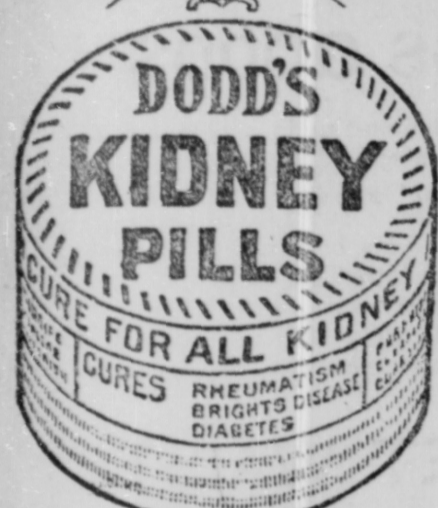


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A CLERICAL ERROR.

I presume I should have known better than to make a most undignified attempt to overtake it, but I did not, and when I returned from the breathless and altogether unhelpful chase the station agent was smiling broadly. Then he took a second look at me and doffed his cap.

"I beg your reverence's pardon," he said with the unmistakable Milesian accent, "but wan man always does be laughin like a fool whin another's chasin a thrain."

"Never mind that," I said shortly "How am I going to get to Lavarock? I must get there in time for the west bound train."

"That's the easier said than done, your reverence. There'll be no thrain till to-morrow."

"Nevertheless I must go," I repeated, unreasonably enough. I confess, but I was thinking only of getting back to my parish.

My man looked up at the plume of smoke blackening the southern horizon. "I have it," he said suddenly, slapping his thigh, "if your reverence'll not mind bein shook up a thrife on an engine."

He darted into the station, and presently the red arm of the semaphore swung out over the track with a faint clatter as from subterranean machinery. Five minutes later the pursuing locomotive thundered up with a shriek and a roar and stopped palpitant under the outstretched signal. A short, thick-set man, coatless, hatless and begrimed with coal dust and oil until he was scarcely recognizable, sprang to the platform and rushed violently at my friend the station agent.

"What in blank are you stopping me for, you blankety blank?" I omit here and elsewhere the shocking expletives with which his every sentence was garnished.

My man stood his ground bravely "General orders, Mr. Bostwick, d'ye see? The time card say tin minutes be-



I labored with her as her own pastor might.

tween thrains, and you're less than that behind No. 7 this blessed second."

The man of wrath consigned the time card and all things appertaining thereto to the nether depths of an indescribable perdition with a horrifying accompaniment of profanity. But my good friend, the young Irishman, was still undaunted.

"Beg pardon, sorr, but now you're stopped here's his reverence the holy father goin to Lavarock and was wan minute too late for No. 7. If you wouldn't mind—it's purgatory that'll be rawpin for the best of us, and some



One of a healthy woman's principal charms is her vivacity of carriage—the dainty, springy steps with which she walks. The woman who suffers from weakness and disease of the distinctly feminine organism, who is troubled with back-aches, stitches in the sides, dragging down or burning sensations, sick headaches and the multitude of other ills that accompany these disorders, cannot have the dainty, bounding carriage of a healthy woman. She will show in every movement

that she is a sufferer.

There is a wonderful medicine for troubles of this description, that has stood the test for thirty years, and has been used successfully by many thousands of women. It is Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription. It acts directly on the delicate and important organs concerned and makes them strong, healthy and vigorous. It allays inflammation, breaks ulceration and soothes pain. It tones and builds up the nerves. It is the discovery of Dr. R. V. Pierce, an eminent and skillful specialist, for thirty years chief consulting physician to the Invalids' Hotel and Surgical Institute, at Buffalo, N. Y. This is one of the greatest medical institutions in the whole world. During the thirty years that Dr. Pierce has been at its head he has gained the unbounded respect of his fellow citizens of Buffalo, from which position he resigned to give the remainder of his life to the practice of his chosen profession. He will cheerfully answer, free of charge, any letters written to him by suffering women. Address, as above.

"A few years ago," writes Mrs. W. R. Bates, of Elworth, Trumbull Co., Ohio, "I took Doctor Pierce's Favorite Prescription, which has been a great benefit to me. I am in excellent health now. I hope that every woman, who is troubled with 'women's ills' will try the 'Prescription' and be benefited as I have been."

day maybe you'll be wantin him to —

The angry man turned upon me with an oath between his teeth, but he swallowed it in what I took to be some small measure of deference for the cloth—the Roman Catholic cloth.

"Oh, you're one of the Paulist Fathers, I suppose! Well, climb aboard, and I'll get you to Lavarock. A priest more or less won't make any difference."

It was ungracious enough and most humiliating to be obliged to sail under false colors. But there was no alternative. I obeyed, not without trepidation, since the adventure promised to be most temerarious, and took my seat on the side where there seemed to be the least amount of machinery. The fireman was shoveling coal into the boiler in frenzied haste, but he desisted at a shout from his superior.

"Johnnie, hand me down that oil can—lively now!"

The article in demand was quickly forthcoming, and I leaned out of the window to see what was to be done. There was no one on my side of the huge machine, but even as I looked the station agent ran around from the rear, lifted the lid of an iron box projecting beyond one of the wheels, poured a handful of sand into the receptacle, and disappeared as quickly as he had come. It struck me at the time as being a singular proceeding, but while I was still speculating upon its probable utility the great locomotive lunged forward, and the chase recommenced.

For the first mile the onrush of the huge iron monster was pleasantly exhilarating, but before many minutes had passed I began to wish myself, first in my cozy study, and a little later anywhere in the universe so I might be safely out of the mass of shrieking machinery hurled onward faster and faster and ever faster by the soot begrimed maniac, who seemed bent on accomplishing not only his own destruction, but that of the unfortunate fireman and myself as well. It was a hideous experience.

When the uproar was most deafening, and the promise of speedy deliverance by death seemed each instant about to be fulfilled, I chanced to look outward and backward and my horror was increased tenfold by the appalling sight of flames bursting apparently from one of the fast flying wheels. At the imminent risk of my life I got upon my feet and crept across to the side of the madman.

"Sir," said I, shouting at the top of my voice, "we are about to be consumed. This locomotive is afire!"

Thrusting me aside, he craned his neck out of the window which had lately been mine, sprang back with an oath, which resounded above the din of the machinery, and brought the shuddering monster to a stand. Then he leaped to the ground, yelling frantic orders to the fireman.

"Bucket of water! Quick, you imp of hades! That's it! More—more yet! Now get your tools and pack this box! Lively! Get a move! Here, give me that book! Now then! More waste! More oil—more yet!"

The conflagration was staid at length, and once more the terrible race was resumed. Five miles farther on the flaming wheel stopped us again, and when this had occurred a third and a fourth time I began to suspect that the handful of sand was in some manner accountable for it. Yet I dared not for my life so much as suggest this to the infuriated blackamoor, whose wrath mounted higher and grew more ungoddable with each fresh hindrance. More than once we came in sight of the train ahead, but as often as we did so the smoking machinery brought us to a stand, evoking new and more dreadful maledictions from the madman, cursings measured only by the comparative meagerness of his vocabulary.

Fortunately for my sanity, which was fast lapsing in the struggle for outward calm, the end came at length, and I stepped down from the hissing monster at the Lavarock platform, thankful to my finger tips that I was yet in the land of the living. We arrived but a few moments behind the train, and I caught a glimpse of my young scapegrace in earnest consultation with the agent. Hardwicke, as I passed the cab stand.

I walked into the hotel waiting room, meaning to go to supper with the other passengers, but I was not to escape so easily. It seems that Hardwicke, whether from malice or misunderstanding I have never been able to learn, made haste to tell the angry father that I was the clergyman who was to marry the runaways. If I had known this at the time, I might have been more charitable. Truly, it must have been little less than maddening to reflect that he had unwittingly furthered the plans of the young fugitives by bringing me to Lavarock. But of this I knew nothing at the time, and when he shouldered through the throng in the waiting room and grasped my arm roughly I was pardonably annoyed.

"So you're the helper on this job, are you?" he shouted, and all and sundry gaped to look and listen. "Nice business for a man of your age and a minister of the gospel, marrying runaway children! Worked me up by setting up for a Catholic priest, too, didn't you? By heaven, sir, if I'd known it, I'd have pitched you out of the cab window neck and heels, minister or no minister."

"You are the most unreasonable person I have ever had the misfortune to meet, sir," said I, looking him fairly

in the eyes. "I had no intention of deceiving you!"

"Intentions be hanged!" he blustered. "What the deuce do you suppose I care about your intentions? I say they shan't be married without my consent, and, by heaven, sir, I'd like to see 'em do it!"

It was more than was meet, and I gave him his answer hotly and in kind. "One moment, sir, if you please"—he was turning away—"I was on the train with these young people, and I not only refused to aid them, but said what I might to turn them from their purpose. But since I have had the very questionable pleasure of meeting you I will say frankly that I shall be glad to assist them if they still desire it."

For an instant I thought he was going to strike me, but if he had any such intention he abandoned it when the crowd parted to admit the two young rebels to the little circle in which we were standing. They were in the last ditch and, knowing this, had the courage of despair, but of the twain I fancied the young woman was the more self possessed.

(To be Continued)

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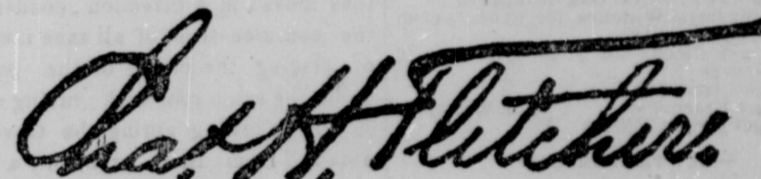
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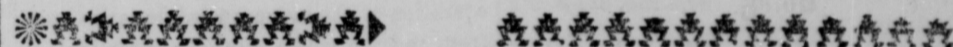
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