"Pro-mis-cuous," she repeated halt-

"Indiscriminate." He rubbed his

ingly. "What does that mean?"

"Our game wasn't mixed up."

ous to catch somebody?"
"It depends upon whom you catch,"

he answered, with a dry, whimsical

children." She looked up at him with

him. She was searching for her book.

"Is this what you are looking for?"

"Oh!" cried Polly, with a flush of em-

"You've been working a long time or

"I thought I might help you if

answered thinkly. "But I don't sup-

"I can never tell you how much you

"Do I?" she cried eagerty. "I can

school now. I got to the book of Ruth

"You did?" He pretended to be as-

"Um-hum!" she answered solemnly

A dreamy look came into her eyes

"Do you remember the part that' you

nodded. He was thinking how care

free they were that day. How impos-

sible such problems as the present one

would have seemed then! "I know

every bit of what you read by heart.

"Do you think now that it would be

"We'll see wo'll see." he murmured

then tried to turn her mind toward

It's our next Sunday school lesson."

up into his troubled face.

read to me the first day I came?"

tonished. He was anxious to encour-

barrassment. "Mandy told you."

"Well, I don't catch anybody but the

plained, more simply.

serious, inquiring eyes.

from his pocket.

pose I could."

help me, Polly."

age her enthusiasm.

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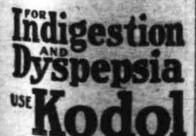
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"Yes, sir-e-beb. We've made up our taught the meaning of true Christianminds to that."

"And who do you mean by 'we?" "The members of this congregation," replied Strong impatiently.

"Am I to understand that you are deep frown between the young pastor's eyes. He was beginning to be "Yes, and as deacon of this church."

Then as deacon of this church you tell the congregation for me that that

"Your affair," shouted Strong, "when that girl is livin' under the church's roof, eatin' the church's bread!" "Just one moment! You don't quite

understand. I am minister of thischurch, and for that position I receive or am supposed to receive a salary to live on and this parsonage, rent free, to live in. Any guests that I may have here are my guests and not guests of the church. Remember that, please." There was an embarrassing silence.

The deacons recalled that the pastor's salary was slightly in arrears. Elverson coughed meekly. Strong started. "You keep out of this, Elverson!" he cried. "I'm runnin' this affair, and I ain't forgettin' my duty nor the par-

"I shall endeavor to do my duty as I see it," answered Douglas, turning away and dismissing the matter. "Your duty la to your church," thun-

dered Strong. "You're right about that, Deacon Strong," answered Douglas, wheeling about sharply, "and my duty to the church is reason enough for my acting exactly as I am doing in this case," "Is your duty to the church the only reason you keep that girl here?"

"No: there are other reasons." "I thought so." "Yon've heard her story-you must have heard. She was left with me by an old clown who belonged in the cir

cus where she worked. Before he died he asked me to look after her. She has no one else. I shall certainly do

well now and able to go back where she came from. Do you expect us to have our young folks associatin' with a circus ridin' girl?" "So, that's it!" cried the pastor, with n pitying look. "You think this child

is unfit for your homes because she was once in a circus. For some reason circus to you spells crime. You call yourself a Christian, Deacon Strong, and yet you insist that I send a good, innocent girl back to a life which you say is sinful. I'm ashamed of you, Strong-I'm ashamed of you!"
"That talk don't do no good with

me!" roared Strong. He was desperate at being accused of an un-Christian at-"I gin't askin' you to send her back

to the circus. I don't care where you send her. Get her away from here; that's all."e

"Not so long as she wishes to stny." "You won't?" Strong saw that he must try a new attack. He came close to Douglas and spoke with a marked instruction. "If you was a friend to the girl, you wouldn't want the whole congregation a-pointin' fingers at her."
"What do you mean?"

"I mean that you're livin' here alone with her and it looks bad-bad for the girl and bad for you-and folks to

"Are you trying to tell me that my people are evil minded enough to think that I"— Douglas stopped. He could not frame the question. "I don't be-lieve it," he concluded shortly. "You'll be made to believe it if

ion't get rid of that girl." "Do you believe it?" He turned upon the little man at his side. "Do you believe it, Elverson?"

Elverson had been so accustomed to

Strong monopolising the conversation that he had become hopelessly lost as the discussion went on, and the sudden appeal to him all but paralyzed his



"It makes no difference believe it or not. We're goin' to do our duty by the church, and that girl "Or I must" Douglas pleced out

Strong's, phrase for himself. "That threat doesn't trighten me at all dea-con. After what you have said 1 should refuse to remain in this church"—the descon stepped forward engerty—"were it not that I realise than ever before how much you



ity." The desicon was plainly disap-

pointed. "Is it possible?" gasped Elverson

weakly. "Well, what are you goin' to do speaking for them?" There was a about it?" asked Strong when he could trust himself to speak again. "I shall do what is best for Miss Polly," said the pastor quietly, but firmly. He turned away to show that the

interview was at an end. Strong followed him. Douglas pointed to the gate with a meaning not to be misaken, "Good afternoon deacon" Strong hesitated. He looked at the pastor, then at the gate, then at the pastor again. "I'll go," he shouted, "but it ain't the end!" He siammed

the gate behind him. "Quite so, quite so," chirped Elverson, not having the slightest idea of what he was saying. He saw the frigid expression on the pastor's face; he coughed behind his bat and followed Strong.

CHAPTER X.

OUGLAS dropped wearily on to the rustic bench. He sat with drooped head and unseeing eyes. He did not hear Polly as she scurried down the path, her arms filled with autumn leaves. She glanced at him, dropped the bright colored foliage and slipped quickly to the nearest tree. "One, two, three for Mr. John!" she cried as she patted the huge brown trunk.

"Is that you, Polly?" he asked ab-"Now it's your turn to catch me," she said, lingering near the tree. The pastor was again lost in thought. "Aren't you going to play any more?" There was a shade of disappointment

in her voice. She came slowly to his "Sit here, Polly," he-naswered grave ly, pointing to a place on the bench. want to talk to you."

"Now I've done something wrong," she pouted. She gathered up her garlands and brought them to a place near his feet, ignoring the seat at his side. "You might just as well tell me and get it over."

"You couldn't do anything wrong," he answered, looking down at her. "Oh, yes, I could, and I've done it. I can see it in your face. What is it?"
"What have you there?" he asked, trying to gain time and not knowing



how to broach the subject that in jus tice to her must be discussed. "Some leaves to make garlands for the social," Polly answered more cheerfully. "Would you mind holding this?" She gave him one end of a string of

"Where are the children?" "Gone bome."

"You like the children very much don't you, Polly? Douglas was striv-ing for a path that might lead them to the subject that was troubling him.
"Oh, no, I don't like them; I love
them." She looked at him with tender

"You're the greatest baby of ail." A puzzled line came between his eyes as he studied ber more closely. yet you're not such a child, are you, Polly? You're quite grown up-almost a young lady." He looked at her from a strange, unwelcome point of view. She was all of that as she sat at his feet, yearning and slender and fair, at the turning of her seventeenth year. "I wonder how you would like to go way"-her eyes met his in terror-"away to a great, school," he added quickly, flinching from the very first burt that he had inflicted, "where the are a lot of other young ladies," "Is it a place where you would be?" She looked up at him anxiously. She wondered if his "show" was about to

"I'm afraid not," Douglas answered smiling in spite of his beavy beart. "I wouldn't like any place without you," she said decidedly and seemed "But if it was for your good," Doug

pleaded. How was she ever to under-stand? How could be take from her the sense of security that he had purposely taught her to feel in his honse?
"Not even for a moment," Polly answered, with a decided shake of her

"Maybe Pre been playing too many

"Where thou diest will I die.'" Her Do you like 'em?" he asked, looking erms went out blindly.

"Oh, you won't send me away, will you?" she sobbed. "I don't want to earn anything else just-except-from you." She covered her face and slipped, a little broken bean, at his

In an instant the pastor's strong arms were about her; his stalwart body was supporting her. "You shan't go away. I won't let you-I won't! Do you hear me, Polly? I won't?"

cheek. He could feel her tears, her arms about him, as she clung to him helplessly, sobbing and quivering in the shelter of his strong embrace. "You are never going to leave me-

forehead as he saw the puzzled look on her face, "Mixed up," he exlife, the realisation of a new necessity, and he knew that the fight which he must henceforth make for this obtid was thinking of the one to which the widow had objected. "Is it promisenwas the same that he must make for

> CHAPTER XI. 'S gotn' into de Sunday school room to take off dat 'ere widow's finishin' touches," said Mandy as she came down

"Never mind, Polly. Your games aren't promiscuous." She did not hear "All right!" called Douglas. "Take these with you. Perhaps they may help." He gathered up the garlands he asked, drawing the missing article which Polly had left on the ground. His eyes were shining. He looked younger than Mandy had ever seen

Polly had turned her back at the sound of Mandy's voice and crossed to the elm tree, drying her tears of haplearned everything you told me," she piness and trying to control her newly awakened emotions. Douglas felt in tuitively that she peeded this moment for recovery, so he piled the leaves and garlands high in Mandy's arms, then ran into the house with the light

help more if you will only let me. I step of a boy. can teach a bigger class in Sunday "I got the s "I got the set-sit-settin' room all tidied up," said Mandy as she shot a sly glance at Polly.
"That's good," Polly answered, fac-ing Mandy at last and dimpling and

blushing guiltily. "Mos' de sociable folks will mos likely be hangin' roun' de parsonage tonight, 'stead ob stayin' in de Sunday school room, whar dey belongs. Las' time dat 'ere Widow Willoughby done set roun' ail ebenin' a-teilin' de parson as how folks could jes' eat off'n her kitchen floor, an' I upe an' tells her as how folks could pick up a good squar mea' off'n Mandy's floor too. Guess she'll be mighty careful what best for me to go away?" She looked she says after Mandy tonight." She chuckled as she disappeared down the

walk to the Sunday school room. I'olly stood motionless where Mandy other things. "Come, now; let's find had left her. She hardly knew which out whether you do know your Sunday way to turn. She was happy, yet



HER ARMS WENT OUT BLINDLY.

school lesson. How does it begin? | afraid. She rest time emering upon her There was to answer. She had turned away with trembling lips. "And Buth and drew her face toward bim, mean-

ing to prompt her.

"Entreat me not to leave thee," she pleaded. Her eyes met his. His face was close to here. The small features before him were quivering with emoeasily within his grasp. His muscles grew tense, and his lips closed firmly He was battling with an impulse to draw her toward him and comfort her in the shelter of his strong, brave arms. "They shan't!" he cried, start-

rolly drew back, overawed. Her soul had heard and seen the things revealed to each of us only once. She would never again be a child.

Douglas braced himself against the back of the beach.

"What was the rest of the lesson? se saked to a firm, hard voice. "I can't say it now," Polly me

"I can't say it now," Polly mur-mured. Her face was averted; her white lids fluttered and closed.
"Nonsense! Of course you can. Come, come; I'll help you," Donglas-spoke sharply. He was almost vexed with her and with himself for the waskness their was so near overcom-tor them. "And Ruth said. Entrast them. "And Ruth said, Entrest Or to return from following after

soest I will go, and where thee ledgest I will ledge. Thy people shall be my people and thy God my"— She stopped.

"That's right; go on," said Douglas.

now felt the need of direction from above. She was no longer master of her own soul. Something had gone from her, something that would never. never come again. While she hest tated Hasty came through the gate looking anxiously over his shoulder. "Well, Hasty?" she said, for it was apparent that Hasty had something portant on his mind.

"It's de big one from de circus," whispered excitedly.
"The big one?"

"You know-de one what brung you. "You don't mean"— Polly's question was answered by Jim himself, who had followed Hasty quickly through the gate. Their arms were instantly about each other. Jim forgot Hasty about each other. Jim forgot Harly and every one in the world except Polly, and selther of them noticed the heartfed Miss Perkins and the Widow Willoughby, who had been crossing the yard on their way from the Sunday school room with Julia.

haven't changed a bit."
"You've changed enough for both of
us." He looked at the unfamiliar long us." He looked at the unfamiliar long skirts and the new way of doing her hair. "You're lagger, Poll, more grown-

"Oh, Jim?" She gianced admiringly at the new brown suit, the rather startling the and the nest little posy in up a bit if I was a-comin' to see you.

down approvingly at his new brown "Very much." For the first time Jim

so as not to make you ashamed of me,

noticed the unfamiliar manner of her speech. He began to feel self con-

Her breath was warm against his

A year ago she would have said "You bet!" He looked at her awkwardly. She hurried on: "Hasty told me you were showing in Wakefield. I knew you'd come to see me How's Barker and all the boys?" She stopped with a catch in her throat and added more slowly, "I suppose everything's different now that Toby

"He'd 'a' liked to seen you afore he cashed in." Jim answered, "but maybe it was just as well he didn't. You'd ardly 'a' knowed him toward the last, he got so thin an' peeked like. He wasn't the same after we lost youobody was, not even Binga." "Have you still got Bingo?" she ask ed, through ber tears,

"Yep, we got him," drawled Jim, but he sin't much good no more. None of the other riders can get used to his gait like you was. There ain't pobody with the show what can touch you ridin'; there never will be. Say, nebbe you think Barker won't let out a yell when he sees you comin' back." Jim was jubilant now, and he let out a little yell of his own at the mere thought of her return. He was too excited to notice the look on Polly's face. "Toby had a notion before he that you was never a-comin' back, but I told him I'd change all that once I seen you, an' when Barker sent me over here today to look arter the advertisin' be said he guess ed you'd had all you wanted o' church folks. 'Jes' you bring her along to Wakefield,' he said, 'an' tell her that ber place is waitin' for her,' an' I will too." He turned upon Polly with sudden decision. "Why, I feel jes' like pickin' you up in my arms an' carryin'

you right off now." "Wait, Jim!" She put one tiny hand on his arm to restrain him.
"I don't mean-not-today-mebbe be stammered uncertainly, "but we'll be back here a-showin' next month." "Don't look at me now," Polly answered as the doublike eyes searched her face, "because I have to say some thing that is going to hurt you, Jim."

"No, Jim," she replied in a tone so low that he could scarcely hear her. "You mean that you ain't never semin' back?" He tried to realise what such a decision might mean to

"No, Jim," she answered tenderly,

for she dreaded the pain that she must

"You're comin', ain't you, Poll?" The big face was wrinkled and care-

cause the great, good hearted fellow.
"You mustn't care like that," she
pleaded, seeing the blank desolution
that had come into his face. "It isn't that had come into his face. "It isn't because I don't love you just the same, and it was good of Barker to keep my place for me, but I can't go back."

He turned away. She clung to the rough brow's sleeve. "Why, Jim, when I lie in my little room up there at night"—she gianced toward the window above them—"and everything is peaceful and still I think how it used to be in the old days, the awful noise. to be in the old days, the awful noise and the rush of it all, the cheerless wagons, the mob in the tant, the ring with its blasing lights, the whirling round and round on Bingo and thoops, always the hoops, till my head got dimy and my eyes all dim, and then the hurry after the show, and the heat and the dust or the mud and the rain, and the rumble of the wheels in the plains at night, and the shrick of the anixals, and then the purade, the swful, nwful parade, and I riding through the streets in tights, Jim-tights? She covered her face to shut out the memory. "I couldn't go back to it, Jim! I just couldn't!" She turned away, her face still bidden in her hands. He looked at her a long while in allence.
"I didn't know how you'd come

feel about it," he said doggedly.
"You aren't angry, Jim?" She turned to him anxiously, her eyes pleading for his forgiveness.

"I guess it couldn't ever come to that atween you an' me. I'll be all right." He shrugged his great shoulders. "It's just kinder sudden, that's all. You see, I never figured on givin' you up, an when-you said you wasn't comin' back it kinder seemed as though I couldn't see nothin' all my life but long, dusty roads an' nobody in 'em. But it's all right now, an' I'll just be gettin' along

to the wagon."
"But, Jim, you haven't seen Mr. Douglas," Polly protested, trying to keep him with her until she could think of some way to comfort him.

"I'll look in on him comin' back," said Jim, anxions to be alone with his disappointment. He was out of the gate before abe could stop him. "Hurry back, won't you, Jim! I'll be weiting for you." She watched him going quickly down the road, his fists thrust into his brown cost pockets and his hat pulled over his eyes. Le did not look back, as he used to do, to wave a parting forowell, and she turned to a parting farewell, and she turned to-ward the house with a troubled heart. She had reached the lower step when Strong and Elverson approached her from the direction of the church.



back to the circus?' demanded Btrong. She opened her lips to reply, but before she could speak Strong assured her that the congregation wouldn't do anything to stop her if she wished to go. He saw the blank look on her face. "We ain't tryin' to pry into none of your private affairs," he explained. "but my daughter saw you and that there feller a-makin' up to each other. If you're calculatin' to run away with him you'll save a heap of trouble for

the parson by doin' it quick." "The parson!" "You can't blame the congregation for not wantin' him to keep you here You got sense enough to see how looks. He'd see it, too, if he wasn't just plain bullheaded. Well, he'd better get over his stubbornness right now. If he don't we'll get another min-

ister; that's all," "Another minister? You don't mean" It was clear enough now. She recalled Douglas' troubled look of an hour ago. She remembered how he had asked if she couldn't go away. It was this that he meant when he promised not to give her up, no matter what happened. In an instant she was at the de side pleading and terrified. "You wouldn't get another minister! Oh, please, Deacon Strong, listen to me, listen! You were right about Jim. He did come to get me, and I am going back to the circus-only you won't send Mr. Douglas away, you won't! Say you won't!" She was searching his eyes for morey. "It wasn't his fault that I kept staying on He didn't know how to get rid of the He did try. He tried only today." "So he's countr' restrict." success

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

The Wise Though Gantle Reader. In an armchair of a Pullman smoking car on the way cost from Louisville a polite but resourceful man was trying hard to read a novel while his next neighbor kept up a running fire of chatter. With the light of a desperate resolve in his eye, yet cloaking once and it will keep you abreast determination with exquisite politeness, the reader presently said: "Par don me, but my memory for names is not to be depended upon. Your name

"Shepherd," replied the voluble one

cheerfully. The one sided conversation kept or awhile longer, the light of desperate resolve meanwhile burning brighter and brighter. Then the reader raise his eyes to a stranger, his neighbo across the aisle, and suddenly demand

ed, "What is your name, sir?" "Ward," said the stranger. "Yes, yes, of course!" cried the reader briskly. "Mr. Ward, let me intro duce Mr. Shepherd."

By which simple but ingenious expedient the torrept of extraneous chat ter was diverted to poor Ward, and the reader read happily ever after,-Harper's Weekly. A "Queer" Prescher. Rev. Mr. Hagamore, to whose men

ory is a slab in the church at Cats hoge, Leicestershire, England, was "a little queer." It seems that the rev erend gentleman died in January, 1896, leaving all of his property, valued at \$3,500, to a railroad porter. This queer old preacher kept on

servant of each sex, whom he locked up every night. His last employment of an evening was to go the rounds of his premises, let loose the dogs and fire off his gun. He lost his life in a curious manner. Starting out to let out his servants, the dogs fawned upon him and threw him into a pond of water. The servants heard his cries. but, being locked up, could not rende When the inventory of his property

owner of 80 gowns, 100 pairs of tronsers, 100 pairs of boots, 400 pairs of shoes, 80 wigs (although he had plenty of natural hair), 50 dogs, 96 wago and carts, 30 wheelbarrows, 240 razors, 80 plows, 50 saddles and 222 pickages and shovels. He surely was "a little

There are some very curious mont pents to animals scattered over the countryelde. The one with the most remarkable story crowns Farley mount, near Winchester. Underneath it lies buried, as an inscription on the exterior records, "A horse, the propthe month of September, 1733, leaped into a chalk pit twenty-five feet deep a-fox hunting, with his master on his back, and 'n October, 1734, won the and was 1 de by his owner and en-tered in the name of Beware Chalk Pit." This inscription, which is a copy of the criginal, was restored by the Right Heat. Sir William Heathcote, Bart., in 1870. A duplicate is in the interior, which is provided with three of wayfarers.-Wide World Mas

"I have not. I can't afford to work and go to bed. This is men



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