

Quincy Adams Sawyer

BY CHAS. F. PIDGIN.

A New England Story Dedicated to the Memory of James Russell Lowell.

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SYNOPSIS.
Quincy Adams Sawyer, the son of the Honorable Nathaniel Sawyer, a prominent lawyer of Boston, is at Mason's Corner, Mass., for the benefit of his health. His courtesy to the young women of the little town make him the object of spite on the part of Obadiah Strout, the village singing master, who tries to enlist Ezekiel Pettengill, a young farmer, with him, but fails. Deacon Mason, with whom Sawyer is staying, has a daughter, Huldj, who loves Quincy but is loved by Pettengill. Quincy finally tells Huldj that he cannot marry her, and the girl, excited by his words, forgets herself and causes the horse she is driving to fall and upset their buggy, whereupon she falls out and breaks her arm. Quincy then changes his boarding place to Ezekiel Pettengill's home, being invited there by Pettengill's Uncle Ike, and old friend of the elder Sawyer. Here he meets Alice, Ezekiel's sister, who has been brought home from Boston, where she was a bookkeeper until her eyesight failed. The young man loves her but does not betray his feelings. Meanwhile, Mrs. Putnam, a rich old woman in the neighborhood tells Quincy that she is to leave her fortune to Alice, though no one else is let into the secret. Quincy, who is also rich in her own right, and the only daughter of Mrs. Putnam, tries to learn from Quincy her mother's secret but fails. Huldj and Ezekiel come to a complete understanding and join with Quincy to be even with Strout for the gossip he has started regarding their estrangement. The next day Jim Sawyer dies and Quincy and his body interred side by side with his wife and children. On his return from the funeral he learns that Strout has been circulating more false reports against him and prepares to depart Ottumwa to keep all inside the house several days and meanwhile Quincy falls deeper in love with Alice, and agrees to act as her amanuensis while she is preparing a story for publication. She develops an appetite for writing both poetry and prose. Mrs. Putnam gives Alice an envelope which must be destroyed 24 hours after Mrs. Putnam's death without its contents being read, but Quincy decides to learn what it says, having been told by Huldj that she is a foundling and her foster mother refuses to disclose her true identity. Leopold Ernst, a college friend of Quincy, and a literary critic, promises to place Alice's stories and says they have merit.

light knock was heard on the door. Leopold opened it, and the domestic brought in a tray with a pot of tea and the ingredients of a light repast, which she placed upon another table near a window.

"There is always enough for two," said Leopold. "Reading is mighty tiresome work, and listening is too, and a cup of good strong tea will brighten us both up immensely. You can come back for the tray in fifteen minutes, Jennie," said Ernst.

The supper was finished, the tray removed, and the critic sat in judgment once more upon the words that fell from the reader's lips. Leopold's face lighted up during the reading of "Her Native Land." He started to speak, and the word "That's—," escaped him, but he recovered himself and said no more, though he listened intently.

Quincy took a glass of wine and a cracker before starting upon the story which had been dictated to him. Leopold gave no sign of falling asleep, but patted his hands lightly together at certain points in the story, whether contemplatively or approvingly Quincy could not determine. As he read the closing lines of the last manuscript the cuckoo clock struck 12, midnight.

"You are a mighty good reader, Quincy," said Leopold, "and barring fifteen minutes for refreshments, you have been at it ten hours. Now you want my opinion of those stories, and I've got to give you my advice as to the best place to put them to secure their approval and early publication. Now I am going to smoke a cigar quietly and think the whole thing over, and at half past twelve I will give you my opinion in writing. I am going into my library for half an hour to write down what I have to say. You take a nap on the lounge there, and you will be refreshed when I come back after having made mince meat of your poor, beautiful, blind protegee."

Leopold disappeared into the library, and Quincy stretching himself on the lounge, rested, but did not sleep. Before he realized that ten minutes had passed, Leopold stood beside him with a letter sheet in his hand, and said, "Now Quincy, read this to me, and I will see if I have got it down straight."

Quincy's hand trembled nervously as he seated himself in his old position and turning the sheet so that the light would fall upon it, he read the following:

Opinion of Leopold Ernst, Literary Critic, of certain manuscripts submitted for examination by Quincy A. Sawyer, with some advice gratis.

1. Series of eight stories. Mighty clever general idea; good stories well-written. Same style maintained throughout; good plots. Our house could not handle them—not of our line. Send to (He took a note and followed the name of a New York publisher.) I will write Cooper, one of their readers. He is a friend of mine, and will secure quick decision which, I prophesy, will be favorable.

2. "Her Native Land" is a fine story. I can get it into a weekly literary paper that our house publishes. I know Jameson, the reader, will like it especially. If you would give him the right to dramatize it, he is hand and glove with all the theatre managers and has had several successes.

3. That story about the Duke. I want for our magazine. It is capital, and has enough meat in it to make a full-blown novel. All it wants is oysters, soup, fish, entrees, and a dessert prefixed to and joined on to the solid roast and game which the story as now written itself supplies.

"In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, this 24th day of February, 186—"

Leopold Ernst, Literary Critic.

Quincy remained all night with Leopold, sleeping on the bed lounge in the sitting-room. He was up at seven the next morning, but found that his friend was also an early riser, for on entering the library he saw the latter seated at his desk regarding the pile of manuscript which Quincy had read to him.

Leopold looked up with a peculiar expression on his face.

"What's the matter," asked Quincy, "changing your mind?"

"No," said Leopold, "I never do that, it would spoil my value as a reader if I did. My decisions are as fixed as the laws of the Medes and Persians, and are regarded by literary aspirants as being quite as severe as the statutes of Draco; but the fact is, Quincy, you and your protegee—you see I consider you equally culpable—have neglected to put any real name or pseudonym to these interesting stories. Of course I can affix the name of the most popular author that the world has ever known—Mr. Anonymous—but you two probably have some pet name that you wish immortalized."

"By George!" cried Quincy, "we did forget that. I will talk it over with her, and send you the nom de plume by mail."

"Very well," said Leopold, rising. "And now let us go and have some breakfast."

"My dear fellow, you must excuse me. I have not seen my parents this trip, and I ought to go up to the house and take breakfast with the family."

"All right," said Leopold, "rush that pseudonym right along, so I can send the manuscripts to Cooper. And don't forget to drop in and see me next time you come to the city."

On his way to Beacon street Quincy suddenly stopped and regarded a sign that read, Paul Culver, M. D., physician and surgeon. He knew Culver, but hadn't seen him for eight years. They were in the Latin school together under pater Gardner. He ran the bell and was shown into Dr. Culver's office, and in a few minutes his old school mate entered. Paul Culver was a tall, broad-chested, heavily-built young man, with frank blue eyes, and hair of the color that is sometimes irreverently called, or rather the wearers of it are called, towheats.

They had a pleasant talk over old school days and college experiences, which were not identical, for Paul had graduated from Yale college at his father's desire, instead of from Harvard. Then Quincy broached that which was uppermost in his mind and which had been the real reason for his call. He stated briefly the facts concerning Alice's case, and asked Paul's advice.

Dr. Culver sat for a few moments apparently in deep study.

"My advice," said "is to see Tiltonson. He has an office in the Hotel Parkman up by the public library, you know."

"Is he a regular?" asked Quincy.

"Well," said Culver, "I don't think

he is. For a fact I know he is not an M. D., but I fancy that the diploma that he holds from the Almighty is worth more to suffering humanity than a good many issued by the colleges. You are a pretty broad-minded allopath," said Quincy, "to give such a sweeping recommendation to a quack."

"I didn't say he was a quack," replied Culver. "He is a natural-born healer, and he uses only nature's remedies in his practice. Go and see him, Quincy, and judge for yourself."

"But," said Quincy, "I had hoped that you—"

"But you couldn't," broke in Paul. "I am an emergency doctor. If baby has the croup, or Jimmy has the measles, or father has the lung fever, they call me in, and I get them well as soon as possible. But if mother-in-law has some obscure complaint I am too busy to give the time to study it up, and they wouldn't pay me for it if I did. Medicine, like a great many other things is going into the hands of specialists, and Tiltonson is one of the first of the new school."

At that moment a maid announced that some one wished to see Dr. Culver, and Quincy took a hurried leave.

He found his father, mother, and sisters at home, and breakfast was quickly served after his arrival. They all said he was looking much better, and all asked him how he was coming home. He gave an evasive answer, and saying that there were lots of good times coming down in Eastborough and he didn't wish to miss them. He told his father he was improving his time reading and writing, and would give a good account of himself when he did return.

He had to wait an hour before he could secure an interview with Dr. Tiltonson. The latter had a spare day in each week, that day being Thursday, which he devoted to cases that he was obliged to visit personally. Quincy arranged with him to visit Eastborough on the following Thursday and by calling a carriage managed to catch the half-past eleven train for that town, and reached his boarding place a little before two o'clock. He had arranged with the driver to wait for a letter that he wished to have mailed to Boston that same afternoon.

He went in by the back door, and as he passed through the kitchen Mandy made a sign and he went to the parlor.

"Hiram waited till one o'clock," said she, "but he had to go home, and he wanted me to tell you that the surprise party is coming off next Monday night, and they are going to get there at seven o'clock, so as to have plenty of time and lots of fun, and Hiram suspects, and her voice fell to a whisper, "that Strout is going to try and work the Deacon for that five hundred in cash to put up for the grocery store next Tuesday. That's all," said she.

"Where is Miss Pettengill?" Quincy inquired.

"She's in the parlor," said Mandy. "She has been playing the piano and singing beautifully, but I guess she has got tired."

Quincy went directly to the parlor and found Alice seated before the open fire, her right hand covering her eyes.

She looked up as Quincy entered the room and said, "I am so glad you've got back, Mr. Sawyer. I have been very lonesome since you have been away."

Alice did not see the happy smile that spread over Quincy's face, and he covered up his pleasure by saying, "How did you know it was I?"

"Oh," said Alice, "my hearing is very acute. I know the step of every person in the house. Swiss has been with me all the morning, but he asked a few minutes to be excused, so he could get his dinner."

Quincy laughed and then said, "Miss Pettengill, I forgot a very important matter in connection with your stories we omitted to put on the name of the author. He told her of his meeting with Ernst, and what had taken place, and Alice was delighted. Quincy did not refer to the coming visit of Dr. Tiltonson, for he did not mean to speak of it until the day appointed arrived. "Now, Miss Pettengill, I have some letters to write to send back by the hotel carriage, so they can be mailed this afternoon. While I am doing this you can decide upon your pseudonym, and I will put it in the letter that I am going to write to Ernst."

Quincy went up to his room and sat down at his writing table. The first letter was to his bankers and enclosed a check for five hundred dollars, with a request to send the amount in bills by Adams Express to Eastborough Centre, to reach there not later than noon of the next Tuesday, and to be held until called for. The second letter was to a prominent confectioner and caterer in Boston, ordering enough ice cream, sherbet, frozen pudding and assorted cake for a party of fifty persons, and fifty grab-bag presents, to reach Eastborough Centre in good order on Monday night on the five minutes past six express from Boston. The third letter was to Ernst. It was short and to the point. "The pseudonym is —" And he left a blank space for the name. Then he signed his own name, he glanced over his writing table and saw the three poems that Alice had given him to read. He added a postscript to his letter to Ernst. It read as follows:

"I enclose three poems written by the same person who wrote the stories. Tell me what you think of them, and if you can place them anywhere do so, and this shall be your warrant therefor."

Q. A. S.

When his mail was in readiness he went down stairs to the parlor, taking a pen and bottle of ink with him, and saying to himself, "That pseudonym shall not be written in pencil."

"I am in a state of hopeless indecision," remarked Alice, "I can think of Christian names that please me, and surnames that please me, but when I put them together they don't please me at all."

"Then we will leave it to fate," said Quincy. He tore a sheet of paper in two to six pieces and passed three, with a book and pencil, to Alice. "Now write," said he, "three Christian names that please you, and I will write three surnames that please me; then we will put the pieces in my hat and you se-

lect two and what you select shall be the name."

"That's a capital idea," said Alice, "it is harder to select a name than it was to write the story."

The slips were written, placed in the hat, shaken up, and Alice selected two, which she held up for Quincy to read.

"This is not fair," said Quincy. "I never thought. Both of the slips are mine. We must try again."

"No," said Alice, "it is 'Kismet.' What are the names?" she asked.

"Bruce Douglas, or Douglas Bruce, as you prefer," said Quincy.

"I like Bruce Douglas best," replied Alice.

"I am so glad," said Quincy, "that's the name I should have selected myself."

"Then I will bear your name in future," said Alice, and Quincy thought to himself that he wished she had said those words in response to a question that was in his mind, but he had decided that it was not yet time to ask her. He was too much of a gentleman to refer in a joking manner to the words which Alice had spoken and which had been uttered with no thought or idea that they bore a double meaning.

Quincy wrote the selected name in the blank space in Leopold's letter, sealed it and took his mail out to the carriage driver, who was seated in the kitchen enjoying a piece of mince pie and a mug of cider which Mandy had given him.

As Quincy entered the kitchen he heard Mandy say, "How is 'Bias nowadays?"

"Oh, dad's all right," said the young man; "he is going to run Wallace Stackpole again for tax collector against Obadiah Strout."

"Is your name Smith?" asked Quincy, advancing with the letters in his hand.

"Yes," replied the young man, "my name is Abbott Smith. My dad's name is 'Bias; he is pretty well known round these parts."

"I have heard of him," said Quincy, "and I wish to see him and Mr. Stackpole together. Can you come over for me next Wednesday morning and bring Mr. Stackpole with you. I can talk going back, and I want you to drive us over to your father's place. Don't say anything about it except to Mr. Stackpole and your father, but I am going to take a hand in town politics this year."

The young man laughed and said, "I will be over here by eight o'clock next Wednesday."

"I wish you would have these letters weighed at the postoffice and if any more stamps are needed please put them on. Take what is left for your trouble," and Quincy passed Abbott a half dollar.

He heard the retreating carriage wheels as he went upstairs to his room. He made an entry in his pocket diary, and then ran his eye over several others that preceded and followed it.

"Let me see," soliloquized he, as he read aloud, "this is Friday, Saturday, expect war records from Adjutant General; Monday, hear from Ernst, surprise party in the evening; Tuesday get money at express office; Tuesday see Stackpole and Smith and arrange to knock Strout out again; Thursday, Dr. Tiltonson. He laughed and closed the book. Then he said, "And the city fellows think it must be dull down here because there is nothing going on in a country town in the winter."

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CHAPTER XXIV.
The New Doctor.

Quincy improved the first opportunity offered for safe traveling to make a visit to the city. He had several matters to attend to. First, he had not written his letter to his friends, and he wanted to make inquiries as to Obadiah Strout's war record, for the great snowstorm had come the day after he had written it. Second, he was going to take Alice's story to show to a literary friend, and see if he could secure its publication. And this was not all; Alice had told him, after he had finished copying the story she had dictated to him, that she had written several of her short stories during the past two years.

In response to his urgent request, she allowed him to read her treasured manuscripts. The first was a passionate love story in which a young Spanish officer, stationed on the island of Cuba, and a beautiful young Cuban girl were the principals. It was entitled "Her Native Land," and was replete with startling situations and effective tableaux. Quincy was delighted with it, and told Alice if dramatized it would make a fine acting play. This was, of course, very pleasing to the young author. Quincy was her amanuensis, her audience, and her critic, and she knew that in his eyes she was already a success.

She also gave him to read a series of eight stories, in a line usually esteemed quite foreign to feminine interests. Alice had conceived the idea of a young man, physically weak and suffering from nervous debility, being left an immense fortune at the age of 21. His money was well invested, and in company with a faithful attendant he travelled for fifteen years, covering every nook and corner of the habitable globe. At 36 he returned home much improved in health, but still having a marked aversion engaging in any business pursuit. A mysterious case and its solution having been related to him, he resolved to devote his income, now amounting to a million dollars yearly, to amateur detective work. His great desire was to ferret out and solve mysteries, murders, suicides, robberies, and disappearances that baffled the police and eluded their vigilant inquiry.

The titles that Alice had chosen for her stories were as mysterious, in their way, as the stories themselves. Arranged in the order of their writing, they were: "Was It Signed? The Man Without a Tongue; He Thought He Was Dead; The Eight of Spades; The Exit of Mrs. Delmonnay; How I Caught the Fire-Bugs; The Hot Mass; and the Mystery of Unreachable Island."

When Quincy first reached the city, his first visit was to his father's office, but he found him absent. He was told that he was conducting a case in the Equity Session of the supreme court, and would not return to the office that day.

Instead of leaving his letter at his friend's office he went directly to the adjutant general's office at the state house. Here he found that an acquaintance of his was employed as a clerk. He was of foreign birth, but had served gallantly through the war and had left an arm upon the battlefield. He made his request for a copy of the war record of Obadiah Strout, of the 11th Mass. Volunteers. Then a thought came suddenly to him and he requested one also of the record of Hiram Maxwell of the same regiment.

Leaving the state house on the Hancock avenue side, he walked down

cape lined with quilted red satin, and on her head a fur cap, which made a strong contrast with her light hair, which crept out in little curls from underneath.

They started off at a smart speed for Old Bill was not in the shafts this time. Alice had been familiar with the road to Eastborough before leaving home, and as Quincy described the various points they passed, Alice entered into the spirit of the drive with all the interest and enthusiasm of a child. The sharp winter air brought a rosy bloom to her cheeks, and as Quincy looked at those wonderful large blue eyes, he could hardly make himself believe that they could not see him. He was sure he had never seen a handsomer girl.

As they passed Uncle Ike's little house, Quincy called her attention to it. Alice said:

"Poor Uncle Ike, I wish I could do more for him, he has done so much for me. He paid for my lessons in book-keeping and music, and also for my board until I had finished my studies and obtained a position. He has been a father to me since my own dear father died."

Quincy felt some inclination to find out more about her, but he repressed it and called attention to some trees, heavily coated with snow and ice, which looked so beautiful in the sunshine, and he described them so graphically, bringing in allusions to pearls and diamonds and strings of glistening jewels, that Alice clasped her hands in delight and said she would take him as her literary partner, to write in the descriptive passages. Quincy for an instant felt impelled to take advantage of the situation, but saying to himself, "The time is not yet," he touched the horse with his whip, and for half a minute was obliged to give it his undivided attention.

"Did you think the horse was running away?" said he to Alice, when he had brought him down to a trot. "Were you afraid?"

"I am afraid of nothing nowadays," she replied. "I trust my companions implicitly, knowing that they will tell me if I am in danger and advise me what to do. I had a debate a long time ago with Uncle Ike about blind people and deaf people. He said he would rather be stone deaf than blind. As he argued it, the deaf person could read and write and get along very comfortably by himself. I argued on the other side. I wish to hear the voices of my friends when they talk and sing and read, and then, you know, everybody lends a helping hand to a person who is blind, but the deaf person must look out for himself."

"Either state is to be regretted, if there is no hope of relief," remarked Quincy. He thought he would refer to Dr. Tiltonson, but they were approaching the centre of the town, and he knew he would not have time to explain his action before he reached the postoffice, so he determined to postpone it until they were on their way home.

There were three letters for himself, two for Alice and a lot of papers and magazines for Uncle Ike. He resumed his seat in the sleigh and started on his journey homeward.

"Would you like to go back the same way that we came?" asked Quincy, "or shall we go by the upper road and come by Deacon Mason's?"

"I should like to stop and see Huldj," said Alice and Quincy took the upper road.

Conversation lagged on the homeward trip. Alice held her two letters

in her hand and looked at them several times, apparently trying to recognize the handwriting. As Quincy glanced at her sideways, he felt sure he saw tears in her eyes and he decided that it would be an appropriate time to announce the subject of the new doctor. In fact, he was beginning to think the more his mind dwelt upon the subject, that he had taken an immense liberty in arranging for Dr. Tiltonson to come down without first speaking to her, or at least to her brother or uncle. But the deed was done and he must find some way to have her see the doctor and get his opinion about her eyes.

Quincy spent so much time revolving this matter in his mind, that he was quite astonished when he looked around and found himself at the exact place where he spoke those words to Huldj Mason that had ended in the accident. This time he gave careful attention to horse and bill and curve, and a moment later he drove up the sleigh at Deacon Mason's front gate.

Mrs. Mason welcomed them at the door and they were shown into the parlor, where Huldj sat at the piano. The young girls greeted each other warmly, and Mrs. Mason and Huldj both wished Quincy and Alice to stay to tea. They declined, saying they had many letters to read before supper and Zekiel would think something had happened to them if they did not come home.

"I will send Hiram down to let them know," said Mrs. Mason.

"You must really excuse us this time," protested Quincy. "Some other time perhaps Miss Pettengill will accept your hospitality."

"But when?" asked Mrs. Mason. "We might as well fix a time right now."

"Yes," said Huldj, "and we won't let them go till they promise."

"Well, my plan," said Mrs. Mason, "is this. Have Zekiel and Alice and Mr. Sawyer come over next Monday afternoon about 5 o'clock, and we will have tea at six, and we will have some music in the evening. I have so missed your singing, Mr. Sawyer, since you went away."

"Yes," said Huldj, "I think it is real mean of you, Alice, not to let him come and see us often."

Alice flushed and stammered, "I—I do not keep him from coming to see you. Why, yes, I have to," said she, as a thought flashed through her mind. "I will tell you the truth, Mrs. Mason, Mr. Sawyer offered to do some writing for me, and I have kept him very busy."

She stopped and Quincy continued, "I did do a little writing for her, Mrs. Mason, during the great snowstorm, and it was a great pleasure to me, as I hope it was a help to her. I had nothing else to do."

"What matter between you?" asked Quincy. "You must really have been very all that Huldj and me wants to know is, will all three of you come and take tea with us next Monday night?"

"I shall be greatly pleased to do so," said Quincy.

"If Zekiel will come, I will," said Alice, and Quincy for an instant felt a slight touch of wounded feeling, because Alice had ignored her entreaty in accepting the invitation.

As they drove home Alice said to Mrs. Mason, "I didn't wish to appear too eager to come, for Huldj might have suspected."

"What mystery is this?" asked Quincy. "I really don't know what you are talking about."

"What?" said Alice. "Didn't Zekiel tell you about the surprise party that Mr. Strout was getting up, and that you, Zekiel, and I were not to be invited?"

(To be Continued Thursday.)

CHAPTER XXV.
Some Plain Facts and Inferences.

The next day was Saturday; the sun did not show itself from behind the clouds till noon, and Quincy put off his trip to the Eastborough Centre post office with the hope that the afternoon would be pleasant. His wish was gratified and at dinner he said he was going to drive over to Eastborough Centre, and asked Miss Pettengill if she would like to accompany him. She hesitated, but Uncle Ike advised her to go, telling her that she stayed indoors too much and needed outdoor exercise. Ezekiel agreed with his uncle, and Alice finally gave what seemed to Quincy to be a somewhat reluctant consent.

He saw that the sleigh was amply supplied with robes and Mandy, at his suggestion, heated a large piece of soapstone, which was wrapped up and placed in the bottom of the sleigh.

Alice appeared at the door equipped for her journey. Always lovely in Quincy's eyes, she appeared still more so in her suit of dark blue cloth. Over her shoulders she wore a fur

cape lined with quilted red satin, and on her head a fur cap, which made a strong contrast with her light hair, which crept out in little curls from underneath.

They started off at a smart speed for Old Bill was not in the shafts this time. Alice had been familiar with the road to Eastborough before leaving home, and as Quincy described the various points they passed, Alice entered into the spirit of the drive with all the interest and enthusiasm of a child. The sharp winter air brought a rosy bloom to her cheeks, and as Quincy looked at those wonderful large blue eyes, he could hardly make himself believe that they could not see him. He was sure he had never seen a handsomer girl.

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in her hand and looked at them several times, apparently trying to recognize the handwriting. As Quincy glanced at her sideways, he felt sure he saw tears in her eyes and he decided that it would be an appropriate time to announce the subject of the new doctor. In fact, he was beginning to think the more his mind dwelt upon the subject, that he had taken an immense liberty in arranging for Dr. Tiltonson to come down without first speaking to her, or at least to her brother or uncle. But the deed was done and he must find some way to have her see the doctor and get his opinion about her eyes.

Quincy spent so much time revolving this matter in his mind, that he was quite astonished when he looked around and found himself at the exact place where he spoke those words to Huldj Mason that had ended in the accident. This time he gave careful attention to horse and bill and curve, and a moment later he drove up the sleigh at Deacon Mason's front gate.

Mrs. Mason welcomed them at the door and they were shown into the parlor, where Huldj sat at the piano. The young girls greeted each other warmly, and Mrs. Mason and Huldj both wished Quincy and Alice to stay to tea. They declined, saying they had many letters to read before supper and Zekiel would think something had happened to them if they did not come home.

"I will send Hiram down to let them know," said Mrs. Mason.

"You must really excuse us this time," protested Quincy. "Some other time perhaps Miss Pettengill will accept your hospitality."

"But when?" asked Mrs. Mason. "We might as well fix a time right now."

"Yes," said Huldj, "and we won't let them go till they promise."

"Well, my plan," said Mrs. Mason, "is this. Have Zekiel and Alice and Mr. Sawyer come over next Monday afternoon about 5 o'clock, and we will have tea at six, and we will have some music in the evening. I have so missed your singing, Mr. Sawyer, since you went away."

"Yes," said Huldj, "I think it is real mean of you, Alice, not to let him come and see us often."

Alice flushed and stammered, "I—I do not keep him from coming to see you. Why, yes, I have to," said she, as a thought flashed through her mind. "I will tell you the truth, Mrs. Mason, Mr. Sawyer offered to do some writing for me, and I have kept him very busy."

She stopped and Quincy continued, "I did do a little writing for her, Mrs. Mason, during the great snowstorm, and it was a great pleasure to me, as I hope it was a help to her. I had nothing else to do."

"What matter between you?" asked Quincy. "You must really have been very all that Huldj and me wants to know is, will all three of you come and take tea with us next Monday night?"

"I shall be greatly pleased to do so," said Quincy.

"If Zekiel will come, I will," said Alice, and Quincy for an instant felt a slight touch of wounded feeling, because Alice had ignored her entreaty in accepting the invitation.

As they drove home Alice said to Mrs. Mason, "I didn't wish to appear too eager to come, for Huldj might have suspected."

"What mystery is this?" asked Quincy. "I really don't know what you are talking about."

"What?" said Alice. "Didn't Zekiel tell you about the surprise party that Mr. Strout was getting up, and that you, Zekiel, and I were not to be invited?"

(To be Continued Thursday.)