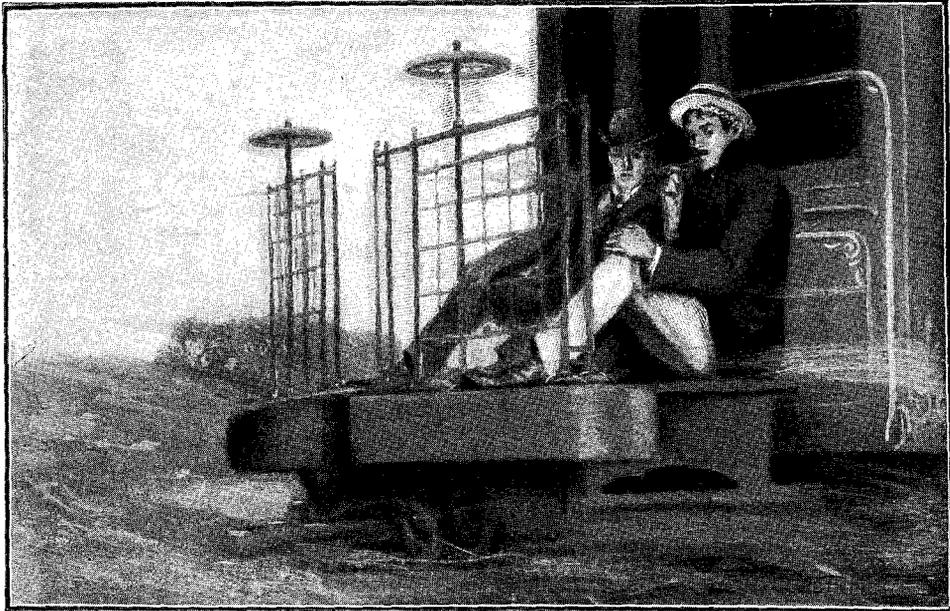


looking up, and buried her face in his shoulder with her arms around his neck. The elder girl began to weep, and the baby howled, while the boy looked on in amazement at this apparently uncalled for display of family feeling.

"Hit will be all right neow, honey. I aim to give yeou a better time an' to tek care of yeou. Don't yeou cry, honey," soothed the man in the kindly Southern drawl.

ing the sights of the great West. It was due to arrive at Omaha the following morning, and there a committee would drive the excursionists around in carriages and omnibuses. There would be a banquet, and the spokesmen of the party would once again unwind the frayed strings of speech which had done duty from St. Paul and Minneapolis to Helena, and back by way of Denver.

Tipman was not anticipating the fes-



TIPMAN AND DOWS SAT ON THE REAR PLATFORM AND VIEWED THE DREARY LANDSCAPE.

The judge cleared his throat and wiped his glasses with his handkerchief.

"I reckon this knocks the bottom out of your case, Jeff," he said.

Jeff brushed his hand across his eyes.

"I reckon it does, sir, and I'm dashed glad of it," he said impetuously. "Your honor, in behalf of the plaintiff, I move to dismiss the case."

William McLeod Raine.

The Luck of Monty Morrison.

TIPMAN and Dows, fellow graduates of Grinnell, editors and publishers, dust covered and weary, sat on the rear platform of the Pullman, the dust whirling about them in clouds, and doggedly viewed the dreary Nebraska landscape. The train—six coaches, loaded to the doors—was a special, kindly furnished on reasonable terms for the laudable purpose of restoring to their homes a party of jaded, satiated Iowa journalists, who had been see-

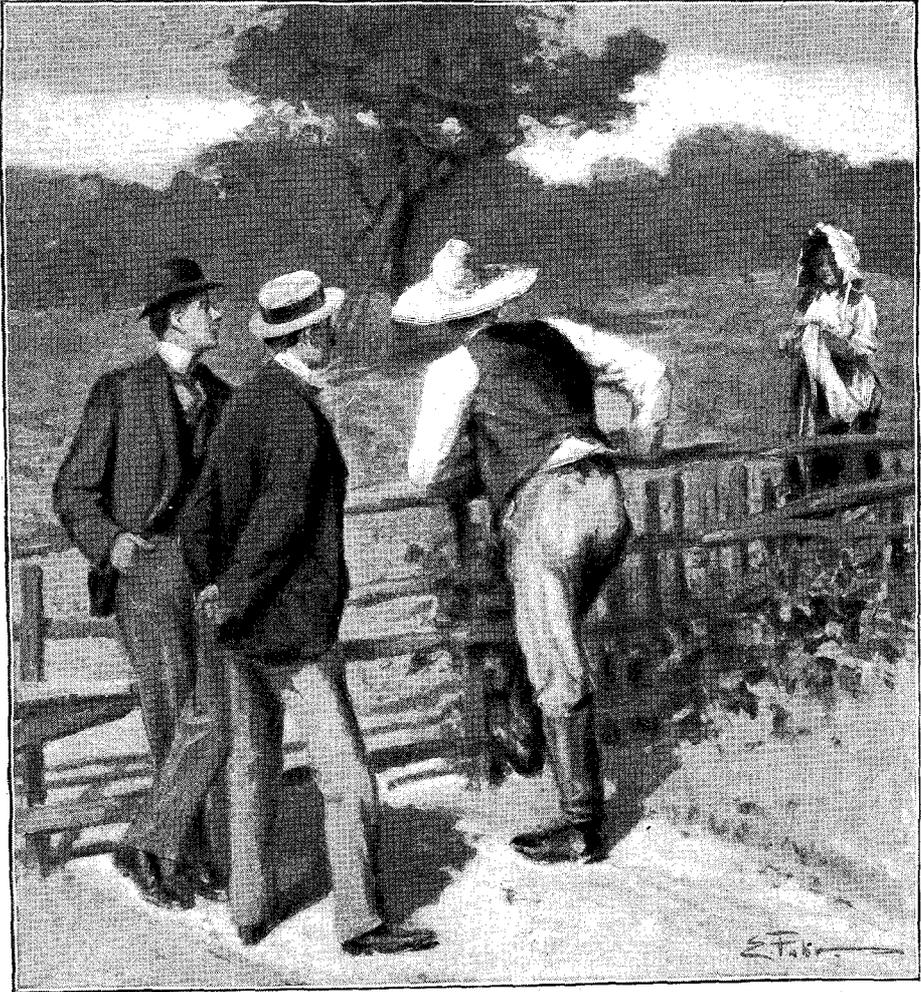
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Tipman was not anticipating the festivities with a great amount of pleasure, and he told Dows so, whereupon Dows came out of a state of mind closely resembling the waking slumber of functional debility, and declared his intention of cutting it.

"Monty Morrison's farm is somewhere near Omaha," he said. "Let's go out and see the old chap while the others are being entertained. I don't think I am strong enough to be entertained again this trip. I don't, really."

Tipman's travel stained face brightened at the suggestion. "It's a positively great idea," he said.

Monty Morrison had been of their class at Grinnell, and in some mysterious way he had managed to graduate when they graduated. He had not been strong in books, but he could play baseball. He was afraid of girls. And yet, a year or two after his graduation, his fellow classmates were astounded to learn of his marriage to a young lady whom the Dubuque papers



THE WOMAN WITH THE HOE CAME FORWARD, WIPING HER HANDS ON HER APRON.

enthusiastically described as a queen of society. She was the daughter of a Keyes, and the wedding was followed by a violent shower of gossip all over the State. It was said that old Keyes raged unceasingly for weeks. He had wished his daughter to marry an old friend of his—a man of most disagreeable social attributes, but of undoubted financial standing. Not even so much as a bridal gown or a belt buckle did he give her for a wedding gift, though he might have given her a check for a hundred thousand dollars without the least inconvenience.

Public opinion, while severe upon old Keyes for permitting his anger to reach such lengths, was rather inclined to question the wisdom of the match. A young fellow whose fortune consists of a small Nebraska farm, and nothing else, takes stupendous chances when he marries a girl

who has been reared in the lap of luxury. Furthermore, there seemed little in common between the daughter of the house of Keyes and Monty Morrison. Her education and culture had cost not a penny less than fifty thousand dollars. She had in her veins the most aristocratic blood between the rivers. Monty had no definite idea as to what culture was. He had gone to college principally because the boys wanted him on the team. He had sprung from very common stock—sound and honest and all that, but scrubby.

After the wedding, Monty Morrison and his bride started for their future home, near Omaha. The elder Morrison had inherited the farm from an uncle, and in turn he bequeathed it to Monty. The rest of his fortune, which was not a large one, had gone to Mrs. Morrison and the girls. Monty was perfectly satisfied.

"Did you ever see Monty's wife?" asked Tipman.

Dows said he had not, but his mother had. "She described her," said he, "as very beautiful; a creature with all the graces; with an almost regal air; one who was accustomed to rule; one who had never known what it was to have her slightest wish ungratified."

"And yet," said Tipman slowly, "she married Monty Morrison."

"I suppose," he went on presently, "that it was pure love. Monty was a handsome chap with a pleasant way. He was different from the others. She was probably sick of twaddle and twaddlers. She wanted the real article. But I am afraid they have both repented before this. Farmers' wives have to work, and she doesn't know how to work. That was not included in her fifty thousand dollar education."

"Probably not," said Dows. "Poor Monty!"

"Poor Monty!" echoed Tipman.

Next day, they found that the farm was not far from Omaha. They came into full view of the place after an hour's driving in a hired buggy. It was a plain dwelling, set upon a well kept lawn. There was a red barn, and there was a carriage house. It was the typical home of the prosperous farmer. In the big garden, separated from the lawn by a graveled driveway, a sun bonneted woman was hoeing energetically.

Tipman nudged Dows, and jerked his thumb towards her.

"Has to keep a servant," he said pityingly.

"Poor Monty!" said Dows again.

They stopped at the driveway, and a tall, broad shouldered, bearded man, followed by a yellow dog, came towards them from the barn. When he was near enough to recognize them he broke into a run and came down upon them with a mighty rush. He greeted them vociferously, and piled into the buggy on top of them, talking every instant like a delighted whirlwind. Tipman and Dows glanced their astonishment at each other across his back.

"How long can you stay?" asked Monty. "A month?"

"Heavens, no!" said Tipman; "we must go back in an hour."

Monty wanted to know all about his old friends, and they gave him all their news. The visitors wanted to know about Monty's marriage, and he told them very frankly.

"It came about like a story book," he said candidly. "I was strolling along the

Mississippi below Dubuque, one day, with nothing to bother me but a picnic party. I sat down to enjoy the scenery, and when I awoke the first thing I saw was a man and a girl in a skiff. He was a beast—looked more like a hippopotamus than anything I could think of—and the girl was scared to death. She was begging him to return, and he wouldn't. She tried to take the oars, and he took hold of her. That made her scream.

"Of course it wasn't any of my business, but it roiled me to see that big dub bully the girl. I had a baseball in my pocket, and I reached for it, measuring the distance to the skiff. It was seventy feet, I estimated—just far enough for my old out curve to work beautifully. I let drive. It was a great throw, boys, if I do say it. It caught the beast squarely under the ear, and he dropped into the bottom of the skiff so suddenly that the leer didn't have a chance to break loose from his face. Then I stepped down to the shore and called to the girl. 'Will you please take the oars and row over here so that I may get my ball?' said I. 'It accidentally slipped from my hand.' She did as I asked her to do. She shook my hand, too, and looked at me till I blushed fearfully. She asked my name. I gave it to her like a schoolboy. Then she gave me hers, and invited me to call on her. I pushed the skiff out into the stream, and escorted her back to her friends. The fellow in the skiff was the man her father wanted her to marry. She had suggested a boat ride rather than walk with him. Well, we were married, in spite of a lot of things, six weeks later."

"Love at first sight, eh?" said Tipman.

"I believe that's the term," said Monty; "but it's good love." He pointed with his finger down the road. "See that?" he asked.

"I see nothing but a cloud of dust," said Tipman.

"Nor I," said Dows.

"Well, in the midst of that cloud of dust are two of the greatest kids in the world. They've been visiting a neighbor's boys, and they're playing steam engine home again; the dust is the smoke, you know. And now I want you to meet my wife."

He spoke proudly, arising to his full height. Tipman and Dows moved involuntarily towards the front door.

"Not that way," said Monty. "She doesn't stay in the house much during the summer."

He led the way to the garden fence, and called to the woman with the hoe. She

dropped the implement, and came forward, wiping her hands on her apron. Then she pushed back the sunbonnet, disclosing a sweet face, beaming with health and happiness, and greeted her husband's friends.

That night, in the Pullman, Tipman was awakened by a vigorous prodding in his ribs.

"What is it?" he asked, starting up.

"Did Monty's wife lower herself to his level, or did he raise himself to hers?" asked Dows, in the tone of one who has suddenly awakened.

"It looks to me like a blessed happy medium," replied Tipman sleepily. "Lucky Monty!"

"Lucky Monty!" echoed Dows.

David H. Talmadge.

A Lady on the Telephone.

"If you've never had a disappointment, you can't talk," said Redding. "It knocks the life out of a man. He's not himself."

Oliver scoffed humorously. But he did not tell them that he knew. It was his own affair that Wilhelmina had refused him and gone to Europe, where she was making—who could tell what conquests?

He knew everything there was to be known, and he looked pensively into his champagne, watching the little bubbles come to the surface.

Redding was talking to the girl next him, and Oliver roused to a sense of his remissness. His neighbor was an actress, who had made an enviable name for herself, but Oliver had known her in the obscure days when managers were unmanageable. She had been an infatuation of his sophomore year.

"I wonder," she said, meeting his eyes with a musing look, "how you would take a disappointment?"

"Calmly," he said, smiling; "very calmly."

"That's where you flatter yourself." She shook her head. "You see, you're simply full of hope. You've never had it taken away from you."

Oliver thought he had had hope taken from him very cruelly, but he did not say it.

The dinner was in Oliver's rooms, and thus far everything had gone to his entire satisfaction. He was an adept at little dinners. But he was not happy. Between him and his successes came always the memory of Wilhelmina. He could not help wishing that he had not asked her not to write to him.

It was when he was playing host that he

always missed Wilhelmina acutely. When he dined alone, he had often propped her picture opposite, only to catch it away guiltily when the servant brought in the dishes.

Redding was telling a story and making every one laugh. Oliver had heard Redding tell the same story better, but he laughed heartily, as became the host.

Then the waiter bent over him.

"Some one on the telephone, sir."

Oliver excused himself and went out to the telephone.

"Yes?" he said.

"This is Mr. Oliver?" asked the voice at his ear.

Oliver almost dropped the receiver. "Wilhelmina!" he exclaimed.

A little laugh confirmed him. "You didn't know I was back?" she added.

"Know!" he echoed. "Not a word of it! When did you come?"

"Yesterday. Can you come up tonight, after dinner?"

Oliver calculated rapidly. "May I come late?"

"Yes. I shall expect you. Oh, Robert! Don't go to Fifty Third Street, you know. I'm at the Holland House, and, Robert, be sure you ask for *Lady Bromley—B-r-o-m-l-e-y*. What's that? Oh, I'll tell you everything when you come. I'm so glad you're coming! Good by!"

"Good by."

Oliver put up the receiver mechanically. Lady Bromley! So she had married a title. He was stunned. He went back to the table, and was more careful than ever that everything should go well. He made a great many foolish puns, because he could not stop himself. He talked even more foolishly to the girl beside him. They revived the memories of their sweetheart days.

"Do you remember," she asked, as the talk around them swept away and left them to each other—"do you remember the night you and Redding gave me a dinner in your college room? Do you remember the little liqueur glass you gave me for a souvenir? I put three violets from the bunch you had sent me into the glass and sealed it up. I broke the seal today, to see if any of the fragrance was left."

Oliver questioned her with his eyes. She met them for a moment with something wistful in her glance, and infinitely sweet; she shook her head.

"The fragrance was all gone—quite, quite gone. They were just ashes."

Oliver still looked into her face, and he had stopped smiling. "So you threw them away," he finished gravely.