

The Chatham Record.



LIVING IT DOWN

freehold room. I have just brought Nettie up. It is cool there, and there are some seats.

"I am rather tired," I said, taking his offered arm. "It is a pity London drawing rooms are so small. One can never manage sufficient seats, I find."

"I think your spirits will wear out your body, he said, "you bear excitement badly. You enjoy it, perhaps, yes," gravely.

"I think you do enjoy it." But you are not like yourself in the least. "You would not wish me to have told you how it is in London, would you?"

"Or whether you kill yourself or not," he added. "No, you are right; it is no business of mine; only I wish to help you in some way. As I said, you are not like yourself in the least. You would not wish me to have told you how it is in London, would you?"

"You mean I should not go to London?" I asked. "No, you are right; it is no business of mine; only I wish to help you in some way. As I said, you are not like yourself in the least. You would not wish me to have told you how it is in London, would you?"

"You mean I should not go to London?" I asked. "No, you are right; it is no business of mine; only I wish to help you in some way. As I said, you are not like yourself in the least. You would not wish me to have told you how it is in London, would you?"

"You mean I should not go to London?" I asked. "No, you are right; it is no business of mine; only I wish to help you in some way. As I said, you are not like yourself in the least. You would not wish me to have told you how it is in London, would you?"

"You mean I should not go to London?" I asked. "No, you are right; it is no business of mine; only I wish to help you in some way. As I said, you are not like yourself in the least. You would not wish me to have told you how it is in London, would you?"

"You mean I should not go to London?" I asked. "No, you are right; it is no business of mine; only I wish to help you in some way. As I said, you are not like yourself in the least. You would not wish me to have told you how it is in London, would you?"

"You mean I should not go to London?" I asked. "No, you are right; it is no business of mine; only I wish to help you in some way. As I said, you are not like yourself in the least. You would not wish me to have told you how it is in London, would you?"

"You mean I should not go to London?" I asked. "No, you are right; it is no business of mine; only I wish to help you in some way. As I said, you are not like yourself in the least. You would not wish me to have told you how it is in London, would you?"

"You mean I should not go to London?" I asked. "No, you are right; it is no business of mine; only I wish to help you in some way. As I said, you are not like yourself in the least. You would not wish me to have told you how it is in London, would you?"

"You mean I should not go to London?" I asked. "No, you are right; it is no business of mine; only I wish to help you in some way. As I said, you are not like yourself in the least. You would not wish me to have told you how it is in London, would you?"

"You mean I should not go to London?" I asked. "No, you are right; it is no business of mine; only I wish to help you in some way. As I said, you are not like yourself in the least. You would not wish me to have told you how it is in London, would you?"

"You mean I should not go to London?" I asked. "No, you are right; it is no business of mine; only I wish to help you in some way. As I said, you are not like yourself in the least. You would not wish me to have told you how it is in London, would you?"

"You mean I should not go to London?" I asked. "No, you are right; it is no business of mine; only I wish to help you in some way. As I said, you are not like yourself in the least. You would not wish me to have told you how it is in London, would you?"

some wonderful news. Come here, and I will tell you." He advanced, but he did not sit down, only stood there by the mantelpiece, tall, straight, massive, with his eyes bent on the fire.

"I will please you, I am sure," I went on rapidly. "You have never wished to tell me. Can't you guess?"

"I am not good at guessing," he answered constrainedly. "You had better tell me at once."

"Well," I said, bursting into the subject without further delay. "Yorkie has proposed to Nettie at last."

He started. The words certainly roused him from his composure.

"Proposed?" he said, almost as involuntarily as I myself said it a short time before. "Are you sure?"

"She has just been telling me," I answered; "she was so elated to leave the house so very long to herself, and you are looking straight up into his face and meeting his eyes—are you surprised?"

"Very," he said slowly.

"Why?" I asked, coloring hotly and indignantly. "You always thought he was fond of her. You always hoped he would marry her, and now—"

"Now," he interrupted. "I am not so sure about his feelings—that is all; and Nettie is too good, and sweet, and fair to be the victim of an unworthy caprice."

"I don't understand you," I said, coldly.

"Do you not? Then I will speak more plainly. Yorkie is not worthy for Nettie, and I do not think he has given her his word."

"What makes you think so?" I asked, faintly.

"He answered me in one word: 'Observation.' I knew now the secret of the change in him. I knew he had guessed Yorkie's feelings for me, and I knew, too, that my own reticence, deception, confusion, had been like so many additional proofs for his suspicious mind."

"Are you pleased?" he asked me suddenly, after a long, dreary pause.

I started and looked up, but as I met his eyes the red blood once more rushed to my face and neck. The very certainty of interpretation only added to my confusion.

"Of course I am pleased," I said, but my voice was noticeably, "Very pleased. There is always something delightful in a woman in a friend's marriage."

"Laughing foolishly," he said, "the next best thing to being married herself. And that, of course, is the secret of her life. I suppose it is in your mind, history, and turned away. 'It is a pity she does not give it a little more serious consideration when you appear to have done.'" "Do you mean," I said hotly, "that you are dissatisfied with me—that you regard me as unworthy?"

"He interrupted, with rising passion. "That is a poor word—a very poor word. When one would give one's life to amend a mistake—when one knows that all that life is marred and spoiled by reason of it—one feels something more than regret."

"I am as if by hand," I said, "but my heart is not in it. I tried to do it, but I could not. I tried to do it, but I could not. I tried to do it, but I could not."

"I tried to do it, but I could not. I tried to do it, but I could not. I tried to do it, but I could not."



JACK'S BABY

A STORY FOR THANKSGIVING.

BY VERA CALDWELL MELVILLE.

VER in the village the Kingsleys were called by their neighbors 'the dear old folks' and they were not at all displeased to be so called.

There was the father, mother and three sons, the latter all farmers, for even when boys at the district school, not one of them would play with or in any way notice a girl.

With a family like this it is not surprising, of course, that the girls, when they grew to womanhood, were not sought after by the young men of the village.

It was on Thanksgiving morning that the Kingsleys had a very busy day. They were to have a dinner for the men who had been in the army and navy.

Jack, the youngest son, who was then only a boy, was very busy with the chickens.

He was so busy that he did not notice when the door opened and a young man came in.

The young man was very handsome and well-dressed. He looked at Jack and then at the chickens.

"What are you doing?" he asked.

"I am looking after the chickens," Jack answered.

"They are doing well," the young man said.

"Yes, they are," Jack answered.

"I am glad to hear it," the young man said.

He then looked at Jack and then at the chickens.

"I am glad to hear it," the young man said.

"Yes, they are," Jack answered.

"I am glad to hear it," the young man said.

"Yes, they are," Jack answered.

If I don't stand for her and fight the hull world, it need be. I ain't fit for much; the Kingsleys ain't like other people nallow, and if this here kid ain't respectable it can't make no great odds to us. We ain't 'society' folks but all these fine things she's got on shows she don't belong to no poor trash round here. There's a mystery about it that I hope we won't never understand.

After this incoherently long speech, Jack Kingsley put the child in the basket and went out, his mother never saying a word.

He was a little alarmed for his mental condition, though. When she recovered from the shock a little, she remembered a few other times in his life when Jack had unexpectedly flung out in a similar fashion in defense of an abused animal, and once in the case of a sick tramp. She blamed herself severely for not using more strategy at the outset; how the battle was hopelessly lost. Well, he might have been somebody to care for; she would not and in five minutes after she had settled this point she was holding the object of controversy in her arms and feeding it most tenderly.

Then for the first time she remembered that this was Thanksgiving Day. "Thanksgiving," and sitting and rocking, her mind traveled back to a time when the boy was not so narrow, so selfish, when she was not so church-and-congregation human companionship. Then she remembered the first Thanksgiving on the farm, when Jack was a sturdy boy of five and the others younger; how she had made a little feast almost out of nothing, but, despite the homeliness and loneliness, they had been far happier than in the years since when love of gain had "eaten them up," spiritually and mentally. With a start she heard the clock strike eleven. The baby was sleeping; could she manage to get up a Thanksgiving feast in an hour? She had intended to have baked potatoes, fried salt pork, bread, coffee and sorghum molasses.

Ben, her youngest son, was at the door for something and, yielding to the impulse of the moment, she called to him from the doorway. "Run me down a chicken, Ben, if you men folks can't get along till one o'clock without your dinner."

"Aye, aye," said Ben heartily, but when he came in with the chicken he looked so inquiring that his mother said, "I guess you forgot 'twas Thanksgiving, just as if they ever observed it either inwardly or outwardly. Ben, what were you doing when he reached the door. You had better look after that bird, it'll be about one o'clock."

"What's up?" asked Tom.

The Kingsleys were not humorous, but an idea did occasionally strike Ben and he answered severely: "You can't expect mother to take care of a youngun and have meals waiting up to tete."

"Hain't the youngun?" was Tom's inquiring reply. "Saw Jack, your brother, go over to Sween's this afternoon."

"If you've any business at Sween's go yourself, I hain't any."

Even Mr. Kingsley, who was not at all observing, opened his eyes when he entered the big kitchen, from which most savory odors had already greeted him.

Never had the old room looked so inviting before, and no wonder. A handsome feast on a table spread with the white cloth and best dishes—only used for company—and a baby fern in the tall high chair so long relegated to the parlor. He smiled and laid his rough hand on the little head covered with golden red curls.

"Whoops!" said Tom, looking approvingly about. "Saw all this fuss of having a party in the family?"

Jack glanced at his brother and then at what Mr. Kingsley was ever known to do before without being asked—stilled the water-pail.

Ben looked down at himself, then there was another departure. He put on a clean "smock" and washed and combed with musical care. Everyone had a smile or a pat for the bright, fearless babe who, they thoughtly understood, was in some way responsible for the good cheer.

When ready to sit down, Jack quietly lifted the high chair to a place besides her own. He meant to take care of her, evidently. And so the new life at the Kingsleys began. Not all in a day did the changes come, but the truth of the words: "And a little child shall lead them," was never more thoroughly verified than in this instance.

By another Thanksgiving time a roya family was spread on the parlor and the family brightened, talked and joked more like "other people," they ever sent wood and vegetables to several poor families, and remembered that they themselves had caused to give thanks for many blessings, not least among them Jack's baby.

The Turkey.

For weeks and weeks the pinnered boys, now in some suit November morn, he gets it in the neck.