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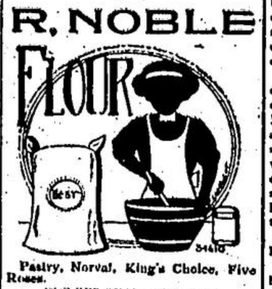

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Poetry.

WISHING

Do you wish the world were better?
Let me tell me what to do.
Set a watch upon your actions,
Keep them always straight and true;
Rid your mind of selfish motives,
Let your thoughts be clear and high;
You can make a little Eden
Of the sphere you occupy.

Do you wish the world were happy?
Then remember day by day
Just to scatter seeds of kindness
As you pass along the way;
For the pleasures of the many
May be oftimes traced to one,
As the hand that plants the acorn
Shelters armies from the sun.

Select Family Reading

What Fred Found Out

By Elizabeth Price

"NOW, look here, Minnie, if you are going with me you can't wear that scarecrow." Fred spoke with great decision and Minnie paused, hat in hand.

"It is not a scarecrow, Fred. This hat is nice and neat. Anyway, its cloudy."

"Mere bluff. Hasn't the least idea of raining."

"Your weather predictions usually fail, and the feathers on my best hat will be spoiled if they get wet."

"Which they won't do. Best hat, or I stay at home."

Minnie looked distressed but gave up the argument. It was very discouraging to try to change Fred's opinion, whether on the subject of millinery or politics. "Have convictions and stick to them. That's my motto," he was fond of saying and that he lived up to it, no one who knew him would deny. His sister crossed to the big closet and reached for her hat box.

"What sort of footgear have you got on, Minnie? Regular clodhoppers, aren't they?"

"No, indeed. They're my walking shoes and nearly new," Minnie made indignant protest as she glanced at her very respectable boots.

"Well, you don't need walking shoes on the street cars. Wear your Sunday ones."

"Fred—"

"No use, ma'am. If a girl goes out with me I don't want to be ashamed of her. You ought to know that by this time."

Fred yawned and stretched his long arms lazily. Minnie's cheeks were suddenly red. "If I do it's from observation more than experience," she observed.

"Oh, well, Min, a fellow can't always be wasting his attentions on his own sister. Leave that for somebody else. By the way, that isn't your best jacket is it? Didn't I hear rumors of a new and festive one?"

"Maybe you did, Fred, but we're only going shopping and I don't want to wear all my best things down town this threatening day."

"Think of the person you're going with, sister mine, and dress accordingly. Sure, wear your new jacket."

Minnie hung away her rejected wrap and sped upstairs for another.

"It's perfect foolishness," she scolded to herself. "But if I don't do as he says he'll insist on going to buy mother's birthday gift by himself, and that's the last thing I want him to do, for I haven't as high an opinion of his shopping ability as he has. Somebody'd be sure to sell him an imitation vase, and no one would ever be able to convince him that it wasn't cut glass. I'll just have to yield."

The final inspection proving satisfactory the pair started. "You're not a bad looking girl when you are properly decked out," was Fred's somewhat lofty comment as he passed through the front door first leaving his sister to follow. "You ought to appreciate my interest in you instead of fussing to wear your old things when you go out."

"Nonsense, Fred. Your interest is not in me—it's in yourself," Minnie laughed as she buttoned her glove. "You are particular because you are my escort. If you weren't you would not care how I looked."

"Oh, well, that's different. No, I won't go back for an umbrella. The sun will be out in an hour. Let's take the High Street car—I've an errand to do at the transfer corner. That football supply place, you know."

"All right, though that's a horrid part of the town. The Bond Avenue cars are so much nicer in every way."

"Yes, but it's only a matter of fifteen or twenty minutes. We'll come back on the Belt Line, and make a regular lark of it."

"Oh good, that will be fine," exclaimed Minnie joyfully. But she was doomed to disappointment for the errand at the transfer corner could not be finished at one call, and Fred broadly promised to stop on his way home, ignoring his sister's disappointed face, and keeping up a brisk conversation to avoid comments.

The business which had called them down town together could easily have been dispatched had either been alone. For Minnie needed to search no further than a dainty rose bowl of beautiful design was set out for their inspection; while Fred was immediately fascinated by a large and extremely ornate brass jardiniere. "It's a stunner, Minnie," he insisted. "That little shiny glass thing isn't in it with this."

"Oh, but Fred, that doesn't look a bit like mother," objected Minnie.

"Of course not. Where did you ever hear of a brass umbrella stand resembling a lady?"

"You know what I mean. It's not an umbrella stand anyway, but a jardiniere, and she got all she wants already."

"You can't have too much of a good thing, sister mine. That will light up the dark end of the parlor in great shape."

"Fred, I just can't—"

"Oh, but I can. Now see here, Minnie, half the money's mine, remember, and my half is me going to be spent for why little dish that you can buy one like for a quarter. It's going towards this big brass beauty, and if you won't chip in with me I'll get it on the instalment plan. I can see it now on mother's inlaid taboret, just loosing up in that corner."

Minnie groaned. "It will 'loom' alright. Mother'll hate it but she'll be too dear and polite to say so, and I'll go on hurting her for years and years."

"Don't you believe it. I'll chance it, so give in like the sensible girl that you are."

"I'll have to, I suppose, for you never will, and father wouldn't like it at all to have you go into debt for it. But I'll tell you plainly, I'm just heartsick over the dreadful thing, and mother won't like it any better than I do."

Fred turned to the waiting clerk and drew out his purse. "We'll take it. Send it out to 241 Hughson. Oh yes, to-morrow will be soon enough."

It was sprinkling when they reached the street, and Minnie drew back under the awning. "Please, Fred, let me go home on the Bond Avenue car. It's so much more direct and we don't have to change on that line."

"As you like, Minnie, but you'll have to travel alone if you do. I promised to go the other way, and I'm a man of my word, you know. No it's not going to rain much—this little drizzle won't hurt anybody."

Contrary to Fred's prediction the drizzle soon became a downpour, and he decided to omit his errand and hurry home out of the weather. He make a dash from gate to front door, then stopped inside the hall to shake the glistening drops from his shoulders. The living-room door was ajar and somebody was talking. It sounded like Minnie's voice yet who had ever heard her so emphatic?

"It's getting worse and worse—it's almost unbearable—Fred's selfishness!"

That was what he heard, and with a comical grimace he waited for the next remark. "Yes, Minnie, I've noticed." This in grandfather's even tones.

Then Minnie again. "He's every bit for himself—he doesn't care for anybody else's wishes. My cloak will never get over this drenching, I'm afraid and he made me wear it. Made me put on everything I didn't want to just because I was going with him. He forgot that maybe I was particular about my escort's looks, and he was a sight with tennis shoes, and a green baseball cap and a blue tie with a lavender shirt, though I've told him how badly those colors look together. And he will call me Minerva, though he knows how I hate it, right in front of strangers, as if I were a Spanish island instead of a girl with a name like other people.

"But I wouldn't have minded those things so much if it had been all, but it wasn't—not near. No, grandfather, I won't—tell any more tales—I've said too much already, but he isn't the same brother he used to be—not in any way. He wouldn't treat other girls the way he does me, though they wouldn't care if he did, for they don't love him as I do, even if my poor darling feathers are ruined frights." There was a sudden catch in the voice. Fred, peeping guiltily into the hall mirror, caught a glimpse of a scarlet-cheeked, dejected little figure on the rug before the grate, its cherished best hat in its hands, trying to dry and coax back to beauty the limp and damaged feathers which had been his sister's pride.

He went upstairs then to meditate. "Whoever knew that under Min's top crust there was a volcano like that? How'd I know she cared if I dressed like a combination of athletic sports?

"Why didn't she pitch into me instead of spluttering behind my back? She hasn't asked me not to call her Minerva for a month. Could I be expected to remember every time that she doesn't like it? What's the sense anyway in wearing foolish clothes that a drop of rain will spoil? I do, too, treat her right—may leave off a few flourishes, but what of that? She said she didn't tell all—I wonder what the rest was. Come to think of it she did look queer when I called myself a man of my word. It's just possible she was thinking about my promise to bring her up on the Belt Line. Wonder what she'd say if she knew I never stopped at the Sportsmen's Emporium, after all."

He sat still a while—a long while for active Fred—then rose and deliberately surveyed himself in the looking glass. "Truly a charming sight, even without the green cap," he remarked sarcastically at length. "One who has so faultlessly arrayed himself is able to dictate terms to anybody else, now isn't he!" He pulled his tumbled hair disgustedly, jerked off the offending tie, then nodded at his image. "I wonder if my selfishness has struck clear through?" He said aloud. "Wonder if there are any unspoiled streaks left? Tell you what—I might get to work and make up for lost time. Cut the other girls out for a week or two, and do all my past duty to her at once. I guess I'll change her about my selfishness. What a lark to see how long it would be before she'd take it all back same as if she'd never said it."

The supper bell summoned a young gentleman in faultless attire from the upper floor. Spotless linen, a sumptuous tie, with socks and silk handkerchief to match, and an air of humility as becoming as it was unusual. Minnie, still unconsoled for the disastrous results of her outing, sat behind the tea urn trying to be cheerful and turn the quiver of her lips into the beginning of a smile. She looked up in surprise at her brother's toilet. "It's still raining Fred. Are you going away?" she asked.

"No place this evening, Minor—nic. House's the best ever, anyway."

"Good for you! my boy. I'm glad you think so," said fatherly heartily, while grandfather nodded approval.

"Well I do think so. Min, will you play some accompaniments for me? I've my violin in fine tune now, at none of the other girls keep time as you do."

Minnie flushed prettily. "Yes, indeed, I'll be glad to. I thought may be my playing didn't suit any more; it's been so long since we have tried anything together."

"You thought wrong there," Fred was most emphatic.

"It suits me down to the ground. By the way, I've got the promise of tickets to the concert Friday night of next week, where that famous violinist is going to play. Would you like to go?"

"Like it? I'd love it!" the girl clapped her hands. "I've been wanting to hear him this ever so long, but I had no idea I'd have the chance."

* * *

"You see I started to convince you that I was not as black as you had painted me—yes—you. I judge from your delicate hints that I've accomplished it. But, Minnie, I've learned something myself. I never enjoyed any girl's society more than I have yours, and never was half so proud of any one of them. I imagine I'll divide up my attentions, but I'll promise you shall have your share hereafter, honey, and don't you forget it. Only, if you have got anything to say about me, give it to me first hand, and don't whip me through grandfather and the hall mirror."

"What-at? I don't understand a thing your talking about."

"No? I do, then, and that's all that's necessary. Come on Minor—Minnie, to the festivities downstairs."

FROM PAGE TO LEGISLATOR

A few times every generation things work out almost according to the novelist in his wildest flights of fancy. Now and then the poor boy walks into the bank and asks for a job, picking up a pin the while, and thereby attracting the attention of the grizzly steel-hearted boss, gets the job, and soon becomes president of the bank. It's bound to happen very often, of course, that the younster is refused the job, and is rated soundly for stealing the pin, but not always. Occasionally the brakeman gets to be boss of the road, and once in a blue moon the legislative page becomes the powerful statesman in the body where he once ran errands.

Nearly 40 years ago—37 to be exact—a blue-eyed blonde-haired youngster of 12 summers who bore the name of James David Taylor, applied for the position of page in the Canadian House of Commons. He got the job all right, and for the next five months of the session of '76 lightly answered the back and call of Mackenzie (who was the Prime Minister), Macdonald, Blake, Thompson, Tupper, and incidentally Wilfrid Laurier, whose antagonist in the same Commons in the year to come fate had decreed him to be. That was a stirring session, as our political historians have not neglected to note, and the youthful page imbibed in large draughts a love for political conflict, and dreamed of the days when perhaps he, too, would strike a heroic pose and declaim for the "plain people." Being a page, however exciting it may appear to the juvenile, is not very lucrative financially, and "Jimmie" Taylor, like the majority of other mortals, needed all the loose change he could accumulate. A printing press had that strange attraction for him which some noted men of letters seem to think it had for them, and the following year he forsook the paging game to become a printer's apprentice in the office of the Ottawa Citizen, graduating as a full-fledged Typographical Union man five years later. But somehow or other politics and journalism seemed to call him with an irresistible force, and after four years at the printing business he went down to Montreal as a reporter on one of the big dailies. He had a habit of getting at the heart of things that caught the eye of the chief editor, and they soon sent him to Ottawa to record the proceedings of Parliament from the Press Gallery. He was heartily welcomed by, not upon an equal footing, and even mildly criticised at times, by the same men for whom, not ten years before, he meekly ran errands. It was a long stride upwards, but Taylor had no thought of making the Press Gallery his terminus, and now recalled his page boy dreams of some day becoming a member of Parliament himself.

He went through the fierce campaign of 1891, and his vivid reports of some of the spectacular meetings of that stirring political struggle were models of graphic and faithful reporting. His work attracted such favorable attention, indeed, that he received and accepted a flattering offer of a position on the editorial staff of the Victoria Colonist. That was in 1892. By 1903, J. D. Taylor had become a force to reckon with in the somewhat tangled political situation on the coast. He moved to New Westminster to become managing editor of the Columbian, and four years later he was chosen as the Conservative standard-bearer. Taylor's party was almost annihilated, but he himself triumphed, and three months later he entered the House of Commons to fight with and against some of the men whose page he had been in the same legislative chamber twenty-eight years before.

In the House of Commons to-day there is no more highly respected and conscientious member than this same J. D. Taylor, who still sits for New Westminster. A thorough-going democrat of sane conservative tendencies' his whole career epitomizes what pluck and perseverance can do with the opportunities of a blessed democracy.—M. Grattan O'Leary, in Toronto Star Weekly.

THE SEVEN MODERN WONDERS

The seven modern wonders of the world have just been selected in a poll in which most a thousand scientists took part. The winning septette are wireless telegraphy, the telephone, the aeroplane, radium, the antiseptics and antitoxins, (considered as one,) spectrum analysis and the X-ray.

Fifty-six subjects were proposed on the ballot and all had merit. Only one ballot in the whole number contained the list given above, although several had six out of the seven. The Panama Canal had a hundred votes and almost secured a place, as did anaesthesia and synthetic chemistry. The others scaled downwards to the X-ray which won with 111 votes.

The seven wonders of the ancients were far less practical and useful to the race than the modern wonders. They were the Pyramids of Egypt, the Pharos or watch tower at Alexandria, the hanging gardens at Babylon, the Temple of Diana at Ephesus, the Statue of Jupiter by Phidias, the Mausoleum of Artemisia and the Colossus of Rhodes.—Richmond Times-Dispatch.

When a man is afraid to think for himself it is time the wedding bells were ringing.

TWENTY YEARS AGO

Notes from the Free Press of Thursday, March 1st, 1894

This is not February 29th.

Mrs. McSpadden, one of the oldest residents of the vicinity, died at the home of Mr. Isaac Snyder, Erin, yesterday.

Friday, February 23rd, appears to have been the coldest of the season in Ontario and Quebec. 22 below in Acton.

Mrs. Jane Sharp, one of our oldest residents, passed away at the home in Acton of her son, James, on Sunday. Her husband, John Sharp, lost his life through a runaway accident many years ago. She was 80 years of age and was a member of the Methodist Church.

Rev. Lachlan Cameron, for many year pastor of Knox Church, Acton, died at Thamesford on Monday. He was 68 years of age and had been pastor at that place since leaving Acton nearly twenty years ago. No pastor ever left Acton over whose departure were more genuine manifestations of regret.

Rev. Joseph Edge is conducting evangelistic services this week in the Methodist Church. Rev. J. C. Speer, Toronto, has been three days assisting, and Rev. E. E. Scott, Parkdale, will be present the remainder of the week.

Mrs. W. J. Cook, Toronto, who visited her sister, Mrs. Robt. Mills, Sr., at Christmas, died last week and her remains were interred in Fairview, according to the wish of herself and husband. The funeral was held from Mr. W. Gurney's home. Revs. Cooke and Edge officiated.

Very Rev. McEvay, of Hamilton, who visited Rome and the Holy Land in company with Bishop Dowling about a year ago, gave a fine address on his trip to a large audience in St. Joseph's Church on Wednesday.

Rev. T. J. Sabius is holding special services at Crewsons Corners.

Lorne School report—Miss Jessie McDonald, Teacher; Alice Brown, Charlie Quantic, Emma Cameron, Lexie Gamble, Ivs Cleave, Lizzie McDonald, James McDonald, Ada Alexander, Annie Quantic, Hannah Plank, Henrietta Plank, won places on the honor roll.

Just as Rev. J. A. Macdonald finished his stirring address at the Halton Sunday School Convention, at Milton, the gas jets flickered and every light went out leaving total darkness. The president announced a hymn to be sung, and when the company came to the words: "Though like a wander, daylight all gone, darkness comes over me," etc, the appropriateness of the selection became manifest. Light was soon restored.

Mr. and Mrs. Wm. A. Coleman visited at Strabane a couple of days last week.

Two loads of young people drove up from Milton on Monday evening and enjoyed the hospitality of the home of Mr. D. Henderson, M. P.

Miss Edith Wright, whose mother, Mrs. Asa Hall, died here recently, has gone to reside with her sister, Mrs. J. P. Secord, Orillia. For four years she has been first violinist in the Methodist Sunday School Orchestra.

Mr. James McDonald, farmer, of Nassagaweya, was killed at the railway crossing at Crewsons Corners last Thursday.

The following, from Acton, attended the Halton County Sunday School Convention in Milton last week: Revs. J. W. Rae, Joseph Edge, G. B. Cooke, Mr. and Mrs. H. P. Moore, Mrs. C. S. Smith, Mrs. Jas. McLaus, Mrs. I. Francis, Mrs. A. Stephenson, Mrs. D. Henderson, Mrs. Willis Brown, Mrs. W. Williams, Misses Maggie Matthews, Lottie E. Speight, Lottie Mainstreet, Messrs. H. B. Henderson and R. J. Gurney.

BORN

KENNEY—In Acton, on February 23rd, to Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Kenney, a son.

HAUSBERGER—In Acton, on February 16th, to Mr. and Mrs. Sydney Hausberger, a son.

McKITTRICK—In Malta, on February 20th to Mr. and Mrs. H. McKittrick, a daughter.

FIRE-PROOF CAR

An experimental fire proof train is now running on the Lancashire and Yorkshire railway, England, the principal features of which are:

1. All outside panels, instead of being made of wood are of steel.

2. The carriage door in addition to being double and insulated, is covered on the underside with fire-proof material.

3. Salvage tools and extinguishers are carried in each guard's van.

4. The under frame and bogies are entirely of steel.

5. The gas reservoirs, carried on the under frames, are separated from the floor by coverings of steel plates, and are also protected at the ends by steel plates, to prevent any possibility of damage.

6. Each gas reservoir is fitted with an automatic valve, and if the gas pipes are broken this valve closes and instantly prevents the escape of gas.

7. Emergency windows are fitted near the centre of each car, which can be used, if required, for the egress of passengers.

A MENACE TO MANHOOD

There is nothing wrong in loving luxury, but when luxury becomes indispensable, it is a menace to manhood. The young fellow who cannot drink coffee with a relish out of a tin cup, or sleep rolled up in a blanket on the floor, in lieu of a bed, has an element of weakness in himself which threatens his undoing. All young people need to try roughing it occasionally just to prove how many things they can do without and not mind the deprivation. And if any of you find that steam heat, electric lights and carefully served meals are essential to your happiness, it is high time for you to learn to get along without them!

A LEGAL TANGLE

The day was drawing to a close. Judge, jurors, witnesses and lawyers were growing weary. Finally the counsel for the prosecution rose to examine the defendant.

"Exactly how far is it between the two towns?" asked the lawyer, in a weary voice.

The defendant yawned and replied, "About four miles as the cry flows."

"No doubt," said the man of law, "you mean as the flow cries."

The judge leaned forward. "No," he remarked, suavely, "he means as the flow frows."

Then all three looked at one another, feeling that something was wrong somewhere.

THE CALL OF THE OLD COUNTRY

My thoughts are weaving dreams that cross the sea,
Day-dreams, my dearest;
They fly to England, smiling back at me,
Though tears are nearest;
They rest upon the Crystal Palace dome,
All asking what I want to choose from home!

If I might choose the place across the sea—
The place that's dearest;
Might choose the spot that to my heart—Ah, me!—
Is ever nearest,
Where heather, golden gorse, and bracken grow.

If I might choose the man across the sea,
I hold the dearest,
Might choose the friend that to my heart—Ah, me!—
Is ever nearest,
Then I would choose, where all my longings end,
That man who is my father, and my friend.

My thoughts are weaving dreams that cross the sea,
Day dreams, my dearest;
They fly to England, smiling back at me,
Though tears are nearest;
They rest upon the Crystal Palace dome,
All asking what I want to choose from home!

—Beatrice Plumb.

LET'S HAVE A LAUGH!

"Tommy," said an irate mother to her incorrigible offspring. "If you don't behave I'll give you a good whipping." "Well, that'll be a chance anyway," replied the little fellow. "All the other whippings I ever got from you were bad."

Tommy (watching a high soprano singing and the musical conductor waving his baton): "Ma, what's that long-haired man hitting her with that stick for?" His mother: "He isn't hitting at her." Tommy: "Then what is she screaming about?"

The Jew pedlar rapped timidly at the kitchen door. Mrs. Kelly, angry at being interrupted in her washing, flung open the door and glowered at him: "Did yez wish to see me?" she demanded in threatening tones. The pedlar backed off the steps. "Well if I did," he assured her, with apologetic grin, "I got my vish, thank you."

Two Irishmen on a sultry night, immediately after their arrival in India, took refuge underneath the bedclothes from a skirmishing party of mosquitoes. At last one of them, gasping for breath, ventured to peep beyond the blankets, and by chance, espied a firefly which had strayed into the room. Arousing his companion with a kick, he said: "Fergus, Fergus, it's no use. Ye might as well come out. Here's one of the crayters looking for us wid a lantern!"

Harry Lauder told an amusing story the other day of two Glasgow women who met in the street and began to discuss the domestic affairs of a newly-married couple. "Aye, Mrs. McTavish, said one, "so Jeannie's got married." "She has that, Mrs. Alpine," replied the other. "An' how's she gettin' on?" the first woman wanted to know. "Oh, no sae bad at a'," was the reply. "There's only one thing the matter. She thinks she could hae got a better man. But then there's aye some thing."

TRUE OBEDIENCE

During General Havelock's stay in England a friend called to spend the evening. Mrs. Havelock coming in asked, "Where is Henry?" referring to their son who had left the house with his father that morning. The general started to his feet.

"Poor fellow! He must be standing on London Bridge. I left him there at twelve o'clock today and told him to stay until I came for him. In the pressure of business I forgot the appointment."

He called a cab and went for the boy, who sure enough was standing just where he had been told to.

The general said to his visitor, "I was sure I should find him there. He is a soldier's son and soldiers know the importance of obedience."—The Boy's Teacher.

A DEFINITION

Three ladies had planned to drive together, but when the hour appointed came one of them asked to be excused on the score of an attack of indigestion. Her companions expressed their disappointment and sympathy, but the elder of them insisted that the excuse was insufficient.

"You shouldn't let yourself be governed by such ideas," she said. "It is really as you think. What is indigestion anyway?"

The third lady, wishing to avoid the apparently impending discussion on the mental control of illness, broke in quickly: "Indigestion," she said, "is the failure to adjust a square meal to a round stomach."—Harper's.

BRING TO YOUR WORK HIGH PURPOSE

If you are doing work that you think is beneath you, that is no reason for slighting it. Poor work, indeed, is beneath anybody with brains and a conscience. To dig ditches with honest purpose, to give a dollar's worth of work for every dollar you earn, is more to one's credit than to do office work with the intention of doing just enough to keep your position. Remember that no work can degrade a worker, if he brings to it a high purpose, and that all work, lacking such a purpose, is degrading.

Reduced by Asthma.—The constant strain of asthma brings the patient to a dreadful state of hopeless exhaustion. Early use should by all means be made of the famous Dr. J. D. Kellogg's Asthma Remedy, which more than any other acts quickly and surely on the air passages and brings blessed help and comfort. No house where asthma is present in the least degree should be without this great remedy.

A Medical Need Supplied.—When a medicine is found that not only acts upon the stomach, but is so composed that certain ingredients of it pass unaltered through the stomach to find action in the bowels, then there is available a purgative and a cleanser of great effectiveness. Parmelee's Vegetable Pills are of this character and are the best of all pills. During the year that they have been in use they have established themselves as no other pill has done.