SHORT STORY

The Jester's Last Chance

By JOHN T. KIERAN

One more chance to play his old role! One more chance to put on the only thing left of the days when he was hailed as the World's Greatest Clown, as Arsel, the Children's delight.

In a flash Arsel thought of what was in his trunk, for from his shabby tenement room he could hear the little fellow downstairs bewailing his fate. The circus parade! And it was passing a block down, just far enough away that he could not see it, but near enough that he could hear the thrilling rumble of wagon wheels and the delighted shouts of the other children. But to share in the feast of joy was denied the little fellow. A few days before an errant truck had crushed his leg, and there he lay, imprisoned in a heavy cast.

* * *

To Arsel the rumble of wheels brought back memories. Again the smell of sawdust was in his nostrils. The stirring music of the circus rang in his ears. He saw the big tent, the prancing horses, the thousands of people laughing at his antics, shouting his name—Arsel, the world's greatest fun maker, beloved by millions—now Arsel the forgotten, the unknown, in poverty and ill health. He sat up now in his bed uncertainly, wobbily.

But only for a moment did he hear the shouts and applause of other days, for they were crowded out by the crying of the boy downstairs. He was inconsolable. The circus was passing him by.

Arsel was trying to carry his thought into action. One more chance to be his old self! One more chance to wear the one thing that remained of his days of glory—his clown suit. And for what a cause!

* * *

The shabby room became a dressing tent. Out there was the audience he was going to amuse, to make happy—even more this time—to cheer a little boy into a frame of mind that would beckon recovery and lessen the misery of imprisoned limbs.

But could he manage to go through with it? Could he find the strength? The community nurse, having found him when she came to visit the injured boy, had told him that he must not leave his bed.

But another outburst of childish grief decided him. Hesitatingly, totteringly he left the bed and started for the battered trunk in which lay the old clown suit.

When the circus had come into the town a half dozen of the oldtimers were still with it. They had been troopers long ago with Arsel before he faded into oblivion.

They had last heard of him in this town. He probably was still here. They determined to find out, and to give him a rousing salutation, a regular circusman's greeting.

Arsel had the old suit on now.

He wondered again what made him feel so strange. But then as he looked at himself in the dingy mirror he forgot everything. He was Arsel, the Children's Delight.

Suddenly he almost collapsed. The flare of strength that had buoyed him up puffed out.

Suddenly a sound re-aroused his flagged mind. Incredulously he listened. Was it just a part of this strangeness that had come over him? Or was it really a circus band? Just outside! They were playing his march. The Circusmen's March!

He relaxed, happily. The boy was getting his circus after all. Shouts of joy were coming from him. For the little fellow was looking out the window, almost crying again he was so excited and thrilled.

"I wanna dance," he exclaimed, looking down at his cast. He saw one of the bandsmen come into the house. In a minute or two he came out again and the band stopped playing. He said something to the others and then they started playing again.

The boy looked puzzled. He listened attentively for a moment. Then:

"That first piece was so pretty it made you wanna dance or somethin'. But this one is different. Gee! It sounds like somebuddy was dead."

CANADIAN STYLE

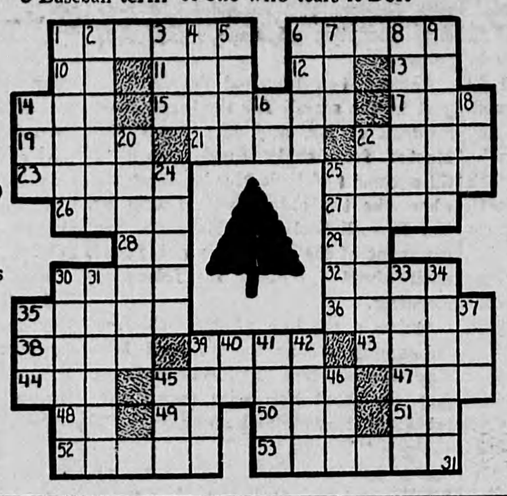
Sequin sunburst from the left shoulder to the darted waistline is gay trim on this Peter Pan date dress. The wide short sleeves display the same fullness as the flared dress.

U. S. Army Group

HORIZONTAL
1,6 Depicted is insigne of the U. S. Army — — Division
10 Within
11 Members of these army units — brave men
12 Upon
13 Transpose (ab.)
14 Perform on stage
15 Motive
17 Tear
19 Ceylonese constable
21 Walked on
22 Cried
23 Slaves
25 Rings out
26 Examination
27 Repeat (Scot.)
28 Toward
29 Oleum (ab.)
30 Assist
32 Malayan coins
35 Uncovers
36 Animal
38 Limbs
39 Salamander
43 Eli
44 Friend (Fr.)
45 Bullfighter
47 Roads (ab.)
48 Half-em
49 Exists
50 Meadow
51 Daybreak (comb. form)
52 Solid
53 Disfigure

VERTICAL
1 Most exacting
2 Chant
3 Auricle
4 Waste allowance
5 12 months
6 Nutritive material
7 Hostelry
8 River
9 Baseball term
14 Mimic
16 Therefore
18 Pints (ab.)
20 Cuddles
22 Rich
24 Pauses
25 Canoes
30 Injured
31 Type of fur
33 One who tears
34 Infrequently
35 Sheep's bleat
37 Footlike part
39 Face part
40 Symbol for erbium
41 Join closely
42 Woody plant
45 It is (contr.)
46 Dolt

Answer to Previous Puzzle



CHRONICLES OF GINGER FARM

By Gwendoline P. Clarke

Now let's think about Christmas, shall we? Christmas, you say? Well, why not? Fall fairs are over, Thanksgiving is past, we have had our Indian summer, we are back on standard time, so why shouldn't we think of, and plan for, the last big event of the year? To tell you the truth I have had it in mind for several weeks and have already purchased a box of Christmas cards and a couple of Christmas gifts. I have a feeling that ordinary, everyday presents are going to be hard to come by at reasonable prices later on. Daughter is also Christmas-minded and her knitting needles are busy all the time. She was here for Thanksgiving as were also other friends from a distance. These from a distance came unexpectedly so that on Sunday our dining-table looked more as if it were set for a threshing gang.

* * *

On Monday some of us took a trip up the road to take a look at our new highway that is still under construction—and that is putting it mildly. We never know when we start out from this end what we shall find at the other—or whether we shall get through at all. This time we found a steam shovel at work chewing its way clear across the road preparatory to laying a culvert. We went as far as we could go, then turned tail, and approached the job by way of a detour to find out what was going on. We found plenty of activity. The machinery was working at a spot where they had struck quicksand. Tile had been laid along one side of the road and all kinds of fill—dirt and gravel—had been dumped on the road. But still the road-bed was like a sponge to walk on. It really gave one the queerest feeling. I was almost afraid to lift one foot after the other—that is until I remembered that heavy machinery was continually passing over the spot, and since each piece of equipment must weigh a good many tons I thought there was just a chance the road-bed would not give under my weight! Anyway daughter and I took a chance as we wanted to watch the big bulldozer at work—the men were off at another place watching some other machine. The bulldozer was going up and down a huge bank, pushing dirt ahead of it on to the road for more fill. It looked as if it must surely take a nose-dive but of course we knew it wouldn't — the caterpillar treads took care of that.

* * *

Haven't we been having the most wonderful weather and isn't the country lovely these days? I think we should all take a little time off some time and take advantage of every chance we get to see a little of our own native scenery. Maybe it isn't necesary to go very far afield — sometimes no further than our own backdoor. The main thing is to have "seeing" eyes.

* * *

And speaking of scenery—if you get the connection—what do my readers think of the Battle of the Skirts? Of course we will leave the men out of this little discussion—what I want to know is what the ladies think of it. Personally, I am all in favor of the longer hem-line—if it doesn't go to extremes. Dresses the way they were may be all right for five-footers—all they have to do is shorten them to suit themselves, but take women like myself—five feet eight—we never find anything long enough. Now it will at least give us a little leeway whether we finally decide to have them long or short. And after all, ladies, you will admit that the longer hem-line will cover up a few runs and such like in these days of dearer stockings. But, of course, if fashion says—skirts to the ankle—well, that's another story. That is where we can show our independence and do as we like.

The diamond is the hardest most enduring substance in nature.

Good Measure

"I always believe in weighing my words before speaking," said Mrs. Hopkins.

"And you don't give short weight either," replied her husband.

Rules for Care Of House Plants

Watering is one of the most important secrets of success in raising plants. There is no hard and fast rule for watering plants, because of varying temperature and humidity. Plants of the same variety even vary in their demands because of differences in size or vigor, says Christian Science Moreton.

The amount of water lost through the sides and bottoms of pots varies because of different degrees of porosity of pots. Most plants require a little water every day and more on hot, dry days. It also helps to sprinkle the foliagé of many house plants; African violets, cinerarias, and begonias, however, should never have water sprinkled on their leaves. Use tepid instead of cold water in watering house plants and be sure there is humidity.

Some plants may be kept at their best by placing a saucer filled with pebbles and water underneath the pots.

Scholarships Offered To Young Students

Application forms for the Music and Art Scholarships donated by the Junior Leagues of Hamilton and Toronto have been sent out by the Department of Education to the principals of all Secondary Schools in Ontario. There are four Music Scholarships and four Art Scholarships of $200 each. Every Secondary School is allowed to submit two pupils for the Art and two for the Music Scholarship. The music is open only to grades nine and ten, and is for instrumentalists only. The Art is, this year, open to all grades in Secondary Schools. Application forms and further information may be obtained from the school principals.

Use Two

To dry bedspreads and blankets quickly, use two clothes lines. Pin top of spread to one line and bottom to other line so that spread is stretched horizonatally.

Dawn Patrol

I do not love the crowing rooster
As much as in my youth I yooster.
In fact, it makes me somewhat surly
To have him wake me up that urly.

True Co-operation

Employee: "Could I have temorrow off to help my wife with the house-cleaning?"

Boss: No. We're much too busy."

Employee: "Thank you sir, I knew I could count on you."

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