



**MISS RHODA'S MEASURE.**

Miss Rhoda sat in the west doorway. Her face was turned toward the sweet sky, radiant with its rays of red and golden light; it was nature's "withdrawing season." At Miss Rhoda's right was a field of stubble from which the wheat had been harvested. At her left the corn still stood, like Indian wigwags, all over the field, waiting for the husking time. At her feet the maple leaves, so gorgeous in their autumnal plaids, were falling. Here and there the note of a stray bird which had tarried later than its fellows fell upon her ear. There was a chill in the air; the wind was rising, and it stirred the locks of silvery hair which usually lay with such calm precision about Miss Rhoda's face. She folded her black shawl closer about her shoulders, but still she lingered.

There was no kindly voice to warn her of the dangers that might come from longer exposure. No loved form to come to the door and say, "Come in, now; the air is chill and the fire is burning brightly. It is lonely in the room without you." Miss Rhoda was alone in the world; she had outlived those nearest and dearest to her.

In the afterglow of the lives of those who had belonged to her in the old home sweet memories lighted up the closing day, and as she looked intently at the western sky she seemed to see



**HE'S TOO CLOSE-FISTED.**

A vision of the peary gates, behind whose portals those loved ones were dwelling. Watching the red and gold light fade away, and the darkness gather, she, like Christian, "fell sick" at the glimpse of the glories and wished she could be among them.

As she turned and went into the house, there was a look on her face which, if an artist had caught it at that moment, might have inspired him to paint a picture and call it Renunciation. The most notable thing after one has grown old is the fact of renunciation. But in some lives, like that of Miss Rhoda, it is a more deeply felt fact than in others.

"I was passing Miss Rhoda's house just at sunset-to-night, and I saw her sitting at her west door," said Mr. Bates, as he sat down at the supper table. "I knew she was trying to work out the knots and knots about that mortgage on her place. But old Tom Carpenter will foreclose when the time comes. She can't expect any mercy from him; he is too close-fisted for that."

"Dear me!" exclaimed Miss Martha Bates; "what will become of her."

"She will have to go to the town-house, I suppose. It will be very hard for her; Miss Rhoda was always a high-strung woman," her brother replied.

"And after all that woman has done to help other folks when they were in trouble!" exclaimed Mrs. Bates. "Think how she took in those Butler children and kept them after their mother died; and how she kept that young man who was too sick to work all winter. In my own mother couldn't have done more for him. I declare if Miss Rhoda was to give up her place and go on the town at her age, it will be a shame."

"Doesn't the Bible say, 'With what measure ye meet it shall be measured to you again?'" asked Arthur, the tall boy at his mother's right. "How do you reconcile that passage of scripture with Miss Rhoda's prospects of going to the town-house? All my long life I have looked upon Miss Rhoda as one of the fire-side saints of the earth; and

to move. It's something I never did before, and it's sort of trying. But I'm thankful I don't feel so unconquered and unhappy about it as I thought I should when I first made up my mind that there was nothing else I could do. My eyes are so poor I can't see any more. I say with John Bunyan, 'Perhaps my way to heaven lies through this very valley.' It is just as near the town-house, heaven is, as it is to my old home here, but then—well, I won't say one word against the Lord's dispensations. The Lord keepeth the feet of his children. If this is his way for me to walk, I hope he will give me strength to follow without faltering step."

"But, my dear Miss Rhoda, it is not going to be the Lord's will for you to leave your old home; you are to stay in it as long as you live."

When Miss Martha told her how her home had been secured to her, she exclaimed, "I never thought before how Abraham must have felt when he was ready to sacrifice Isaac and the Lord stayed his hand!"

It was Arthur who planned a house-warming for Miss Rhoda on Christmas eve. The young men and young women of the church and town filled her woodshed with wood and coal, and her cupboard-shelves with things needful for the necessities of the body. The fathers and mothers joined in the work of love, and there was never such a thorough house-warming done in that locality before. A new light came into Miss Rhoda's face that Christmaside. It was love-light—she was not alone in the world any longer; she belonged to her good neighbors, and they belonged to her.

When the Christmas bells rang in the church belfry on Christmas morning the people heard them with gladness, and thanked the Lord that they had been enabled to help return Miss Rhoda's measure running over full.

"No; but the finger on the signboard points that way," replied Arthur. "It is dreadful for old people to be obliged to give up their home and old associations and go 'where they would not,'" said Mrs. Bates. "Young folks can bear changes—many really enjoy them—but it is different with the aged."

Aunt Martha had not married—her acquaintances called her "a maiden lady." It was not because she never had opportunities to marry, she told her nephews and nieces, but because she loved them too well to break her home ties with them. It had long ago been settled that the Bates family could not do without Aunt Martha, and Aunt Martha could not get along without them. "How dreadful it must be," was her thought that night, "to have no love-light in one's life."

Then Miss Martha sat down and wrote a letter to her brother John, who lived in the city. She told him of Miss Rhoda; what a patient, faithful life hers had been, and now, just as nearing the end of the journey, she must be forced to give up her home and go to the town-house. Then she added, "John, you and I must pay off that mortgage, and give Miss Rhoda the home for her life. We are able; let us be willing to do it. What a joyous Christmas we shall have if we do this! Miss Rhoda must have the measure meted out to her that she has meted out to others."

The result was that Brother John who was quite apt to act on sister Martha's suggestions, joined her in the labor of love for her neighbor. When Miss Martha went over to see Miss Rhoda, a short time before the foreclosing of the mortgage, she found her looking over her things—she could not carry many with her; for the room was small she expected to occupy. But there was this little memento and that gift with sweet memories associated



"THE LORD STAYED HIS HAND," about them which made it a hard matter to decide what to take and what to give up. There was the mother's old workbasket, once so full of the making and mending for the loved ones, and her copy of "Daily Food" lying in it, and father's well-thumbed Bible, with here and there words of comfort and explanation written on the margins—those of course must go with her.

Tear-marks were on Miss Rhoda's face as she offered the mother's rocker to her visitor.

"Yes, Miss Martha, I'm getting ready

**VENETIAN GLASS-BLOWING.**

An Ancient Science Revived at the Royal Prussian Museum of Arts.

The art of glass-blowing before the lamp is now carried on in the Royal Prussian Museum of Mechanical Arts in the same manner in which it was practiced by the old Venetians during the most flourishing period of their glass industry. The famous glass artist, Fr. Zittmann of Wiesbaden occupies a room in the museum in which he produces from his stock of glass tubes of different strength and color, by blowing, those fine and delicate drinking vessels, carnes, vases, etc., as are seen in the numerous collections of old Venetian glass. Similar products of more recent date are being manufactured again in Venice and Mantua since 1860, when the industry was revived by Salvati, and by the French Glass Company of Cologne—Ehrenfeld.

These factories are operating on a large scale and with the assistance of all the appliances that modern technology can furnish. Zittmann, on the other hand, works without any outside or pattern, using nothing but a few absolutely necessary tools. Otherwise he relies absolutely on his sense of form, which is developed to extraordinary keenness. It is extremely interesting to watch him at his work, and observe how fast and sure the numerous articles, so different in shape, size and decoration, are created by him. A large number of his products are on exhibition in the museum. While the drinking glasses destined for use show forms just as delicate and elegant as pure, the artist has been tempted by his great virtuosity in overcoming all technical difficulties, to construct some of the larger ornamental vessels exhibited with too much by-work. This ought to be avoided, if the article shall not use its practical value. The demand for such far-fetched glassware in Europe is very fair at present.—*Local Advertiser.*

**A Bad Place to Be Born In.**

These are a great many advantages in being born an American citizen. One can hope to become president of the United States and various other high and mighty things; but after all, the greatest privilege is in being born among a people who are free from foolish superstitions. Suppose you had been born on the Congo river, for instance. How would you like that when you consider some of their beliefs? It is told by persons supposed to be well informed that the people inhabiting the district around the Congo river share with the Ashantees, of whom we have recently heard such a lot, the belief that if their high priest, the Chitome, were to die a natural death the whole world would follow suit at once, and would dissolve into air, for it is, according to them, only held together by his personal will.

Accordingly, when the pontiff falls ill and his illness is serious enough to make a fatal termination probable, a successor is nominated, and he, so soon as he is consecrated, enters the high priest's hut and chide him or struggles him to death. A somewhat similar custom obtains in Uporee when the king falls seriously ill and seems likely to die, for his wives to kill him. The same rule is followed if he gets beyond a certain age, for an old Uporee prophecy states that the throne will pass away from the family in the event of the king dying a natural death.—*Harper's Round Table.*

**CHRISTMAS RAPPINGS.**

(By James Rolfs Haggood.)

If a friend should rap at your old home door On the Christmas morning fair, With a present for you and your little dears, Say, wouldn't you open, Claire?

If a boy should rap at your old home door On the Christmas morning fair— Your wandering boy, that you thought was lost— Say, wouldn't you open, Claire?

If a babe should rap at your old heart door On the Christmas morning fair, To give you a kiss or a hug or two, Say, wouldn't you open, Claire?

If a God should rap at your old heart door On the Christmas morning fair, To give you a Son with a heavenly home, Say, wouldn't you open, Claire?

**Christmas Kindnesses.**

At this season of the year, remember that it is your duty as children, and also your privilege, to glorify God, to promote peace, and to extend good will to those around you. You may promote the blessing of peace on earth by frankly forgiving those who may grieve or annoy you, by persuading enemies to be reconciled to each other, and by daily prayer to God to preserve the nations of the earth from the deadly horrors of war. And you may in a great many ways show good will to men. Are there not poor people within a short walk of your own door who will receive no Christmas cards, no nice presents of food or good clothing, whose children have no nice toys or picture books, of which some of you have such an abundance that you scarcely know where to find room for?—*Christian Herald.*

**What Makes a Happy Christmas.**

It does not require much money, nor indeed any money, to make a happy home circle on Christmas. The chief thing is a warm and merry heart. It will devise ways and means for filling the home with cheer, joy and gladness. A little invention, a little effort, and much love will give the day a halo brighter than tinsel and gold. God did not require extra material to paint every tree and bush in all this region a crystal whiteness the other night. He used only a little moisture and a little cold, and in the morning men exclaimed in wonder, "What beauty!" So the simple things beautify and glorify the home, and make holidays bright with joys beyond the purchase of money.—*Michigan Christian Advocate.*

Christmas gifts for thee, Fair and free! Precious things from the heavenly store Filling thy casket more and more; Golden love in divested chain, That never can be unwined again; Silvery carols of joy that swell Sweetest of all in the heart's lone cell.

**HOPE**  
 Sarsaparilla  
 Hood's Pills

Stupidity Personated.

Old Jackson—What you ride backward for?  
 Coffee—So I won't have to be round when I can look.

**SYRUP OF FIGS**

Gladness Comes

With a better understanding of the transient nature of the physical life, which vanish before present efforts—gentle efforts—pleasantly directed. There is comfort in the knowledge that so many forms of sickness are not due to any actual disease, but simply to a constipated condition of the system, which the pleasant family laxative, Syrup of Figs, promptly removes. That is why it is the only remedy with millions of families, and everywhere esteemed so highly by all who value good health. Its beneficial effects are due to the fact that it is the one remedy which promotes internal cleanliness without debilitating the organs on which it acts. It is therefore all important, in order to get its beneficial effect, to note when you purchase that you have the genuine article, which is manufactured by the California Fig Syrup Co. only and sold by all reputable druggists.

If in the enjoyment of good health, and the system is regular, laxatives or other remedies are then not needed. If afflicted with any actual disease, one may be recommended to the most skillful physicians, but if in need of a laxative, one should have the best, and with the well-informed everywhere, Syrup of Figs stands highest and is most largely used and gives most general satisfaction.

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