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All accounts collected monthly.

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All Other Records

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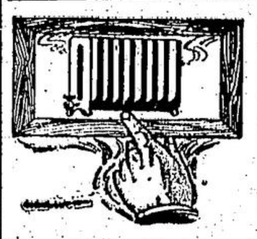

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Poetry.

BENNY AT THE BIRD'S BANQUET

Benny Bruce was always kind to every living thing;
He liked to feed the pretty birds that gathered round to sing.
Now, one fine day, the little birds and larger birds as well,
Resolved to spread a banquet on the moss in Fairy Dell.

Then the Kingfisher fished with his brand new rod and reel,
Till he caught a string of speckled trout sufficient for a meal;
And the cuckoo cooked them well till they were brown within the pan,
While Mistress Magpie made a pie as only Magpies can.

The Wren ran for the rennet, and she made a custard fine;
Said she: "A dish of junket is good dessert for folks that dine."
Quoth the Guinea Hen: "A guinea will be just the proper fee
For all excepting Benny Bruce; he'll be invited free."

You should have seen that jolly crowd around their mossy table!
Benny Bruce ate quite as much as ever he was able,
Yet the Swallow swallowed even more than Benny so they say;
And Mrs. Duck just ducked her head when good things came her way.

Said Benny (to himself) as he was finishing his plateful,
"I've learned one thing: that even birds can prove that they are grateful."

—S. Virginia Levis.

Select Family Reading

HIS FIRST CONTRACT

THE church needs paint, some of the doors stick and there is a lock broken on that one. The eyebrow windows should have new cords and one of the swinging pivots is loose. Some patching would help the floor, there ought to be glass in place of the broken panel in the entrance door; and I wish the paths might be trimmed.

The minister stopped a moment for breath as he surveyed a comparatively pretty brown-shingled church which seemed to shrink from the gentle menace of a tottering fence overgrown with honeysuckle.

"That should come down, too," Preston Pulls, declared, with a gesture toward the indolent posts and the vine encumbered pipe railing. "The strap hinges of the cellarway are broken besides. The back stoop needs a couple of new steps, the chancel windows have not been fitted with those opening rods yet, nor has that patch of fresh plaster been kalsomined since the leak was found and stopped."

"I'd like to carry you into the vestry meeting as a note-book, Preston," the minister laughed, adding then a little bit hopelessly: "Well, I'll do what we can do toward legislating these things into shape when we meet to-night. Perhaps our directors can get the people interested in giving a little more money.

With the hasty but pleasant nod of a busy man Mr. Galeworthy left the young fellow to continue a solitary inspection of the church at his leisure. To a stranger the enumeration of repairs might have meant a parsimonious congregation; but Preston knew the little band of people had been under heavy assessments for a long time. An addition to the small building had been made a year or two before, a new organ had been bought; and then the folk had insisted on squaring up the minister's salary and putting a few comforts into the rectory before they stopped.

"Now I guess, they have as little money to spare, as myself," Preston mused. "I couldn't afford to buy paper and pencil to list the repairs, let alone pay for them."

Buying a small home for himself and mother through Building and Loan Association payments explained the financial stringency in Preston's affairs. And he was out of work now. Mr. Gooding, his late employer, had closed his shop and gone west for his health.

A carpenter jobber from the neighboring town was getting the local work and giving his own man the benefit. Preston had picked up a few bits of trade here and there; but they were done with now and he was altogether idle.

The young journeyman had decided to pack his kit and go down the railroad lines to some of the bigger places in search of employment; but the prospects were too uncertain to offer much incentive for hurry. "I'd have time to drive a nail or two in the church and tighten up a couple of screws as my contribution before I go," he decided, thoughtfully.

That evening at the Grange meeting he drifted conversationally on the subject with Timothy Wales, a young laborer with whom he had worked at times. Wales was out of a job for the time being and he evinced interest in Preston's plan of contributing labor instead of money toward the repairs.

"I'm not a very good church member," he admitted, with a smile; "but if you will nail the building down so it can't chase me off the grounds I'll come up and trim paths to keep you company."

Such ready enthusiasm was the only thing needed to decide Preston. Returning home late he saw a light in Mr. Galeworthy's study and went in to get formal permission for his purpose. The minister was heartily appreciative, disappointedly observing that the vestry at its meeting had decided to postpone repairs for yet a little longer. The expense would total up a good sum; and the man thought the people who cared had no money to spare.

"Very nice of them to speak of me in that way," Preston loftily appreciated; but they hit the nail on the head. I'd have to give my note for a pound of tenpenny nails."

Mr. Galeworthy thought he could find a little money for such things as Preston would need; but the young mechanic declared an intention to confine himself chiefly to the work of easing up doors, tightening up screws, repairing locks adjusting window pivots, and such patching as the material in the church cellar would allow. Only one donation he allowed himself, a new pair of strap hinges for the cellar doors. He sympathized with the sexton's difficulty in climbing up and down.

The minister smiled. "Stand by the sexton, that's right. You can get a new minister but I don't know where you would find another such good sexton or loyal lads to take the place of my boys." He laid a friendly hand on Preston's shoulder. "I wouldn't care if the church were falling to pieces so long as I had such young people by me."

Preston glanced at his watch to see that it was getting on toward midnight. "If you have about three hours to spare right now," he whimsically suggested, "I'll set forth a few reasons why we stick by you."

On second thought, however, he decided to go home and get ready for the next day's work. Getting ready consisted in cogitating for an hour or more before he slept.

His first business in the morning was to stop in the general store to buy strap hinges. The proprietor was a vestryman. Preston mentioned his purpose of doing a little work on the church and left a list of things needed, such as eye-brow window ropes, front door glass, stay pulleys, step materials, a new lock, some additional nails and nails and a front door flagstone to replace the one which had been broken when the organ was installed.

The suggestion was offered to Mr. Lawton that when church people came into the store he might mention the fact of workmen being ready to use without cost any of these things that should be donated.

"If Mr. Benson comes in," Preston illustrated, "just say, 'This is very nice fresh cheese. Pound? All right. I'll give you a real honest pound for once if you will give a bundle of shingles toward the church repairs. Preston Pulls will put them on for nothing.' And if Mr. Manley gives you a five dollar bill in payment for a packet of tacks ask if he minds you using the change to buy glass or a new flagstone."

"See here," Mr. Lawton laughingly agreed, "I can't supply all the things on this list, but I'd give the paint if you could use it. Kalsomine too, and I guess I could throw in the putty."

"Um!" Preston pondered. "Um! Just send those things up, will you? Timothy Wales and I will sit on the cans while we eat our lunch and send 'em back if no painter is donated in time."

"I'll cart them up for you," an interested voice broke in. "I can't donate anything so I'll go hauling."

"Good!" Preston thanked the mail carrier for his proffer of off-duty time, talked with him a moment and then hastened across the street to a little real estate office. The broker was a vestryman and agreed to have his stenographer strike off some mimeograph notice sheets, setting forth the fact that Preston Pulls would apply to the church any listed repair material which might be donated. Such supplies, the dodgers were to say, moreover would be hauled free from the donating station to the application point.

The carrier promised to spread the papers broadcast. Then Pulls, on his way to the church, stopped in Gerry Hockenber's shop. Gerry was at home and Pulls told him about storekeeper Lawton's paint gift.

"Shame to waste it," he declared, adding craftily, "I wish we could get somebody to put it on before Mr. Lawton backs out. The tub of butter he just opened looked rather yellow and I'm afraid it might discourage his generosity."

Gerry was an obliging fellow himself and needed only a little shove to start him off. He wasted no time about agreeing to send a man up for half a day at least. Preston gave a grunt of satisfaction. If he could get the building part painted the remainder would be done somehow.

"Time P. Pulls got to work now," Preston reminded himself, and he hurried off to the contract he had undertaken. He found Timothy Wales laboring industriously and wondering what had become of the foreman. "Thought maybe I got the wrong church," the young fellow chuckled as he grubbed away at the edges of the main path.

With Timothy on the ground and Preston busy at the front door lock a sense of industry was created which attracted the attention of the lame Mr. Houston in passing. Timothy gave him an idea of what was going on; he came up there to the front door to express his approval and to ask if there was anything he could donate.

"Putty, nails, screws, ropes, glass, flagstone, sandpaper, lumber, stain, kalsomine paint, strap-hinges, oh, no; I have some of these," Preston corrected himself; "but there's a new lock, shingles, flooring, steps—"

"Here, hold on," Mr. Houston begged, while Preston fired the list at him without taking breath. "Have a little putty to fill up some holes. I meant to give it anyhow sooner or later."

Preston wiped his oily hands up and down on his overalls and with wide eyes took the bill that Mr. Houston handed him.

"Say, Timothy," Preston called as the old gentleman went on down the street; "come here a minute. Can you tell a ten dollar bill when you see it."

Timothy solemnly declared that he believed the note was a ten and pointed out the large figures which he said he was sure meant dollars. Mr. Galeworthy came along in time to add his opinion. He accepted charge of the money after an instant thought, listening then with eyes narrowed in meditation while Preston told of the paint contribution and the circulars. Then he started away suddenly, as if with an idea in his mind.

Gerry Hockenber came up that afternoon and helped his man with the painting. Some bit of contract work had been delayed and he promised that he would have time to finish the church job before the coming Sunday. He even agreed to stain the floor, a small job, if the stain were forthcoming as somebody's donation.

"Um!" Preston agreed instantly. "The nail is crooked; I'll have to go down to the store to get another one."

And once there he told the storekeeper of the offer to stain the floor. It was a shame, he thought, to run any chance of losing the work for the want of the colors and the storekeeper gamely bade him not to worry about that. Preston carried a can of stain back with him, forgetting all about the new nail he needed.

TWENTY YEARS AGO

Notes from the Free Press of Thursday, January 11th, 1894

John Matthews has purchased the Horton Feed Store on Mill Street.

Among the pretty pictures of the little ones published in the holiday number of the Toronto Mail were Master Alex. Winer Cooke, son of Rev. G. B. Cooke, and Master Frankie Havill, son of Councillor Havill. They graced the pages of the Mail.

All the members of the family of Hugh McLaughlin were home together after an absence of several years to attend their mother's funeral. The six sons are well-built men, and their avoirdupois is considerable. On Monday the weight of the eleven members of the family was found to be 2,032½ pounds.

To the members of Acton Temperance Union is due much credit for the large prohibition majority in the recent plebiscite vote. The new term officers are: Past President—William Williams; President — Harry Jeans; Vice-President — Hattie Thurston; Treasurer—Chas. Jenner; Secretary—Annie Smith; Ass't. Secretary—A. E. Gurney; Chaplain—I. Francis; Usher—L. Williams; Sentinel—Chas. H. Moore; Organist —Annie Stephenson; Sick Visiting Committee—Maggie Cobban, Bella Stephenson, Madie McNabb, R. J. Gurney, R. J. Edmiston, Duncan Grant; Finance—W. Williams, J. L. Charles; Entertainment—Alex. Sasord, W. Williams, Maggie Cobban, Bella Stephenson.

Methodist Sunday School officers: Superintendent—H. F. Moore; Ass't Superintendent—I. Francis; Secretary Treasurer—R. J. Gurney; Assistant-Secretary—Miss Ida McNabb; Librarians—C. Williams, Chas. Jenner, N. F. Moore; Organist — Miss Annie McNabb; Ushers — Richard Somerville, Robt. Edmiston; Teachers—Rev. J. Edge, Mrs. James Moore, Mrs. John Stephenson, Mrs. Jas. McLean, Mrs. H. F. Moore, Misses Lottie E. Speight, Allie Laing, Annie Williams, Maggie Matthews, Meda Nelson, Nettie Clark, Messrs. James Moore, J. S. Coleman; Reserve Teachers—Thos. T. Moore, Mrs. I. Francis, Miss Hannah Bingham.

Last evening the fire bell rang and it was learned that Fairview Place, Mrs. C. S. Smith's home, was on fire. After an hour's hard fighting by citizens the fire was subdued. It originated in a defective chimney above the bath room and communicated to the roof.

Rev. Mr. Adams, formerly Commissioner of the Salvation Army, has charge of the Congregational Church at Churchill, and is much thought of.

Mr. Abram Stauffer and family have returned from Buffalo to Acton, and will make their home here again.

Mr. Robt. Nickle, of Brandon, is in town and looks well. He will spend the winter in Ontario.

Oats were 32 cents in Guelph yesterday, and pork as high as $6 per 100 pounds.

Acton Branch Bible Society annual meeting was convened in the Baptist Church last night, but was summarily dismissed at the ringing of the fire alarm. It will be held later.

BORN

MAYNARD—In Acton, on January 6th, to Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Maynard, a son.

HALKES—In Acton, on January 6th, to Mr. and Mrs. E. E. Holmes, G. T. R., a son.

DUNN—In Acton, on January 5th, to Mr. and Mrs. R. C. Dunn, a son.

MARRIED

McCLUMPHA-HOFFMAN—At the home of the bride's father, Kequeda, on December 24th, by Rev. J. Appel, Dorval, Hamilton M. McClumpha, D. D. S., L. D. S., Hamilton, to Miss Belle F. Hoffman.

GRIMM-ROGERS—In Elmwood, Methodist Church on December 27th, by Rev. F. W. Crowle, B. A., Robert J. Grimm, of Milverton, to Rilla, daughter of Mr. Alfred Rogers, Elmwood.

PEAT-BRADSHAW—At St. James Cathedral, Toronto, on January 5th, by Rev. Canon DuMoulin, Henry J. Peat, of Montreal, to Adelaide A. Bradshaw, second daughter of the late George Lionel Bradshaw, of Toronto.

DIED

McMURCHY—In Erin Township, on January 3rd, Mrs. Angus McMurchy, aged 87 years.

MACKINNON—In Brantford, on December 23rd, Clementina McDougall, relict of the late John Mackinnon, of Norval, in her 86th year.

WASTING TIME

He was lurching home very late one evening much the worse for a bachelor's supper or something of that sort. He came to a clock tower, and paused and looked up at the illuminated dial to see the time. As he did so, the clock slowly began to strike. One—two—three—four the inebriate listened, counting the strokes carefully, and when at last twelve sounded he said, as he prepared to stagger on again: "Durn you—blo—why couldn't you shay that all at once?"

THE GIRL IN THE LIBRARY

"It's the girl from the dressmaker's with your new dress, Miss Mattie."

Mattie started to push back her chair from the dining-table. Uncle Geoffrey looked up.

"I guess that girl can wait, can't she?" he said mildly. Uncle Geoffrey objected to anything like confusion during his meals. His son Charles came to his assistance.

"Of course she can wait. If Mattie stops now to get the money, by the time she gets back the soup will be cold." Charles was a young man who gave a great deal of attention to his bodily comfort.

"Oh, very well." Mattie subsided into her chair and went on with her soup. Dinner was always a leisurely meal at Mr. Geoffrey Clarke's, and tonight it seemed longer than usual, Mattie thought. Uncle Geoffrey had some stories to tell which were deliberate, like Uncle Geoffrey himself. The clock struck the hour, the half hour and still the girl in the library waited.

She was not waiting patiently either, regrettable as it is to record it of a young person in her sphere of life. To begin with, she was hungry. Since her plain and early breakfast she had eaten nothing but a roll, meeting sandwich fashion over a piece of greasy ham. The roll had not been fresh when she had left the boarding-house in the morning, and by noon it was still drier, while the quality of the ham had not improved. By five o'clock she was faint, and pains like red-hot needles stabbed her eyes and her temples. She comforted herself by thinking about dinner. It was dumpling night at the boarding-house, the best dinner of the week, some of them thought.

When Madam Schumann, the dressmaker, told her that she must stop with Miss Nettie Clarke's dress on her way home, the girl had not looked pleased. In fact she had gone so far as to say, "There isn't much stopping about it. I've got to go six blocks out of my way."

"If you had to go sixteen," said Madam Schumann, with a snap, "it would be all the same. That's what you're paid for."

At first her only concern had been that the dumplings would be cold. Then she faced another and more serious possibility. At half-past seven the dining-room door at the boarding-house was closed, and nothing could coax it open till the next morning. "If I didn't have my rules and live up to 'em," said Miss Ryan, the boarding-house keeper, "I might as well hang out a sign, 'Meals at All Hours.'"

When Mattie made her appearance in the library at last, something unusual was happening. Bella the dressmaker's girl was sitting stiffly in the chair by the door, and the tears were running down her face. Mattie stared, gasped, stood still. "Oh, what is the matter?" she cried.

"I'm hungry," said the dressmaker's girl shortly. "That's all." She dabbed away the tears with a very damp pocket handkerchief.

Mattie hesitated. "But you're going home to dinner, aren't you?" she returned at last.

"Not now," said the dressmaker's girl. "I was, but it's too late. They shut the door at half-past seven."

"Do they?" Mattie exclaimed, uncomfortable. "But you can get something to eat somewhere, can't you?"

"Sure!" said the dressmaker's girl, with a sarcastic laugh. "I get four-fifty a week to keep myself. I can drop into a restaurant and get a nice little meal whenever I feel like it." She looked at Mattie with burning eyes as she added: "You can tell Madam if you like. She'd turn me off in a minute if she knew I'd been rude to a customer."

"You wait a minute," Mattie replied, and left the room. This time the girl resigned herself. Dinner was over. There would be no dumpling that evening. As well wait there as anywhere.

But when Mattie again made her appearance, the dressmaker's girl sat up quickly. Mattie was staggering under the weight of a tray. She had refused all offers of assistance in carrying it.

"Pull your chair to the table," she commanded breathlessly. "Your soup is nice and hot. That's your napkin under the celery dish. Oh, dear! What is it?" For the dressmaker's girl was crying again.

"I—was so cross," she wailed; "and now you've gone and waited on me. Oh, dear!" Hunger and weariness makes tears come easily. After her soup she felt less like crying.

It was not the sort of dinner the dressmaker's girl was used to. Long before she had finished, she had ceased to regret the lost dumplings, and she went away warm and grateful and penitent. But as for Mattie, she had not even stopped to think whether her new dress looked well or not.

RADIUM AND CANCER

The utility of radium in completing the work of the surgeon is by this time generally acknowledged. Dr. Abbe, who made an elaborate report of his experience with this weapon of science before the section of radiology at the Seventeenth International Congress of Medicine held last August, says that the effective use of radium lies in the discovery that one of its three radiations, the gamma rays, can be separated from the rest, and that these induce the degeneration of malignant cells. They work more gently than the gamma radiations of Roentgen rays, and they establish permanent cures of skin cancers. They cut out the roots of the cancer "as with a million knives." Technical improvements are adding constantly to the gains already shown, and malignant tumors, some of them not on the surfaces of the body, have been attacked with it.

MY TASK

A housekeeper? Ah, yes, dear heart, and more!
Keeper of hearts for those love gave to me,
Upholding weary hands that else might fall,
Smoothing a little head upon my knee.

A housekeeper am I; this is my task;
To make one little spot all snug and warm,
Where those who bruised and beaten by the day
May find a refuge from the night and storm.

Gladly I serve—love makes the serving sweet;
I feel no load—love makes the burden light;
A happy keeper I of home and hearts
Serving, I reign—a queen by love's own right.

—Florence Jones Hadley.

IRELAND.

Dear land of song and bard,
Whose lays
Ring for all time and story,
Whose saints and martyrs' burning words
Are for a single world's glory,
Ah, who shall voice the heart's desire
In such strange, tender strain
Or lilt the laughter of glad life
Or banshee's weird refrain.

Call dancing elves beneath the moon
Or wraiths of warriors bold
With just the music of thy tongue?
That Celtic speech of gold.
O land who stood so high and free,
Untouched by Roman yoke.
When Britain bowed beneath their chains
Thy pride they never broke.

Where Finn, like David, fought for right,
Where Moore and Goldsmith sang;
Where Emmet spake with tongue of flame,
Where Patrick's message rang.
Shall not thy harp sound forth again
From Tara hill's now birth?
Shall not thy sons know their own land
'Mong nations of the earth?

—Alice B. Ives

THOROUGHBREDS

Everyone everywhere rises up to applaud the Thoroughbred—the man who has gathered together the finest things in life, and crystallized them for use through every thought and act. Such a man is not going to hesitate when called upon to perform what he is capable of performing. He is going to see the job through. He is not going to disappoint anyone. He is a Finisher.

Every Thoroughbred is a Finisher.

If a friend is a Thoroughbred you need never be concerned as to his Loyalty. He will stick by you though leaden bullets defy him. Your Thoroughbred friend offers no excuses for you. He believes in you and defends you though he walk daily into the camp of your bitterest enemy.

Every Thoroughbred is Faith.

He a Thoroughbred in business—never a Quitter nor a Quibbler, but straight-forward contender of principles that make business Lofty and Honorable. If the fellow next to you is given an honor or promotion when you think it should have fallen to you—be a Thoroughbred about it. Act sweet. Ability is always squalled sooner or later—it always seeks and finds its level.

Every Thoroughbred is Just and Fair.

HER LUCK

"Oh, George!" cried the fair young violet in blue, as she floated into the drawing-room and found her lesser half reading the latest novel. "You really ought to have come to church with me this morning. Such a beautiful sermon. I'm sure it would have done you good. All about dishonesty and stealing, and petty meanness. No one could help feeling better for it. I do wish you could have heard it."

"Really, my dear," murmured George, and tried in vain to stifle a yawn. "And—a—did you walk home?"

"No! I took a tram. And, oh, George, I had such a stroke of luck! The conductor never asked for my fare, so I saved two-pence."

SIGNS OF RECOVERY

Rev. Callar: "Well, Mrs. Mangles, and is the good man any better?"

Mrs. Mangles: "Oh, yes, sir. 'E's nearly are right again, sir. 'E don't say 'is prayers no more of a night now, sir."

There never was and never will be a universal panacea in one remedy for all ills to which flesh is heir. What would relieve one ill in turn would aggravate the others. We have, however, in Quinine Wine, when obtained in a sound, unadulterated state, a remedy for many and grievous ills. By its gradual and judicious use the frailest systems are led into convalescence and strength by the influence which Quinine exerts on Nature's own restoratives. It relieves those to whom a chronic state of morbid despondency and lack of interest in life is a disease, and by tranquillizing the nerves disposes to sound and refreshing sleep—imparts vigor to the action of the blood, which being stimulated, courses through the veins, strengthening the healthy, animal functions of the system, thereby making activity a necessary result strengthening the frame and giving life to the digestive organs which naturally demand increased substance—result, improved appetite. Northrop & Lyman, of Toronto, have given to the public their superior Quinine. By the opinion of scientists, the wine approaches nearest perfection of any on the market. All druggists sell it.