



"Marg'ret Snell, you stop! You come right in here!"

NEIGHBORHOOD TYPES

* II—LITTLE MARG'RET SNELL: THE VILLAGE RUNAWAY

By Mary E. Wilkins

Author of "A Humble Romance," "A New England Nun," "Pembroke," etc., etc.

DRAWINGS BY ALICE BARBER STEPHENS

IT certainly goes rather hard for any mother in this village, of a fanciful and romantic turn of mind, who tries to depart from our staid old customs in the naming of her children. She is directly thought to be putting on airs in a particularly foolish fashion, and her attempts are frustrated so far as may be.



"Very dirty, but very smiling"

For instance, when Mrs. White named her second boy Reginald, and the neighbors knew that there was no such appellation in the family, that it was only a "fancy name," they sniffed contemptuously, and called him "Ridgy." Ridgy White he will be in this village until the day of his death. And when Mrs. Beals named her little girl Gertrude, the school-children, who scorned such fine names, transformed it to "Gritty," and Gritty the poor child goes.

As for Marg'ret Snell, she fared somewhat better; she might easily have been dubbed Gritty too, had it not been for the fact that Gertrude

Beals is eight months older, and went to school first. She is only called in strict conformance to the homely old customs, "Marg'ret" and sometimes "Margy," with a hard g, when her real name is Marguerite.

How the neighbors sniffed when they learned what Francis Snell's wife had named her girl-baby. Miss Lurinda Snell, Francis' sister, told of it in Mrs. Harrison White's. She had dropped in there one afternoon, about a week after Marg'ret's birth, and several other neighbors had dropped in, too.

"Sophi has named the baby," said Lurinda. Mrs. Francis Snell's name is Sophia, but everybody calls her "Sophi," with a strong emphasis on the last syllable.

Then the others inquired eagerly what she had named it, and Lurinda replied with a scornful lift and twist of her thin nose and lips: "Marguerite."

"Marg'ret, you mean," said the others.

"No, it's Marguerite," said Lurinda.

"Where did she get such a name as that?" asked the neighbors.

"Out of a book of poetry," replied Lurinda, with another scornful sneer.

The neighbors then and there agreed that it was very silly to twist about a good sensible name, and Frenchify it in that way; that Sophi read too much, and that she wouldn't be likely to have much government.

Whether the first was silly or not they certainly have never abetted it. Not one of them has ever called the little girl anything but Marg'ret or Margy, and whether they were right or not about Mrs. Snell's superfluous reading they most assuredly were about her lack of government. Sophia Snell is a good woman, and probably one of the most intellectual persons in the village, but she does hold a loose rein over her domestic affairs. That broad, white, abstracted brow of hers cannot seem to bring itself to bear very well upon stray buttons,

and heavy bread and childish peccadillos. Francis Snell sews on his buttons himself or uses pins, or his sister Lurinda calls him in and sews them on for him with strong and virtuous jerks. It is popularly believed that he never eats light bread unless his sister takes pity upon him, and as for little Marg'ret, she runs loose. She always has, ever since she could run at all. When she was nothing but a baby, and tumbled over her petticoats every few minutes, she was repeatedly captured and brought back to her mother, who immediately let her run away again, with the same impeded but persistent species of locomotion.

Before little Marg'ret was three years old she had toddled and tumbled all alone by herself over the entire village, and often far on the outskirts. Once Thomas Gleason, who lives on a farm three miles off, brought her home. Nobody could understand how she got there, but she toddled into the yard at sunset in her little muddy pink frock, with one shoe gone, and no bonnet, very dirty, but very smiling, and not at all tired or frightened.

Little Marg'ret never was afraid of anybody or anything. Probably there is not another such example of absolute fearlessness in the village as she. She marches straight up to cross dogs and cows, the dark has no terrors for her, the loudest clap of thunder does not make her childish bosom quake. And she certainly has no fear, and possibly no respect, for mortal man. Speak harshly to her, even give her a little smart shake, or cuff her small, naughty hands, and she stands looking up at you as innocently and unabashedly as a pet kitten.

Everybody prophesied that little Marg'ret, through this fearlessness of hers, would come soon to an untimely end. "She'll get bitten by a dog or hooked by a cow," they said. "She'll get lost, she'll follow a strange man, she'll walk into the pond and get drowned." But she never has so far, and she is going bravely on to six.

Little Marg'ret's Aunt Lurinda Snell has probably endured sharper pangs of anxiety on her account than anybody else. Marg'ret's father is an easy-going man; his sister Lurinda seems to have all the capacity for worry in the family.

Lurinda is much given to sitting in her front window. She arises betimes of a morning, and her solitary maiden house is soon set to rights, and not a soul who comes down the street escapes her. Let little Marg'ret essay to scamper past, and straightway comes the sharp tap of bony knuckles upon the window-pane, then the window slides up with a creak, and Lurinda's voice is heard, sharp and shrill, "Marg'ret, Marg'ret, you stop! Where you going?"

Then when Marg'ret scuds past, with a roguish cock of her head toward the window, the call comes again, "Marg'ret Snell, you stop! You come right in here!"

But Marg'ret seldom comes to order. She goes where she wills, and nowhere else. The very essence of freedom seems to be in her childish spirit. You might

as well try to command a little wild rabbit. All Lurinda's shrill orders are of no avail, unless she sees her soon enough to head her off, and actually brings her into the house by dint of superior bodily strength.

If Marg'ret has once the start her aunt can never catch her, but sometimes she starts across her track before the little wild thing has time to double. Then, indeed, there are struggles and wails and shrill interjections of wrath.

To compensate for her lack of parental survey the whole neighborhood, as well as Lurinda, takes a hand at controlling this small and refractory member, although in uncertain fashion, which, perhaps, does more harm than good. However, we all do our best to reduce Marg'ret to subjection, each for one's self—we are driven to it.

None of us are safe from an invasion of Marg'ret at any hour of the day, upon all occasions. Have we any very particular company to tea, in walks Marg'ret in her soiled pinafore, with her yellow hair in a tousle, and her face very dirty, and sweetly smiling, into the best parlor, and seats herself in the best chair, if a guest has not anticipated her. When told with that gentle and ladylike authority, which one can display before company, that she had better run right home like a good little girl, Marg'ret sits still and smiles.

Then there is nothing to do but to say in a bland voice that thinly disguises impatience, "Come out in the kitchen with me, Marg'ret, and I'll give you a piece of cake,"



"Her mother is one of the most intellectual persons in the village"

and toll her out in that way,— Marg'ret will sell her birth-right of her own way for cake, and cake alone,—and then to cram the cake with emphasis into the small hand, and say, "Marg'ret, you go right home and don't you come over here again to-day." But no one can be sure that she will not appear at the company tea-table, and pull at the company's black silk skirts for more cake, like a petted pussy cat.

Marg'ret walks into the minister's study when he

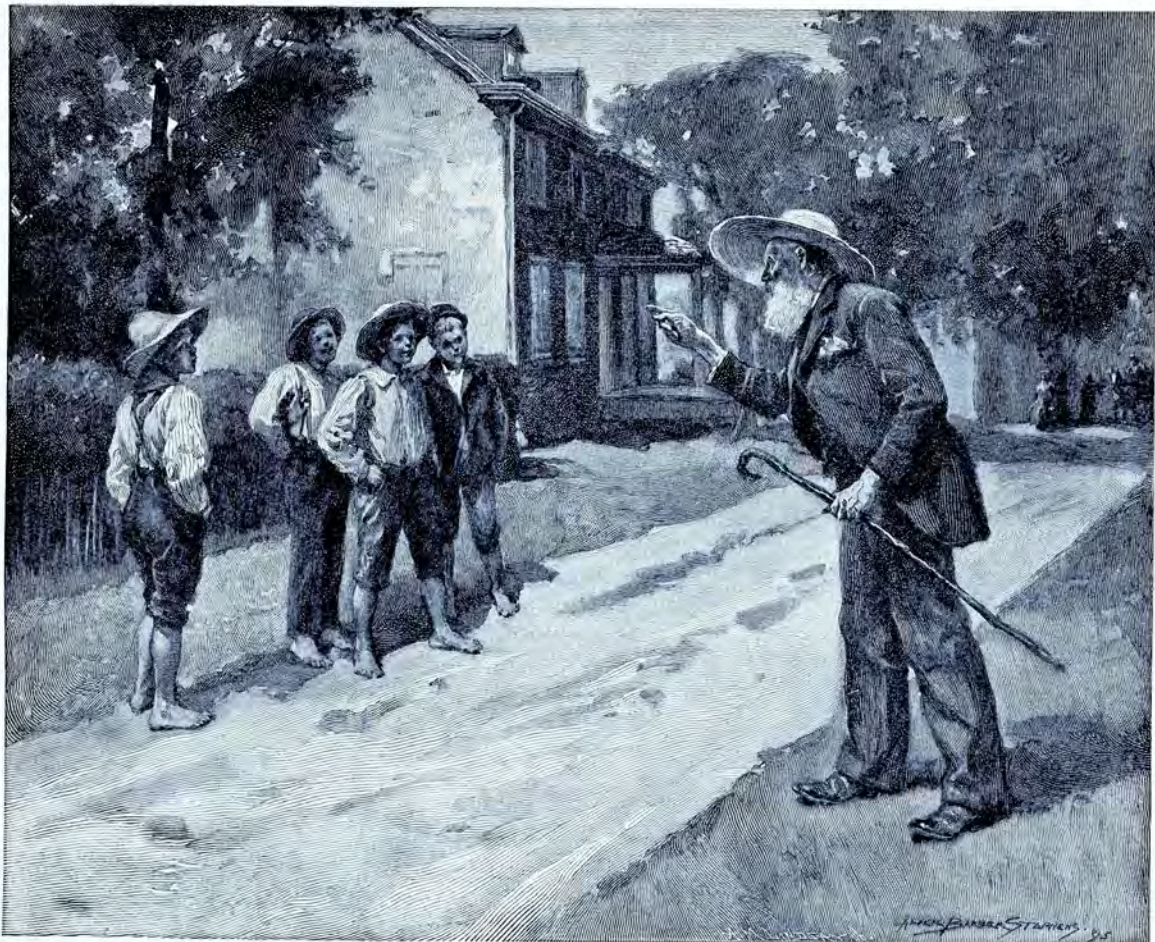
is writing his sermons or when he is conducting family prayers. The doctor keeps his dangerous drugs on high shelves where she cannot reach them; he has found her alone in his office so many times. She walks over all our houses as she chooses. We are never sure on going into any room that Marg'ret will not start up like a little elf and confront us. She has been found asleep in the middles of spare chamber feather-beds; she has been found investigating with her curious little fingers the sacred mysteries of best parlor china-closets.

Little Marg'ret is the one lively and utterly incorrigible thing in our dull little village. There are other children, but she is that one all-pervading spirit of childhood which keeps us all fretting but powerless under its tyranny, and yet, if the truth must be told, ready enough to cut the sweet cake, which it loves, for it when it runs away into our hearts.



"Have we any very particular company to tea, in walks Marg'ret in her soiled pinafore"

* The second of Miss Wilkins' series of character sketches portraying New England types. The first appeared in the December issue. All are illustrated by Alice Barber Stephens.



"I'm too old a man for you to speak to me like that, boys"

NEIGHBORHOOD TYPES

*III—CYRUS EMMETT, THE UNLUCKY MAN

By Mary E. Wilkins

Author of "A Humble Romance," "A New England Nun," "Pembroke," etc., etc.

DRAWINGS BY ALICE BARBER STEPHENS

It is not probable that Cyrus Emmett's relations intended any sarcasm toward a helpless and inoffensive infant when they gave him the name of the great Persian conqueror, but that alone has proved a mockery of his lot in life. Poor Cyrus Emmett has not been able to conquer even the petty obstacles of the narrow sphere to which he was born—even in this humble village of humble folk, who regard the luxuries of life very much as they do the moon, as something so beyond their reach as to make desire ridiculous.



"Through the village street, his back bent with years"

Cyrus Emmett has the superior lowliness of the utterly defeated. Not one of the other villagers but has had at some time or other his own little triumph of success, which gave him that sense of power which exalts humanity. He has married the prettiest girl or has made a great crop of hay, or he has grown the finest grapes, or built himself a tasty house, or been deacon or selectman. Cyrus Emmett has never known anything of these little victories, which, being well proportioned to the simple contests, perhaps produce as fine a quality of triumph as did those of the great Persian whose name he bears.

Poor Cyrus, when a boy at school, never quite got to the head of his class, although no one studied more faithfully than he, and at the end of the term he knew his books better. Once Cyrus would have gone to the head; he spelled the word correctly, but the teacher misunderstood. Once the two scholars above him had the mumps and were absent, and he would then have taken his place at the head had he not slipped on the ice on his way to school, and sprained his ankle.

Always, when he could spell a word, and the scholars

* The third of a series of character sketches which Miss Wilkins has written for the JOURNAL, and which Alice Barber Stephens has illustrated. The others will appear in following issues.

above him were failing, and his heart was beating, and his head swimming with anticipated triumph, when he leaned forward and waved his arm frantically, and could scarcely be restrained from declaring his wisdom before his turn, the next boy gave the correct answer and went to the head. If Cyrus had not been so near success his disappointment would not have been so great.

Cyrus made a signal failure in his boyish sports. He could never quite reach the bottom of a hill without a swerve and roll in the snow when almost there, and that, too, on an experienced sled, and with no difference in his mode of steering, that one could see. If there was a stone or snag heretofore unknown on the course Cyrus discovered it and cut short his career; if another boy was to collide with any one it was with him.

At a very early age Cyrus began to excite a feeling compounded of contempt and compassion among everybody with whom he came in contact.

"Cyrus Emmett is a good boy, and tries hard, but he never seems to make out much," they said.

"Try again, Cy," the boys shouted when he toiled up the hill for the twentieth time after a hard toss in the snow. And Cyrus would try with fierce energy, and upset again amidst exultant laughter from the top of the hill. There has been, from the first, no lack of energy and perseverance in Cyrus Emmett. It is possible that he might have gained more respect in his defeats if there had been. There is, after all, a certain negative triumph in declining to bestir one's self against excessive odds, and sitting down to the buffetings of fate, like an Indian, maybe with a steady fury of unconquerable soul, but no struggles nor outcries. Cyrus, however, has never ceased to kick against the unending pricks of Providence, and fall back and kick again, and fall until his neighbors seem never to have seen him in any attitudes but those of futile attack and defeat. Had he sat stolidly down on his sled nor tried to coast at all, and defied his adverse fate in that way, it is quite probable that he might have gained more respect.

Cyrus' father was a farmer; a thrifty man, and considered quite well-to-do, as he owned his place and stock clear, with a little balance in the savings bank, until Cyrus was old enough to enter into active coöperation with him in the farm management. Then things began to go wrong, but seemingly through no fault of Cyrus', nor indeed of any living man.

First the woodland caught fire, and all the standing wood and fifty cords of cut went up in flame and smoke. Then there was a terrible hailstorm, which seemed to spend its worst fury on the Emmett farm, and laid waste the garden and the corn-fields. Then the Emmetts' potatoes rotted, although nobody's else in the village did. That year half the little balance in the savings bank was drawn; in two years more the Emmett account was closed. The old man died not long after that, and his son inherited the farm; his wife had died long before, and a maiden sister of his had kept house for him.

The year after his father's death Cyrus' barn was struck by lightning, and burned to the ground with several head of cattle and a valuable horse. Then Cyrus mortgaged the farm to build a new barn and buy stock, and it is one of the tragic tales of the village that the

new barn had not been finished a week before that also was burned because of the hired man's upsetting a lantern, and only two cows were saved. Then Cyrus borrowed more, and the neighbors went to the raising of another barn, and lent a hand in the building. They also contributed all they could spare from their small means and bought Cyrus another horse.

But it was not long before the horse sickened and died, and the lightning struck again and badly shattered one end of the new barn, and killed a cow, beside stunning Cyrus so severely that he was in the house for a month in haying-time. Then the neighbors gave up. "It's no use tryin' to help Cy Emmett, he wasn't born lucky," they said, and they had a terrified and uncanny feeling, as if they had been contending against some evil power.

Once Cyrus had what seemed for a little while a stroke of luck, such as all the village people have known at least the taste of—he drew a prize. The village does not approve of lotteries, and Cyrus had been brought up to shun them, but that time he was tempted. A man went the rounds selling tickets at a quarter of a dollar apiece on a horse which he represented as very valuable. The man was a third cousin of Deacon Nehemiah Stockwell, and people were inclined to think he was reliable although they had not seen the horse. He represented, also, that the money obtained was to go toward the building of a Baptist church in East Windsor.

Cyrus had just lost his horse, and he had a quarter in his pocket and he bought a ticket and drew the prize. It went around the village like wildfire, "Cy Emmett has drawn the horse." Pretty soon two men were seen leading the horse through the village. It seemed odd that he should be led instead of ridden, that it should require two men to lead him, also that he should be so curiously strapped and tied about the head and hindquarters. However, he looked like a fine animal, and tugged and pranced as well as he could under his restrictions, thereby showing his spirit. He was said to be very valuable; Cyrus Emmett was thought to be actually in luck that time.

However, poor Cyrus' luck proved to be only one of his usual misfortunes. The horse was a white elephant on his hands; he could not be harnessed, and he threw every rider who bestrode him. As for working the farm he might as well have set the fabled Pegasus at that. He kicked and bit—it was dangerous even to feed him.

Finally he took to chewing his halter in bits, and escaping and terrorizing the village. "Cy Emmett's horse is loose!" was the signal for a general stampede. At last he had to be shot.

Cyrus Emmett, when he was a little under forty, had the mortgage on his farm foreclosed, and went to live in a poor cottage with a few acres of land attached. He has lived there ever since, and he is now past sixty.

Cyrus' ill luck seems to have followed him in his love affairs. When he was quite a young man he fell in love with Mary Ann Linfield, but she would not have him. She married Edward Bassett afterward.

It was all over town one morning that Mary Ann had jilted Cyrus. Her mother ran in to Miss Lurinda Snell and told of it. Cyrus did not marry until his old aunt, who kept his house, died; then he espoused a widow in the next village, and she has been a helpless cripple from rheumatism ever since their marriage.

Cyrus has to toil from dawn until far into the night, tilling his few scanty acres, caring for two cows and hens, peddling milk, and eggs, and vegetables, nursing his sick wife, and doing all the household tasks.

It is a curious thing that although Cyrus pays painfully, penny by penny, for all his little necessities of life, that he has no credit. I doubt if a man in the village would trust him with a dollar's worth, and he is said to purchase such infinitesimal quantities as a dozen lumps of sugar, and two drawings of tea, and a cup of beans, because he has no ready cash to pay for more.

Poor Cyrus Emmett goes through the village street, his back bent with years and the hard burdens of life, but there is still the fire of zeal in his eyes, and he is always in spirit trying over again that coast down the hill, although he always upsets before he reaches the goal.

The boys call out, "Hallo, Cy," when they meet him, and he makes as if he did not hear, although they are, after all, friendly enough, and intend no disrespect. It is only that his lack of progress in life seems somehow to put the old man on a level with themselves.

Once he stopped and said, half angrily, half appealingly, "I'm too old a man for you to speak to me like that, boys." But they only laughed and hailed him in the same way when they met again.

They say that luck is always sure to turn sooner or later. Perhaps later means sometimes not in this world; but if poor Cyrus Emmett's luck does turn in his lifetime there will be great rejoicing in this village.



"He is said to purchase such infinitesimal quantities as a dozen lumps of sugar"



species of nightmare of unperformed duty tormenting her. She cannot remember, in her bewildered state, whether she has neglected the stairs and the door step or not, and if she has, none can say what evil seems impending over her and her house.

Once her husband, George Henry, who at times is afflicted with that species of rheumatism known as a crick in the back, is reported to have rebelled at this midnight call to the cellar stairs and the broom, and Phebe to have retorted with tragic emphasis: "Suppose I was to die before morning, George Henry Little, and those cellar stairs not swept." And that argument is said to have been too weighty for George Henry's scruples.

Phebe Ann is also said to send George Henry searching with a midnight taper for cobwebs on the ceiling, which she remembers to have seen and cannot remember having brushed away. There is a popular picture in the village imagination of George Henry Little, in the silent watches of the night, standing on a chair, a feather duster in one hand and a lamp in the other, anxiously scanning the ceiling for cobwebs.

George Henry Little, it goes without saying, is a meek and long-suffering man. If ever he had spirit and the capability of sustained rebellion, Phebe Ann must long since have scoured it away with some kind of spiritual soap and sand. Indeed, George Henry's relatives openly say that he never was the same man after he married Phebe Ann Fitch, which was his wife's maiden name. And yet Phebe Ann is such a mild-looking, little, sandy-haired woman, with strained, anxious blue eyes, and small, knotty hands with rasped knuckles, and George Henry is black-whiskered and rather fierce-visaged in comparison. Phebe Ann taught school before she was married, too, and George Henry's relatives feared that she would not make a good housekeeper, but their fears upon that head were soon allayed.

When George Henry's sister, Mrs. Ezra Wheeler, went to call at his house for the first time after he and Phebe Ann were married,

she came home, surprised and a little alarmed.

"It was four o'clock in the afternoon when I got there," she tells the story, "and there was Phebe Ann in a calico dress and gingham apron (likely to have wedding callers all the time, too), scrubbing the tops of the doors. They hadn't been living in that brand-new house a week either. I don't see what she found to scrub. But there she was hard at work with soap and sand. I said then I guessed we needn't worry about George Henry's not having a good housekeeper; I guessed he'd have all the housekeeping he wanted, and more, too."

It is fortunate for George Henry that he has a reasonably neat and tidy occupation—he is Mr. Harrison White's confidential clerk and chief assistant in the store and post-office. If he had been employed in the grist mill, or if he had been a farmer,

Phebe Ann might have resorted to such extreme measures as lodging him in the woodshed or on the door step in mild weather. As it is he seems to work hard to gain an entrance to his own house. George Henry always goes around to the back door—it is improbable that he has ever crossed the threshold of his front door since his wedding-day—and when there he opens it a crack, slips his hand around the corner and takes a pair of slippers from a peg just inside. Then he removes his boots, puts on the slippers and enters. The neighbors are positive that this is



"There we stand and carefully scrape and scrape"

NEIGHBORHOOD TYPES

* IV—PHEBE ANN LITTLE: THE NEAT WOMAN

By Mary E. Wilkins

Author of "A Humble Romance," "A New England Nun," "Pembroke," etc., etc.

DRAWINGS BY ALICE BARBER STEPHENS

LET anybody mention Phebe Ann Little in the neighborhood, and some one is sure to immediately remark, "She's terrible neat."



"Her husband often has to hold the lamp"

It is impossible to think even of Phebe Ann, to have her image come for an instant before one's mind, without reference to this especial characteristic of hers. She cannot be separated by any mental process from her "terrible neatness." It is interesting to speculate what can become of Phebe Ann in the hereafter, where, as we are taught to believe, the contest against moth and rust and the general untidiness of this earth is to cease. Can Phebe Ann exist at all in a state where neatness will be merely a negative quality with no possibility of active exposition? Will not there have to be cobwebs for Phebe Ann to sweep from the sky, if she is to inhabit it in any conscious state?

Except in meeting, Phebe Ann is scarcely ever seen by a neighbor without broom and dusting-cloth in hand.

With the first flicker of dawn light and the first cock crow, comes the flirt of Phebe Ann's duster from her window, the flourish of her broom on her front door step, and often far into the evening Phebe Ann's scrubbing and dusting shadow is seen upon the window curtains. People say that Phebe Ann's husband often has to hold the lamp for her while she cleans and dusts until near midnight. A neighbor passing the open kitchen window late one summer night, reported that he heard Phebe Ann appeal to her husband in something after this fashion: "George Henry, can you remember whether I have washed this side of the table or the other?" There are even stories current that her husband has often to rise during the small hours of a winter night, light a lamp, get the broom and sweep down the cellar stairs, or the back door step, because Phebe had awakened with a



"Likely to have wedding callers all the time"

his daily custom when he returns from the store. But should the day be snowy or dusty or muddy, then, indeed, George Henry Little has to painfully work his passage into his own house. Phebe Ann comes forth—indeed she often lays in wait—with the broom, and sometimes, it is asserted, with the duster, and poor George Henry is made to undergo a purification as rigid as if he were about to enter a heathen temple.

It must be a sore trial to Phebe Ann to admit any one without the performance of these cleansing rites; but she has to submit in other cases. She cannot make the minister take off his boots and put on slippers before entering, neither can she make such conditions with the neighbors. She has always a little corn-husk mat on the door step, and there we stand and carefully scrape and scrape, while she watches with ill-concealed anxiety, and then we walk in, although we feel guilty. In very muddy weather we always, of course, remove our rubbers and all our outer garments which have become damp; but otherwise our shoes, which have been contaminated by the dust of the street, come boldly in contact with Phebe Ann's immaculate carpets.

But she has her revenge. Not a neighbor goes in to spend a friendly hour with Phebe Ann, who does not see, after her return, if she lives within seeing distance—and if she does not it is faithfully reported to her—her late hostess fling windows and doors wide open, and ply frantically broom and duster, and she wonders uneasily how much dirt and dust she could possibly have tracked into Phebe Ann's.

But the neighbors have double cause for solicitude so far as an imputation upon their own neatness is concerned, for Phebe Ann never herself returns from a neighborly call, that she does not, it is vouched for by competent witnesses, hang all the garments which accompanied her upon the clothes-line to air. Miss Lurinda Snell declares that she turns even the sleeves wrong side out and brushes them vigorously—that she has seen her.

We all admit, with perhaps some prickings of conscience in our own cases, that Phebe Ann Little is a notable housekeeper. Her window-panes flash like diamonds in the setting sun. There is no dust on her window-blinds; one could sit in one's best silk dress on her door step; one could, if there were any occasion for so doing, eat one's meals off her shed floor or her cellar stairs. There is no speck of dirt, no thread of disorder in all Phebe Ann's house, nor upon her person, nor upon anything which belongs to her. She is certainly a housekeeper whose equal is not among us, and we all give her due admiration and respect.

She is a credit to our village, and yet it is possible that one such credit is sufficient. If there were another like her the village might become so clean that we should all have to take to the fields and survey its beautiful tidiness over pasture-bars.

EDITOR'S NOTE—In this series of "Neighborhood Types" the following sketches have appeared:

- I—Timothy Samson: the Wise Man, December, 1895
- II—Little Marg'ret Snell: the Village Runaway, January, 1896
- III—Cyrus Emmett: the Unlucky Man, February, 1896

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NEIGHBORHOOD TYPES

*V—AMANDA TODD: THE FRIEND OF CATS

By Mary E. Wilkins

Author of "A Humble Romance," "A New England Nun," "Pembroke," etc., etc.

DRAWINGS BY ALICE BARBER STEPHENS

AMANDA TODD'S orbit of existence is restricted of a necessity, since she was born, brought up and will die in this village, but there is no doubt that it is eccentric. She moves apart on her own little course quite separate from the rest of us. Had Amanda's lines of life been cast elsewhere where circumstances had pushed her, instead of hemming her in, she might have become the feminine apostle of a new creed, have founded a sect, or instituted a new system of female dress. As it is she does not go to meeting, she never wears a bonnet, and she keeps cats.

Amanda Todd is rising sixty, and she never was married. Had she been, the close friction with another nature might have worn away some of the peculiarities of hers. She might have gone to meeting, she might have worn a bonnet, she might even have eschewed cats, but it is not probable. When peculiarities are in the grain of a person's nature, as they probably are in hers, such friction only brings them out more plainly and it is the other person who suffers.

The village men are not, as a rule, very subtle, but they have seemed to feel this instinctively. Amanda was, they say, a very pretty girl in her youth, but no young man ever dared make love to her and marry her. She had always the reputation of being "an odd stick," even in the district school. She always kept by herself at recess, she never seemed to have anything in common with the other girls, and she always went home alone from singing-school. Probably never in her whole life has Amanda Todd known what it is to be protected by some devoted person of the other sex through the nightly perils of our village street.

There is a tradition in the village that once in her life, when she was about twenty-five years old, Amanda Todd had a beautiful bonnet and went to meeting.

Old Mrs. Nathan Morse vouches for the reliability of it, and, moreover, she hints at a reason. "When Mandy, she was 'bout twenty-five years old," she says, "George Henry French, he come to town, and taught the district school, and he see Mandy, an' told Almira Benton that he thought she was about the prettiest girl he ever laid eyes on, and Almira, she told Mandy. That was all there ever was to it, he never waited on her, never spoke to her, fur's I know, but right after that, Mandy, she had a bunnit, and she went reg'lar to meetin'. 'Fore that her mother could scarcely get her to keep a thing on her head out-of-doors—allers carried her sunbunnit a-danglin' by the strings, wonder she wa'n't sunstruck a million times—and as for goin' to meetin', her mother, she talked and talked, but it didn't do a mite of good. I s'pose her father kind of upheld her in it. He was 'most as odd as Mandy. He wouldn't go to meetin' unless he was driv, and he wa'n't a member. 'Nough sight ruther go out prowlin' round in the woods like a wild animal, Sabbath days, than go to meetin'. Once he ketched a wildcat, an' tried to tame it, but he couldn't. It bit and clawed so he had to let it go. I guess Mandy gets her likin' for cats from him fast enough. Well, Mandy, she had that handsome bunnit, and she went to meetin' reg'lar 'most a year, and she looked as pretty as a picture sittin' in the pew. The bunnit was trimmed with green gauze ribbon and had a wreath of fine pink flowers inside. Her mother was real tickled, thought Mandy had met with a change. But land, it didn't last no time. George Henry French, he quit town the next year and went to Somerset to teach, and pretty soon we heard he hed married a girl over there. Then Mandy, she didn't come to meetin' any more. I dunno what she did with the bunnit—stamped on it, most likely, she always had consider'ble temper—anyway I never see her wear it arterwards."

Thus old Mrs. Nathan Morse tells the story, and somehow to a reflective mind the picture of Amanda Todd in her youth decked in her pink-wreathed bonnet, selfishly but innocently attending in the sanctuary of Divine Love in order to lay hands on her own little share of earthly affection, is inseparable from her, as she goes now, old and bare-headed, defiantly past the meeting-house, when the Sabbath bells are ringing.

However, if Amanda Todd had elected to go bare-headed through the village street from feminine vanity, rather than eccentricity, it would have been no wonder. Not a young girl in the village has such a head of hair as Amanda. It is of a beautiful chestnut color, and there is not a gray thread in it. It is full of wonderful natural ripples too—not one of the village girls can equal them with her papers and crimping-pins—and Amanda arranges it in two superb braids wound twice around her head. Seen from behind Amanda's head is that of a young beauty; when she turns a little, and her harsh old profile becomes visible, there is a shock to a stranger.

Amanda's father had a great shock of chestnut hair, which was seldom cut, and she inherits this adornment from him. He lived to be an old man, but that ruddy crown of his never turned gray.

Amanda's mother died long ago; then her father. Ever since she has lived alone in her shingled cottage with her cats. There were not so many cats at first; they say she started with one fine tabby, who became the mother, grandmother and great-grandmother to armies of kittens.

* The fifth of a series of character sketches which Miss Wilkins has written for the JOURNAL, and which Alice Barber Stephens has illustrated.

Amanda must destroy some when she can find no homes for them, otherwise she herself would be driven afield, but still the impression is of a legion.

A cat is so covert, it slinks so secretly from one abiding place to another, and seems to duplicate itself with its sudden appearances, that it may account in a measure for this impression. Still there are a great many. Nobody knows just the number—the estimate runs anywhere from fifteen to fifty. Counting, or trying to count, Amanda Todd's cats is a favorite amusement of the village children. "Here's another," they shout, when a pair of green eyes gleams at them from a post. But is it another or only the same cat who has moved? Cats sit in Amanda's windows; they stare out wisely at the passers-by, from behind the panes, or they fold their paws on the ledge outside in the sunshine. Cats walk

Amanda's ridge-pole and her fence, they perch on her posts and fly to her cherry trees with bristling fur at the sight of a dog. Amanda has as deadly a hatred of dogs as have her cats. Every one which comes within stone throw of her she sends off yelping, for she is a good shot. Kittens tumble about Amanda's yard, and crawl out between her fence-pickets under people's feet. Amanda will never give away a kitten except to a responsible person, and is as particular as if the kitten were a human orphan, and she the manager of an asylum.

She will never, for any consideration, bestow one of her kittens upon a family who keeps a dog, or where there are many small children. Once she made a condition that the dog should be killed, and she may be at times inwardly disposed to banish the children.

Amanda Todd is extremely persistent when she has selected a home which is perfectly satisfactory to her for a kitten. Once one was found tied into a little basket like a baby on the doorstep of a childless and humane couple who kept no dog, and there is a story that Deacon Nehemiah Stockwell found one in his overcoat pocket and never knew how it came there. It is probable that



"She looked as pretty as a picture sittin' in the pew"

But the managers of the institution to whom Amanda applied made inquiries, and the result did not satisfy them. Amanda stated frankly her reason for wishing to take the child, and her intentions with regard to her. She wished the little girl to tend her cats and assist her in caring for them. She was willing that she should attend school four hours per day, going after the cats had their breakfast, and returning an hour earlier to give them their supper. She was willing that she should go to meeting in the afternoon only, and she could have no other children come to visit her for fear they would maltreat the kittens. She furthermore announced her intention to make her will, giving to the girl, whom she should adopt, her entire property in trust for the cats, to include her own maintenance on condition that she devote her life to them as she had done.

The trustees declared that they could not conscientiously commit a child to her keeping for such purposes, and the poor little girl orphan, who had the chance of devoting her life to the care of pussy cats and kittens to the exclusion of all childish followers, remained in her asylum.

So Amanda to this day lives alone, and manages as best she can. Nobody in the village can be induced to live with her; one forlorn old soul preferred the almshouse.

"I'd 'nough sight ruther go on the town than live with all them cats," she said.

It is rather unfortunate that Amanda's shingled cottage is next the meeting-house, for that, somehow, seems to render her non-church-going more glaringly conspicuous, and then, too, there is a liability of indecorous proceedings on the part of the cats.

They evidently do not share their mistress' dislike of the sanctuary, and find its soft pew cushions very inviting. They watch their chances to slink in when the sexton opens the meeting-house; he is an old man and dim-eyed, and they are often successful. It is wise for anybody before taking a seat in a pew to make sure that one of Amanda's cats has not forestalled him; and often a cat flees down one flight of the pulpit stairs as the minister ascends the other.

We all wonder what will become of Amanda's cats when she dies. There is a report that she has made her will and left her property in trust for the cats to somebody, but to whom? Nobody in this village is anxious for such a bequest, and whoever it may be will probably strive to repudiate it. Some day the cats will undoubtedly go by the board; young Henry Wilson, who has a gun, will shoot some, the rest will become aliens and wanderers, but we all hope Amanda Todd will never know it.

In the meantime she is undoubtedly carrying on among us an eccentric, but none the less genuine mission. A home missionary is Amanda Todd, and we should recognize her as such in spite of her non-church-going proclivities. Weak in faith though she may be, she is, perhaps, as strong in love as the best of us. At least I do not doubt that her poor little four-footed dependents would so give evidence if they could speak.



"Now Amanda is old . . . and lives alone . . . with her cats"

Amanda resorts to these extreme measures to save herself from either destroying her kittens or being driven out of house and home by them.

However, once, when the case was reversed, Amanda herself was found wanting. When she began to grow old, and the care of her pets told upon her, it occurred to her that she might adopt a little girl. Amanda has a comfortable little income, and would have been able to provide a good living for a child, as far as that goes.

EDITOR'S NOTE—In this series of "Neighborhood Types" the following sketches have appeared:
 I—Timothy Samson: the Wise Man, December, 1895
 II—Little Marg'ret Snell: the Village Runaway, January, 1896
 III—Cyrus Emmett: the Unlucky Man, February, 1896
 IV—Phebe Ann Little: the Neat Woman, March, 1896

NEIGHBORHOOD TYPES

* VI—LYDIA WHELOCK: THE GOOD WOMAN

By Mary E. Wilkins

Author of "A Humble Romance," "A New England Nun,"
"Pembroke," etc., etc.

DRAWINGS BY ALICE BARBER STEPHENS

WE all agree that Lydia Wheelock is very plain-looking, but that she is very good. She was never handsome, even as a girl. She never had any youthful bloom, and her figure was always as clumsy and awkward as it is now. Poor Lydia, with her round shoulders and her high hips, always moved heavily among the light-tripping maids of her own age. Seen from behind, her broad, matronly back made her look old enough to be the mother of them all. Bright and delicate girlish ribbons and muslins, which set off their happy, youthful, flower-like faces, made poor Lydia's dull, thick cheeks look duller, and thicker, and heavier.

Some women as plain-visaged as Lydia, seeing themselves, as it were, like dingy barnyard fowls among flocks of splendid snowy doves and humming-birds, might have deliberately tried to cultivate loving kindness and sweet obligingness of manner as an offset. But Lydia was not brilliant enough for that, neither had she much personal ambition. It is doubtful if she has ever looked in the glass much, except to ascertain if her face was clean and her hair smooth, and if her lack of comeliness ever cost her an anxious hour.

Besides, Lydia's goodness, contrary to the orthodox tenets, really seems to be the result of nature, and nothing which she has acquired at any known period since her advent upon this earth. Nobody can remember when Lydia was not just as good and devout as she is now: just as faithful in her ministrations to the afflicted and needy, just as constant at meeting, just as patient under her own trials.

As a child at school Lydia never whispered, was never tardy, seldom failed in her lessons, and never teased away another little girl's candy. Besides, her mother always vouched for the fact that she was good as a young and tender infant, and consequently seemed to have been actually born good.

"Lyddy never cried except when she was real sick," her mother used to say. (She lived to be a very old woman, and harped upon her good daughter as if she were the favorite string of her whole life.) "Never knowed her cry because she was mad, as the other children did. Lyddy allers took her nap regular an' slept all night without fussin'. An' she never banged her head on the floor 'cause she couldn't have her own way. She allers give in real pleasant and smilin'."

What was true of Lydia as a baby has undoubtedly been true of her ever since—she has "allers give in real pleasant an' smilin'." There may be some people who would urge the plea that Lydia has an easy temperament, and not naturally such a firm clutch upon her desires that it is agony to relinquish them. But if all the ways that Lydia has patiently and smilingly accepted have been her own ways, she must, even if her temperament had been ever so stolid, have had peculiar tastes and likings. Sometimes it would have been almost like a relish for the scalping-knife or the branding-iron. If Lydia has not, metaphorically speaking, many times during her life banged her head upon the floor, it has not been from lack of proper temptation. She has had from any human standpoint a hard life. Her father died when she was a young girl. She had to leave school and go about helping the neighbors with sewing and cleaning and extra household tasks when they had company, to earn a pittance for the support of herself and her mother. Lydia's mother, although she lived to be so old, was always a feeble woman, crippled with rheumatism.

Lydia lived patiently and laboriously, earning just enough to keep her mother comfortably and herself uncomfortably alive, and that was all. She had one good meal a day when she was working at a neighbor's. Often we know that was all she had, although she never said so and never complained.

Lydia's shawl was always too thin for winter wear, and we felt that we ought to avoid looking at her poor bonnets in order not to hurt her feelings. Every cent that Lydia earned, beyond what she spent for the barest necessities, went for her mother's comfort.

Her mother never went without her three meals a day and her warm flannels, when the dread of Lydia's life was that she might faint away some day at a neighbor's from lack of proper nourishment, and the state of her attire in midwinter be discovered. She confessed her great dread to somebody once, after she was married.

When Lydia was about thirty she suddenly got married, to the surprise of the whole village. Nobody had dreamed she would ever marry. She was so plain and so poor, and seemed years older than she was—old enough to be her own grandmother, as Mrs. Harrison White said. She married a man who had paid some attention to Mrs. Harrison White when she was a girl, and she was popularly supposed to favor him, but her parents objected, so she married Harrison White instead.

* The sixth and concluding sketch of a series of New England types written by Mary E. Wilkins, and illustrated by Alice Barber Stephens, for the JOURNAL. The preceding sketches were published in the JOURNAL for December, 1895; January, February, March and April, 1896.

Elisha Wheelock, the man Lydia married, all the neighbors had called "a poor tool." He was good-looking and good-hearted, but seemed to have little ambition and little taste for industry. Moreover, everybody said he drank. Lurinda Snell said she had seen him when he could scarcely walk, and many others agreed with her. Although the village was surprised the village gave a sort of negative approval of the banns. Everybody agreed that a man like Elisha Wheelock couldn't hope to do any better. No pretty girl with a good home would forsake it for him, and as for Lydia, it was probably her first and only chance, and she could never hope to do any better either. Moreover, Elisha owned a comfortable house—his father had just died and left it to him, with quite a good-sized farm; and it was said positively that Lydia's mother was to live there. "Lydia's got a good home for herself and her mother if 'Lisha don't drink it up," people said. Some thought he would. Everybody watched to see the old homestead and the fertile acres transformed into fiery draughts going down Elisha's throat, but they never did.

Lydia has had her way in one respect, if not in others, and that one may suffice for much. She has certainly had her way with Elisha Wheelock and made a man of him. Not a drop has he drunk, so far as people know—and all the neighbors have watched—in all the years since he married Lydia. He has worked steadily on his farm, he does not owe a dollar, and he is said to have a nice little sum in the savings bank. Moreover, he is a deacon of the church, and on the school committee.

Some of the neighbors say openly that Elisha would never have been deacon if it had not been for his wife; that Lydia ought to have been deacon, and since she could not, because she was a woman, they made her one by proxy through her husband. Elisha is a good deacon—a very good deacon, indeed—and he has Lydia to fully and carefully advise him.

Lydia has never had any children, but she has always had a large family. She began with her own mother and her husband's mother, and a little orphan second cousin of her husband's who had lived with the Wheelocks since her parents died. Her own mother, as I said before, was very feeble and a deal of care; her husband's mother had a jealous, irritable disposition and was very difficult to live with; the orphan cousin was delicate, had the rickets, and, people said, none too clear a mind. Lydia kept no servant, and she had to work hard to keep her house in order, sew and mend, build up her husband's character, and reconcile all the opposite dispositions and requirements of her family. She has had to delve in a spiritual as well as temporal field, and employ heart, and soul, and hands at the same time ever since she was married. After her mother died an old aunt of Elisha's, who would otherwise have had to go upon the town, came to live with them. She is stone-deaf and has a curiously inquiring mind, but it is said that Lydia never loses her patience and never wearies of shouting the most useless information into her straining ears.

It was accounted somewhat fortunate that Elisha's mother did not live long after Aunt Inez appeared, for it would have been, not too great a strain upon Lydia's patience—nobody doubts the long-suffering of that—but



"Lydia has never had any children, but she has always had a large family"

dren. But, after all, it would be only a temporary relief. Some other widow, or orphan, or aged and infirm aunt, would descend upon her, for it is well known that it is Lydia who aids and abets her husband in his charity toward his needy relations. And, moreover, it is told how she lets the children and the additional expense be as small a source of worry to him as possible. Some of the neighbors think that if Lydia Wheelock stints herself much more, to provide for widows and orphans, she cannot go to meeting for lack of simply decent covering. Lurinda Snell is positive that she keeps her shawl on in hot weather to cover up her sleeves, which are past mending in any decorous fashion, and simply make a show of their innumerable and not very harmonious patches. And as for her bonnets, it is actually an insult to look attentively at them.

Poor Lydia has not had a new carpet in her sitting-room since she was married. The one Elisha's mother had was old then, and long ago went to the rag-man. Ever since she has lived on the bare boards. It is a dreadful thing in this village not to have a carpet in the sitting-room. The neighbors never get over being shocked at the loud taps of their shoes on the hard boards when they enter Lydia's. She had a rag carpet almost done, they say, when Lottie Green and her children came; since then she has had no time nor opportunity to finish it.

But everybody knew that if Lydia and Elisha did not do so much for other people she could have a tapestry carpet in her sitting-room, and a black silk dress every year. She sees to it, however, that Elisha is not stinted to his discomfort. He has his good Sunday clothes and looks as well as any man in the whole village.

Lydia is a good cook, and is said to simply pamper her husband's appetite, and take more pains to do so the more she has in her family. We are all very sure that Lydia never neglects her husband for his needy relations, nor relaxes for an instant her watchful eye upon his spiritual and temporal needs. Miss Lurinda Snell declares that she has built up a fire in the north parlor every evening this winter that Elisha may sit in there and read his paper, and not be annoyed by Lottie Green's children. They are very noisy, boisterous children.

Lydia Wheelock, busy as she is with her own, and the needs of her own, tried as her strength must be by her own household cares, does not confine her ministrations to them. If a neighbor is ill Lydia is always ready to watch with her, and a most invaluable nurse she is. Not a neighbor but would rather have Lydia than anybody else over her when she is ill.

Absolutely untiring is Lydia when ministering to the sick, tender as if the sufferer were her own child, and yet so firm and wise that one can feel her almost sufficient of herself to pull one back to health.

Lydia is always in the house of mourning; people claim her sympathy as if it were their right, and she seems to recognize her obligation toward all suffering without a question. She is also always ready with her aid on occasions of rejoicings, at wedding feasts, as well as funerals. She comes to the front with her kindly sympathy when the exigencies of human life arise.

We look across the meeting-house on a Sunday and see Lydia sitting listening to the sermon, her plain face uplifted with the expression of a saint, under that bonnet which we avoid glancing at for love of her, and our hearts are full of gratitude for this good woman in our village.



She suddenly got married, to the surprise of the whole village"

for her strength, to reconcile two such characters and keep the peace for any length of time. However, Elisha's mother had not been dead long before a sister of the rickety orphan cousin, who grows more and more of a charge as the years go on, lost her husband and came to live at the Wheelock place with her four children. They said she would be a great help to Lydia, but she is a pretty young thing, in spite of her four children; she is a good singer, and she is constant at all the sociables and singing-schools, and does a deal of fancy-work, and the neighbors think Lydia has to take nearly all the care of the children. They also think that the young widow is setting her cap here and there, and hope she may marry and so relieve poor Lydia of herself and her chil-