

JOE'S MISSIONARY

By M. J. Phillips

Copyright, 1905, by Ruby Douglas

Little Mary Anderson was undoubtedly pretty. She was brown and lithe. Her crinkly hair was a jumbled poem. Her big brown eyes were alight with shifting fires, merriment and mischief predominating. Joe Temple thought, once or twice, that he had surprised a tenderer light in their depths, but Mary's pert little tongue and ringing laugh promptly drove such idens helter skelter.

Joe was a light haired viking of a fellow, with muscles like a wrestler, shoulders almost the width of the door and the best temper in the world. He was teamster at the cereal food factory where Mary worked. The little brown maid attracted him. Her duty was to pack the paper cartons in cases for shipment and nail on the light covers of the boxes. Almost every load somehow lacked one box and that the one



"OH, BUT, MARY, I HAVEN'T TOUCHED A DROP IN SIX MONTHS."

Mary was smiling, so it was natural Joe should wait for it by Mary's bench and talk while he waited.

The other girls were not slow to notice, and there were many sly little darts aimed at Joe in his absence. Mary soon learned that his besetting sin was drink. The conviviality of the cup that cheers had no fascinations for him. He abstained totally for months, only to fall grievously when the innate and agonizing thirst for liquor overcame him. Then he drank hard and long, suffering untold remorse after his appetite had been satiated.

When bashful Joe, his acquaintance with Mary a week old, asked if he might call on the girl in her home, the clear brown eyes met his gaze frankly. "You may, Mr. Temple," she replied, "but there is one condition. If I smell liquor on your breath, it's all off." Poor Joe blushed. "And don't use clothes to cover it up!" she added emphatically. "That's so cheap a trick in a man. Besides, I'd know it just as quick."

Every Wednesday and Sunday evening thereafter found Joe at Mary's home, for he was soon very much in love. The family liked the big fellow and made more of him than the friendly but outwardly indifferent Mary. He talked politics with her father, helped her mother wind endless skeins of yarn and eased her small brother over rough places in the "three r's."

Fortnightly Joe and his sweetheart attended the dances of the Pastime Pleasure club at Ilbernia hall, the teamster scrupulously sober and fairly exuding pride and happiness, while Mary's demureness was belied by the sparkle of her eyes.

Twice the old insidious longing for liquor fought with Joe's love, but was worsted. For days during these periods he trembled with the manfully suppressed longing when he passed a saloon. In the past he had fallen an easy victim; it was different now.

For a dazzling plan was taking form in Joe's honest brain. He had the home where he lived with his aged parents repainted and papered; during the long summer evenings he shingled the kitchen and built a back porch, for he was handy with tools, and several articles of furniture had been added to the living room out of his wages or savings.

Winter had come before he finally mustered up courage to ask the question which such preparations foretold. And the answer he received was not what he had hoped.

"Oh, I daren't, Joe; I daren't!" little Mary had said, the merry eyes sober for once. "I like you, but—her voice sank to a whisper—"suppose you got drinking again! I couldn't stand that, Joe."

"Oh, but Mary, I haven't touched a drop in six months!" he responded earnestly.

"And please God, if you'll marry me I'll never take another drink." But she still shook her head. "That isn't long enough, Joe; wait six months more."

And to all his pleading this was her answer until Joe, in a burst of disappointment and wounded pride, declared the time too long to wait for any one: there were others; now—

Mary was a girl of spirit. She tossed her brown head and commended the sulky Joseph to those "others." He could go to them; she didn't want him, she was sure.

It was a sore hearted and very angry Joe who found himself alone soon after beneath the frosty winter stars, the snow creaking in discords beneath his feet.

"It's no use," he said to himself bitterly. "No one cares whether I'm on the water wagon or not. That girl's just been baiting me on; she doesn't care for me"—and he knew the thought was untrue while he formulated it.

"I know what I'll do. I'll go down to Joe Byers' and get slouched. No use trying to do the right thing; nothing in it. M'm, but a drink will taste good!" It occurred to him that a drink would never taste as it did before he met Mary, though.

Joe's ugly reflections kept his eyes off his path, and a jolt to his shoulder brought him up standing. He had walked under an iron stairway which ascended to the second story of a quaint little brick store, an obstruction which the stream of progress had not washed away.

An arc light near by shone brightly on the scamed and grizzled wall. Absentmindedly rubbing his shoulder, he was stepping back from beneath the stairway when his eyes sensed something unusual on the wall, and he stooped to examine it.

There, sheltered by the steps above from the snow and the worst of the frost, a little clump of grass, a bare four spears, clung undauntedly. The cold had withered the tips, but the heart of the plant was vigorous. No earth was visible; it flourished, apparently, on bare brick and mortar. Temple peered at the grass, which stood out in minutest detail beneath the strong electric light, until a suspicious policeman gruffly ordered him to move on.

When Joe had walked half a dozen blocks, pondering the phenomenon, he began to find a lesson in it for himself. "Why," his thoughts ran, "that little bunch of grass has got more grit than I have! It's shy a thinker to help it out even. The Lord put that seed on earth to grow. He didn't say, 'Find a nice rich soil somewhere, grow if you feel like it and quit when you get discouraged.' No, sir. He just commanded it to be what it's made to be, and

by thunder, that seed didn't ask any questions!"

"And here I am," he went on in wholesome self scorn, "a great big hulking guy with brains—leastways I'm supposed to have 'em—laying down like a hound pup when things don't go to suit me. Mary, little sweetheart, that bunch o' grass was a missionary set to growing out of a brick wall just to show me what a chump I am. Well, I've found out in time. No booze for me! And if you say six years instead of six months I'll wait for you and be proud to do it." With a light heart he turned homeward.

Joe met a diminutive messenger boy at his own front gate. "Yer name Temple?" queried the youngster. "This is for you then."

By the light of a single match he read the brief message:

Can't you come over, Joe? Maybe we can compromise. MARY.

"Hey, you!" shouted the boy in amazement as Joe, after rapturously pressing the note to his lips, rushed down the street. "Any answer?"

"Yes, but I'll deliver it myself," came back to him. Cautiously the youth tested with strong teeth the dollar Temple had given him; then a grin overspread his wizened face, and he reached up into the frosty atmosphere as if to pull on a rope. "Weddin' bells!" he commented laconically.

The Barometer.

That the barometer should be so important a factor in indicating meteorological conditions is to many an unsolvable mystery. There should, however, be no difficulty in understanding that the simple principle underlying the construction is that the free and unfettered air balances a column of mercury varying in height, according to the circumstances of the moment, whose average elevation at the level of the sea is thirty inches. It is known because directly ascertainable, that thirty cubic inches of mercury weigh close upon fifteen pounds avoirdupois, and therefore, as commonly expressed, the pressure of the atmosphere is, under normal conditions, fifteen pounds on every square inch—equivalent to nearly a ton on a square foot, more than eight and a half tons on a square yard and of 100 tons on a square of ten and a quarter feet side. Scientific calculation also places the aggregate weight of the atmospheric envelope surrounding the world at about 5,000,000,000,000 of tons, and this may be represented as the weight of a solid leaden ball having a diameter of sixty miles. Such figures are really beyond human comprehension.

Morning Astorian, 65c. per month.

900 DROPS
CASTORIA
A Vegetable Preparation for Assimilating the Food and Regulating the Stomachs and Bowels of
INFANTS - CHILDREN
Promotes Digestion, Cheerfulness and Rest. Contains neither Opium, Morphine nor Mineral.
NOT NARCOTIC.
Recipe of Old Dr. SAMUEL PITCHER
Pumpkin Seed -
Licorice -
Rhubarb -
Sassafras -
Sulphur -
Cinnamon -
Cloves -
Ginger -
Peppermint -
Mint -
Cinnamon -
Cloves -
Ginger -
Peppermint -
Mint -
A Perfect Remedy for Constipation, Sour Stomach, Diarrhoea, Worms, Convulsions, Feverishness and LOSS OF SLEEP.
Fac Simile Signature of
Chas. H. Fletcher
NEW YORK.
At 6 months old
35 DROPS - 35 CENTS
EXACT COPY OF WRAPPER.

CASTORIA
For Infants and Children.
The Kind You Have Always Bought Bears the Signature of
Chas. H. Fletcher
of
In Use For Over Thirty Years
CASTORIA
THE CENTAUR COMPANY, NEW YORK CITY.

Devil's Island Torture
Is no worse than the terrible case of Piles that afflicted me 10 years. Then I was advised to apply Bucklen's Arnica Salve, and less than a box permanently cured me, writes L. S. Napier, of Rugles, Ky. Heals all wounds, Burns and Sores like magic, 25c at Chas. Rogers, druggist.

It enriches the blood, strengthens the nerves, makes every organ of the body strong and healthy. A great spring tonic. Hollister's Rocky Mountain Tea, 35 cents, Tea or Tablets. Frank Hart, druggist.

Perhaps it will be found that Minister Witte's resignation resembles that of Chancellor von Bulow.

A Dandy for Burns.
Dr. Bergin, Pana, Ill. writes: "I have used Ballard's Snow Liniment; always recommended it to my friends, as I am confident there is no better made. It is a dandy for burns! Those who live on farms are especially liable to many accidental cuts, burns, bruises, which heal rapidly when Ballard's Snow Liniment is applied. It should always be kept in the house for cases of emergency." 25c, 50c and \$1.00. Sold by Hart's Drug Store.

HERE YOU ARE
Morning Astorian Every Day in the Month For 65c

The Astorian Wants 500 New Subscribers
And in Order to Do This the Price Has Been
Reduced From 75c to 65c a Month

Be Loyal to Your Town and Begin the New Year by Taking Astoria's Greatest Paper, The Astorian
DELIVERED BY CARRIER TO ANY PART OF THE CITY FOR 65 CENTS