sold him to a slave dealer, who carried him off to the far southwest, so that the sharp Nancy was never bothered by him again. Husbands have been badly sold before, though not in this particular way.

☞ An Irishman went for the first time to a play. Just as the drop curtain descended, after the first act, an engine in the basement exploded, and the Celt was blown through the roof, alighting in the next square. His first remark, after coming to his senses, was, 'and what the devil do you play next?'

☞ A ten-year old boy boasting to a school-mate of his father's accomplishments said: 'My father can do most anything. He is a notary public, and he's a pothecary, and he can pull teeth, and he's a horse doctor, and he can mend wagons, and he can play the fiddle, and he's a jackass at all trades.'

☞ A father, in consoling his daughter, who had lost her husband, said: 'I don't wonder you grieve for him, my child. You will never find his equal.' 'I don't know as I can,' responded the sobbing widow; 'but I'll do my best!' The father went home comforted.

☞ Two Irishmen traveling on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad track came to a mile post, when one of them exclaimed: 'Tread aisy, Pat; here lies a man who was 108 years old—his name was Miles from Baltimore.'

☞ An Irish housemaid, who was sent to call a gentleman to dinner, found him engaged in using a toothbrush. 'Well, is he coming?' asked the lady. 'Yes, ma'am, directly, he is just sharpening his teeth.'

☞ There was a desire on the part of a teacher to make a scholar understand what conscience is. 'What makes you feel bad when you have done wrong?'—'Pop's strap,' said the youth feelingly.

A schoolmaster asked a class of boys the meaning of the word 'appetite.' After a short pause one little boy said, 'I know, sir; when I'm eating I'm appy and when I'm done I'm tight.'

The young lady whose feelings 'were all worded up' has ordered a fresh supply.