

fer water. It's the wholesomest of anything you've swallowed fer one spell, I can tell you."

Wilkinson said nothing but tried to throw pathos into his hiccup. He tapered each one off with a despairing groan that was unobtrusively doleful.

"I was readin' only last week," his wife resumed, "that a healthy man oughter drink a gallon of water a day to keep him healthy. Now you ain't a healthy man, Mr. Wilkinson, and ye've got to take more. It stands to reason."

"But a gallon a day, Mandy, and a quart every thirty minutes—why that's half (hic)—that's half a gallon an hour." He did some dumb calculating—"why, that's (hic)—that's twelve gallons a day, Mandy, I ain't so unhealthy as all that."

"Yes, you be. You're an awful unhealthy man, and you're the driest critter I ever see. You've been so dry for the last twenty years that I've wondered the dust didn't fan off you when the only thing that ever reconciled me to you was the thought that ye was as ye might say, fulfillin' of the old Scriptur' words that we uses to funerals—'Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return.' I've often thought that you've kept that part of Scriptur' teachings ef ye ain't never kept no other."

Wilkinson's thoughts were large, round thoughts, but somehow he seemed to have no medium of expression for them. He continued to weep softly and Mrs. Wilkinson continued to talk, altogether unmoved by the spectacle of his woe.

"You've always said ye had to drink because ye was so dry. Well, now, I ain't never goin' to let ye get dry again. I'm going to keep ye wet; and if a quart of water every half hour ain't enough, I can easy make it more. It's a cheap medicine."

The reaction from strong emotion always had a tendency to make Wilkinson drowsy, and his eyes, which he tried manfully to keep open, as became a penitent sinner dwelling upon the thoughts of his sins, began to waver. Presently they closed and his troubles were forgotten, but only for what seemed to him a modern minute whisking by on some new scheme of rapid transport that stretched it far over a mile. He had only just dozed off when he heard his wife's voice that he had really never quite lost track of in his drowsy lapse, saying,

"It's time fer water, Mr. Wilkinson."

HE awoke with a start and raised his head meekly. One of the hardest tasks of Wilkinson's life was to swallow about a pint of that tasteless dipper-ful. Then he looked up.

"Can't ye put somethin' into it, Mandy—even a little slippery ellum would be a godsend; anything to make it slide down easier?" His voice was imploring, but hers was sharp and incisive as she answered:

"Now, Mr. Wilkinson, there ain't nothin' the matter with yer swallerer. Your swallerer has been the most active of all yer members sence I've knowed ye, and I ain't never heard ye complain of it before. It ain't never shirked, an' I don't want it to shirk now. The only thing is that you've got yer mind cross-wise in yer throat, and it makes yer think that a little quart of water is a roarin' Niagara trying to go over a mill-dam and not wash out the scenery on both sides. Jes' suppose it was beer."

He drew a long breath at the thought and again applied himself to the dipper. His effort was heroic and little streams of water trickled down each side of his chin, circling in chilly currents round to the back of his neck and making a cold, wet place between his shoulders. His wife suspected this zeal, though, and eased the dipper a little.

"There's more goin' outside than there is inside," she remarked dryly. "Take it a little easier."

It seemed to her afflicted husband as if his mind, or some other portion of his anatomy, had got cross-wise in his throat. Never before had it required so much resolution to work those little automatic muscles so long used, so well practiced. Finally he had to count three, then four, then five, between swallows. He remembered to have heard the minister, who was inclined to poetical metaphor, once say that one swallow did not make a summer, and he thought now how true it was, too, that one swallow did not make a quart. He had never heard of the elder Mr. Weller, nor his son, Sam, nor of missionary tea-meetings, but after three hours of the water-cure treatment Wilkinson felt himself to be "visibly swollen." His soul rose in revolt when a portion of the last dose of water spurted through his nostrils and declined to go down, and he lay back on his pillow gasping. As a matter of fact at this juncture Wilkinson's mouth was bubbling like the scupper of a sinking ship.

"I'm drownin', Mandy," he gurgled hoarsely. "I'm drownin' inside. My insides is all awash—jest floatin' round and nothin' to anchor to. If this don't give me a dropsy that I won't never git over, it ain't going to be your fault."

"Dropsy your grandmother!" scouted Mrs. Wilkinson. Her eyes gleamed with professional interest. "Do you feel so dry as you did?"

"Dry!" groaned the drowning man. "At my time of life I don't look to live long enough to ever dry out again. I guess I'm goin' this time, Mandy. I ain't going to live to trouble you no more. But I know you meant it all for the best."

His tears started at this picture of their immediate separation, but his wife was dry-eyed.

"You'll git used to it," said she. "I guess by the time you've swallowed twenty or thirty gallons more it won't seem so hard."

But this vision was too much for even a penitent sinner. Wilkinson felt that existence now required an effort, else death would claim him for his own, a dank, wet, washed-ashore victim, a water-killed rather than a water-cured man.

"Mandy," he said solemnly, "ef I was to swaller another drop I'd bust. Don't you dast to so much as let me look at that dipper agin until I can git my hands on dry groun' somewhere."

A shadow of disappointment crossed his wife's practical face.

"I didn't calculate on its bein' done so easy," said she, regarding him with a practical eye; "somehow I made up my mind 'twould take quite some time, like the Gold cure. Do ye think ye are cured, Mr. Wilkinson?"

"I don't know yit. 'Pears to me I'm nearer bein' killed. I've got to wait until I git alive before I can tell."

"Well," remarked his wife decisively, "I ain't goin' to give up this water cure treatment until you're cured for good and all. I don't feel 'sif we'd given it jest to say a good try. But I've set in to cure ye and I'm going to do it er bust somethin'."

"I guess ye would, Mandy, and it'd be me," said Wilkinson resignedly. Then he took stock of himself and thought hard for a minute. "I tell ye what, Mandy, I guess I'm cured. I really think I be. I don't feel 'sif I should ever swaller another drop of anything as long as I live." His wife looked at him skeptically, and seeing this he was moved by the inspiration of his life. "Mandy," his voice took a solemn inflection; "Mandy, I'll tell ye what I'll do. I'll promise ye solemn, that I'm cured. I'll promise ye by—"

"Now don't ye go to swearin' by nothin, Mr. Wilk-

THE GOOD OLD TIMES

BY TUDOR JENKS



OST thou remember, little one,
The day when we were wed—
How with my trusty war-club
I whanged thee o'er the head?

And when thou wert subdued, love,
I grabbed thee by the hair,
To drag thee through the jungle
Unto my rocky lair.

Thy father and thine uncle
Pursued us—but in vain;
For one of them I crippled,
The other soon was slain.

Oh, those were happy, happy days!
The simple times of yore,
So build a roaring fire, dear,
And roast the dinosaur.

It is most inconvenient
For man to live alone,
Pray bring a hunk of flint, love,
To crack the marrow-bone.

inson," interrupted his firmer half in a tone of admonition.

"There ain't no oath ever swore that could put backbone into ye. You ain't got no more muscle around yer words than my old mop has around its rags. But you can git up and try. That's the best thing you can do, and I'll believe ye or not by your acts. Your word ain't worth a weed in the garden."

THAT afternoon Wilkinson rose. During that day and the next he partook sparingly of all liquids. It did seem as if his thirst had left him, temporarily, at least.

But by the end of the first day he had begun to be haunted by the thought of a certain fence corner down near the bars where he turned the cattle into pasture every morning. He had a vision of a little brown jug with a cob cork, that he had left standing in the old secure retreat, concealed by tall grass, that night when he came home from town. The jug was filled with good old corn-juice, and the more Wilkinson thought of it, the more important it became that he should investigate that fence corner and ascertain if all was well with the little brown jug—and its contents. Once in a while he experienced harrowing fears concerning it. "What if one of the critters trampled on it, nosed it over; loosened the cob—spilled the whiskey! Horrors!" The morning that his wife had begun her water cure treatment, while he was yet a repentant sinner, he had thought of confessing the jug. But some power held back his words. Oh, if he could have had one swallow of what that jug held—just one, instead of those vile and nauseating gallons of water! Once in his despair he had thought of sending for a neighbor who was not a teetotaler, and imploring his aid.

But caution restrained him. How easy it would be for Jones to represent to him that he found the brown jug empty! He might even go to the length of proving that he had discovered it broken, like the pitcher that went once too often to the well. And if that conniving and contriving neighbor re-

mained away until he had acquired an evaporated breath, what evidence would he, Wilkinson, have of fell intent? And, admitting the circumstantial evidence of a suspicious breath, what redress had he? None, absolutely none.

On the third morning his anxiety concerning the little brown jug had become too great to resist. The thought that he would soon find it, secreted amidst the weeds like a brown thrasher's nest, filled him with elation. He was rebuked sharply by his wife for bringing in the morning's milking to the tune of an objectional ditty whose refrain was "little brown jug, how I love thee."

She watched him down the road with suspicion and called sharply after him.

"Ye come right back, Mr. Wilkinson."

Thus does suspicion, once aroused in a human heart, feed on itself.

"As well be guilty as be suspected," thought her husband with dull anger. But he did not come right back. The morning sun rose higher and higher, the cattle were feeding far away from the bars. Now and then a team rattled along the road, but there was no sign of Wilkinson. After two hours had passed Mrs. Wilkinson put on her sunbonnet and started on the trail.

"There's only one thing I'm certain of," she said to herself as she started out, "and that is that he ain't eatin' grass with the cows."

SHE stopped by the pasture bars, let down one and crawled through. It seemed to be instinct that made her walk in the direction of that particular fence corner, where Wilkinson sat with his back against the angle formed by the rails. His knees were drawn up, his elbows rested on them, and his head rested in turn on his crossed arms. A gallon jug sat squat and low and brown in the grass between his feet. Mrs. Wilkinson at once seized it up as a degenerate, a wicked looking jug to be suspected of evil contents. She lifted it softly, drew out the cob, and sniffed it.

Mrs. Wilkinson's worst suspicions were confirmed, but, being a woman of thrifty mind she wished to know how much there was remaining in it before she aroused Wilkinson and turned it out before him—an oblation offered to the pasture, or poured before the shrine of the virgin day. Several seemingly inebriated ants were running wildly around the body of the jug, in what seemed to Mrs. Wilkinson to be a state of maudlin excitement. These she flirted carefully off with her apron before resting the jug on her hip and tilting it cautiously up over the hollow of her curved palm. The next moment the little brown jug was turned ignominiously upside down, and its contents gurgled out as a sort of liquid accompaniment to Mrs. Wilkinson's scream.

"Mr. Wilkinson! You've been drinkin' ants!"

Wilkinson was a humane and tender-hearted man, and he now raised his head and blinked vacantly at his wife.

"I know I did, Mandy," said he, apologetically, "but it didn't hurt 'em none. They was all dead before."

His wife looked at him with anger and disgust dividing her countenance. Then she deliberately broke the jug on the end of a projecting rail, and seized her relapsed spouse by the arm.

"Jonathan Wilkinson," said she sternly, "you git right up and come home to your water cure. And you catch me stoppin' next time when you say stop—you jest catch me doin' of it! I'm going ter break you of this or I'm goin' to break yer neck, one. And if yer swallerer gits out of order, and you can't swaller a cure, I'm jest goin' to tilt ye on end in the rain barrel, head down, and I guess that'll cure ye."

Wilkinson walked beside her whimpering quietly as visions of the dipper hung before his wavering eyes.

THE ACCIDENTS OF GREAT CAREERS

BECAUSE a Jewish boy (born in an ancient house in the crowded Juden-Gasse quarter of Frankfort-on-the-Main in the year 1743) did not like the idea of becoming a rabbi, he was sent to work in a bank at Hanover. Some years later he returned to Frankfort and set up a bank of his own in the old house with a red shield. When Bonaparte entered Germany, William, the Landgrave of Hesse, intrusted all his wealth to the Jewish banker. In 1812, when the Jewish banker died, his name was famous throughout Europe. His name was Meyer Anseim. He assumed the name of Rothschild (red shield) from the sign on his house, and was the founder of the Rothschild banking houses, the most famous money dynasty in the world.

During the school days of an Irish student in France the French revolution endangered his liberty and even his life and he escaped. He returned to his native land, studied law, was admitted to the bar, and found himself in the midst of the rebellion of 1798. But he ranged himself on the side of law and order. He made \$290 the first year of his legal life. Soon his yearly income was \$45,000. In 1841 he was elected Lord Mayor of Dublin. In 1844 he was put in jail. In 1875 he died. Brief events in the life of Daniel O'Connell, the Irish liberator, of whom Gladstone said: "He was the greatest popular leader the world has ever known."