THE STORY TELLER

A DIFFERENCE.

From them who come to grumble when
They think the world has used them ill
We long to flee nor see again,
We wish they might, at least, keep still.
The luckless ones who come with moans
We long to set upon with stones.

From them who come to boast how much
They have or are about to win,
We long to flee; we wish that such
Fools might find holes and there crawl in.
With empty pride they rouse our hate,
Their very smiles exasperate.

Ah, but they please us who appear
With hopeful cheering words to say,
And, as they say them, let us hear
How great they think we are, who lay
Sweet stress upon our excellence—
We love them for their glad good sense.
—S. E. Kiser, in Chicago Record-Herald.

The Revolt of Jim.

By Helen Frances Huntington.

NEVA Warrington checked her pony's gait slightly as she drove around the curve in the road leading past the quaint old Trescott place, which was a delight to the eye, for it was in the flush of early summer, and the garden was aflame with blossomed sweetness to the four winds. The long, cool walks between the great poplars were rose-bordered and the low white picket fence was burdened with crimson fragrance—old-fashioned cinnamon roses whose damask petals strewed the thick dust of the road.

Voices reached her from the wide veranda, where a merry company sat chatting behind the thin tendrils of a cypress vine.

"Oh, do write and have them come right away," said Minnie Kelly, the second Mrs. Trescott's daughter. "The more the merrier, you know. We can have a perfectly lovely time here all summer, if we have a big enough house party."

"I wonder where Jim comes in on that proposition," said Neva to herself, as she glanced toward the piazza in search of the young host who was not in sight. There were several white-gowned girls, and two smartly dressed young men who sat on the veranda railing smoking and watching the progress of the tea table which Mrs. Trescott was setting.

A second turn in the road brought Neva face to face with Jim Trescott, who sat reading his evening paper in the doorway of an old outbuilding, whose environments showed that it served for a repair shop. A blanketed cot and a chair and table were visible in the dim background of the rook behind Jim.

"So you have moved, have you?" said Neva, with an inscrutable smile, drawing rein beside the blossomed hedge. "How do you like your new quarters?"

"The folks had unexpected company," Jim explained, rising embarrassedly, "and as there wasn't room for us all, I thought I'd bunk out here for a night or two."

"I see." The corners of her beautiful mouth curved scornfully. "So your stepmother crowded you out to accommodate her guests! Do they permit you to sit at their table, or do you take your meals here, too?"

"I'd rather not eat with them," Jim declared in self-defense, "for I should have to dress up for each meal, and I can't very well spare the time now that work is pushing."

"So you are contented to live like a tramp while your stepmother and her friends live on the fat of your lands? Jim Trescott, you haven't got the grit of a jackrabbit!"

Jim's black eyes burned, and a vivid flush underran the healthy tan of his face, but being naturally slow of speech and very much in love with Neva Warrington, he was unable to express his brimming thoughts, though his face showed that her taunt stung deep.

"Here you are, the rightful master of the situation, a great, able-bodied, sensible, sane man, without spirit enough to stand up for your rights against a greedy, miserly woman for whom your father made ample and just provision. She not only lives on your bounty unasked, but drives you out of your own house to accommodate a pack of silly guests for whom you will slave all summer without a whimper."

"What am I to do?" Jim asked, miserably conscious of Neva's growing scorn. "She won't leave without being put out, and I can't do that on father's account."

"Oh, of course not. Only a man of grit could do that," Neva retorted scathingly. "If you had one grain of ordinary gumption, Jim Trescott, you'd revolt like a man and send the whole gang about their own business in no time. If nothing else would do, you could sell the house over their heads and let strangers force them to leave."

"Sell the old home!" Jim repeated with a deep-drawn breath of regret. "Why it would seem like selling my own flesh and blood!"

"Four years of strife and imposition must have endeared it to you unspeakably," Neva scoffed. "I should think you would loathe the very sight of it after the way you have been treated in it."

"They would have to move out if I should marry," Jim had the temerity to say.

"Oh, you'd never have the heart to send away your stepmother and her children for the sake of a mere wife," Neva broke in with a ripple of scornful laughter. "Besides, no woman of spirit would marry a man who can't stand up for his own rights. I am very sure I shouldn't."

With that biting declaration Neva flipped the whip over the pony's ears and drove away with head held high.

She had never actually encouraged his suit, but neither had she ever openly scorned him before. Now he knew that she despised him for a weakling because of his lenience toward his father's second wife and her vain offspring. To Jim it seemed cruelly unjust. Yet he reasoned that she was probably right. Perhaps outsiders viewed his many concessions just as she did and despised him also. She had advised him to revolt! to sell the house that held the tenderest associations of his joyous, care-free youth, when he had been the closest companion of his parents. The rose hedge, now grown to a gnarled, blossomed wall, had been set out by his mother's loving hands with Jim helping her with childish ardor. He distinctly remembered the erection of the vine-covered summer house, where the happy little family spent their leisure moments summer after summer until his mother died.

Several years after his mother's death his father had married an attractive widow with three pert, half-grown children who had made the ensuing year sadly unpleasant for the quiet, peace-loving old man. But release came to him after a short illness, and he died leaving his property equally divided between the widow and Jim. Mrs. Trescott immediately sold her share and invested the proceeds, while she continued to live in the home place which was left unconditionally to Jim. She monopolized the farm income to defray all the expenses of herself and her two airy daughters; besides an incidental outlay in behalf of her son, who made life as unpleasant for Jim as an arrogant, conceited and lazy young idler is capable of doing. After a year or so of heroic tolerance Jim had let his stepmother know that he had thought of marrying.

"You surely don't want this whole big house to yourself!" she exclaimed in grieved surprise.

Jim told her that he thought it unwise for two families to live together.

"But we shan't be two families, Jim dear. Your wife will be one of us!" she declared with warmth. "Any nice, pleasant-tempered girl would be only too glad to have such lovely company as the girls. Anyway, we simply couldn't bear the thoughts of leaving the house where we have been so happy. I will never go away unless you put me out, and I am perfectly sure that you will never be guilty of such cruelty. The very thought of such a thing would have broken your poor, dear father's heart."

That ended the matter for some time. Jim's courtship did not progress very rapidly, owing chiefly to his very low estimate of his own chances against two apparently more favored suitors.

"I might have known it from the start," said Jim, rousing at last, when the rim of the young moon pierced the velvet-black shadows that enveloped the world like a dusky mantle. "I'm only a poor dull stick beside Will Elverson. He's the sort that girls like Neva marry. Well, I don't care much what comes or goes after this, so they can keep the house and run things to suit themselves. I'm going off where there won't be any reminders of what might have been."

After that Jim worked harder than ever to get together enough money for a humble start in the west, where he decided to go in order to get away from associations that had grown inexpressibly dreary to him since he lost hope about Neva. His stepmother continued to entertain lavishly in behalf of her daughters, whose matrimonial prospects depended largely upon Jim's bounty, and as he was too weary of it all to make any objections, no one consulted him. He stayed in his cramped, bare quarters in the repair shop without a murmur, really glad to be away from the unwelcome merriment that filled the house at all hours. One afternoon, however, he was called from his work in the field to find Neva awaiting him on the veranda in company with young Elverson who looked gayer and more bouyantly handsome than ever. Jim bravely stifled the pang of jealousy that seemed for one cruel instant to crush out his very life, and put out one brown, toil worn hand into which Neva laid hers with a charming smile.

"I have come to look at the house," she informed him cheerfully. "We—that is I am thinking of buying the place."

"Buying the place," Mrs. Trescott repeated incredulously, forgetting her listening guests. "You have made a big mistake if you imagine it is for sale."

"It is you who are mistaken if you think it isn't," Neva answered urbanely. "Evidently Jim hasn't consulted you—presumably because he knows you don't care to buy. I have always liked this place immensely and for that reason I came over to look over it as soon as I heard Jim wanted to sell. Will you show us around please, Jim?"

"Whoever started that absurd rumor, I'd like to know!" Mrs. Trescott exclaimed indignantly. "There isn't a word of truth in it. Why, I shouldn't sell this house for the world!"

"As the place is Jim's, you can't very well dispose of it, even though you have been living on it and draining its resources for years," said Neva imperturbably. "Isn't this a dear old piazza, Will? Look at those great trees, and that lovely rose hedge. I always envied Jim the possession of this quaint, beautiful old place. Now about your price, Jim."

Jim cleared his throat and tried to answer in spite of his pained bewilderment, but Minnie Kelley intercepted him hotly. "Didn't mamma make it perfectly clear to you that we don't intend to sell the place, Miss Warrington?" she asked insultingly. "The place is as good as a homestead to us, and we wouldn't think of parting with it under any circumstances. I suppose you understand the case now, don't you?"

"I understand your version of it, yes," Neva answered sweetly, "but as Jim is the only person concerned in the matter, I don't understand why you should interfere. Come, Jim, name your price, please, for I want it very badly. You would rather old friends should have it than strangers, wouldn't you?"

"Yes," said Jim in a very clear, steady voice, which nevertheless hurt Neva poignantly, for as he spoke he looked at his graceful, handsome rival, and there was that in his good, honest eyes which betrayed his deep secret unerringly. "I had much rather you would have the house than anyone else in the world, because—"

"Because I will take the very best care of it in the world!" Neva finished kindly.

"But, Jim, you don't mean to part with it!" his stepmother cried. "Are you crazy, to think of such a thing? What would your father think if he knew?"

"Shall I tell you he or any honest man would think?" said Neva, suddenly turning to Mrs. Trescott with a flash of rosy scorn. "That Jim has been shamefully imposed upon by you and your children since the hour that his good father died. Perhaps you don't believe that anyone knows the full extent of your rapacity—that you nagged and wheedled Jim into mortgaging the pasture field in order to raise a required amount of money to cover your son's discrepancies, and so worked on Jim's sympathies that you induced him to finally sacrifice his property. I know all about that cute deal—not through Jim, but through my brother, who filed the mortgage. I mean to take pains to let other people know as well as myself. You can hereafter support your children on the money that Jim's father left you, for Jim is going to sell this place to me and keep every dollar of the purchase money. Come, Jim, show us through the house, please."

At last Jim had revolted. In spite of the bitter pain of disappointed love, he felt himself suddenly transformed to a new, dominant manhood which gave him a fine, simple dignity that impressed and awed his old oppressors. Neva's loyal defense of his motives and her denunciation of the usurpers filled him with somber, quiet elation which never could quite fade from his memory of that triumphant hour. After all, it would seem good to know of Neva's joyous presence in the house that had sheltered his own happiest hours.

"You can have the place, Neva," he said with the utmost composure. "I will show you both through at once."

Neva followed him, chatting gaily, with Elverson beside her, smiling and radiant. Now and then he whistled a snatch from Lohengrin, seemingly quite unconscious of Jim's suffering presence, because of the latter's heroic calmness, which never wavered throughout the long, trying ordeal, while the lovers applauded this and that quaint turn or nook of their future home. By and by that was over, and Neva asked Jim to accompany her to her lawyer's office.

"I want the deed signed and everything legally transferred at once, to make sure that it is really mine," she explained briskly, as she ran down the veranda steps between her two companions.

Jim had nothing at all to say during the short drive to the village courtroom. He signed the deed of transfer without a word and handed it to Neva, who drew up a check to the amount $3,000. She was a long while doing it, and in the meanwhile Will Elverson had occasion to call the lawyer out on urgent business, which left Neva and Jim alone. As Neva handed him the check, finally, her hand touched his. He started violently and thrust back the crisp bit of paper.

"Neva," he began in a husky voice, "if you didn't know just how it is with me I wouldn't have the courage to ask what I am going to. I want you to keep the money—to take the place as a wedding gift from me. I hope with all my heart that you will be very happy."

"Jim!"

Her voice made him catch his breath in a gasp of surprise. "I'll take your gift on one condition," she stipulated, "and that is that you will accept a wedding present from me."

"A wedding present!" Jim faltered. "You don't understand—"

She interrupted his embarrassment with a sweet imperiousness which he had grown to associate with his constant dreams of her. "This is my wedding present to you," laying her hand in his and smiling radiantly into his eyes. "You dear old goose, don't you know that I have always loved you in spite of your soft-heartedness? I tried my best to make you revolt against those vampires, and failed, so I had to do it myself, even at the risk of—"

She paused suddenly because Jim leaned over and kissed her full on the lips. "Even at the risk of making myself out a bold, designing—"

Again Jim interrupted her, and then he found his voice, which had temporarily left him at the moment of supreme elation.

"I am a great deal happier than any plain, ordinary chap has any right to be," said he very unsteadily. Which was a sadly inadequate expression of the rapture that thrilled every fiber of his big, generous being.—Farm and Home.

AN UNSOCIABLE CUSTOMER

Young Man Resents Allusion to His Girl and Puts Up Some Hot Talk.

"You must be going out to see the girl," observed the friendly tobacconist to the young man who had just purchased a cigar.

"What's that?" asked the young man sharply, pausing in the act of lighting his Havana second, relates the Chicago Daily News.

His manner was disconcerting, but the tobacconist repeated his surmise. "You're fixed up so," he added. "Flower in your buttonhole, mustach curled. You're looking all right."

"I didn't ask you how I looked," said the young man, morosely. "I came in here to buy me a smoke."

"That's all right," said the tobacconist, soothingly. "I didn't mean to hurt your feelin's. There ain't any harm in a feller going to see a girl as I know of. I've done it myself.'

"I may be going to sit with a sick grandmother for all you know," said the young man, in no wise placated. "If I get my mustach curled I guess it's my own business."

"Sure! That's all right."

"I don't know whether it is or not. I didn't get fresh with your bald spot when I came in here."

"You don't need to get mad about it," said the tobacconist.

"If I want to wear a flower I guess it's my privilege," continued the young man. "I may wear a flower every day in the week and two on Sunday. You don't know. You never saw me before, as I know of. You've probably got me mixed up with somebody you went to school with, the way you talk."

"I'll take it all back," said the tobacconist.

"You'd better not bring it out the next time," said the young man with a threatening shake of the head. "You can't make a monkey of me, I want to tell you. You're a josher, you are. You must think that line o' talk is a trade getter. If I've got a girl I don't remember introducing her to you. How would it be if you tended to your cigar business? Say, if you've got any friends you must josh them something fierce."

"Now, see here—" began the tobacconist.

"If you've got anything to say about my necktie you might as well get it off your mind," said the young man. "Maybe you'd like to know about the girl, too."

"No, sir, I don't," said the tobacconist wrathfully. "I don't care a hang about her or you. You can go and see her or you can stay away from her, just as you dern please, just so long as you get out of this store. A man may have a grouch, but he can't rub it into me, more than about so much."

The young man turned to the cigar lighter and lit his cigar with ostentatious deliberation. At the door he turned.

"Talking about that bald spot of yours," said he, "it looks as if you'd been having trouble with your wife."

The tobacconist glared at the spot where the young man had stood for nearly a minute. Then his features relaxed. "Maybe I ain't the first that's told him that this afternoon," he said.

MEXICAN CHARACTERISTICS

Useless Employes Are Kept on Railroad Pay Roll as a Matter of Habit.

A little story from Tehuantepec is just finding its way into railroad circles here. It casts no reflection on the ability of a certain Tehuantepec railroad man, but it does emphasize the fact that the oil burner is a new thing in Mexico, states the Mexican Herald.

Wood had been the common fuel on the locomotives of that road before the oil burners were placed in service. The firemen on that road were assisted by men known as wood passers. The Tehuantepec is not the only road in Mexico where wood passers are on the pay roll. It naturally follows that when the oil burners were placed in commission, the road's wood passers would have to go. They have gone, but they were late in going. The wood passer wasn't going to suggest that he be let out, and calmly waited to be notified that his services were no longer required.

The oil burners had been running some time when one day a visitor, standing beside the man whose duty it was to look after those things, asked the man why he didn't take the wood passers off the oil burners. He added that he didn't see what good they could do on an engine burning oil. Apparently it was the first time the man had thought about the fact. The next day every oil burner went out without a wood passer.

The Foolish Boy.

Frightened Mother—My child! What in the world are you doing with all that flaming-red paint smeared over your face and hands?

Foolish Boy—I wanted t' git a job, an' I seen a ad. in th' paper that said: "Wanted—A bright colored boy." So I jist paints m'self the brightest color I could, an' just was startin' out t' see th' feller what advertised.—Baltimore American.

Proof.

Enthusiast—The Japanese are great mechanics.

Anti—What makes you think so?

"The speed with which they are converting Russian battleships into submarine warships."—Detroit Free Press.

Main Point.

First M. D.—Have you diagnosed that patient's case yet?

Second M. D.—No; but I've looked him up in Bradstreet's.—Judge.

YARNS WITH A LAUGH.

Mark Twain tells a story that while traveling in Germany a man sitting next to him at a dinner in a hotel ordered a bottle of Johannesburg wine. When it was brought he saw on the bottle a label of Moselle, and called to it the attention of the manager, who exclaimed: "Ach! what a stupid donkey; I distinctly told him to put on the Johannesburg label."

A blushing and pretty Swedish girl just arrived from the old country attended evening service at a Duluth church. The minister, seeing she was a stranger, shook hands with her at the close of the meeting and said he would find pleasure in calling upon her soon. Whereupon the girl hung her head and bashfully murmured: "T'ank you, but ay have a fella'."

Mr. Campbell, the Irish solicitor-general, speaking the other day upon delusions, told a story of a north of Ireland Protestant who was perfectly sane save on one point. This stanch Protestant harbored the delusion that one of his legs belonged to a Roman Catholic and therefore when he went to bed every night he used to leave the Catholic leg outside the blanket by way of punishment.

There had been a railway collision near a Scottish country town, and an astute local attorney had hurried to the scene of disaster. Noticing an old man with a badly damaged head lying on the ground, he approached him with notebook in hand. "How about damages, my man?" he began. The injured man waved him off with the remark: "Na, na; ye'll get nae damages fae me. It wasna me that hit yer bloomin' auld train."

Many years of hard work on the farm had made the old man round-shouldered and his coat fitted badly. His son in the city sent him a coat stretcher on which to hang the coat at night. On his next visit to the farm the young man asked how the coat stretcher worked. His father looked a little embarrassed and then confessed: "I can't stand it on," said he. "It was real good of you to send it. Your mother fastened it to my coat with tape, but I wasn't comfortable in it and I had to take it off."

FACTS AND FINDINGS.

Russia has 86 general holidays in a year.

In England one man makes a fortune to eight that become bankrupt.

At least two-fifths of the companies promoted annually in England fail.

In 12 marriages out of every 100 one of the parties has been married before.

Blue coral, which is probably the most precious kind, is obtained in the Bay of Benin.

The average birth-rate for Europe shows that for every 100 girls 106 boys are born.

Every year between 60,000,000 and 70,000,000 codfish are caught round the coast of Newfoundland.

Dartmoor is the largest tract of uncultivated land in England; it occupies one-fifth of the county of Devon.

Three out of every 20 children that are born to British parents in those islands of the blest do not live to the age of 12 months.

The most powerful dredge in the world is that used by the Susquehanna Iron company at Buffalo to dig through solid rock an inland harbor.

Some Indian muslins are so extremely delicate that when spread on the grass and moistened with the dew they are practically invisible.

FROM FOREIGN SOURCES.

Single eyeglasses are prohibited in the German army.

Only one man in 700 pays an income tax in India, though the tax is levied on all incomes of $165 and upward.

Prof. William Smart, the political economist, says that if British wealth were divided equally each person would receive $195.48 a year, or $3.62 a week.

Speaking at Exeter, England, Rider Haggard said he had seen people herded together in England under conditions to which Kaffirs or wild African tribes would not submit.

An authentic Madonna of the great fifteenth century Venetian painter Giovanni Bellini, painted on wood, has just been discovered in the house of a family at Trieste, in Austria.

The amount of money advanced to Irish tenants for the purchase of their lands under the various acts of parliament passed since 1886 is, according to a parliamentary paper, $128,866,015.

A Russian officer, who with six others broke his parole and escaped from the interned cruiser Diana at Sargon, was reprimanded when he arrived at St. Petersburg for breaking his parole and then congratulated on behaving like a sailor. The seven officers have asked to be sent back to the far east.

The British government has decided to withdraw the British troops from Egypt. Only the native army will be left in possession and a new police force will be created. For a year the garrison will consist of a field battery, a mountain battery and two battalions of infantry. At present the army is 18,000 strong.

An agitation is going on in London for horse ambulances, for, incredible as it may seem, a person injured in the streets of London is joggled to the hospital in a two-wheeled hand barrow, drawn by one or two policemen. There are only three horse ambulances in the whole city, and they are owned by private parties, who charge for their use. There is no first aid system.

Had a Kick Coming.

Short—Hello, Long! Where are you going?

Long—I'm on my way over to the post office to register a kick against the miserable delivery service.

"What's the trouble?"

"Why, that check you promised to mail me ten days ago hasn't reached me yet!"—Chicago Daily News.