BABY'S NEW FATHER

By HAROLD CARTER.

"Your baby's come, Mr. Johnson," announced the postmaster, as the young settler halted his team in front of the post office at Alliance, Miss. "Just wait a minute and I'll bring him out to you." He disappeared within the door that led to his parlor, and presently emerged again, accompanied by his wife and a little boy ot some three years, who smiled up confidingly into Johnson's face.

"Never knew you was a married man, Mr. Johnson," continued the postmaster sympathetically. "He seems to have made a sure enough long journey across the water all by himself. My wife says she'd be scared to death to send our Ella that distance by post. The mother ain't dead, I hope?"

"My baby!" he yelled. "I'm a single man, Mr. Smith. How can it be my baby?"

The postmaster shook his head dubiously.

"He's tagged," he said, "and there's postmarks from most all the places he's passed through. C. Johnson, Alliance, Miss., it reads. This is Alliance, and this is Mississippi, and you're sure enough C. Johnson, aren't you?"

"It's a mistake," groaned Johnson. "I never even dreamed of having a baby."

Alliance was an isolated hamlet, to which the young southerner had come only a few months before. Born in Alabama, of good family, an unfortunate love affair had influenced him in arriving at his decision to shake the dust of Alabama off his feet and settle in another state. He had gone to Alliance merely because of an advantageous opportunity to purchase land in that place, and he was not only a confirmed bachelor, but had every intention of remaining one.

And now an unknown person had sent him a baby!

"Of course, Mrs. Smith will take charge of him for a while, if the sender can be found," said Ed. Smith, gloomily. "But, having nine of our



"You Keep Him a Few Days."

own, you'll understand that it would be kind of hard on us to keep him."

"You keep him for a few days until something more is heard about him," said Johnson. "Can't you have the sender traced?"

"I'll do my best," said Mr. Smith, and Johnston rode away.

That night the loneliness of his situation appealed to him more than ever before. He had almost forgotten the faithless young woman who had been the cause of his migration to this half-settled and almost uninhabited region. He had the normal human need of companionship—yet he had no one to call his, neither wife nor parents nor family. He surprised Mr. Smith by appearang at the post office again the next morning.

"I think I'll relieve you of the boy for a few days," he said. "It might be companionable—and then, when you get word of the sender we can have him shipped back again."

With many directions from goodhearted Mrs. Smith as to the care of the child, Johnson took him into the cart and drove away. And as the fat, chubby hand stole into his own Johnson felt a curious softening of the heart and a sense of a strange happiness.

He did not return for several days, and when he did appear at the post office, Mr. Smith was amazed to hear the child calling him daddy.

"Well, you see," explained Johnson, sheepishly, "I came to the conclusion that I was a sort of selfish cuss, living all alone, and I might as well do a little good in the world. So Johnny and I have sort of struck up a partnership. He's going to run the home and I'm going to run the farm, aren't we, Johnny?"

"Yeth, daddy," said Johnny, clinging to his new father's coat.

Ed. Smith turned to his wife when the cart had rolled away.

"I hate to think of Mr. Johnson's feelings when the real father turns up," he said.

"Perhaps he won't turn up," answered his wife. "Do you suppose—"

"No, no, my dear; it isn't his," her husband answered. "But it's a mighty queer situation."

The problem was solved a few days later by the arrival at the postmaster's office of a pretty and highly excited young woman who inquired breathlessly for the boy.

"I got word at Alliance, Ark," she explained. "My dead sister's boy, sent from Scotland. She was my only relative. You have him here?"

"Well, not here," the postmaster admitted, rubbing his chin reflectively. 'Might your name be Johnson, Miss?"

"Yes, Clarice Johnson"

"Well, it's odd; but the boy was addressed to C. Johnson—that stands for Charles; and as there's only one C. Johnson around here, I gave him to him."

"Then you must take him away at once," answered Miss Johnson.

"Well, I'll try," the postmaster said. "But Mr. Johnson kinder took a hankering after him."

"But he can't have him," cried the young woman, indignantly. "How can a stranger take a child away from his aunt?"

"He can't" admitted Mr. Smith. "Only he's sort of done it. However, you wait here, miss, and I'll get Mr. Johnson down by telephone inside of a couple of hours."

Two hours later Johnson, looking very uncomfortable, arrived with the boy. But Johnny absolutely refused to go with his new-found relative.

"I guess you'd better spend a day or two here, miss," suggested Mrs. Smith. "Then he'll grow sort of used to you, and it won't be so hard on them."

On them! Miss Johnson suddenly perceived that Johnson was really the most miserable person present.

She accepted Mrs. Smith's hospitality. And soon the situation was self-evident. The child had evidently destroyed the original tag, and in rewriting it, the prefix Miss had somehow got placed at the end, where it read Mississippi.

But Johnny proved so reluctant to leave his new-found father that, long before the "day or two" was up Johnson, having ascertained that Miss Johnson had no ties at Alliance, Ark., made a proposition embracing—

But what other sort of proposition would one expect at a town named Alliance?

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FROM THE OLD HOME

By L. O. HUME.

There is no more lonely experience than being among strangers in a large city, upon a holiday; so thought Lydia Hargrave, as she started out for the matinee one Thanksgiving afternoon, in a brave effort to enjoy the day, in spite of her lonely condition. Lydia belonged to an old cultivated family of Hartford, but, like so many of our old eastern families, the strength of the Hargraves had been given to the accumulation of culture rather than the accumulation of dollars, and Lydia had accepted a position in a young ladies' boarding school in Buffalo.

Mr. Joshua Wheeler, middle-aged, well-to-do and a merchant of Hartford, found himself held in Buffalo over this same Thanksgiving day. He did not know that Lydia was in Buffalo—indeed, he had not seen nor thought of her since she was a child.

Lydia, as she turned down Genesee street, headed for the Star theater, was delighted to see some one from her old home, and approached Mr. Wheeler with happy confidence. As she came near enough to speak to him, she saw plainly that he did not recognize her. She hesitated, and filled with embarrassment and indignation, hurried on. She had not gone far, when she heard rapid footsteps behind her, and turning immediately, discovered Mr. Wheeler. In his most suave manner Mr. Wheeler raised his hat and inquired if she was going to the matinee.

"Yes," said Lydia, tentatively.

"May I join you?" murmured Mr. Wheeler.

"I should be most pleased to have you," she replied.

Lydia had been rowing her own boat for over six years and had learned to steer.

Mr. Wheeler secured their seats and they were comfortably settled with some minutes to chat before the curtain went up. Lydia could not feel certain that Mr. Wheeler did not know her, and in order to test the point, said:

"Now you must tell me who you are."

Mr. Wheeler hesitated, then with emphasis that was slightly overdone, said:

"Calhoun—Calhoun; I haven't a card with me, but I'm Calhoun—William Calhoun."

Then she knew.

"And where are you from, Mr. Calhoun?" sweetly murmured Lydia.

"I'm from New York."

"New York city?"

"Yes, from the metropolis. And now you must tell me your name."

Lydia could not think of any high-sounding, romantic name, so she chokingly murmured: "Jones, Mary Jones."

"O, come now, your name isn't Jones; tell me what it really is."

"But it is Jones, and it is unkind of you to doubt it. It is bad enough to have to go through life with such a plebeian name without having people make personal remarks about it."

Here the curtain went up and their conversation was interrupted. Just before the last act her escort said:

"I'm going to take you home."

"No," said Lydia, trying to fence, "it is so far out to my house that you would get lost, and perhaps never get back."

"I'm going to take you home. You have led me to believe that I might, and I don't intend to let you go alone."

"But your interpretation is wrong."

"What other interpretation is there?"

"This. I had every right to speak to you—every right to let you go to the matinee with me, for I have enjoyed your acquaintance, and the acquaintance of your wife and daughters, for many years, Mr. Joshua Wheeler, of Hartford."

Lydia donned her wraps, and still smiling broadly, extended her hand.

"I thank you for the jolliest afternoon of my life. Now will you take me to my car?"

"In heaven's name, who are you?" ejaculated Joshua.

"Mary Jones, of Buffalo," smiled Lydia. "Will you take me to my car?"

"I will."

And he did.

To Honor Schiaparelli.

A committee comprising the heads of leading Italian scientific institutions and presided over by the king of Italy has been formed to obtain money by public subscription for paying suitable honor to the memory of Prof. Giovanni Schiaparelli, the distinguished astronomer. It is proposed to erect a monument to him at his birthplace, Savigliano, in Piedmont, and to place a memorial tablet in the Brera palace at Milan. He was connected with the observatory of Brera for 40 years, most of the time as director. To the world at large Schiaparelli was chiefly famous for his discovery of the so-called canals of Mars in 1877.

Game Did Not Appeal to Them.

Four Armenians sat in a Manchester park the other day watching the bowling-green, says the Manchester Guardian. Their calm faces betrayed no curiosity. But then some one paused by them to watch the game, the oldest Armenian rose and put a polite question: "Sir, please do they pay money to do that?" "Yes, they pay money." A flush of amazement passed over the Armenian faces. One could see that, for the first time, they realized the folly of the Anglo-Saxon race.

CHICAGO GIVEN GREAT SHOCK

Insanity Found to Be Alarmingly on the Increase in the First City of Illinois.

Chicago has just completed a census and alarm is felt over the figures, which show an increase of 25 per cent. in insanity, with the increase in population only 12 per cent. in four years. Dr. H. I. Davis, county physician of Cook county, Illinois, declares that the number of insane people increases steadily each year.

It is a fact, however, that the undue increase in insanity is in many instances confined to certain sections of the country in cycles or waves. There will be a period in which a marked increase in mental derangement will be noted. Then statistics will suddenly shift and the lunacy ratio will go down in sections where it was high and go up in sections where it was comparatively low. Just what is the reason for this has not been determined, although alienists and others have offered all sorts of explanations.

One of these is that when a great calamity befalls a community children born of parents who have suffered much through the calamity are likely to be born mentally deficient. The parents themselves may not suffer in that way because, being fully grown and matured mentally, they survive the shock.

One on the Lawyer.

Here's a bit of cross-examination dug up by a jovial lawyer from his fund of reminiscences:

Q.—Now, what were the exact words used by the prisoner when he spoke to you?

A.—He said he stole the watch.

Q.—No, no. He wouldn't have used the third person.

A.—But there was no third person; only the two of us.

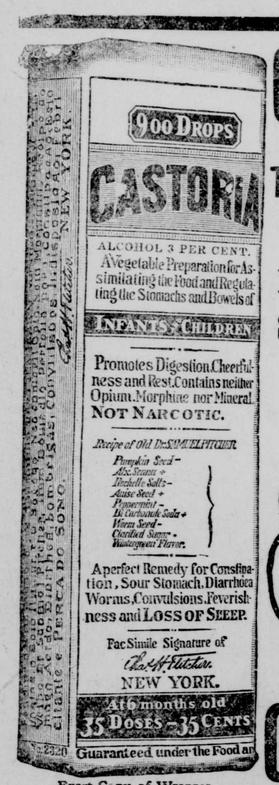
Q.—Then he must have said: "I stole the watch."

A.—Begorra, maybe you did, but he didn't squeal on you.—Cincinnati Times-Star.

HIT HIGHEST MARKET PRICE

Easier Done With Grain Crops Than With Livestock—Animals Must Go When They Are Ready.

It is much easier, generally speaking, to hit the highest market price with grain crops than it is with livestock. There are various powerful interests that aim at certain seasons of the year to depreciate the prices of meat products and grain. The grain farmer is less at their mercy than the stock farmer, because he can, as a rule, hold his grain for a few months until the market suits him. The stockman cannot do this with his cattle, sheep and swine to anything like the same extent. Cattle, sheep and swine must go when they are ready for market. It is the best thing a farmer can do to sell when they are ready, that is, when they have reached a weight at which he cannot add more weight at a profit. The only advice that it is safe to give on this point is to avoid being a market chaser, and to sell fattened stock when it is fit to ship. There is a large expense connected with holding fat stock and in many instances the market goes the wrong way. Every farmer knows that with corn at, say 50 cents, he is assuming the role of a speculator by holding a bunch for a higher market, after most of the food of support and the food of gain becomes a diminishing quantity, diminished to such an extent that he cannot make a profitable increase on his stock.



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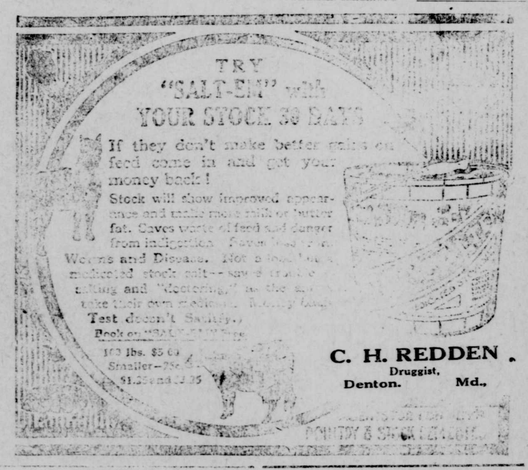
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Federalsburg, Friday, Oct. 17 (Covey & Williams' Hdw. Store)
Preston, Saturday, Oct. 18 (J. A. COX'S STORE)
Hillsboro, Wednesday, Oct. 22 (THOMPSON'S IMP'T STORE)
Henderson, Thursday, Oct. 23 (CLARK'S STORE)
Greensboro, Friday, Oct. 24 (CAROLINE COUNTY BANK)
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