

For the Boys and Girls

MY FIRST JACK KNIFE

By A. H. SWETZER

I have owned many pocket-knives since, big and little, and embracing nearly all varieties of whittling implements known to boys or men, from a delicate, single-bladed penknife to the stout, six-bladed jack-knife, fitted with gimlet, corkscrew and a number of other things to the kind.

In fact, I could begin to enumerate the varieties of pocket-knives which have fallen to my ownership at one time or another, and nearly every one of which I somehow managed to lose before I had hardly had time to get thoroughly accustomed to the "feel" of it, so to speak.

There is, however, a peculiar fascination in the first pocket-knife that anybody owns which he never forgets. Even when he has become an old man, looking back upon his years of early boyhood, he will somehow manage to remember the first time he cut his finger, and which occurrence probably happened within an hour or two after finding himself "the proud" possessor of his first pocket-knife.

But I was to tell you my first jack-knife, and which I remember as well as though it were a possession of yesterday, instead of nearly forty years ago.

To begin with, the knife was a birthday present from a favorite uncle, and when I found it lying beside my breakfast plate on the morning of my seventh birthday, and was informed by my mother that it was all my own to keep and carry in my pocket, I wouldn't have changed places with the King.

From that day forth I began to make life a burden to my mother and brother, cutting and hacking everything within my reach, and was informed by my mother that it was all my own to keep and carry in my pocket, I wouldn't have changed places with the King.

First of all, I cut my thumb—badly. It is true, I couldn't cut it to bleed freely, and I couldn't have made more of a hullabaloo if I had cut my own head off. In fact, by the better use, I think I should have made even less racket, on the whole. However, the thumb was bound up, and in a short time that agony was over.

The next day I ruined Bridget's best rolling-pin by hacking seven holes upon it, smooth, round, and round. I might remember my seventh birthday every time I saw it. I explained afterward and bewailed the shakings administered by the rolling-pin, who complained to my mother that she "had no pay, at all with the said rolling-pin."

My last notable exploit with this new implement consisted in an attempt to shave myself as I had seen my father do, but I only succeeded in cutting a deep gash in my fat cheek.

And I may as well add that the sympathy I received on this occasion was a stern reminder from my mother that any similar foolish attempt would be punished by taking the knife away from me until I should be old enough to use it properly.

One day, after I had owned the knife about two weeks, I was sitting in the back alleyway, trying to whittle a mouth and eyes into the head of a "Bootham," to make a doll for Rosy, my baby-sister, when I happened to look up and saw Lige, the garbage boy, coming up the alley with his greasy bucket.

"What Lige's other name was I never knew, nor for that matter whether he had any last name. All the boys called him "Lige," and nothing else. He was a big, disagreeable-looking fellow, fully twice as old as I, and he bore a bad reputation as a coward and a bully. Besides, the boy that lived in the next alley had told me, in his period confidence, one day, that Lige stole things.

But as I was saying, I saw Lige with his bucket, coming up the alley. He came up to our gate, and dropping the handles, commenced emptying the gate bucket.

"What yer got there, young feller?" said he, as soon as he saw me using the knife. "Give it here a minute, lemme see it."

I handed him the knife, though somewhat reluctantly, whereupon he began to open the different blades, snapping them back and forth to try the springs. Next he tried the several blades on the gate post.

After handling the knife a few minutes, he suddenly stooped down and began to his shoe, after which he picked up his bucket and began to move off down the alley.

"Here, you, give me back my knife," said I.

"I'm in it yer already," he responded. "Then it occurred to me that he meant to steal the knife, and I became frightened. Running to the gate, I opened it and called aloud:

"Mother, Bridget, come quick. The garbage boy's got my knife and he's running off with it!"

Upon hearing my screams for help, Lige hastened his steps, and had got half-way down the alley before my mother and Bridget reached the gate in response to my cries.

"Mother, run into the alley and cried out: "Here, my boy—come back, give me my knife! He's stole it! He's stole it!" I yelled, with better zeal than grammar.

Meanwhile Lige kept moving down the alley, with the evident intention of seeing round the corner of the street before a policeman should be attracted to the scene.

Relief was coming, however, and from an wholly unexpected source. Just as Lige was turning the corner, Tom Lincoln, our family marketman, drove rapidly into our alley on his truck, for the purpose of delivering our morning order.

The instant my mother saw him

Author of the Words Should Appear on Programs.

At a recent concert in Winnipeg, a gentleman said to his guest from the East, "I notice that on this program the names of the composers of the songs lyrics are omitted. I wonder who is responsible for such an oversight? It may be said at once that such omissions are not confined to Winnipeg. Everywhere you go you will find programs giving the names of the composers of the music, but the artists responsible for the tests are nameless. Sometimes the program even gives in full the two or three stanzas of each of the texts without mentioning the writers' names."

It is to be hoped that the program committee of the artists is not in opposition to the printer? Is it thoughtlessness? Or is it because the one responsible for the program considered the words of no importance?

As a matter of fact, the real cause is the lowering of custom. Program builders, evidently concerned by the influence of the music, and that the writer of the words is of no account. The fact that the words are too frequently unheard at the average concert may be responsible for the attitude of indifference as regards this omission, of long standing on concert programs. This should not be, for the fact must not be overlooked that the music is set to the words, and not the words fitted to the music.

One of the foremost vocalists on this continent said the other day: "Before I study a new song to add to my repertoire, I read over the words-carefully, and if they are not worth while I wouldn't put any time on the song, no matter how exceptionally fine the music was." Another singer, a famous one, said recently: "When I get a new song I first familiarize myself with the text; if the words prove silly or sentimental, I throw the song aside. For no man ever wrote a good song is not worth singing unless the words are worth hearing."

Words and music should constitute a harmonious union. For that matter I believe that the accompaniment to a song is just as much a part of it as the words. The most successful composers lay great stress on the lyrics. There is absolutely no excuse for using the words of a song on a program without giving proper credit to the writer of those words, and it would be good taste when listing songs to say the words are by so-and-so, and the music by so-and-so. The music publisher would have a song entered in the title page covering the name of the writer in prominent type along with that of the composer of the music."

Cathedral Saved by a Diver.

The fascinating story of the saving of Winchester Cathedral is told by Sir Francis Fox, in "Sixty Years of Engineering."

The problem, as the great engineer neatly put it, was to remove from beneath the foundations the eight-foot layer of wet peat by sections, and insert in its place cement or concrete blocks solidly on the gravel, flint, and chalk below.

This work was carried out, in the course of five and a half years, by one of the marine divers named W. A. Walker, working in complete darkness under the walls, and embedded in its place concrete and cement which he himself had to bring down from the surface.

In any record of the heroic in craftsmanship, this feat would assuredly claim one of the highest places.

Just Try Thinking.

Never mind a change of scene. Try a change of thinking. Try things seen from behind. What is the use of blinking? Life's not always green and blue. Squid whose stars are shining. Try to think your joys out loud. Silence all repining.

By desiring, by thinking light. Thinking glad and sweetly. You'll escape the stress of night. "Nasty" gone completely. Get the habit of looking for "Sublimus pinetting." Tapping gaily at your door. Surreal cure for fretting.

—John Kendrick Bangs.



Ever Settles Their Debts. "This settles all things." "Yes, some people even ask it to settle their debts."



They use their heads in English football. This West Ham player scores a goal by "kicking" with his head in a recent game with Sunderland at Upton Park, London.

THE WICKED WASP OF TWICKENHAM

By J. L. Harbour

"Dimple John!"

"My nephew, Davy Marshall, was a petulant mood. I could tell it from the tone of his voice.

He was not particularly fond of his studies, and I inferred that his teacher had given him what he called a "pose" in the way of a question.

"Well, Davy, what is it?" I inquired. "Is it anything about partial payments or syntax?"

"No, sir—what it was, that would be something easily explained to this, looked in my natural history and every boy in our school should know it."

"The 'Wicked Wasp of Twickenham.' That's all she said about it. And here I've looked all through the 'W's' in the dictionary and the encyclopedia, and every place else, and I can't find a thing about any such wasp. Won't you please tell me about it, if you know."

I made it a rule never to tell school boys and girls anything they could find out themselves. Davy would say that I always put him on the scent and let him find the things down. That was not a very elegant way to express it, even though it did very honestly explain my method.

It was very evident to me that Davy was far at sea in his understanding of who and what the "Wicked Wasp of Twickenham" was. The idea of looking in his natural history for information of that sort, but I wholly disapproved of indicating children, therefore I said, quietly:

"Davy, the 'Wicked Wasp of Twickenham' was a man."

Davy's dictionary was closed with a bang and he sat eyeing me in open-mouthed wonder. At last he spoke.

"What a man! He was fair, at least, and I can't see why you should say so? 'What made her ask us to find out about a wasp, I'd like to know?'"

"Because," I replied, "this man was called a wasp, and he was called a very sharp and painful, very exasperating insect, to those who felt it. His stinger was his job."

"Now," I continued, "I will tell you all about him, and you must afterward write what I tell you and take it to your teacher on Monday."

"This wasp was one of the greatest men of his day. His name was Alexander Pope."

"He was born in 1688 in the city of London. There are no such boys in this age of the world as Alexander Pope."

"When he was but twelve years of age he wrote an 'Ode to Solitude,' that few men could have written."

"He was very much hampered and deformed. When full grown he was only four and one-half feet in height."

"He sat in a high chair at the table, and he was a very weak and sticky little fellow."

"He was always a bundle of bandages, and could not even dress or undress himself. In fact, he was such an old-fashioned, crooked and bent little fellow that some long-headed old man named him the 'Indragrogan of Point-a-name that I could find in the dictionary.' He was extremely sensitive about his deformity, and his temper was quickly injured. He was not a very charming youth. I fear, in spite of his great talents."

"He had, as most boys have, a good and kind mother, and he appreciated all her love for him. For that, draw a long mark in young Alexander's favor."

"His father was a bookseller. He read and studied the best writers. He used to say that the one sure way to excel in anything was to be correct. He determined to be a great correct writer, and such he became. He was the greatest of his day and generation, and as such, his name should be familiar to all bright boys and girls."

"He was as fierce in his hatred as he was strong in his likes. Those who offended him felt the power of his pen."

"When Pope was thirty-seven years old he wrote a book that was ridiculed by some of his contemporaries. The sensitive Pope had all his angry passions aroused by this ridicule, and forthwith wrote a book, called the 'Dunciad,' one of the most remarkable books ever written by any writer."

"In it he flays and scourges his enemies. In many instances giving their real names. The 'Dunciad' is said to be the most powerful ever composed. The characters are represented as persons of the most extreme ignorance and stupidity, contending for the honor of sitting on the throne of Dullness."

Stories About

Peculiar Privileges.

Prince George will be able to claim some peculiar privileges after he has been admitted to the freedom of the Mercers' Company.

For instance, he will be entitled to a loan of £500 for five years without interest from one of the bequests to the Livery, and "in old age or misfortune he can obtain relief from Sir Richard Whittington's or other benefactions. The Mercers is the senior of the London companies, and its members are judged from the fact that the father of Thomas a Becket is said to have been a member of the fraternity.

Why They Laughed.

One story Lord Birkenhead, when told in his book—If he ever writes one—concerns the K.C. who at three o'clock his first case—how he had succeeded in getting an acquittal for a charge of a good family who was undoubtedly afeared.

After dinner a well-known London financier arrived. The host presented the K.C. to him. "Oh, I know your friend," the financier said. "The matter of fact gave him his story. Life. I was his first client. I wondered why the guests laughed so much."

Never Become Contented if You Aim to Succeed.

Enthusiasm, says Douglas Fairbanks, is the great desire that nothing can defeat.

"Whatever success I have obtained has been due to my efforts to my enthusiasm," he declares. Fairbanks' constant contention must be the chief enemy of progress.

Let Your Child Choose His Musical Instrument.

At a regular meeting of a musical society on West a few days ago, one of the members was asked to talk upon the cultural value of the piano in the home. There was no space here to report his speech, but one of the chief points was as follows: "I think that every child should be taught to play some instrument, and I think that the piano is the best, and should be chosen by the child."

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Known People

The World's Lightest Writer.

Harold MacGrath, the veteran trader in furs, caravans, and other things, calls himself the lightest writer in the world. The story is that he has written more than a score of best-selling stories in which the heroines are adorable fairy princesses without a speck of fat on their bodies. He is a thin, wiry man, and his heroes are really villainous. He should be in the delicious world of romance. A high school of his up and down this tale at less than a hundred pounds. He is a member of the Boston Club. Although he is forever traveling the far end of the world in search of adventures, his tastes are decidedly for a drive to a high school of his old-fashioned country club. He is a fish-thrower at Cape Cod. His dogs, the movies and his other hobbies, MacGrath is fifty years old, but is still young. He wants to light the candles in his life and the ritual is one of the celebrations of his year.

Novel Time Tests.

When it comes to stepping apon quickly, race, sex, color, and religion do not count. But scientific tests show that experience and natural ability affect the amount of time spent for a driver to get his feet on the accelerator of the car. An apparatus has been invented that gives a accurate measurement of the time between the start of the foot on the accelerator and the start of the speed of driving, and a thousandth of a second is recorded for the response of the driver. Experiments have been tried with a number of men and women students at George Washington University. The number of taxi drivers who have been tested is very small. In the reaction of the men, the apparatus showed an average of half a second. A group of Negro students of the University, the tests showed that there is no difference in the reaction of the taxi drivers. One of the men had been driving for many years, but an accident, showed a reaction of half a second.

Red Rays Rain.

The subject of many experiments in 1938, was the effect of red rays on the human body. The rays were produced by a special apparatus, and the results were surprising. The rays were found to have a beneficial effect on the human body, and were found to be a valuable addition to the human diet.

Because She Came.

She sang, why others sang. Her sweet, cheery uppers sang. Her heart that heavy were with song. Her sudden glad and young.

The Essential.

It is indispensable for such a list in that it should be consistent with the Four Rules of Arithmetic, with the Ten Commandments, and with the Ten Back—Mr. Sidney Webb.

Words! Words!

Some very beautiful choruses were heard recently at the little speech Str. Henry Wood made to Sheffield collectors. "Words! Words are your power. When you go and hear a bad opera and you listen with rapidity, you hear every word. You forget that he has no control. Think when you are singing at the next festival what a word will be to the public. They hear you sing."

The Scribe.

Winter is a monkish scribe in a white cell. He draws black letters on a page. He draws them out exceeding fine. Black borders on squares of sky. And curious, quaint shapes of things. Where white shows life.

A Logical Inference.

Bobby: "Pop does infestive, mean a letter?"
Fond Parent: "Yes, Bobby."
Bobby: "And does 'sub' mean infestive?"
Fond Parent: "High Bobby."
Bobby: "Then 'infestive' must mean a prescript, mustn't it?"
Fond Parent: "High Bobby."
Bobby: "I had a dog's life. Will 'Everybody know' your whine?"

Proved By His Whine.

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Province of the Mind.

The province of the mind is a vast and unexplored territory. It is a land of infinite possibilities, where the boundaries are constantly shifting. It is a land where the mind is free to roam and explore, and where the only limits are those set by the imagination.

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