

# THE DIARY OF DELIA

Being a Veracious Chronicle of the Kitchen with  
Some Side-Lights on the Parlor

BY ONOTO WATANNA

NEXT day. "A notermobile," ses Mr. Wolley at the brekfust table "is the veeicle of the moduns. Its a boom to soofering humanity in this yumid and turribly trying and hot summers of this climut. In my opinyon" ses he, "its the gratest of modun invishuns. Dont interrupt James," ses he, turning upon Mr. James, who was snickering noisly. "I confess" ses Mr. Wolley "that I was want sometime ago to curse the horseless veeicle, but times are changed" ses he, "and we who wish to kape step wid the times must grow wid it. A notermobile is a coolitived taste. Its like olives. Whin first tasted we detist its flavor, but having thryed it wanse or twice we becum its ardint slaves. Jimmy," ses he "pass me another musk melon. John er—whats the news this marning?"

"O nothing par," ses Mr. John, grinnin behind his paper. "Our riclkiss presydint is waring pink pyjamas and Roosel Sage is ded."

As I was coming down the stips lading from the oopstares to the bastemint, who shood I see, standing outside me kitchen dure, but Mr. Moolvaney. The gentleman has his face aginst the closed dure, and heas after serrynading the lady inside—namely, Minnie Carnavan, wid the folling milody.

I shstoold still on the stares to lissen:

In Dublin's fair city  
The girls are so pretty  
I wans laid me eyes  
On sweet Molly Malone,  
As she wheeled her wheel barrow  
The strates broad and narrow  
Of cockles and mussels alive, alive, Ho!

When the gentleman finished I shstepped down the stares, and joost thin he toorned about and seen me camming tord him. He guv a shstart, and ses he:

"Why Delia, is it yerself? Well, well!" ses he, "and shure I was thinking it was yerself was in the kitchen."

I condinsind not wan ward, but I walked into me kitchin, past the false craychure, and I shoot the dure bang in his face. Minnie's sated on a chare, shsmiling from eer to eer.

"Its a grand voyse" ses she, "I'm after lisseenin to. Who is the handsum gentleman Delia, deer," ses she.

Joost thin the spaking chube rung out and I wint to it at wanse, and shouted oop at the tap of me voyse:

"I reffuse to answer," and wid that I shstoold up the dommed thing wid me dish towel.

A week later. Its been a week of sorrer and distress sinse Minnie Carnavan cam to visit me. Shure there's been no more pace or comfort in me brest. She do be the most obstreprous crachure in the world, shstickin her auld nose into ivrywan's thrubbles and ristless and unhappy widow she's making mischiff. Every nite since Minnie cum there do be thrubble of sum sort.

Shes after making the lives of the pure yung crachures distressful, by interferring in there innersint convyashun. Every nite whin I streches out me weary tired body upon me bed I lissen to Minnie.

Mr. Doodley do be a rascal and a scallywag. He do be desing to rooin the life of Miss Claire. Its me that a sinful crachure for not exposin him to her parents and brothers, and its she Minnie Carnavan, who will seek counsil of her holy father confisser, whos no wan but herself. Its ny to busting she is wid kapin the sacret of the pur yung crachures love affare, and its tired I am wid me indiiss attimps to contrhol her. And now its in dred and feer I am that something dredful is about to happen.

Tonite whin Minnie was lisseenin at the dure, wid her eer pricked up against the keyhole of me private dining room, Mr. Dudley suddenly opens the dure. He has a bottle in his hand, and as he opens it Minnie falls at his feet.

"Is there a cat here?" ses he, and shsqirts the silzer wather in her face.

Following day. This marning whin I waked I missed Minnie Carnavan at me side. Sitting up and looking about me, I seen Minnie seated at me table, ritin a litter. She seen me whin I set up, and she faulded oop her litter and licked the invilip.

"Well Minnie Carnavan," ses I, "and what are you up to at this unairthly our?"

"Hoosh, darlin!" ses she, caming to me bed, and setting down beside me. "Delia" ses she "I've dun it."

"Dun what?" ses I, and I begin to have misgivings.

"I've rote" ses Minnie "to the auld gentleman."

"To Mr. Wolley," ses I a bit daft.

"No," ses she shaking her hed. "To the lad's father."

For a minit me tung faled me. I stared at the crachure in silense. She got ap from me bed and searched about for her hat, found it and put it on.

"Delia O'Malley," ses she. "That yung Dudley fellow do be fresh as sour milk," ses she. "Its been on me consunse iven sinse I came, mavourneen, to poonish him for his thricks. Its desaving the pretty Miss Claire hes after oop to. Trust an auld girl like Minnie Carnavan to see thro the thricks of a yung spalpeen like that."

"Minnie," ses I meekly, for ther's a feer in me hart that makes me weak as a kitten, "tell me the thruth, darlin. Be you going to male a litter to the lad's father?"

"Indade and I am," ses Minnie bauldly. "And to mak shure," ses she, "that the old dude gets it safely, I'll be me own postman and deliver it in person! Goodbye, Delia, mavorneen, I'll not be coming back. Give me luv to Mr. Mulvaney."

rayspictiv packages so he may know them nxxt Spring whin he going to have a fine gardin.

Miss Claire cum into me kitchin, wid her blo eyes swimmin wid teers.

"What will we do, Delia?" ses she, "John is in the dining rume tonite, and I cant get him out."

"Now don't you be after wurrting, darlant," ses I. "Shure Mr. Harry is wilcam to me kitchin."

"But John may walk in upon us," ses she desprity.

"He'd better not," ses I. And wid that I wint to the dure and called out to Mr. John:

"Will ye be good enuff to kape your disthance from me kitchin tonite, as its private company I'm expicting."

"Very well, Delia," ses he perlitey.

I wint outside to the bastemint dure, and wated in person for Mr. Harry. When he arrived, I tauld him the state of things, and he slipped into me kitchin. Miss Claire were sitting on me table, her little feet swinging in the air.

"Good avening," ses she, trying to smile and look charful. "Ye'll obsarve," ses she, "the extremes to which we are driven. John holds the fort tonite."

Mr. Harry is haulding her hands as she spakes, and watching her face like he wad ate her up.

"Had I better go thin?" ses he.

"O, if you want to," ses she, slipping down from the table, and turning away from him a bit.

"Want to?" ses he. "You don't mean that?"

"No," ses she, saftly, "I—I dont."

I thot the yung lad wud grab her, but joost thin he seen me and kept still.

Miss Claire sayses hauld of a frying pan.

"Never mind," ses she. "We'll enjoy ousrives aven in the kitchin. You've never tasted me famiss fudge, have you Mr. Dudley?"

"No," ses he, looking at her pretty arms, as she rolled back the slaves from them.

"Well," ses she; "I larned to make it in me Vassa days. Get me an aprun, Delia," ses she.

I brot her wan of her own—a little red gingum thin wid frills and pockits. She let him button it behind her, and he tuk so long she broke away, larfing and blooshing.

"Now," ses she, "you may help me. I want crame, sugar, butter and chocklett. A bit of vernilla, too," ses she.

They set to work, busy and happy as chルドren making mud pies. By and by, the stuff was cooked, and she set him to mixing it. "And mix it stiff," ses she, "while I greess the pans."

This dun, she tuk a spoon and hild it to his lips. He, not looking at the fudge, but wid his eyes fixed on her, opened his mouth and took in the spoon. Then he guv a yell and doon drappwd the spoon.

"Oh!" ses she, turning pail, "wuz it hot? Harry," ses she, "I burned you!"

"You call me Harry!" ses he, and sayses hauld of her by the arms. I was watching wid all me eyes, whin I herd the dure squeake a bit. Before I cud move tords it Miss Clare roon oop aginst it and hild it closed wid her little hands.

"The china closet, Delia!" she wispered, and I shuvved Mr. Harry into the closet and banged the dure tite. Whin we let in Mr. John he looked about him.

"Whats the matter?" ses he, "why did you hauld me out?"

"O," ses Miss Claire, gayly; "it's a game Delia and I are playing."

He frowned and ses caudly.

"Ye cud find bitter implaynt I fancy than playing in the kitchin wid Delia. Your not a child, Claire," ses he.

Shes about to speake in anser whin the frunt dure bell run, and I saized me aprun and wint to awnr it, laving the yung people alone. As I reched the upper flure, I seen Mr. Wolley turning on the lites in the hall. Then he



"Go Away!" Ses She. "You Shan't Open the Dure!"

Before I cud git me wits thegither agin, Minnie, the ritched, false crachure was gone. I herd the frunt dure close behind her.

Next day. Oh wirrah! wirrah! wirrah! Its a sad and loansome world and its a trecherous snake is Minnie.

Yesterday me hart was full of feers. Its menny an effort I made to relave mesilf to Miss Claire, but for pity for the pur yung crachure me tung refused to spoke.

Last nite was a nite of shocks. Mr. John cum down to the bastemint and taks possishun after dinner of me privat dining rume. The widder do be giving him a barskit full of seeds, frish picked from her gardin, and heas after wanting he ses to sort them out and mark the

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I Stopped Me Chopping, and Guv Him Wan Look of Contempt and Scorn

opened the dure. A little auld gentleman wid wiskers on his chakes and spats on his feet stud there.

"Good avening," ses he. "Mr. Wolley, I belave?"

I cud tell by Mr. Wolley's back that his face was purple. He harf closed the dure, and thin agin opened it.

"What is it you want?" ses he roodly.

"Who is it, father?" ses Mr. James, coming into the hall, then he too seen the little gentleman. The latter wuz spakin wid horchure and dignity.

"I cum, sor," ses he, "to—er—ask—you sir, to requist me sun to lave your house."

"I don't understand you," ses Mr. Wolley caudly.

"I resaved," ses the auld gentleman, stepping into the hall, "nonnymuss episelle this marning. Ordinary I ignoar sich things, but me suspishuns had alreddy been aroused. I tuk it upon meself to play the detective tonite. When me sun left the house I followed him here. I saw him inter ye're place be way of the—er—bastemint," ses he hortily. "I wayted around a bit and thin desided to spake to you personally. You—er—probably appreeshiate me position," ses he. "I, of course, shall absolutely refuse to reckynise anny foolish shcrape of the yungster—he's a mere boy," he adds loftily.

"Sir," ses Mr. Wolley; "if yure yung ass of a son—I yuse the word advisedly," ses he, "has been making a fool of himself over a girl in me employ, I am not intrusted in the affare. Will you be good enuff to go to the back dure."

Wid that he's about to open the dure, when he seen me standing there.

"Delia!" ses he, "here's your yung man's father. Just tak him into the kitchen."

Auld Mr. Dudley seemed aboot to boorst, but befor he cud spake, Mr. James tuk him by the arm and lid him gintly but firmly to the kitchen dure. As I was about to follow Mr. Wolley saised haud of me slave.

"Delia," ses he, whispering excitedly, "is Claire doon stores?"

"N-no—yes—indade, I dont know sir," ses I, and I picked up me aprun and begun to cry into it.

We disindis to me kitchin—Mr. Wolley, Mr. James and auld Mr. Dudley, who shtumbled on the dark steps and sneezed whin he got to the bottom. In the kitchin we cum upon a strayne site. Miss Claire was standing wid her back aginst me chiny closet; her eyes were big and wild looking, and she kept talking to Mr. John who stud before her.

"Go away, John! Go away!" ses she. "Youshan't open the dure! Youshan't! Youshan't!" ses she. Then she seen us all, and she guv a little cry.

"Delia! O Delia!" ses she. "Don't let him. He—he soospicts sumthing," ses she, and then she poot her hed down on my shoulder and burst into teers.

I herd Mr. Harry moving in the closet, and I belave the yung chap must have herd Miss Claire waping, for

joost as she boorst into teers, he forced open the dure. For a moment he stud blinking, and thin he seen us all. He guv a look first at his father and, as the auld gentleman wint tord him, he drew himself up stiff and faced him.

"Well sir!" ses the auld fellow, choking wid rage; "so this is whare ye've been spinding your avenings—in the kitchin of these contempnable pinny-a-liners."

"One moment," ses the lad, and suddenly he turned to Miss Claire, and poot an arm about her. But befor he eud draw her to him, Mr. James had dashed forward.

"Confound you!" ses he, "tak your hands off me sister!" Wid that he rinched them apart.

Yung Dudley toorned very pail, but he smiled quarely, as he moved tord the dure.

"Claire!" ses he, spaking clare over the heds of ivery wan, "raymimber, darlant, that we love aich other. All will cum rite yet, deerest," ses he.

Thin ignoaring and pooshing past his little angry father, he made his way to the bastemint dure and out.

Mr. Dudley stud a minit looking about him, his thin lips poorsed ap in a snarling shmilie. He addressed himself to Mr. Wolley, but his eyes was on Miss Claire.

"Me sun," ses he "is yung and rash. This is not the first time I have been obleeged to cum in person to extrocate him from sooch a scrape. Parchunhately," ses he, "we expect him to make an airy marruge. I was talking to his finansay's

After a bit she looked up and ses: "They've been watching me all avening. They'll niver let me be alone wid you agen. You see papa ses your to blame, and James ses that if you hadn't incoraged us to yuse your kitchen and —"

I set up and shuk me fist. "Ef Mr. James," ses I, "has any crittersickem to be after making on a puir, loan, hardworking girl he'd better spake to me."

"Oh Delia!" ses she, "plase don't get excited. Lissen. I'm not to be housekaper anny longer. I dont know how Harry and I will see aich other. And Oh Delia!" ses she, saizing me by the showlider, "did you heer him say that he—he loved me?"

"That I did, darlant" ses I; "so don't you be after wrurying, for all the avil minded brother in the world, all the cross-eyed, hard-harted, black-sowled, crool fathers and mothers cant coom betune a pare of swateharts whin troo love is after stipping in."

"Yes," ses she airnestly. "But do you relly think he ment it?"

"Ment it! Its ashamed I am of you, Miss Claire. Is it misdouting the word of Mr. Dudley, you be, and he as foind a yung chap as iver stepped alive?"

The teers dried up like magick, and she smiled as swately as a aingel. "Yes," ses she, "he *did* mane it, and all will cum rite; for love," ses she, "will shurely foind a way."

"That it will," ses I.

Well, thin she wint to bed, and I belave slipt soundly, for her chakes were pink as roses in the marning, and her eyes brite and luvely.

She ses, "Good marning everybody" in a brave, gay toan whin she cam to the brekfust table, wid the intyre family setting there and waiting in agunny for her to aipeer, all suffering wid the thort of her broken hart.

Mr. John lifts oop his paper, and I sane him frowning like to brake his face behind it—he's that ankshiss to kape back a teer. Auld Mr. Wolley blew his nose like it was a throompet. Mr. James swollers his coffee red hot, and Mrs. Wolley tuk to crying saftly to hersilf. Miss Claire guv a kiss to little Willy and wan to her father. Then she et her brekfust, beaming on everybody.

After brekfust Mrs. Wolley cam into the kitchen and guv me the orders for the day. I herd Mr. Wolley's ortermobile and looking from me winder seen him go by wid Miss Claire setting by his side, and Mr. John and James in the tonno. Mr. Billy wint out to his sand pile and Mrs. Wolley left me in peese.

It was baking day, and I had jest set me bread into the pans for the fynal raysing and had opened the oven dure to say how me sponge cake was doing, whin I herd a bit of muvement at me back. I turned aboot, and let out a turrible yell, for there was me frind from the Dudleys. He do be standing in me

(Continued on Page 24)



Manwhile Linding an Eer to the Illygunt Convysashun of the Widdy

father today, and its aboot desided that the yung fokes will both be sint abrond nixt week. Good avening, sir," ses he. "You will not be thrubbled again," ses he.

Thin, still smiling in that nasty insoolting way of his, he bowed and wint.

Next day. After the sad ivints of the hevvy hart, but sorrer a bit of peacefull slape did I get. I drimt that Minnie do be cuming to tak my place wid the Wolley family. By desateful words and ackshons she have worked upon the falings of Miss Claire and now its me the family do be blaming for the thrubbles. I do be waping fit to make a hart of stone ake and telling Miss Claire its me thats been a thro and loving girl. But in me drame Miss Claire refoosed to look at me at all at all, and its wirrah! wirrah! I be crying in me slape. Thin I heerd somewan whispering at me eer.

"Delia! Delia!" I set up wildy in me bed, and there I seen Miss Claire in the moonlite.

"Its I, Claire—don't be fritened, Delia," ses she.

"Oh! Miss," ses I, "ye do be after scaring a body. What's the thrubble, darlant," for shes neeling by me bed, crying fit to brak her hart.



A Little Auld Gentleman wid Wiskers on His Chakes and Spats on His Feet Stud There

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(Continued from Page 15)

kitchin bauld and brazen as if he belonged there, and there's a larf in his eye and on his bauld mouth too.

Now, if therew wan thing bad for sponge cake it do be a sudden bang or noyse. Its bownd to mak the finest cake fall down. Silnse is the rool wid all good cooks whin the cakes in the ooven. I throu wan look at me sponge cake and shure enuff the preshus stuff had fallen flat. Thin I rose and faced about on the impudent, yung spalpe standing there.

"Its plane to see," ses I, me hands on me hips "where you hale frum. Its ashamed I am to acnoleg you a countryman of me own, and its lissons in foine manners ye mitte be after taking," ses I, "from the foine cortshees yung gentleman wid hoom. But Larry guy a larf at the smack I'm giving him, and ses he:

"Delia, darlnt, that's nothing but a love smack. Goodbye, mavourneen, it'll be manny a day before ye'll forget the kissing I've given you."

Whin he was gon I looked about me kitchin, hardly knowing what I was seeing, wid the ixipshun of the hash on the flure. Prisintly, I herd the family coming home, and I sneeked upstairs, hoping to get the chance of saying Miss Claire alone. She was not wid the family on the porch. I stayed a minit to lissen to Mr. James reading aloud from a litter in his hand:

"Deer Miss Wolley," he red; "me sun sales for Europe, per S. S. Germany, tomorrow morning at 7 and is accompanied by Miss Una Robbins and her father."

Thin followed a few more wards in which the auld scallywag congradulated the pur yung crachure upon her escape from a young fellow hoos intishuns were not secrius since he was all the time ingaged to another girl, and he begged to remane hers fathefully—S. Judd Dudley.

I left the family looking at aich other in silinse, and wint oop thay staps at a time to the child's room. I nocked saftly.

"Miss Claire!" I called.

I herd her sobbing inside, and I called agin. "Miss Claire, darlnt!"

At that she called: "Go away Delia! Go away!"

"Miss Claire!" I called, wid me mouch to the kayhole. "For the love of God, open the door."

After a moment I herd the key turn, and thin she opened it joost a crack or two. I throost in me hand and shuvved the letter in at the dure. I herd her guy a little, moofed scrame and thin she was sylint. I stole away down stares, and cryed in peice in me dish towel. Shure, I'd be giving the bauld lad a hoondred kisses more, ef he were to ask me again for them joost now.

Next day. At 4 A. M. Miss Claire cum into me room. She's all dressed and she shuk me a bit and brung me me clothes. "Dress quickly, Delia," ses she, "I'm going to meet him."

"Mr. Harry?" ses I. She nods, her eyes shining both wid tears and smiles.

"Hurry!" ses she. "It's still dark, and I'm afraid to go doon stares alone."

I was into me clothes in a minit, and thegither, we wint down the back stares. We cum to the bastemint, and Miss Claire opened the back dure, and stud there waiting. There was not a bit of sun at the our, and, it gettng tord the Fall, the air do be chilly. Every where we looked there seemed to be oogly gray clouds in the sky, and the grass do be thick wid hevvy jew. But Miss Claire waited on, and watched the sky. "For," ses she, "the set at sunrise."

After a bit I seen a speck of gold cum craping into the gray of the sky, and it grew a wee bit later. Thin I seen Mr. Harry cum across the lon. Miss Claire seen him too and she wint out a step or two to meet him. Then he seen her and he cum running tord her, wid his arms wid wide out; and she started running tord him likewise, till they cum to aich other. And, thin, wid never a word, they were in aich other's arms, he toornig oop her face and looking at it. Thin soodently she put it down against his coat (just as I had dun wid that bold Larry), and she begun to cry safty, joost as iff her hart was broken.

"Lissen, Claire, me darlnt," ses he. "I love you! We love aich other. The world itself cannot divide us."

"Be dommed then," ses he. "But lissen, swathart. Mr. Dudley do be sinding Mr. Harry aff to Europe to-morrow marning airily. Its the long distunse cure the auld gentleman do be after expicting for the lad. Now, Mr. Harry has rote a litter of explana-shuns to Miss Claire, appoynting an interview. So, Delia, darlnt, its oop to you. Shall Miss Claire have the litter or shall she not?"

"Mr. Mulvaney," ses I, "do you mane to say ye'd be holding back the litter from the puir, yung thing?"

"Oonless," ses he, "you guy me a kiss."

"Tak it then," ses I, "and be doomed to you!"

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Wid that he guy a joomp, sayded me about the waste and kissed me smack on the lips, and me riddy to sink into the airth for shame; for shure its the first time a lad do be giving me a kiss. He slipped the letter into me hand. Wid that I cam to me sinses and struck out wid me free hand. But Larry guy a larf at the smack I'm giving him, and ses he:

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But she still sobbed a bit against his coat, and she ses: "And Una Robbins is going, too. Is she—are you engaged to her?" ses she.

"I'm engaged to *you*," ses he, so vlyently that she larfed a bit; and thin he tuk her hand and slipped a ring on wan of her fingers:

"It's a chape, little thing," ses he. "It was me mother's. When father gave it to her they was pur—pur as—er—Delia there—he a plane worker in a masheen shop, and she a country teecher."

Then he kissed the finger wid the ring on, and they put their arms about each other and clung a bit thegither.

"Goodbye, my love!" ses he.

"Goodbye, Harry!" ses she.

They separated for a sicond and wint away, aich from the uther. Thin they flew back to aich other and clung a bit again. And agin they sepprated, and she run tord the bastemt dure wid her hand to her throat like she was choking. She roon down the stairs, and I tuk her into me arms. She was shaking and trimbling like a child. Then we herd Mr. Harry's voyse: "Claire!" he called, and he cum down the stairs.

"I can't do it" ses he. And again they clung. They broke away again, she pushing him along.

"Goodbye," ses she. "Now, go—before they cum," seshe. Then, when he was gone, she run up the stairs and bolted the dure.

I herd him at the other side, pooshing at it. "Claire! Claire! Claire!" he called, and she inside: "Harry! Harry! Oh my love!" ses she. "Goodbye, goodbye!" .

Ten days later. "Good marning, Delia" ses Mrs. Bangs (the widdy acrost the strate). "Is anny wan at home?"

"Oh, yes, mam," ses I, lifting her in throo the fly dure. "Mr. John," ses I, "is after shaving his face, mam" ses I. "Will ye wait till he's throo?"

"Why, anny of the family will do" ses she, flushing.

"Ye'll find Mr. Wolley," ses I in the stable. He's undernature the ortermobile, as yushul. Mrs. Wolley is after taking her noonday syester, as Mr. James calls it, and Miss Claire is in her room. Mr. James has gone to town. Mr. Billy is hilping his daddy."

"I'll see Miss Wolley," ses she hotly. I wint oop to tell Miss Claire. She looked a bit poutoot.

"Where's John?" she asked at wanse.

"Shaving miss," ses I.

She wint down stairs, and she and the widder kissed. I wint about me wark, doosting the dyning rume, and wiping up the parkay flure wid a greesy cloth, mane-while linding an eer to the illygunn consyashun of the widdy. She do be fond of the sound of her own voyce, and she threatend the pur yung crachure to sooch an indless strame of sinseliss gossip as iver I had the misforhune to lissten to before. Pur Miss Claire sat wid her chin on her hand, pretinding to lissten but heering not a word of the widdy's discourse. After a bit the widdy seemed to tak notiss of her silsene.

"You seem a bit distract this marnin, deer," ses she.

Miss Claire set up.

"Oh, no, no," ses she. "I—I'm all rite, Mrs. Bangs."

The widder leened back and fanned herself keekelessly.

"So Harry Dudley has gone" ses she, wotching Miss Claire. "It was very suddin, I believe."

Miss Claire was all awake now, white and red in turn; but she sed nutting.

"And Una Robbins is gone, too," ses the widder. Suddintly she closed up her fan sharply. "Do you no," ses she, "I want to say sumthin' to you orful badly?" but I feel I haven't the rite to—not being a member of your family."

Jooest then Mr. John cum down, looking very spry and neet wid his new shaven face and hare frish brushed.

"Hello!" ses he, and shuk the widder's hands. "Are you going Claire?" ses he; for she was going tord the stairs.

"If Mrs. Bangs will excuse me," ses she; "I'll finish the letter I was writing. I'll be back shortly."

Whin she was gone, Mr. John pulled up a chare and sat forrad looking at the widder who opened her fan again and was looking at the picture on it.

"Mr. Wolley," ses she suddenly, "I'm afraid I've offendid your sister. Oh, deer," ses she; "I dont want to interfere in the affares of this foolish and impractical

family, I'm shure," ses she. "If I only had the opporhunity I cud make both Claire and your brother Jimmy see the error of their ways. Take Jimmy for instunsse. He's like a prickly porkypine lately, riddy to scratch wun if wun dares to even look at him. Look at the state of his lons!

Why, the grass is a mile hy and the weeds have all cum up in the carriage drives. Why, I cud tell him in a minit how to rid the drives of weeds. Salt—salt's the thing! Jest spred it on the drives. It'll kill the weeds at wunse. But, ah deer me!" ses she, sighing heavily; "I've not the rite to advise Jimmy or cunsole Claire."

"And why have you not?" ses Mr. John calmly, tho I seen him move his fingers about in the nerviss way he has.

"Why have I not the rite?" repeats the widder, opening her eyes innerinsly. "Beccos I'm not wan of the family," ses she.

Mr. John got up, tuk a cupple of nerviss walks across the room, and thin soodintly wint back to the widder. He set himself doon on the arm of her chare and laned over her. She didn't boodge an inch, tho I seen her get red oonder the look he guverher.

"Jane," ses he, "be wan of the family." "Good grashis!" ses she, laning back so her neck nachully fitted in the coorse of his arm; "Are you *proposing* to me, Mr. Wolley?" ses she.

"Yes, Jane," ses he. "I'm orffully in love wid you."

Wid that she tilted back her hed, guy him a long look, then delibritly offered him her lips.

"Hilp yerself, John" ses she. "I'm yours."

She's larfing while she spakes, but she's cryin a bit just like every other woman.

Mr. John who is a fare-sized gentleman slipped down from the arm of the chare to the seat beside her. The widder is pretty ploomp hersilf and they squashed up closely thegither, laning aginst aich other and spooning like yung fokes, he being thirty if he's day, and she a widder.

"Now that I've got the rite to interfeer," ses she after a moment, "I'm going to do it wid a vingine. Hold on a bit" ses she, pooshing him off from her. "Now, lissten to sense, John Wolley. Go upstairs and tell Claire I want to speak to her."

"Speak to her tomorrow," ses he.

"No," ses she, shaking her hed dedisidly. "John," ses she, "you an I have a whole life yet to spind thegither. I kin spare you for a little wile. I came today upon a partikuler errant. I had sumthing to say to Claire; but first it was necessary for me to have the rite to say it. The proposal and—ah—acquintance was a meer dyagrissun, and wile I confess to a shameless weekness for your shyle of wooing, darlant, yit I'm not to be swurmed from the objick of me misshun. There! Go and get Claire; and, when I'm throo wid her, cum back," ses she.

Finally, wid more airing, she injooed the pur lover to go after his sister, and, whin he's brort Miss Claire back, she waves her hands airily and ses: "Begone! I want to speake to your sister aloan."

Whin they were aloan she farely beamed upon Miss Claire, and then: "And now to resoom, deer," ses she. "I was about to say sumthin' to you to whin your brother interrupted."

"Mrs. Bangs," ses Miss Claire, wid agyshtun, "please dont—dont talk to me aboot ——"

"Harry?" ses the widder, wid her eyes raysed up. "Why, me deer," ses she, "who has a better rite to talk to you about your luver than yure sister, deer?" ses she swatly.

"My ——" began Miss Claire, and stared at her wid round eyes. Suddintly, she saised hauld of the widder's hand and ses she, wid exisement: "You dont mane ——"

The widder nodded, the teers cumming into her eyes.

"But—but he's a confirmed old bacheeller," ses Miss Claire.

"Is he?" ses the widder. "Well, all good things cum to an end. However, John and I are beside the quistion. I merely told you as an excuse for samting to pry into your sacred affares. Give me a kiss now, and paor out your hart and sole into me sympathetic eers."

Then they kissed, and the widder pushed Miss Claire into a chare, and set down herself. Before the girl can spake she ses crossly: "Now, will you tell me why you were such a little goose as to let Harry Dudley slip throo your fingers? My deer,"

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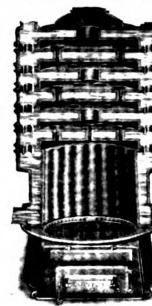
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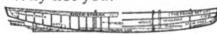
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ses she, interrupting Miss Claire as she started in to speak. "The boy was mad—clane daft about you. Now, answer me this, you natty girl, why didn't you take him?"

"I did—that is—" began Miss Claire, when the widder grabbed her hand and looked at the ring.

"Aha!" ses she, "cort you thin, didn't I? Now," ses she; "whare were your sinses under the sarcumstunes when you let him go away at wanse—and of all things in the wurd wid Una Robbins?"

"Wid her!" ses Miss Claire.

"Yes. It was an artful move of old S. Judd and her father. My dear, Una is the most richkiss flurt this side of heaven. Why, its only thray years ago she was ingaged to Harry. They luvved for a moonth, and broak the ingagement a day later. Dont look so hurt. They weren't achuly in love—jest playing. Now, Una has had her own way with men ivver sinse she wore long drasses. Thin the Wolley family moved out to the Poynit. There was a sartin rood and surly mimer of this crazy family wid a constitooshinal dislike for magnuts and therre dorters. Miss Una chose to be intrusted in him, of all men. To her surprise her advances were reboofed. She achuly disindised to pursooing him, as you no, and, finally, in desprashun—as I learned from her own lips—she sank so low as to insinnyvate to the loonytick that she *lived* him!"

"O!" ses Miss Claire. "You meen our Jimmy."

"The terrible Jimmy!" ses the widder, nodding.

"She told him —."

"As good as told him."

"And he —?"

"He! Ye gods in hiven!" ses the widdy, throwing up her hands. "He cuverred up his eers wid his fingys, gav a look of cominged horrow and dispire, and ran away from her. The following nite," wint on the widder; "Mr. S. Judd Dudley called to see her papa, and, the marning after that, Miss Una was packed bag and baggage off to Europe. Now, lisser to me words of wisdom and experineen. If those 2 sore, yung indiivoools dont cum to sum sintimintul conderstanding on this voyage out to Europe, thin my name is not Jane Bangs and will never be Jane Wolley."

Miss Claire sed never a word, but she looked at the widder beseechingly.

"To begin wid," said the widder; "its all your brother John's foll. Ef he'd proposed to me a moonth ago I cud have ingineered the hole affare happily for this family. As it is now," ses she, "ye've acted like a little fool, and Harry like a big wan. Sakes alive!" ses she. "Why didn't you make him stay at home?" You had him at the sycological moment," ses she. "Do you suppose I'd have let John Wolley sale away at sooch a time? Not by a long chop. Una is sore—broosed—hart sick—hurt clane throo and throo. She's desprut. A girl in that condishun has but one resorce—matrimunney—wid another fellow. Now, Harry —?"

"Oh!" ses Miss Claire. "Please Mrs. Bangs dont say anything to me about him. I know he loves me only."

She cuverred her face wid her hands convulsively, and me shitting in me wark in the dining room lissering by the dure, and reddy to bat the interferring widder on the ned wid me dooster. But fur the sake of pace I hold meself in.

"Now, me deer," ses the widder; "you must counteract at wanse the avil of this long oshun voyage. You must follow the pair at wanse to Europe."

"I! Oh Mrs. Bangs, indade, we aren't rich people. We couldn't afford it," ses Miss Claire. "And besides, Jimmie may cross in the Fall. He's been offered the London corryspundint's post for The Planut."

"He'd better accept at wanse," ses the widder promptly. "As for you —."

Just thin in walked Mr. John and brort an ind to the paneul interfloo.

The widder found herself aloan wid the sintimintul gentleman looking at her very tinterly.

Her own face is poockered oop wid exasperashun at the way things wus.

"John Wolley!" ses she; "I feel like shaking you."

"What have I dun, Jane?" ses he reprotoachfully.

"Why didnt you propose to me a munth ago?" ses she crossly.

(TO BE CONCLUDED)



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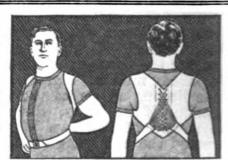


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