The Turmoil

By

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SYNOPSIS.

—7—

Sheridan's attempt to make a business man of his son Bibbs by starting him in the machine shop ends in Bibbs going to a sanitarium, a nervous wreck. On his return Bibbs finds himself an inconsiderable and unconsidered figure in the "New Homes" of the Sheridans. The Vertreees, old town family next door and impoverished, call on the Sheridans, newly-rich, and Mary afterward puts into words her parents' unspoken wish that she marry one of the Sheridan boys. At the Sheridan housewarming banquet Sheridan spreads himself. Mary frankly encourages Jim Sheridan's attentions. Mary shocks her mother by talking of Jim as a matrimonial possibility. Jim tells Mary Bibbs is not a lunatic—"just queer." He proposes to Mary, who half accepts him. Sheridan tells Bibbs he must go back to the machine shop as soon as he is strong enough, in spite of Bibbs' plea to be allowed to write. Edith, Bibbs' sister, and Sibyl, Roscoe Sheridan's wife, quarrel over Bobby Lamborn. Sibyl goes to Mary for help to keep Lamborn from marrying Edith, and Mary leaves her in the room alone. Bibbs has to break to his father the news of Jim's sudden death. All the rest of the family helpless in their grief, Bibbs becomes temporary master of the house. At the funeral he meets Mary and rides home with her.

Love has awakened in the bosom of Bibbs—shy, hopeless love for something unattainable. The emotion is reflected in his gentleness with his grief-stricken father. Will it stir his ambition and impel him to activity that will help him win the girl finally? Will Old Sheridan come to understand and appreciate?

CHAPTER XII—Continued.

There came a second explosion, and Uncle Gideon ran out into the hall. Bibbs went to the head of the great staircase, and, looking down, discovered the source of the disturbance. Gideon's grandson, a boy of fourteen, had brought his camera to the funeral and was taking "dashlights" of the Moor. Uncle Gideon, reassured by Bibbs' explanation, would have returned to finish his quotation from Bildad the Shuhite, but Bibbs detained him, and after a little argument persuaded him to descend to the dining room whither Bibbs followed, after closing the door of his father's room.

He kept his eyes on Gideon after dinner, diplomatically preventing several attempts on the part of that comforter to reascend the stairs; and it was a relief to Bibbs when George announced that an automobile was waiting to convey the ancient man and his grandson to their train. They were the last to leave, and when they had gone Bibbs went sighing to his own room.

He stretched himself wearily upon the bed, but presently rose, went to the window, and looked for a long time at the darkened house where Mary Vertrees lived. Then he opened his trunk, took therefrom a small notebook half filled with fragmentary scribblings, and began to write:

Laughter after a funeral. In this reaction people will laugh at anything and at nothing. The band plays a dirge on the way to the cemetery, but when it turns back, and the mourning carriages are out of hearing, it strikes up, "Darktown Is Out To-Night." That is natural—but there are women whose laughter is like the whirring of whips. . . .

Beauty is not out of place among gravestones. It is not out of place anywhere. But a woman who has been betrothed to a man would not look beautiful at his funeral. A woman might look beautiful, though, at the funeral of a man whom she had known and liked. And in that case, too, she would probably not want to talk if she drove home from the cemetery with his brother; nor would she want the brother to talk. Nevertheless, too much silence is open to suspicion. It may be reticence, or It may be a vacuum. It may be dignity; or it may be false teeth. . .

Silence can be golden? Yes. But perhaps if a woman of the world should find herself by accident sitting beside a man for the length of time it must necessarily take two slow old horses to jog three miles, she might expect that man to say something of some sort! If he did not even try, but sat every step of the way as dumb as a frozen fish, she might think him a frozen fish. And she might be right. She might be right if she thought him about as pleasant a companion as Bildad the Shuhite!

Bibbs closed his notebook, replacing it in his trunk. Then, after a period of melancholy contemplation, he undressed, put on a dressing-gown and slippers, and went softly out into the hall—to his father's door. Upon the floor was a tray which Bibbs had sent George, earlier in the evening, to place upon a table in Sheridan's room—but the food was untouched. Bibbs stood listening outside the door for several minutes. There came no sound from within, and he went back to his own room and to bed.

In the morning he woke to a state of being hitherto unknown in his experience. Sometimes in the process of waking there is a little pause—sleep has gone, but coherent thought has not begun. It is the moment, as we say, before we "remember," and for the first time in Bibbs' life it came to him bringing a vague happiness. However, it was a brief visitation and was gone before he had finished dressing. It left a little trail, the pleased recollection of it and the puzzle of it, which remained unsolved. And, in fact, waking happily in the morning is not usually the result of a drive home from a funeral. No wonder the sequence evaded Bibbs Sheridan!

His father had gone when he came downstairs. "Went on down to 's office, Jes' time," Jackson informed him. "Came set breakfast table, all by myself; eat nothin'. George bring 'em breakfast, but he dif'r eat a thing. Yessuh, went on downtown, jes' same he yoosta do. Yessuh, I reckon putty much anything gotn' on same as it yoosta do."

It struck Bibbs that Jackson was right. The day passed as other days had passed. Mrs. Sheridan and Edith were in black, and Mrs. Sheridan cried a little, now and then, but no other external difference was to be seen. Bibbs went for his drive, and his mother went with him, as she sometimes did when the whether was pleasant. Altogether, the usualness of things was rather startling to Bibbs.

During the drive Mrs. Sheridan talked fragmentarily of Jim's childhood. "But you wouldn't remember that," she said, after narrating an episode. "You were too little. He was always a good boy, just like that. And he'd save whatever papa gave him, and put it in the bank. I reckon it'll just about kill your father to put somebody in his place as president of the Realty company, Bibbs. I know he can't move Roscoe over; he told me last week he'd already put as much on Roscoe as any one man could handle and not go crazy. Oh, it's a pity—" She stopped to wipe her eyes. "It's a pity you didn't run more with Jim, Bibbs. And kind o' pick up his ways. Think what it'd meant to papa now! You never did run with either Roscoe or Jim any, even before you got sick. Of course you were younger; but it always did seem queer—and you three boys! brothers like that. I don't believe I ever saw you and Jim sit down together for a good talk in my life."

"Mother, I've been away so long," Bibbs returned, gently. "And since I came home I— He was busy, you see, and I hadn't much to say about the things that interested him, because I don't know much about them."

"It's a pity! Oh, it's a pity!" she sobbed. "And you'll have to learn to know about 'em now, Bibbs. I haven't said much to you, because I felt it was all between your father and you, but I honestly do believe it will just kill him if he has to have any more trouble on top of all this! You mustn't let him, Bibbs—you mustn't! You don't know how he's grieved over you, and now he can't stand any more—he just can't! Whatever he says for you to do, you do it, Bibbs, you do it! I want you to promise me you will."

"I would if I could," he said, sorrowfully.

"No, no! Why can't you?" she cried, clutching his arm. "He wants you to go back to the machine shop and all on earth he asks is for you to go back in a cheerful spirit, so it won't hurt you! That's all he asks. Look, Bibbs, we're gettin' back near home, but before we get there I want you to promise me that you'll do what he asks you to. Promise me!"

In her earnestness she cleared away her black veil that she might see him better, and it blew out on the smoky wind. He readjusted it for her before he spoke.

"I'll go back in as cheerful a spirit as I can, mother," he said.

"There!" she exclaimed, satisfied. "That's a good boy! That's all I wanted you to say."

"Don't give me any credit," he said, ruefully. "There isn't anything else for me to do."

"No, don't begin talkin' that way!"

"No, no," he soothed her. "We'll have to begin to make the spirit a cheerful one. We may—" They were turning into their own driveway as he spoke, and he glanced at the old house next door. Mary Vertrees was visible in the twilight, standing upon the front steps, bareheaded, the door open behind her. She bowed gravely.

"We may'—what?" asked Mrs. Sheridan, with a slight impatience.

"What is it mother?"

"Of all the queer boys!" she cried. "You always were. Always! You haven't forgot what you just promised me, have you?"

"No," he answered, as the car stopped. "No, the spirit will be as cheerful as the flesh will let it, mother. It won't do to behave like—"

His voice was low and in her movement to descend from the car she failed to hear his final words.

"Behave like who, Bibbs?"

"Nothing."

But she was fretful in her grief. "You said it wouldn't do to behave like somebody. Behave like who?"

"It was just nonsense," he explained, turning to go in. "An obscure person I don't think much of lately."

"Behave like who?" she repeated, and upon his yielding to her petulant insistence, she made up her mind that the only thing to do was to tell Dr. Gurney about it.

"Like Bildad the Shuhite!" was what Bibbs said.

CHAPTER XIII.

The outward usualness of things continued after dinner. In the library, while his wife sat in her customary chair, gazing at the fire, Sheridan let the unfolded evening paper rest upon his lap, though now and then he lifted it, as if to read. Bibbs came in noiselessly and sat in a corner, doing nothing; and from a "reception room" across the hall an indistinct vocal murmur became just audible at intervals. Once, when this murmur grew louder, under stress of some irrepressibly merriment, Edith's voice could be heard—"Bobby, aren't you awful!" and Sheridan glanced across at his wife appealingly.

She rose at once and went into the "reception room;" there was a flurry of whispering, and the sound of tiptoeing in the hall—Edith and her suitor changing quarters to a more distant room. Mrs. Sheridan returned to her chair in the library.

"They won't bother you any more, papa," she said, in a comforting voice. "She told me at lunch he'd phoned he wanted to come up this evening, and I said I thought he'd better wait a few days, but she said she'd already told him he could." She paused, then added, rather guiltily: "I got kind of a notion maybe Roscoe don't like him as much as he used to. Maybe—maybe you better ask Roscoe, papa." And as Sheridan nodded solemnly, she concluded, in haste: "Don't say I said so. I might be wrong about it, anyway."

He nodded again, and they sat for some time in a silence which Mrs. Sheridan broke with a little sniff, having fallen into a reverie that brought tears. "That Miss Vertrees was a good girl," she said. "She was all right."

Her husband evidently had no difficulty in following her train of thought, for he nodded once more, affirmatively.

"Did you— How did you fix it about the—the Realty company?" she faltered. "Did you—"

He rose heavily, helping himself to his feet by the arms of his chair. "I fixed it," he said, in a husky voice. He went to her, put his hand upon her shoulder, and drew a long, audible, tremendous breath. "It's my bedtime, mamma; I'm goin' up." When he reached the door he stopped and spoke again, without turning to look at her. "The Realty company'll go right on just the same," he said. "It's like—it's like sand, mamma! It puts me in mind of children playin' in a sandpile. One of 'em sticks his finger in the sand-pile and makes a hole, and another of 'em 'll pat the place with his hand, and all the little grains of sand run in and fill it up and settle against one another; and then, right away it's flat on top again, and you can't tell there ever was a hole there. The Realty company 'll go on all right, mamma. There ain't anything, anywhere, I reckon, that wouldn't go right on—just the same."

And he passed out slowly into the hall, then they heard his heavy tread upon the stairs.

Mrs. Sheridan, rising to follow him, turned a piteous face to her son. "It's so forlorn," she said, chokingly. "That's the first time he spoke since he came in the house this evening. I know it must 'a' hurt him to hear Edith laughin' with that Lamborn. She'd oughtn't to let him come, right the very first evening this way; she'd oughtn't to done it! She just seems to lose her head over him, and it scares me. You heard what Sibyl said the other day, and—and you heard what—what—"

"What Edith' said to Sibyl?" Bibbs finished the sentence for her.

"We can't have any trouble o' that kind!" she wailed. "Oh, it looks as if movin' up to this new house had brought us awful bad luck! It scares me!" She put both her hands over her face. "Oh, Bibbs, Bibbs! if you only wasn't so queer! If you could only been a kind of dependable son! I don't know what we're all coin' to!" And, weeping, she followed her husband.

Bibbs gazed for a while at the fire; then he rose abruptly, like a man who has come to a decision, and briskly sought the room—it was called "the smoking room"—where Edith sat with Mr. Lamborn. They looked up in no welcoming manner, at Bibbs' entrance, and moved their chairs to a less conspicuous adjacency.

"Good evening," said Bibbs, pleasantly; and he seated himself in a leather easy-chair near them.

"What is it?" asked Edith, plainly astonished.

"Nothing," he returned, smiling.

She frowned. "Did you want something?" she asked.

"Nothing in the world. Father and mother have gone upstairs; I shan't be going up for several hours, and there didn't seem to be anybody left for me to chat with except you and Mr. Lamborn."

"Chat with?" she echoed, incredulously.

"I can talk about almost anything," said Bibbs with an air of genial politeness. "It doesn't matter to me. I don't know much about business—if that's what you happened to be talking about. But you aren't in business, are you, Mr. Lamborn?"

"Not now," returned Lamborn, shortly.

"I'm not, either," said Bibbs. "It was getting cloudier than usual, I noticed, just before dark, and there was wind from the southwest. Rain to-morrow, I shouldn't be surprised."

He seemed to feel that he had begun a conversation the support of which had now become the pleasurable duty of other parties; and he sat expectantly, looking first at his sister, then at Lamborn, as if implying that it was their turn to speak. Edith returned his gaze with a mixture of astonishment and increasing anger, while Mr. Lamborn was obviously disturbed, though Bibbs had been as considerate as possible in presenting the weather as a topic. Bibbs had perceived that Lamborn had nothing in his mind at any time except "personalities"—he could talk about people and he could make love. Bibbs, wishing to be courteous, offered the weather.

They Looked Up in No Welcoming Manner.

Lamborn refused it, and concluded from Bibbs' luxurious attitude in the leather chair that this half-crazy brother was a permanent fixture for the rest of the evening. There was no reason to hope that he would move, and Lamborn found himself in danger of looking silly.

"I was just going," he said, rising.

"Oh no!" Edith cried, sharply.

"Yes. Good night! I think I—"

"Too bad," said Bibbs, genially, walking to the door with the visitor, while Edith stood starting as the two disappeared in the hall. She heard Bibbs offering to "help" Lamborn with his overcoat and the latter rather curtly declining assistance, these episodes of departure being followed by the closing of the outer door. She ran into the hall.

"What's the matter with you?" she cried, furiously. "What do you mean? How did you dare come in here when you knew—"

Her voice broke; she made a gesture of rage and despair, and ran up the stairs, sobbing. She fled to her mother's room, and when Bibbs came up, a few minutes later, Mrs. Sheridan met him at his door.

"Oh, Bibbs," she said, shaking her head woefully, "you'd oughtn't to discuss your sister? She says you drove that young man out of the house. You'd ought to been more considerate."

Bibbs smiled faintly, noting that Edith's door was open, with Edith's active shadow motionless across its threshold. "Yes," he said. "He' doesn't appear to be much of a 'man's man.' He ran at the first glimpse of one."

Edith's shadow moved; her voice came quavering: "You call yourself one?"

"No, no," he answered. "I said 'just a glimpse of one.' I didn't claim—" But her door slammed angrily, and he turned to his mother.

"There," he said, sighing. "That's almost the first time in my life I ever tried to be a man of action, mother, and I succeeded perfectly in what I tried to do. As a consequence I feel like a horse thief."

"You hurt her feelin's," she groaned. "You must 'a' gone at it too rough, Bibbs."

He looked upon her warily. "That's my trouble, mother," he murmured. "I'm a plain, blunt fellow. I have rough ways, and I'm a rough man."

For once she perceived some meaning in his queerness. "Hush your nonsense!" she said, good-naturedly, the astral of a troubled smile appearing. "You go to bed."

He kissed her and obeyed.

Edith gave him a cold greeting the next morning at the breakfast table.

"You mustn't do that under a misapprehension," he warned her, when they were alone in the dining room.

"Do what under a what?" she asked.

"Speak to me. I came into the smoking room last night 'on purpose,'" he told her, gravely. "I have a prejudice against that young man."

She laughed. "I guess you think it means a great deal who you have prejudices against!" In mockery she adopted the manner of one who implores. "Bibbs, for pity's sake promise me, don't use your influence with papa against him!" And she laughed louder.

"Listen," he said, with peculiar earnestness. "I'll tell you now, because—because I've decided I'm one of the family." And then, as the earnestness were too heavy for him to carry it further, he continued, in his usual tone, "I'm drunk with power, Edith."

"What do you want to tell me?" she demanded, brusquely.

"Lamborn made love to Sibyl," he said.

Edith hooted. "She did to him!"

"No," he said, gravely. "I know."

"How?"

"I was there, one day a week ago, with Roscoe, and I heard Sibyl and Lamborn."

Edith screamed with laughter. "You were with Roscoe—and you heard Lamborn making love to Sibyl!"

"No. I heard them quarreling."

"You're funnier than ever, Bibbs!" she cried. "You say he made love to her because you heard them quarreling!"

"That's it. If you want to know what's 'between' people, you can—by the way they quarrel."

"You'll kill me, Bibbs! What were they quarreling about?"

"Nothing. That's how I know. People who quarrel over nothing!—it's always certain—"

Edith stopped laughing abruptly, but continued her mockery. "You ought to know. You've had so much experience, yourself!"

"I haven't any, Edith," he said. "My life has been about as exciting as an incubator chicken's. I look out through the glass at things."

"Well, then," she said, "if you look out through the glass you must know what effect such stuff would have upon me." She rose, visibly agitated. "What if it was true?" she demanded, bitterly. "What if it was true a hundred times over? You sit there with your silly face half ready to giggle and half ready to snuffle, and tell me stories like that, about Sibyl picking on Bobby Lamborn and worrying him to death, and you think it matters to me? What do you know about their quarreling? What if I understood why she—" She broke off with a violent gesture, a sweep of her arm extended at full length, as if she hurled something to the ground. "Do you think a girl that really cared for a man would pay any attention to that? Or to you, Bibbs Sheridan?"

He looked at her steadily, and his gaze was as keen as it was steady. She met it with unwavering pride. Finally he nodded slowly, as if she had spoken and he meant to agree with what she said.

"Ah, yes," he said. "I won't come into the smoking room again. I'm sorry, Edith. Nobody can make you see anything now. You'll never see until you see for yourself. The rest of us'll do better to keep out of it—especially me."

"That's sensible," she responded, curtly. "You're most surprising of all when you're sensible, Bibbs."

"Yes," he sighed. "I'm a dull dog. Shake hands and forgive me, Edith."

Drawing so far as to smile, she indulged him in the brief ceremony, and George appeared, summoning Bibbs to the library; Doctor Gurney was waiting there, he announced. And Bibbs gave his sister a shy but friendly touch upon the shoulder as a complement to the handshaking, and left her.

Doctor Gurney was sitting by the log fire, alone in the room, and he merely glanced over his shoulder when his patient came in. He was not over fifty, in spite of Sheridan's habitual "ole Doc Gurney." His hair was gray, however, almost as thin as Bibbs, and nearly always he looked drowsy.

"Your father telephoned me yesterday afternoon, Bibbs," he said, not rising. "Wants me to 'look you over' again. Come around here in front of me—between me and the fire. I want to see if I can see through you."

"You mean you're too sleepy to move," returned Bibbs, complying. "I think you'll notice that I'm getting worse."

"Taken on about twelve pounds," said Gurney. "Thirteen, maybe."

"Twelve."

"Well, it won't do." The doctor rubbed his eyelids. "You're so much better I'll have to use some machinery on you before we can know just where you are. You come down to my place this afternoon. Walk down—all the way. I suppose you know why your father wants to know."

Bibbs nodded. "Machine shop."

"Still hate it?"

Bibbs nodded again.

"Don't blame you!" the doctor grunted. "Yes, I expect it'll make a lump in your gizzard again. Well, what do you say? Shall I tell him you've got the old lump there yet? You still want to write, do you?"

"What's the use?" Bibbs said, smiling ruefully. "My kind of writing!"

"Yes," the doctor agreed. "I suppose if you broke away and lived on roots and berries until you began to 'attract the favorable attention of editors' you might be able to hope for an income of four or five hundred dollars a year by the time you're fifty."

"That's about it," Bibbs murmured.

"Of course I know what you want to do," said Gurney, drowsily. "You don't hate the machine shop only; you hate the whole show—the noise and jar and dirt, the scramble—the whole bloomin' crazy to 'get on.' You'd like to go somewhere in Algiers, or to Thormina, perhaps, and bask on a balcony, smelling flowers and writing sonnets. You'd grow fat on it and have a delicate little life all to yourself. Well, what do you say? I can fix like sixty, Bibbs! Shall I tell your father he'll lose another of his boys if you don't go to Sicily?"

"I don't want to go to Sicily," said Bibbs. "I want to stay right here."

The doctor's drowsiness disappeared for a moment, and he gave his patient a sharp glance. "It's a risk," he said. "I think we'll find you're so much better he'll send you back to the shop pretty quick. Something's got hold of you lately; you're not quite so lackadaisical as you used to be. But I warn you: I think the shop will knock you just as it did before, and perhaps ever harder, Bibbs."

He rose, shook himself, and rubbed his eyelids. "Well, when we go over you this afternoon what are we going to say about it?"

"Tell him I'm ready," said Bibbs, looking at the floor.

"Oh no," Gurney laughed. "Not quite yet; but you may be almost. We'll see. Don't forget I said to come down."

And when the examination was concluded, that afternoon, the doctor informed Bibbs that the result was much too satisfactory to be pleasing. "Here's a new 'situation' for a one-act farce," he said, gloomily, to his next patient when Bibbs had gone. "Doctor tells a man he's well, and that's his death sentence, likely. Dam' funny world!"

Bibbs decided to walk home. It was a dingy afternoon, and the smoke was evident not only to Bibbs' sight, but to his nostrils, though most of the pedestrians were so saturated with the smell that they could no longer detect it. This incited a train of thought which continued till he approached the new house. As he came to the corner of Mr. Vertrees' lot Mr. Vertrees' daughter emerged from the front door and walked thoughtfully down the path to the picket gate. She was unconscious of the approach of the pedestrian and did not see him until she had opened the gate and he was almost beside her. Then she looked up, and as she saw him she started visibly. But if this thing had happened to Robert Lamborn, he would have had a thought far beyond the horizon of faint-hearted Bibbs' thoughts. Lamborn, indeed, would have spoken his thought. He would have said:

"You jumped because you were thinking of me!"

CHAPTER XIV.

Mary was the picture of a lady flustered. Bibbs had paused in his slow stride, and there ensued an instant before either spoke or moved—it was no longer than that, and yet it sufficed for each to seem to say, by look and attitude, "Why, it's you!"

Then they both spoke at once, each hurriedly pronouncing the other's name as if about to deliver a message of importance. Then both came to a stop simultaneously, but Bibbs made a heroic effort, and as they began to walk on together he contrived to find his voice.

"I—I—have a frozen fish myself," he said. "I think three miles was too long for you to put up with one."

"Good gracious!" she cried, turning to him a glowing face from which restraint and embarrassment had suddenly fled. "Mr. Sheridan, you're lovely to put it that way. It was an imposition for me to have made you bring me home, and after I went into the house I decided I should have walked. Besides, it wasn't three miles to the car line. I never thought of it!"

"No," said Bibbs, earnestly. "I didn't, either. I should have said something if I'd thought of anything. I'm talking now, though; I must remember that, and not worry about it later. I think I'm talking, though, it doesn't sound intelligent even to me. I made a mind that if I ever met you again I'd turn on my voice and keep it going, no matter what it said. I—"

She interrupted him with laughter, and Mary Vertrees' laugh was one which Bibbs' father had declared, after the house-warming, "a cripple would dancing to it!" Bibbs' laugh and the merry lilting of it Bibbs' father's son took heart to forget some of his trepidation. "I'll be any kind of idiot," he said, "if you'll laugh at me some more. It won't be difficult for me."

She did; and Bibbs' cheeks showed a little actual color, too, Mary perceived. They had passed the new house without either of them showing—or possessing—any consciousness that it had been the destination of one of them.

"I'll keep on talking," Bibbs continued, cheerfully, "and you keep on laughing. I'm amounting to something in the world this afternoon. I'm making a noise, and that makes you make music. Don't be bothered by my bleating out such things as that. I'm really frightened. I don't remember talking as much as this each time once or twice in my life. I suppose I was always in me to do it, though, the first time I met anyone who didn't know me well enough not to listen."

"But you're not really talking to me," said Mary. "You're just thinking aloud."

Do you think that Mary's warm friendship for Bibbs will help him to endure the machine shop long enough to impress his father with his usefulness in a better job?

(TO BE CONTINUED)

"Your Father Telephoned Me Yesterday Afternoon."

NEEDED HIS WINTER CLOTHES

Minus-Zero Blast Chilled the Captain of the Merton Hall, Arriving From the Tropics.

From a torrid heat of 110 degrees into a minus-zero blast came the British steamship Merton Hall from India, a few weeks ago. Captain Sullivan could not find words to tell how inhuman he found Boston weather. The ship was six inches deep in ice, its sides so white one might say they were painted so. The navigating bridge was a toboggan trampled by hobnailed boots that tortured. Captain Sullivan vowed it seemed as if the whole world was freezing up, and awning stanchions, the electric fans and screened doors, the tumbler with the lemonade straws and the canary were hollow mockeries.

When the Merton Hall crept up harbor with anchors and chains so incased in ice it looked doubtful if they could be used. Captain Sullivan began to think of going ashore to see his agents. That gave rise to the ethics of dress, for the Merton Hall's commander was unprepared.

He had a suit of flannels like they wear at Indge Budge, the headland after leaving Calcutta. Also a gaunt hat with a gay ribbon to frighten the mosquitoes, and a bamboo cane that was the vogue in Aden. His top coat was ample protection for a storm on the Indian Ocean, and of material colored like the storms of sand that sweep Suez. His gloves were just about as thin as they handle in Oran. Naturally the captain was praying for a thaw.

In the Red sea, a short time back, the ship was broiling under a sun that heated her decks to hot for the bare feet of the Chinese deck hands, while the temperature of the boiler rooms scored as high as 120 degrees. The enervating weather tapered off as the freighter neared Port Said, but it was not until some time later that arctic conditions 300 miles from Boston were encountered.

How Raindrops Make the Lightning.

An English scientist declares that the splitting of raindrops in falling through the ascending air currents, which are characteristic of thunderstorms, is the source of the lightning. The small drops with negative charges go up with the wind while large ones with positive charges stay below. Thus during a thunderstorm there is usually a region of positive electricity between the positive earth and the negative upper portion. When the charge has become sufficient a series of direct current discharges usually take place along approximately the same line and these produce what we see as a lightning flash.

E Pluribus Unum.

Briggs—Is Skinner a churchman?

Diggs—Yes, in a way. He's what I would call a limited Christian.

Biggs—How's that?

Diggs—He always limits his plate donations to a nickel.

Cause and Effect.

Hix—Meeks seems to have a lot of faith in homopathy, doesn't he?

Dix—Never saw anything to equal it. Why, last fall when he had an attack of hay fever he married a grass widow.

HEAT FLASHES, DIZZY NERVOUS

Mrs. Wynn Tells How Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound Helped Her During Change of Life.

Richmond, Va. — "After taking seven bottles of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, I feel like a new woman. I always had a headache and suffered from heat flashes. Now I am in better health than I ever was and recommend your remedies to all my friends."—Mrs. LENA WYNN, 2812 S. O'Street, Richmond, Va.

While Change of Life is a most critical period of a woman's existence, the annoying symptoms which accompany it may be controlled, and normal health restored by the timely use of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

Such warning symptoms are a sense of suffocation, hot flashes, headaches, backaches, dread of impending evil, timidity, sounds in the ears, palpitation of the heart, sparks before the eyes, irregular fires, constipation, variable appetite, weakness and inquietude, and dizziness.

For these abnormal conditions do not fail to take Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

For Good Looks

a woman must have good health. She can do her part by helping nature to keep the blood pure, the liver active and the bowels regular, with the aid of the mild, vegetable remedy—

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Largest Sale of Any Medicine in the World. Sold everywhere. In boxes, 10c., 25c.

PATENTS Watson E. Coleman, Patent Lawyer, Washington, D. C. Highest references. Best services. Rates reasonable.

Experienced.

Willie—Pa, what comes after a million?

Mr. Rockleigh—The fortune hunter, my son.—Boston Transcript.

IF YOU OR ANY FRIEND

Suffer with Rheumatism or Neuritis, acute or chronic, write for my FREE BOOK on Rheumatism—Its Causes and Cure. Most wonderful book ever written. It's absolutely FREE. Jesse A. Case, Dept. C, W., Brockton, Mass.—Adv.

Did as He Was Told.

"Do you know," said Reggie, confidingly, "I never had played a game of golf in my life until what I asked the old Scotchman what was the first thing for me to do, he looked at me just like this and said: 'Tee! Moon.'"

"Then what did you do?"

"Why, I hooted, of course."

Count One for Small Boy.

A small boy astride of a donkey was taking some supplies to an army camp in Texas not long ago, and got there just as a detachment of soldiers, preceded by a band, was marching past. The lad dismounted and held the bridle of the donkey tightly in his hand.

"Why are you holding on to your brother so hard?" asked a group of soldiers who were standing near and wanted to tease the country boy.

"I'm afraid he might enlist!" said the lad, without batting an eyelash.—Chicago News.

Persuasive Power.

Arthur Williams, president of the American museum of safety, said to a New York reporter:

"Yes, we kill in our industries annually 35,000 people, and we injure 1,500,000. If we were compelled by law to adopt safeguards practically all this destruction would be avoided.

"But to get us a safeguard law! The man who gets us this law will have to be as persuasive as the Nola Chucky housewife.

"An agent, you know, called on this housewife to sell her a cucumber cream for a suburban, and before the fellow got away the woman sold him a jar of cucumber cream of her own make."

The Fine Flavor—

the delicate taste of malted barley blended with the sweets of whole wheat—is sufficient reason in itself for the wonderful popularity of

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But it is more than delicious—it is the finest kind of concentrated nourishment to thoroughly sustain body and brain tissue—a food that benefits users remarkably.

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