Home Chats

By

MARIE ANN BEST

"A good heart does a little extra."—Chinese saying.

Wild Flowers

Oh, the thrill of Spring! We never tire of welcoming with glad acclaim the tender bursting buds of plant life or ever cease to wonder at the yearly resurrection which unfolds so surely and marvellously before our eyes.

Out in the woods, from a lofty pine tree, the crows send forth their glee song over the meadow and through the aromatic pungent air. One could hardly call his song melodious nor is it a chant, but nevertheless he is heralded as the undeniably affable and friendly announcer of Spring even though his song may be boisterous and occasionally raucous in quality.

Then down far below him through the apparently desistless frozen earth the delicately petalled hypatica shyly and so quietly pushes up bravely from its cool sequestered spot and wafts its fragrant perfume, scarce perceptible, on the Spring breeze.

Truly, wild flowers need their wood environment if we are to appreciate their full beauty. One often wonders, though, whether it is because they are a free gift that they are, more and more, in great danger of becoming extinct. For some reason children and, sad to relate, many grown ups, too, seem to be possessed with an insatiable desir to pluck every wild flower they see, and worse still, it is not an uncommon thing to see a bunch of witherel dog tooth violets or hypatica lying forlorn in a ditch, carelessly thrown there because the flowers have drooped and faded from the warmth of the hand that plucked them thoughtlessly, depriving the woods, in that one discarded bouquet, of many next year blooms. The lovely plot from which they were gathered will be much smaller or gone altogether the following year.

In years gone by it was not too rare a thing to find deep in the woods near by our towns and cities, the showy and much desired pink and white orchid or the yellow lady slipper. To find them now one must go far north where the miles of forest still stretch untouched by man. Climbing over logs and through its guard of marsh lands one is suddenly confronted by a show of dozens of these wonderfully beautiful and rare flowers. A lovely bouquet is discriminately picked and lovingly many are left for next year's propagation, only to find the following day a carload of people laughingly come out of your secluded spot with their arms full of these rare flowers, many of which were torn up by the roots and every last flower hunted out.

"We can never use all these," one can imagin them saying as they sort out the best ones and leave the others, which are carelessly thrown by the side of the road to wither and die.

How much better it would be to always remember the rule when gathering wild flowers, "pick one and leave one," a silent thank you for the woodsy gift.

How lovely our Canadian woods could become if determined efforts were made to multiply and protect our wild flowers in their own environment. What bowers of natural beauty Canada migh have. There they grow, their gardener the spirit king of the forest who keeps the ground moist and black and free from weeds in some mysterious way. He covers them over carefully in the fall with a thick but light coverlet of downy leaves and in the spring, quiet and perfect, his garden blooms.

With forest preservation and wild flower protection along with education, what wonderful places our Canadian woods might become.

The Twilight Hour Story—About Wee Chicks and Other Little Friends.

Chapter 17

Last time, you remember, I told you how well Rover looked after Billy and even how he saved Billy one time, but Rover looked after more than Billy. Did you know that there are some dogs that run after every kitty they see? They don't care how we love our kitty, if they see her they run after her and, oh dear, if they catch her they'll even kill her perhaps. Isn't that awful? Well, Rover looked after Fluffy and Topsy and the little gray kitty.

This is how he did it. Of course, you know, Rover had lots of dog friends. Yes, he was even friends with the dogs who ran after kittens. But, I tell you, none of those other dogs could come onto Mama Lady's farm, if they did Mama Lady would say, "Now you better go home," so Fluffy would be safe, and immediately Rover picked up his ears and all at once, barking softly, would run at the other dog. If the stranger didn't run away, he'd bite him and make him go, then dun after him hard away off over the lawn until he came to the dividing fence which belonged to the next farmer. But the funniest part was this: After he chased him and was so cross to make him run away, he was suddenly friends again with the dog he was so cross to at first, as soon as the dog got off Lady Mama's land, and then the two would trot off together like too good chums.

Pretty soon the dogs knew they could just come so far and then they'd wait for him down the road. Oh, he was a funny, wise old dog.

You know, even if he did take such good care of Fluffy, I don't think he was very fond of her. Not many dogs are real fond of cats, are they? I think he was a little jealous of her at first when Mama Lady brought her home when she was just a little ball of thick furry kitty. She was so cute Mama Lady and Billy wanted to play with her all the time, and so that made Rover jealous, even though they petted him too. Fluffy was pretty frightened of big Rover, too, at first, and so until she got used to him they put him outside for a while when they wanted to play with her, which also made him kind of cross at her, too, for a while. But then he was a good Rover and he knew Mama Lady loved her, so that was why he took such good care of her anyway.

Next time I'll tell you what Rover did to Fluffy one day when she was a kitten.

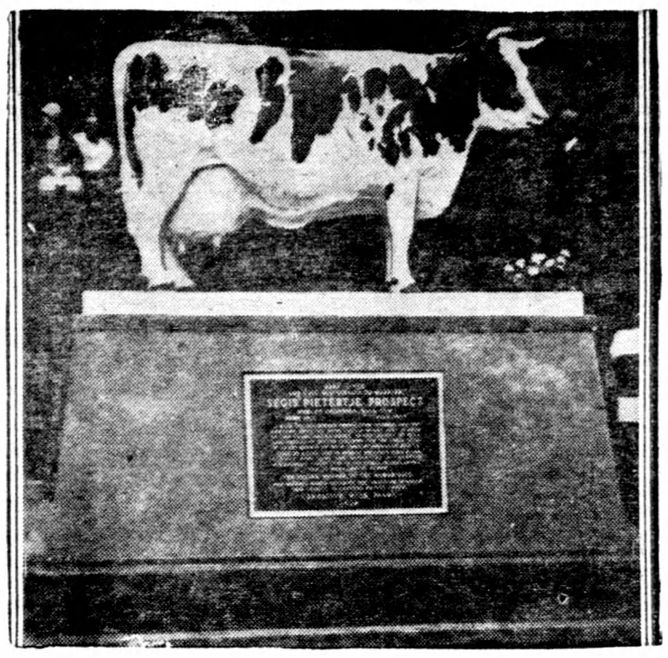
Gabbie Gertie

"A kid who knows the ropes can always get a free seat in the circus."

CALM OF NATURE

It seems as if it were Nature's ain Sabbath, and the verra waters were at rest. Look down upon the vale profound, and the stream is without motion! No doubt, if you were walking along the bauk, it would be murmuring with your feet. But here—here up among the hills, we can imagine it asleep, even like the well within reach of my staff.—Prof. Wilson.

"Mother of Mankind"



"To mother of mankind" a life-size statue was built. Her name was "Segis Pieterje Prospect," and she held world's record as milking cow. At impressive ceremony, recently, at Seattle, Washington, this statue was unveiled.

Sunday School Lesson

April 19. Lesson III—The Rich Man and Lazarus—Luke 16: 19-31. Golden Text—Lay up for yourself treasurers in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.—Matthew 6: 20.

ANALYSIS.

I. THE PURPOSE OF THE PARABLE.
II. THE POOR BEGGAR.
III. THE RICH MAN.

I. THE PURPOSE OF THE PARABLE.

The surest way to misunderstand this parable is to take it as giving us Jesus' teaching about the next world. It is natural, but unprofitable, to ask such questions as "Is Jesus teaching that there is an intermediate state between death and the Last Judgment?" or "Is Jesus giving us here a doctrine of hell?" or "Is the fate of men eternally and irrevocably settled for them at death?" We must remember that this story presents us, not with a map of heaven or hell, nor with a prophecy, nor with theological dogmas, but with a parable. The first part of the parable, giving the surprising interchange of fortune between the rich man and the beggar, is not in any way unique. Similar stories have been told not infrequently within and without Judaism and Christianity. Indeed, it is probably right to suppose that in the first part of the parable Jesus is taking over and repeating a Jewish version of a well-known story. It would, therefore, be a great mistake to press the details in order to arrive at the mind of Jesus about the future or at some authorized foundation of Christian doctrine about heaven and hell. The distinctive element in the story lies in its conclusion.

II. THE POOR BEGGAR.

Lazarus, alone of figures mentioned in the parables, is given a name. Lazarus seems to be an abbreviation for Elazar, meaning, "God help!" or, we might say, "God help him!" It may thus be emblematic of his condition. Apparently Lazarus, who was the victim of some loathsome disease, could not walk. He was "dropped" or "chucked down" at the rich man's gate and left there to do the best he could for himself. He longed to satiate his hunger with the crumbs that dropped from the rich man's table, but even this, it seems, was denied him. To make matters worse, he had to suffer the indignity of having his sores licked by dogs. He could not keep them off. We are apt to contrast the sympathy of the dogs with the callousness of the rich man. But that is not the meaning here. To the Jews the dog was an unclean animal, a mere scavenger. We are not told that Lazrus was a good man, and we should not understand Jesus to mean that any man who has been sufficiently poor and miserable in this life will be taken to heaven for compensation. He is simply repeating the familiar story for the sake of the moral which is to be drawn. The poor man is carried at death by the angels to Abraham's boson, or, as we should say, to Paradise. When the rich man dies, and has been properly buried, he goes to "Hades." This Greek word corresponds with the Hebrew "Sheol," the place of the departed. It normally means the place where all departed souls go to await the final Judgment. Here, however, it seems, unusually, to mean "hell" or the place of torment; not a place of waiting, but of doom. Presumably Jesus tells the story as it was usually told and without any thought of harmonizing it with theological ideas.

III. THE RICH MAN.

The rich man in torment asks Abraham that Lazarus may be sent to him with a drop of cooling water. Abraham replies that between him and the rich man is "a great gulf fixed," and that the rich man has no cause for complaint, for he has had his good time and now it is Lazarus' turn. Our natural inclination is to say, "how very unchristian!" Can we imagine that those in Paradise look on with equanimity at the sufferings of the damned? What had Lazarus done that he had deserved (apparently) endless bliss? And can we really believe that God would condemn the rich man to endless, hopeless, unrelieved torment? Could anything be less like the spirit of Jesus than the answer of Abraham? But these natural objections are really beside the point. The story is a parable, not an account of the future life. We have, rather, to ask, what is it which the parable illustrates? Of whom was Jesus thinking when he spoke this parable. It is difficult to be sure, but there seems a close connection with the often quoted saying of Jesus, that the first shall be last and the last first. The kingdom of heaven will reverse the judgments of earth; such Pharisees as make long prayers in public, or fast and pray to get a reputation for piety on earth, "have received their reward." They sought the regard of men, and it has come to them. That is all they sought. That, therefore, is all they will receive. He who prays in secret, lets not his left hand know what his right hand does, will have treasure in heaven. It will not do for the former to declare, "It is not fair." It will be open to them to claim some of the reward of the latter; it is a matter of spiritual and moral impossibility.

Isolated!

Eighty persons who live within three and a half miles of Coleford (Gloucestershire, Eng.), are at times cut off entirely from the outside world. They are the inhabitants of Drybrook, a hamlet between the spurs of two hills in the Forest of Dean, and they live in conditions that recall the Middle Ages. Drybrook has no public lighting nor drainage, no main water, and, worst of all, no road. The only approach is by a tortuous, treacherous footpath through the woods. Projecting tree roots, deep pits and swamps are a danger to life and limb at night time. Tradesmen are often unable to deliver essential supplies; doctors have sometime been unable to make the perilous journey to visit the sick; and the dead have literally to be hauled up the hillside for burial.

Spring Brings Hope

The farm is always an interesting place in the early spring. No matter how serious the drought in summer, how disappointing the harvests in the fall, or how discouraging the outlook through the bleak days of winter, when spring comes with its warm rains and the warmth from the sun daily increasing, there is renewed hope.

All nature has lain dormant for weeks and weeks. The world, in the country has seemed to be at a standstill. The farmer has been wellnigh in hibernation, he has stuck close to the sheltering roof and the fireside.

Then comes along April, and, in response to her showers and sunshine, all thing in sight seem to come to life—the sap begins to rise, the grass springs green, the farmer gets out and sees his shadow and finds the air and sunhine good and deliciou to stay out in.

Just a few of these warm days and we see teams of horses tramping too and fro in all the fields about us, and hear the familiar hum of tractors as they pull the tillage tools or plows across the fields. Another season of work and hope is here.

Peace

There is a green land hid away
Within the hearts of all,
A pleasant land of light and shade
Whehe happy voices call.

Beneath its wide and azure skies
Its cool, clean houses rest,
In gardens wide where roses blow
Upon the warm soil's breast.

And wide-eyed women sit and spin
Beneath the tall trees' shade,
And in the fields the men at work
Are strong and upright made.

A river flows through that fair land
By meadows lush and green,
No boat with oar piles thereupon,
Nor ship with sail is seen;

But cattle lie along its banks
Or stand in shallows calm,
And woolly sheep with tinkling bells
Soothe heart and ear with balm.

And every home is full of song,
And every back unbowed,
And every head is lifted high,
And every face is proud.

There is the hush of eventide
When purple shadows fall,
The shepherds on the hilltops high
Across the valleys call.

And men let go their pleasant tasks,
And children cease from play,
And bleating kids run to their dams,
And homeward all things stray.

Then, when the silver moon is flowered,
And fireflies gem the breeze,
The silver-throated nightingales
Give tongue in all the trees.

In praise of Him who loveth all,
The flower, the man, the beast,
And guardeth all, and guideth all,
The greatest and the least.

—Charles Grenville Wilson in "The Christian Science Monitor."

BAD TEMPER

A man's most constant companion is himself—a companion never to be shaken off from birth to death. Yet he who is careful to choose desirable companions often forgets to train himself in the essential of happy living. To live in the same house with a bad temper is disagreeable enough; but some men and women condemn themselves to live in the same body with a bad temper—which is one of the worst discomforts imaginable.

DISCONTENT

Much of our discontent in life is due less to any lack of our own lot than to the seeming overabundance in that of our neighbor. If he had not so much we should discover fewer deficiencies for ourselves. We are not so greatly dissatisfied with what we miss as with what he has.

Springtime Touches For the Home

New Paint for the Front Door

In driving through the country what is more pleasing to the eye than a lovely freshly painted front door at some farmhouse?

One house owner re-enameled his door in white. The surface was in fair condition, but that part of it which was exposed to the weather was badly blistered. First of all the door was thoroughly scrubbed with a solution of sugar soap and hot water. Sugar soap can be purchased at a drug shop. About half a pound in half a gallon of water is sufficient.

When the paint was thoroughly scrubbed the door was washed off in clean water. This removed every trace of the strong alkali which was used in the scrubbing process. After the washing down had been completed the door was wiped with clean rags.

The next process was in scraping the surface. This was done with an old knife, care being taken that no cut was made into the wood itself.

The surface was a bit uneven and it was rubbed down with a piece of pumice stone and the door was given a coat of filling. This coat is not essential, though it is useful where the door is exposed to bad weather, as it makes a good foundation for the coats that follow. Filling is made up of red lead, white lead and boiled oil. It can be purchased ready for use.

For white enameling nothing is better than white lead flatting for an undercoat. This may be bought already prepared.

It will dry very quickly, and so must be applied fairly rapidly. Under coating does not spread well and it shows the brush marks, but this is all to the good, as it gives one excellent practice for the actual enameling. If you can get a good surface with the undercoating there is no fear of failing with the enamel.

The number of coats required will depend on circumstances. Generally speaking, three coats will be sufficient, though if you have to paint on a dark surface, four may be necessary to cover it. tI is a good rule to continue giving coats until none of the original color shows through.

Nothing remains now but to apply the finishing coat of enamel; but here let it be emphasized that you will never be able to make a fine job of it unless you use the best enamel.

Experts always say use fresh brushes for enameling; but it is our opinion that nothing is better than the ordinary brushes that have been used before for paint work.

Apply the enamel quickly and freely. Keep the brush well down, else the enamel will tend to run down to the stock, and so slop about.—Julia W. Wolfe.

"Is it true you have been arrested so often?"

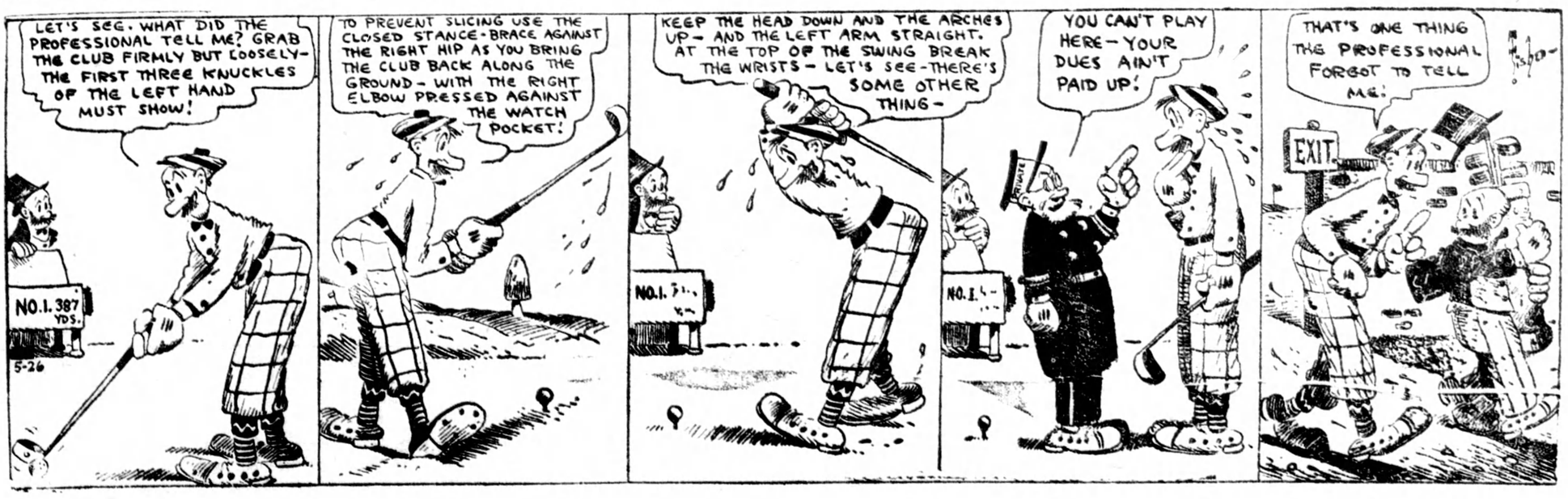
"Yes, mum. I couldn't have been arrested any oftener if I owned an automobile."

Start Spring Chicks Right

(From the Southern Agriculturist)

By far the greatest mortality and loss encountered in chick raising occurs during the first four weeks of brooding. One of the most important factors in keeping the chicks in good health and vigorous condition, and keeping them growing properly, is the feed which they are consuming.

A good all-mash-ration is as follows: 80 lbs. ground yellow corn, 20 lbs. standard wheat middlings, 5 lbs. ground raw bone, 5 lbs. ground limestone (any commercial grit high in calcium carbonate), 1 lb. common salt. Skim milk used freely—no water first two or three weeks. Cod liver oil, 2 pints to 100 pounds mash, when chicks do not get direct sunlight.

MUTT AND JEFF— —By BUD FISHER.

Golf Is a Memory Course.