Bill Ripple, at the appointed hour, over in Lickskillit, where the day will be made memorable by a singing contest—and other things. He's just as perturbed as was the maid of the just as unperturbed as a sleeping Endymion. Josie is anxious to sing; Pill isn't. That's the difference be-

To tell the truth, the two have had some little trouble this morning-but not with each other, O no! Bill wrote note explaining things somewhat in detail and begging that she come out of bondage, which should end precise-ly at the flat rail beside the strawberry patch; and, ir she chose to come, wouldn't she please wear his Merry Widow? Josie chose to go despite papa, who followed, arguing, threatening, cursing. When he had gone almost too far, Josie ordered him back to strawberry pie, where-upon he told her to go to the devil. and then went back. All the way to blokskillit she quarreled awfully with Bill, but when they had arrived at the singing grounds she brightened up wonderfully, and, got ready to sing. just as if things were only too monot-

And right over there sits somebody else who Bill guesses is slightly per-It's Lickskillitt's new He's got his first job. When recess is given, he must hie down to the spring and unite the aforesaid couple in matrimony; and he looks exactly as if he can't think up the ceremony! True, not many know of the thing yet, but of course the entire concourse will get wise, and will hurry after, and will make the fellow fail his first case. Speaking mildly, things are in a mess.

In due time the two choirs are appropriately seated in the building which serves both as schoolhouse munity. The contest is on; a sing-or-die look is on every singer's face, and the congregation, has the congregation has settled into a quiet, nerve-trying intense. There are o chosen juages, for these so often fall to judge in accordance with popular opinion; nor was any sort of verdict expected to be announced. That choir which can commit the more crimes in the name of music, and make the other choir look paler, and tremble the more, that choir will compliment the other choir and gracefully appropriate the verdict.

In the brief silence Bill suffers Will not something happen to relieve the intensity of the moment? Anything, no matter what! For he and Josle are separated new, he with the bass, she with the soprano, and she may grow tired and penitent.

The singing begins. Egypt courteously allowed to sing first. Jothe rest, its broad resonance being the life of the soprano and the despair of all who had hoped for Lickskillit vic- back to the house. tory. Happily for the bass, it is just expected to grunt along and touch the high places, as it were, so that the soprano may be the whole thing. Bill's voice being admirably fitted just few who notice it doubtless think it frembles thus, not pecause he can't help it, but because he has had training in the new school.

He glances at Josie. She's just as serene as ever; also she's just as rosy amorously at her. If it's very long until recess, its indeed probable thatthat just anything will happen.

ly so that the storm sinks into the gentleness of an organ master-touched. These calms are especially sweet because they are so rare. Most of the time the building shakes with its burden of melody, and one is apt to stop one's ears, and to cry for quiet. The and fight right under your feet, "We shall rise," aver the bass, now in the dogs, and the bables say things meanwhile which we can't repeat, and necessarily the music becomes secondary. It is hot-so hot that rivulets of perspiration are making channels through milady's paint and wilting the few collars which are not cellu-Inid. Every spectator, unless we except magistratus, is anxious that recess be announced, but the choristers have become so enthused that neither thinks he can afford to quit just as things are at this juncture.

Lickskillit starts another piece in which the bass are expected to do "We have heard they begin, "Gur-ur-ur-ed," mocked a dog so sim-llarly that the house is drowned in

as quiet has been partially restored; "ain't it about time we uz trying some Lickskillit chickens?

The house is in an uproar for several minutes following this brilliant

Will the thing never end? Say, Bill Ripple is on the verge of instantaneous and irretrieveable collapse. If they hold much longer, Josie's good humor will return, and she may call the wed-ding off. By the way she's snickering now, if they don't stop now, it's all up with Bill Ripple.

omebody rises-perhaps to ask for adjournment until 1. Good. But shucks! It's Squire McKinney, who's just an certain to make a speech as He's rejoicing down in his heart that it's as well with us as what it is. tra as well with us as what it is.

Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God. We had orter come here for a good purpose, fer if we shift our meeting will all be null and void. So that's about all he had to say. But while he's up he b'lieved he woud say he just come over here to tell these folks they orter beware o' wolves in shopp's clothing. There's false docturns in the world, an' some folks air fetcain' em in here, an' our childeren air heing corrupted by the geeds o' discord, an' the old ship o' except the man with glasses on his nose, and a Bible in his hand, and saddebags by his side, and sanctimonious looking people, including 'Squire McKinney, all around him. That was the preacher; couldn't be anybody else. Bill accided to get him out at the first chance.

Shortly thereafter a young man at Bill's instigation went and whispered to the preacher that a couple wanted him to marry him just as soon as he could spare the time. Oh, yes, Brothered to the preacher that a couple wanted him to marry him just as soon as he could spare the time. Oh, yes, Brothered to the preacher that a couple wanted him to marry him just as soon as he could spare the time. Oh, yes, Brothered to the preacher that a couple wanted him to marry him just as soon as he could spare the time. meeds o' discord, an' the old ship o' Zion is about to flounder. Bruthern, we orier drive 'im out, like we done to ther day over in Egup. So that's about all he wanted to say. But afore he took his sent his orter say he b'lieves we're in the last days. Brother
Banks, who is us reliable man as we've
got, said he's comist home to'other
highs, an' all the time there wuz in
front o' him a star bigger'n the moon,
an' it had some'p'n, he tells you. We

A GRAND PAMILY MEDICINE.

orier bring up our childern in the they should go, for of such is kingdom o' heaven.

And the 'squire content at last, sat down amid applause. perturbed as was the maid of the Really was it over? Bill was is in the palaces of the gring Plu-doubtful. Course everybody that Josle Fox is there too, but she's thought he could would try to make a speech now that speech-making was started. Yes—another was up, a young man who Bill bet would say a speech

"Ladies and gentlemen," the youth said stridently, "in view of the fact that everyone but 'Squire McKinney ate an early breakfast, I move that we now take dinner in the grove.'

At last the time had come: Bill must take the tide which had served. Getting to the door, he waited for Josie, and when she came he winked at magistratus and started toward Lickskillit's spring. All the youngsters who saw understood and followed. Baskets were kicked over by the hindmost as they ran after the foremost; mammas who were spreading clean linen on the grass, and goodies on the linen, looked after aghast, until some papas had whispered the magical word "wedding:" then all these elders sat down to wait beside the untasted

The youngsters were at the spring. Josie and Bill were standing together, while magistratus, holding a fluttering document in his hand, leaned against the spring-house for support.

The spectators were all silent. "State o' North Ca'lina, Yancey county," began the officer, "authorizes me to unite these-er folks in the lawful bonds o' holy wedlock."

"Study now, 'squire, di skeered." advised somebody. "O lan't he a preacher?" almost screamed Josie. "I'll never be married by a horrid magistrate, I never,

"But he can do the job as good as any." expostulated Bill. "Go ahead, 'squire."

glad to lose the Job. "I don't think it's right for anybody but a preacher to marry folks on Sunday." "But where in the world can we git a preacher?" That's what poor Bill

"O. Tipton will be over here this evening. He calls this his Sunday school, and he'll be here to teach the

lesson or bust.' The crowd thereupon The next best thing was dinner. Various comments were made upon

Josie and her conduct, but all agreed that so pretty a girl was worth a lot of trouble. My, wasn't she just the prettiest girl in the county? Bet Bill Ripple would have a time, though, if he didn't let her do as she pleased. Bill was stunned. He stayed at the spring until all were gone. Doubtless sie's warbling voice is heard above all he'd have stayed there much longer, if Josle-really he didn't know she was with him-hadn't ordered him

On the way she quarreled a good deal too much, Bill thought. him he was a purty thing, new wasn't he, to think she'd be married by a horrid magistrate? Asked him if he now for this sort of performance, the thought she was that kind of a girl? She had a good mind to-to-well, to put it off. Bill saying nothing to all this, she said a lot more in the same strain; but, when they had got near to the dinner and the crowd, she whispered she wasn't mad a bit, and, nodding to all her acquaintances, was as ever. There are dozens looking her bright little, attractive little self again.

O, wasn't it just too funny that she should mistake that Mr. Magistrate for a preacher, when he was w now at its height. The leaders wave the reddest kind of red tie? But it their arms wildly, so that the classes would come out all right yet, she spurt the notes yet louder; or the guessed, if Bill didn't get disgusted taders move their hands trembling- and run clean away! She'd keep her eyes on him, however, for papa was mad, and what in the world would she do if the plan should fall through

This was said while they were eating-she a lot, he a little. Ordinarily Bill Ripple could have eaten three one's ears, and to cry for quiet. The men's share of such rations, but this babies yell and sob, while dogs bark time his appetite had petered. He Ho tried jelly-if jelly failed, something was wrong. Twas vain; jelly was no lead; "bow-wow, yap-yap!" go the better than dirt. He tried custard, he had never failed on that. But that, too, was unpalatable. Everything choked him. He resolved to quit, and he did.

> Inventing an excuse for getting away awhile, and having said it un-der his breath two or three times, he said it aloud finally, and then went away from the noise of the multi-"Twas a mere incident that he stopped in the shade of a large oak, and that cat-birds sang above him. bumble-bees whizzed lazily through the grasses around him. He had come hither to escape the babble of the frivolous and to nasten away the hours. But even here they lingered like agez. He was setting old. In fact, he was sure he looked like a

vas now beginning. He arose to go But wasn't it dent was given the entire electoral merely to return to more suspense, vote of the State. In 1904 Roosevelt the most terrible on earth? He would and Fairbanks carried Maryland by not go; he'd walt out here, where his a plurality of 7,751, but owing to torture couldn't be seen and mecked the manipulative doings which were by the unrefined But no, he'd better rendered possible in the provisions go, after all. Why not take matters of a law popularly known as "the holdly in hand and, when Rev. Tipton trick ballot law," only one of the had come, call him out and have the eight electoral college votes of the had come, call him out and have the knot tied? With Jose bound beyond recall, he'd face the world, his head in the air, himself unashamed, unafraid.

He went into the yard and with other stragglers entered the house. He went to the bass-bench in his choir. he's risen. Came to Lickskillit for and tried to sing; he couldn't find his voice. Looking up then, he saw in front a tall lean man with glasses on Ashamed to look up, he looked down

er Tipton would be highly pleased to accommodate the parties, though they would have to wait until Sunday school was over, perhaps an hour-certainly not longer. Bill knew better-knew that he would have to walt

After the choirs had sung two remarkably long songs a piece, the preacher bounced to his feet, said he was glad so many were out, and— er—particularly thankful that it was as well with them all as what it was, and—er—though he would like to say nore upon this point, he would be compelled to begin at once the readcompelled to begin at once the reading and explanation of a rather long chapter in John. As some verses had to be explained unto the twenty-seventh impossible ramification, some little time necessarily passed before the preliminaries were done. At something, he asked the congregation to kneel a prayer at three something, the amen was said.

So it was on again, this nerve shat-

tering, brain destroying suspense! Certainly, nobody ever nad the trouble Bill Ripple was having in his efforts to wed. If Josic could only understand, she'd never doubt his love; for only he with the perfectest love can walt on a stentor-lunged, hound-winded preacher, and remain decorous outwardly, while somebody case is casting envious rispecs at his else is casting envious giances at his girl. The strain was almost too se-

vere for any mortal.

After two more songs had been sung, the preacher invited to the front seats all who wanted to take a hand in the lesson. Numbers went up; greater numbers stayed back; still greater numbers went outside. Among those who stayed back was Bill Ripple, and, leaning forward and closing his eyes, he essayed to hold strength sufficient

for the task. Now the first verse was very plain as to sanctification. So said the preacher. He believed in it fully. To Squire McKinney, however, it wasn't nearly so plain. He believed in sanc-tification limited. The discussion disclosed the doctrinal differences of the two men, and was at times so fast and furious the spectators reared a scene; but, after every essential and non-essential point had been enumerated the dozenth time, each told the other, he could take all good men to his bosom, and so they shook hands and passed on, other things to conquer. Twas now four something.

What! At this rate the rising moon would find the brethren occupied on about the third verse. Bill straightened up. If the brethren didn't hurry up-well, something would happen-of course it would. Josie was still unperturbed, it seemed, but no telling when she'd get up, saucy thing! and give her arm to some other fellow and go back to Egypt,

Leaning over again, Bill thrust & finger into each ear. For a long while he would keep thus oblivious of the proceedings, thus in the bliss of ignorance. After he had counted the hundredth beat of his heart, he slipped one finger back cautionusly,

"If I'm undeceived in my heart" the preacher was saying.

Bill put his finger back so hard it ourt. Relieve him of bragging plecy! Three times he did thus; three mes was he disgusted with the boastful, platitudinous assertions of the unco guid; three times cried he inwardly for Josie and peace! Did the walls of his tortured soul sound

across the chasm? He counted unto the two-hundredth heart-beat and gently removed a fing-

"That's false docturn," shouted somebody. "Tain't so! It's God own Word,"

shouted another. Was religious dispute about to become devilish fray? It seemed so. Men glared savagely at one another, passion ill-suppressed in their voices; women rushed up, their hats awry, bables in their arms, and added sarill denunciation to that rapidly rising Lickskillit and Egypt had

"I don't want my children to hear mother.

"I don't nuther," sald another, and the two indignantly and haughtily left the room.

Others did likewise until by and by the building was well-nigh empty. Fortunately, the factions, when outdivided with so much hauteur that the discussion was not resumed. Bill looked for Josie. He saw her; he was serenely, confidently looking for him. Quickly he rushed up to the

"Mr. Tipton, I hain't had a thing to do with this affair. Won't you-"Young man, if you had argied for them folks, I wouldn't marry ye if ye never married. Since you didn't, I'll -er-do so with pleasure.

The couple once again stood together; the minister was ready to be gin the ceremony, but-A youth-Josie's cousin-galloped up and almost shouted;
"Josle, Uncle Lark said to come

over there, you an' Bill. He's saved the strawberry pic, an' I guess you'll have a mighty good supper." "We'll marry at home, then," declared the girl, and in a moment they and the preacher were off, she and Bill on conscripted mounts; and while

they rode the sun dropped, and twi-light reigned. When Reverend Tipton began say-ing to the couple on the vine-latticed veranda the words which bound them forever, both Mr. and Mrs. Fox ran out, astounded that it hadn't happen-

ed so many hours ago. They came back, however, duly cheerful And the first star that crossed the mountains twinkled kindly on the

newly-wedded asthe touching of the lins. THE END.

Doubtful Maryland. Baltimore American.

There is a large unattached vote in this State—a vote which, under fair electoral methods, free from manipulation and trickery, controls the political situation. In 1900 Megrandfather when a song in the house Kinley and Roosevelt carried Maryapprized him that the evening service land by a plurality of 13,941. and the Republican candidate for Prest-State was cast for Roosevelt. The figures of the two most recent presidential years demonstrate, however, that the same description-General Woodford applied to New York fits Maryland. It is not Demo-cratic; it is not Republican; it is a doubtful State

A Faithful Keeper. New York Sun.

As usual prophecies glorious with hope are woven around the Hon. Wilmonious looking people, including liam Loeb, Jr. He is to be chairman Squire McKinney, all around him.
That was the preacher; couldn't be snybody else. Bill decided to get him out at the first chance.

Squire McKinney, all around him. of the Republican national committee. He is to be Secretary of War in Mr. Taft's cabinet. He is to have a job of credit and renown in business. job of credit and renown in business. and so on, when his long penance ends and his reward begins, Most herole of buffers, most patient

of secretaries, what reward can be great enough for him? There never was a more faithful keeper.

Two Varieties on One Tree.

Watanga Democrat.
Jacob Lewis, of Cove Creek, has a freak in the form of a cherry tree. The tree in question is of the redheart variety and some thirty years old. Each year one of the limbs, four inches in diameter, is loaded with black hearts while the rest of the tree sticks to the red variety. One would naturally suppose that the tree was grafted, but Mr. Lewis has known the tree since it was set out and says no such thing has been done. Will some

INDIANA ANXIETY.

Her Delegates, Ridden Over Rough-shod, Are Sore.

That is a diverting dispatch from Indianapolis to the effect that the Republican leaders of the Roosevelt-Taft valrety are alarmed over Indiana. They realized at last, after the fun is all over, that they have left Indiana more or less cut ap and argrieved. Indiana is a most important State to capture, but will they capture her? Their anxiety is easily understood. Theid hindsight is admirable. If they only had had a little bit of foresight!

It would be a wonderful thing if Indiana, after the treatment accorded the Indiana delegation-which was the entire party of ganization and following in Indiana working by proxy -did not sulk some. Surely if any State has a grievance against a party machine it is dir neighbor across the river. A pivotal State, it would seem that the very first considerations of political expediency, even if common decency were omitted, would have demanded that the Indianians be given profound respect and even deference.
Instead of whacking the delegation
over the head and laying it out stark
with a big stick, the same result might have been accomplished with some-what of gentleness. At least an anaesthetic might have been administered to ease the pain. At least a few honeyed words might have been used to soothe the victim. But there was not the slightest pretense of tact, courtesy, or consideration.

The Vice President of the United

States, the holder of the second high-est office within the gift of the Amercan people, Indiana's most dis-tinguished citizen and a Republican long party service, dared to be a candidate for President against the machine's candidate. Therein lay ndiana's crime, and it was for that her delegates were ridden over, rough-When her Governor arose to place in nomination for President Hon. Charles Warren Fairbanks, both the Speaker and his candidate being entitled by virtue of their offices, if for no further reason, to a respectful stiention, he was insulted. In in-sulting him the convention insulted Mr. Fairbanks and insulting both these men the Taftites insulted the entire Indiana delegation, the entire Republican following in the State, and the State itself.

Fish Catches Sparrow. Manistique Correspondence of Detroit

A report from the zoo tells of tragedy enacted at the fish pond in the government park. It appears that the pond is a congregating place for thirsty sparrows and others of the smaller variety of the feathered tribe. A sparrow was performing his ablutions when a big rainbow trout get his eyes on him and quicker than a the like o' this," said some thoughtful flash had the bird securely in his jaws. The sparrow did his best to escape but the fish had his victim secure and made a breakfast of his catch. The fate of their companion did not seem to act as a warning to his mates, for the birds use the pond for drinking and bathing with the same reckless impunity as before the fatality.

> Mascots of Olden Days. Chicago News.

Mascots have had their place in the orld for many generations. Cats as with the ancient Egyptians: grasshoppers as in Italy, and various other time been counted as sacred or lucky other navies of the world.

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by different peoples. So it is only a continuance of old customs that has caused baseball teams to take along an animal or a small boy when they go upon the diamond to try their skill with other players. The custom has spread to such an extent that to-day the United States that has not some kind of a mascot. This assertion will specimens of animal life have in their apply with almost equal force to the



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