



THE HEALING SPIRIT

It was such a straggling, wooden-walled, drink-blighted little town with seven saloons and billiard halls. They kept down the advancement and prosperity of a small town as whisky retards the growth of puppies. The postmaster said so, and what he said went, because he was neither a hypocrite nor a fool. The small town's name was set out on a three-foot board on the station veranda, and when the train slowed up passengers could spell out the legend, only five letters, "Doonee."

Every nation under heaven, almost, had a representative in Doonee. Norwegians and Swedes burned charcoal; Chinamen had a laundry; a Jap who despised the almond-eyed washer-man, and was aided in his scorn by his Western wife, kept a tailor shop; a German had one saloon, a Scot, a Celt and a Dago three more. During the excitement of a fire in Doonee one heard quite a cosmopolitan chatter, each foreigner speaking out of the fullness of his heart in the language of his native land. They were receptive people in Doonee, every new find in religion, provided it were crazy enough, every new comic song, every dancing school step (they danced on ambers in Doonee), every stranger was cordially welcomed and adopted. There were more divorced than single folks in Doonee and about six married couples. Never in such a small town were collected such a number of shady, reckless, demoralized and generally hopeless folks. They talked in a brazen and strident manner about the political and financial affairs of the nation, the scandals of divorce courts and the prize ring. The postmaster read them all the details of the Panama scandal, and they set upon the only Frenchman in town and rode him on a rail. They were not a shouting crowd, and ready recourse to a "gun" did not find favor in their eyes, for there were no miners, but plenty of cowards there. Charcoal burners, tall, golden-haired Swedes and powerfully built Norwegians, who yearned for wife and baby in the far-off home land, and lived terrible lives here in America; tobacco-dried, shrewd men, who "bossed" these toiling giants; a pale druggist and his sickly wife, the autocrat postmaster and his quiet "misus," middle-aged folk, who kept much at home; three long-haired and tobacco-chewing miners, who were photographer, sewing machine agent and dentist respectively on week days, and who preached alternate Sunday mornings in the dingy frame meeting-house the rankiest orations, impossible women, who feared neither man nor fiend, and whose calloused consciences nothing could waken into feeling, a very few young men—sallow, pert, irreverent



SEE AN APPARITION.

and contemptible; several negroes, enormous, brutalized and sly—such was the town census of Doonee. The latest fad which had seized upon the town was engineered by the faith cure apostles, who held meetings night after night in the meeting house; who cured old Bet's rheumatism and made pale Mervy Mole, the druggist's daughter, throw away the crutch and walk and dance. Great excitement and enthusiasm was the result of these successes, which the gross ignorance of the townspeople pronounced a miracle, with their usual impetuosity they raved and believed, and when the only really pretty and pure child in the town was stricken with fever, the town gloried in the occurrence and sat down to wait for another faith cure miracle. This child was the pet of the whole community, from the grossest giant in the pine woods, whose heart melted under the soft gaze and light caress of the little winsome maid, to the postmaster, who ran to lift her over the counter and cry: "Missus—here's little Missie a-visitin'."

She was worse than fatherless, this bairn, for her mother was a deceived and deserted girl. Really deceived, for she had believed herself a lawful wife, until the small girl was a year old, and had held up her curly head in innocent pride of her "handsome gentleman," as the admiring townspeople called her husband. Had Doonee folks laid hands on him after his deceit was known, the "handsome gentleman's" career would have summarily ended, but he disappeared too quickly even for lynch law. When

little Missie fell ill, the people interviewed the faith cure apostles and gave them clearly to understand that her cure was imperative. They believed, but they used strong pressure. Great sons of Anak came, and thick-lipped negroes and terrible women and tobacco-chewing men, and with one voice the nations demanded that little Missie be "righted." The head apostle, a silver-haired, fat man, and his confrere, a hollow-eyed and lanky exhorter, bowed gravely and summoned the sisters, who completed the quartette, to the bedside of the unconscious child. They touched the palms of her burning little hands with holy oil, and moaned and postured beside her. Then as she muttered and moaned they sang and the watchers joined in the chorus. Her mother went from the room with flaming eyes; she seized upon the quiet wife of the postmaster.

"Get a doctor," she gasped; "they are killing her."

The postmaster's wife led her away to where the crowd could not see or hear.

"My dear," she said, "I wrote at once to my niece who is a doctor, and she will be here on the train to-night. But you must not quarrel with the people, you must outwit them."

Then as the girl-mother stared at her uncomprehendingly she added: "When my niece comes she will find a way." The whistle of the incoming train sounded as she spoke. "Go back—try and bear it a little longer," she whispered and slipped away.

One sister was exhorting the crowd in the tiny sitting room to prayer, and beyond on her wee white bed, tossed and raved little Missie, all unconscious of the din which seemed like fiendish torture to the outraged mother. They sang as they prayed, and as they justly lifted a favorite hymn. "Come, Spirit, Heal the Child," the outer door flew open and in the gathering gloom stood a very spirit form with smiling face and golden hair, with wide blue eyes and a tall lovely form robed in classic garments. A little Roman lamp was in her hand and her other hand was raised as if to command silence from the awe-struck singers.

The faith cure quartette fell on their knees and covered their faces as the radiant form glided slowly toward them. Softly she raised the little child in her arms and as slowly glided from the room into the darkening night.

The postmaster's wife closed the door and said, "Let every one sing the Doxology."

And sing they did, once, twice, thrice, and then the faith cure quartette were besieged with questions.

"Was it an angel?"

"Had the child been taken to Paradise?"

"How did they account for it?"

The quartette were strangely silent; they bowed their heads and looked at one another and finally when the postmaster's wife suggested that the crowd should all go home, and offered to remain with the girl's mother, they rushed out in tumultuous and delightful excitement with the story of the vision. The faith cure quartette were last to quit the room; as they went the lank-haired man turned and said in hollow tones: "Cursed be the soul that mocks at holy things," and the postmaster's wife responded scornfully: "Oh, you got out before the war-rant comes," which he did with a very ugly word.

Then the door of an inner room opened, and the spirit came quickly back still holding the child in her arms.

"You poor little woman," she said compassionately to the mother, "I am going to take this child back with me to the city hospital. She is very ill! Will you come, or will you stay with auntie? I'll take good care of her and bring her back when she's well. Oh, auntie! wasn't it a success? And who'd have thought my old Greek table-saw rig would have carried it off as well?"

The postmaster's wife took the sick child into her arms.

"Go in and change your things before you take cold, my dear," she said, laughing. Then she turned to the child's mother. "Will you trust her with little Missie? You can go up to the city if all doesn't go on well, but I am sure my niece will cure her."

The girl-mother looked at the golden-haired figure in its bare feet and classic robe.

"Is she a real woman?" she said nervously.

"To be sure I am; a real woman-doctor, and I must take your baby away from this nest of thieves and impostors before they murder her. Apostles, indeed! That lantern-jawed man was under arrest for theft in our hospital and jumped his bail, and I think I know the ugly faces of those sisters, too! The old chap was dismissed from the church for drinking. A nice lot! Now, auntie, I'm shod and clothed and have just ten minutes before train time. Shall I take Missie with me?"

The young mother faltered, looked into the kindly waiting face, and silently placed Missie in the outstretched arms of the Healing Spirit.

A Long Sleep.

The longest continuous cataleptic sleep known to medical science was reported from Germany in the spring of 1892; the patient—a Silesian miner—having remained absolutely unconscious for a period of four and a half (4½) months. The doctors in attendance could not report anything in the way of symptoms which would suggest that there was something out of the ordinary in the man's slumbers, excepting a complete rigidity of the limbs. One peculiarity which was much commented upon was that the hair grew naturally during the whole of the extended nap, but his beard remained perfectly stationary and lifeless.

OUR WIT AND HUMOR.

CURRENT LEVITIES OF THE FUNNY MAN.

Satirical Paragraphs with Sharp Points—Metropolitan Description Up to Date—One On the Fashion Bill—A Current Intelligible.

What He Said.

First Boy—Why weren't you out today? Sick?

Second Boy—Yes, been lyin' down all day.

What's the matter?

"I don't know yet, but I hope it's small-pox. I've heard they don't give cod liver oil for small-pox."—Good News.

My Conundrum for the Ladies.



Parson—Do you take this woman?

Smithkins—Yes, me'am—er—hem—that is—aw—I meant—yes, sir.

Parson—Do you take this man? etc.

Bride—I do.

(P. S.—The simple conundrum in which Smithkins occupies the position of captain or cabin boy as his conundriol derelict drifts down the stream of life?)

Victims Rewarded.

Mother—Did you give sister the larger part of the apple as I told you?

Little Johnny—Yes, mamma.

That is noble. And did you not feel happier for it?

"Yes, m. Her part was rotten."

Varieties of the Weather.

Little Johnny—It's queer how things go.

Mother—In what way?

Little Johnny—Last Christmas I got a sled, and there wasn't any snow; and the Christmas before that I got skates, and there wasn't any ice; but this Christmas I got new skates, and a new sled too, and there wasn't a thing I could do all day unless I went skating, but I didn't get any poles.

Not Dry.

Little Girl—Oh, dear, I am awful tired of this geography lesson.

Papa—Rather a dry subject, no doubt.

Little Girl—Oh, no. It's all about rivers—Good News.

An Average Parent.

Fond Father—My boy doesn't seem to be learning anything.

Long Suffering Teacher—No-o, I am afraid he is not improving very rapidly.

Fond Father—Huh! Just as I thought. I'll send him to a better school.

Mamma's Changing Love.

Small Son—I don't believe mamma loves you any more.

Papa—Oh, I guess she does.

"If she loved you she wouldn't want to make you unhappy, would she?"

"Of course not."

"Well, she said she was going to tell you to whip me, and you know it always makes you unhappy to have to whip me."

Not Much Comfort.

Little Girl—I wish I was a princess.

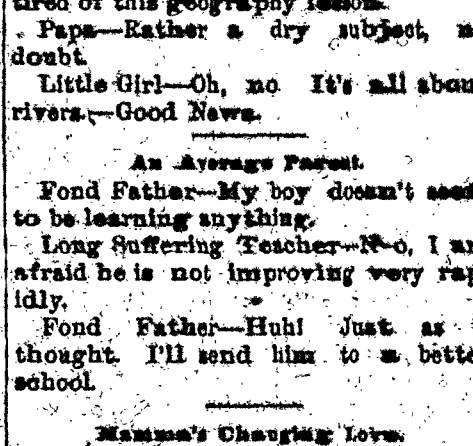
Don't you wish you was a prince?

Little Boy—No, I don't.

"Why not?"

"Cause a prince has to wear his Sunday clothes every day."

His Request Granted.



Reporter—I have come, sir, to ask for a raise. My clothes are in rags, and I haven't tasted food for seventy-two hours.

Editor—You have been a faithful employee of this paper for six years. Your request is granted. I now discharge you!

Reporter (gasping for breath)—But, sir, how can that help me?

Editor—Why, you are now eligible for the free bread and clothes given away by this paper.

Beating Off.

Grandpa—What! Don't like fat? If you don't eat fat you will grow up as thin as a rail.

Little Grandson—When I grow up I want to earn lots of money, so as to take care of papa and mamma and you and grandma.

"Grandpa's own grandson, so he is! But what has that to do with fat?"

"I can get an awful big salary as a living skeleton, you know, grandpa."

Count on the Act.

Little Johnny—Tommy Dodd will grow up into a regular dodo if he doesn't look out.

Little Dick—Guess not.

Little Johnny—Yes, he will. At school to-day I slipped into the city room, and there he was a washin' his hands.

What He Could Do.

Teacher—You have failed every lesson this morning. What can you hope to become if, when you grow up, you are obliged to answer every question with "I don't know?"

Little Boy (who has visited in Boston)—Guess I'll have to be an agnostic.

Now to Keep Well.

Little Boy—Dr. Knowit says that people must always eat too much.

Mother—I presume that is true.

Little Boy—Well, if people would just let their children eat all they want to, there wouldn't be so much left for the people to eat themselves.

Somebody's Foundation.

Feedmaster—You ate things are all wrong; everything is going to the dogs, and there's got to be a change—yes, sir, a change at once—a total change, from top to bottom; or, I just tell you, before many more years roll round, you'll see our best and most estimable citizens making tallow dips for a living, and Madame Patsy singing on the streets and panning around the lot.

Still in Debt.

Adverser—I know I am poor, but I will insure my life for \$50,000, which, at 5 percent interest, will give you enough to live on comfortably in case anything should happen to me.

Miss Filghtie (doubtfully)—Do you think it will be enough to support another husband?

He Could Stand It.

Mr. Mulhooly—Phew! far are you makin' such a noise on that piano? Y'r drivin' me distracted wid y'r racket, and me head achin' like it was split in two parts.

Daughter—Them new neighbors who door has been complainin' of my playin'.

Mr. Mulhooly—Bogorra, hanner harder.

A Photographer's Kit.

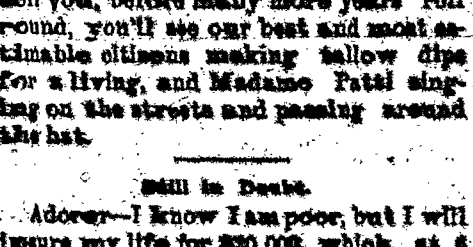
Drummer—Dramatic manager, I presume?

Follow Passenger—No, landscape photographer. I am getting up a new book entitled "Beautiful America."

"Eh? Photographer? Then what are you doing with that carload of theatrical scenery?"

"The canvases are painted with forest scenes. I use them to cover up the billious biters and priggish pill advertisements."—New York Weekly.

A Correct Diagnosis.



Philanthropist—What's the matter?

Tramp—Nervous prostration.

Philanthropist—Impossible. That disease is brought on by overwork.

Tramp—Well, I've had nothing but work offered me since I struck this town.—Puck.

No Chance for Him.

Mr. Gotham—So you are going to settle in the United States?

New Arrival (from South America)—Yes, sir; they've got to drawing things a little too fine in South America to suit me. Why, sir, it's got so now that a man can't even get a job at over-throwing a government unless he belongs to the Revolutionary union and has paid his fee regularly for six months.

A Holiday Deduce.

First merchant (sadly)—The holiday trade was a failure.

Second merchant—Not with me. I sold out everything with a rush.

"How! How?"

"Got up a guessing contest and gave prizes."

"Guessing contest? What about?"

"Each customer was allowed to guess what the things he bought were intended to be used for."

Hard Times.

Old Highwayman—Glad to see yeh back safe. Did yeh do as I said—point y'r gun at every one that came along and yell, "Y'r money or y'r life?"

Young highwayman (gloriously)—Yes.

"Not did yeh git?"

"Nawthin' but lives."

Like a Mummy.

Wife—One night as well talk to a mummy as to you. You don't pay any more attention.

Husband (travelling)—I am a good deal like a mummy in one way.

"In what way?"

"A mummy is pressed for time."

Miseries of Heirloom.

Dora—How miserable Arthur looks since I rejected him.

Clara—I don't wonder, poor fellow. Now he'll have to work for a living.

What He Never Does.

Housekeeper—You ought to be ashamed to be beating your way through life, while honest people are so busy.

Tramp—I may have some beating, mum, but one thing I can say with a clear conscience, I never beat carpets.



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