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The Acton Free Press

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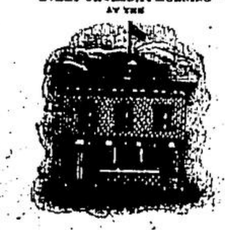

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MILL STREET, ACTON, ONT

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We have just received a fresh stock of Seeds of Red Clover, Timothy, Alsike, Alfalfa, Red Top, Canadian Blue Grass.
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We are paying the highest market price for all kinds of Grain, at our Elevator.

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MANAGER

Poetry.

SCOTIA BY THE SEA

O, Scotia, my Scotia, laved by Atlantic tides,
Though alien lands still hold me, my heart with thee abides;
Thee woo me like a lover, but I answer wistfully—I want to go to Scotia,
In the homeland of my childhood,
My Scotia by the sea.

O Scotia, my Scotia, lapped in Acadian sire,
How magical the glamour thy golden summer weave
While treading sad grey cities, I cry out longingly—
I would I were in Scotia, in the bright land of my boyhood,
Fair Scotia by the sea.

O Scotia, my Scotia, tho' swept by rigid snows,
Thy rigors taught thy sturdy sons to fear no earthly foes,
Oft when the stress goes hardest, I laugh exultingly
What sou is there of Scotia, forgets the brave land of his manhood,
Strong Scotia by the sea.

O Scotia, my Scotia, girt by the opal main,
I love thy lochs and rivers, each mountain and each plain;
I hear them in my dreaming, still calling, calling me
Come home, come home, a suitable, come back to thine own homeland,
Thy Scotia by the sea.

—J. D. Logan, Honolulu.

Select Family Reading

The Dolbers' Agreement

By Arthur Chamberlain

MARCH had been more than usually rainy, and Mrs. Dolber, picking her way across the muddy sparsely-grassed area, called a lawn by courtesy, wished in her heart that at least a part of the space might be concreted, thereby giving her a decent yard for the drying of clothes.

She rubbed her boots as clean as might be on the bedraggled mat at the back door, going in to dump the empty clothes basket on the kitchen table.

Isom Dolber, clumping around in his stout leg-boats, hailed her just as she entered:

"Well, where's dinner, Huldy?" he demanded. "Think I can feel 'round here, waiting, when the spring plowing ain't half done? Guess if this place is to pay I'll have to plow every inch and grow some sort of truck that I can sell. There's half an acre at the back door—just waste, that's what it is!"

"But, Isom!" remonstrated his wife, hurrying the dinner on to the table, "where 'm I going to dry the clothes? It's hard enough as it is—"

"Guess you can stand between the rows—cabbages, or beets, or potatoes. No use talking; I've got to make the farm pay," replied Isom, sitting down to dinner.

"It's dreadfully wet as 'tis, Isom, and in summer, if there's no grass it'll be dusty for the clothes. 'Course, they're not needing half an acre, but if there could be a bit of concrete for a drying yard—"

"I guess a pair of rubbers is a whole lot cheaper'n concrete. What's more, I tell you I want the ground for garden-truck, and I guess, Huldy, if you'll tend to the house, I can take care of what's out-o'-doors."

Mrs. Dolber laid down her knife and fork, looking her husband full in the face. "Now, just you look here, Isom! I've heard about garden truck till I'm clear sick and tired of it. Few years back, we had a decent lawn and flowers like other folks. Then you said you couldn't be bothered with flower-beds and the flowers had to go. You wouldn't get any grass-seed for the lawn, and it's pretty much all run to dandelions and sorrel and pappergrass where it isn't worn clear down to gravel, 'count of walking back and forth over it, and never taking the trouble to water it, summers. Now here's where I quit."

"Land o' compassion!" ejaculated Isom, looking at his wife in amazement. "What on earth do you mean, Huldy? 'Quit'?"

"Oh, I'm not planning for a divorce—not yet!" responded Mrs. Dolber sharply. "Guess as long's I've stood you all these years, Isom, I can go on standing you. When I say 'quit' I mean that I'm going to leave the outside of the house to you, seeing you say you can take care of out-of-doors. Oh, yes, you can come into the house, 'course, Isom, and eat and sleep, and sit around evenings and read the paper and all that—but here I quit doing any outside chores. If you want all the out-doors to yourself, you can have it—for all me!"

"Um," responded Isom, stroking his beard. He got up from the table and took his hat. "Guess I'd better get back to the plowing."

Mrs. Dolber watched him plod away. "You're a good man, Isom," she murmured, "but there's some things you've got to learn, and the sooner you learn 'em, the better."

She washed and wiped the dinner dishes and picking up the water pail started mechanically for the door. As she was about to lift the latch she halted. "Mebbe I've been back and forth to that well times enough, lugging water," she muttered. "That's outdoor work, and I'll just leave it to Isom."

Walking across the kitchen she peered into the woodbox. "Not overly much wood," she remarked meditatively, "but I guess it'll keep the fire going for the rest of the afternoon, though I don't know about supper. Well, wood's in the shed and the shed's quite a piece from the back door. That's Isom's chore all right!"

After a long comfortable survey of the kitchen, cheerful in the western light, she walked over to an inviting rocking-chair that stood at the pleasantest window.

"There's the whole afternoon for sewing—just sewing!" she exulted under her breath. "Not mending—mending isn't really sewing, it's just—mending. I do love to get my needle into something new!"

Her gaze wandered out of the window to the weekly washing on the clothes-line; she half started from her chair only to drop back again peacefully. "There's another outdoor chore for Isom, when he's through plowing," she chuckled. "Mebbe the clothes'll get bone-dry, hanging out so long, but I don't mind giving 'em an extra sprinkling."

Mrs. Dolber certainly enjoyed the long, quiet afternoon as her needle went in and out, producing tucks and ruffles too dainty for her sewing-machine that stood aloof in one corner.

"You're all right," observed Mrs. Dolber, nodding towards the machine, "when it comes to long seams or even straight hems or wide tucks, but I guess I'd best do these tucks by hand, seeing's I've plenty of time."

"Cut-out-out-out-dah-out!" came up from the hen-house, down by the barn. Mrs. Dolber laid down her needle, listening.

"Declare if it isn't most time to feed those hens!" she murmured, "and there's the eggs too—Oh I forgot!" She picked up her work again sewing busily.

The shadows were growing long when Isom opened the back door and trudged into the kitchen, plumping down into the first available chair.

"Tell you what it is, Huldy," he panted, "this plowing certainly does take holt of me! but my, what an appetite I've got! Hope your going to have a first-rate supper."

Mrs. Dolber smiled placidly at her husband from her rocking chair. "I'm calculating to get you the best sort of supper, Isom, and plenty of it, but I'm clean out of firewood and the water pail's most empty. You'll have to bring in some wood and water, Isom, before I can get supper, and you'd better look up some eggs, too, when you're feeding the hens, and—"

"My stars, Huldy!" broke in her husband. "You ain't meaning—?"

"That's all outdoor work, I take it, Isom. You said if I'd tend to the house you'd take care of out-of-doors, and I said I'd quit, and you could have it just as you said. That's the agreement, Isom, and I'm sure I'm willing and anxious to keep my part of it, so please hurry right along with the wood and water and eggs."

Isom set his lip grimly, marching to the door with the air of a man who is too proud not to accept the situation.

"Oh, Isom!" his wife called after him, as the door swung wide. "There's the week's washing on the line; you'd better get that in while you're about it; there'll be plenty of time before supper's ready. Here's the clothes basket."

No one could have called the supper that Mrs. Dolber got forth that evening anything but a success. The huge omelet with fragrant and abundant shavings of delicate pink ham amid its inner mysteries; the hot biscuit, cream-colored between the melting browns of the upper and under crusts; tea of deep amber; jelly that sparkled and gleamed and quivered, yielding up the very essence of the fruit from which it had been made; cake, moist without heaviness and sweet without stickiness—all of these set forth invitingly, challenged Isom to make good his claim to an excellent appetite.

"Why, Isom!" exclaimed Mrs. Dolber, as her husband pushed back his chair after a very moderate meal. "There's nothing the matter with you, is there? You said you had such an appetite—"

"Supper's first-rate, Huldy," declared Isom, with a slightly confused air. "Guess maybe I've eaten enough, though. Fact is, I've a kind of hankering for bed. Might 's well go there, I guess, soon's I've done the chores."

"Well—mebbe you had, Isom," replied his wife in kindly tones. She sat for a while, busied with her knitting, after the third of his stockinged feet in the room overhead had ceased. "I—I d' know as I'd any business to set so!" she murmured relestly. "And he takes it like a lamb, too," she muttered almost resentfully, driving the cat down cellar and blowing out the lamp.

Waking up at the usual hour in the morning Mrs. Dolber's first conscious sensation was one of chagrin. "Declare I never thought of it," she muttered. "Isom always built the fire, mornings, and now I've got to do it." Rousing herself a little more she glanced about her. "Well, I never!" she ejaculated. "If Isom isn't up already—'Count of having all the outside chores to do, I s'pose."

Dressing hurriedly, she went down into the kitchen. The fire was crackling bravely in the cook-stove; the table, even had been drawn out into the middle of the floor, the cloth laid and the dishes set out upon it—man-fashion, to be sure, and in need of more or less rearrangement; nevertheless there they were.

Something rose up in Mrs. Dolber's throat, and her eyes grew misty. "And me driving him around yesterday as if he was a slave," she murmured remorsefully.

She hurried to the kitchen window and looked out on the debatable half acre. There was no sign of any plow; only Isom on his knees cutting away at the sparse turf, while a heap of sods were piled at his side.

Disregarding preparations for breakfast Mrs. Dolber hurried out to her husband.

"It—it was real clever of you to make the fire and—and set the table, Isom," she murmured shyly. "Neither of 'em was yours to do, 'cording to agreement and—"

"I guess, Huldy," replied her husband, turning slowly towards her, "that the agreement you're talking about don't stand. There's a good deal bigger agreement that goes clear back to the time I put that ring on your finger, and there's nothing in that agreement 'bout dividing up duties or rights, but just sharing 'em. Leastways that's the way I sense it, come to think it over."

Mrs. Dolber drew a long breath. "You—you're taking off the sod before plowing, Isom?" she asked with apparent irrelevance. "Now, I should think—"

"Well—yes," interrupted Isom slowly. "I am kind o' taking off the sod, Huldy, but I ain't calculating to plow this half acre; guess I can scrape along without it. I'm kind o' planning to concrete a piece of it near the back door, where it'll be handy for dry drying clothes, and mebbe I'll take some more off, here and there in spots, so's we can have some flower-beds, like you was telling about yesterday, and water laid in the kitchen, I guess, and hose for watering 'em."

Mrs. Dolber gasped. "Water laid on? And a hose?—Oh, Isom." Her breath came short and quick.

"There, Huldy, there. It's all right. Guess we'd best go in and have breakfast. No, Huldy," he went on, in answer to the smile that drew up the corners of Mrs. Dolbert's mouth and made her eyes twinkle. "I ain't going to carry the sharing so far's to try to cook the breakfast, 'cause when it comes to cooking—and a whole lot of other things, too, Huldy—you're surely clear 'way ahead o' me!"

SAYINGS OF PROMINENT MEN

World Grows Better.—Notwithstanding materialism, the heart of the world is kinder than ever to-day. Wealth builds hospitals charitable and educational institutions, and relieves distress.—Hon. W. T. White, Ottawa.

French Loyalty.—Loyal we have been since old French Canada was transferred to Great Britain, loyal we are to-day, and loyal we shall be.—Hon. Jos. Bernier, St. Boniface.

Union is Strength.—All French and English should unite on questions of national interest and make Canada a rich and powerful adjunct of the empire.—Mons. Barachi, Montreal.

A Great Parliamentarian.—Is Hon. Geo. E. Foster, Canada has a son with few equals and fewer superiors in any parliamentary assembly in the world.—J. J. Moncrieff, Winnipeg.

Canada's Womanhood.—Women and girls are the most important asset of a nation. A nation depends upon its homes, and homes depend on the women. Problems of the community resolve into problems of the home. The spirit of women puts soul into a nation. Canada's pioneer women have not failed.—Mrs. J. A. M. Aikins, Winnipeg.

Noble Son of Canada.—Canadians do not realize how much they owe to Blake. We never know the full measure of his stature until he was gone. But God rules, and the lesson which is ours is that every one of us consecrate the gifts God has given us to the service of the country.—Sir Wilfrid Laurier.

Fathers of Confederation.—That was a wonderful group of men was the fathers of confederation. They bequeathed to us people a heritage richer and greater than even they realized. The names of Macdonald, Cartier, Tupper, Brown and others will become more venerated as the beneficiaries of their wisdom and statesmanship unfold the vastness and richness of their heritage. They are the architects—we of to-day are the mechanics; we are the constructors, and are putting into place and filling out into realization their conceptions of the future Canada.—Sir R. P. Roblin.

THE KING

I asked you to sign my next petition, because I am the mightiest king that ever lived. Other kings have yielded to me as a child to its sire; even have I laughed at all the gods of every land from Osiris to Jahowah.

With my breath have I wiped whole nations from the face of the earth.

For me men have discarded honor and woman virtue. I destroy nations, rule statesmen—and still they love me.

I fill insane asylums and prisons, house my subjects in hovels and feed them on husks. Still they love me.

Fathers give me their sons, mothers their daughters and maidens their lovers and beg me to stay.

With one touch I have raised great industries.

Judges yield to my power and lawyers forget under my spell to plead.

I lure cities. With one touch have I sunk navies and destroyed great armies.

I never sleep.

I turn gold into dross, health into misery beauty into caricature, and pride to shame. The more I hurt the more I am sought.

I, by turns, raise a man to highest heaven and sink him to deepest hell.

I am Satan's right hand man. I do his work freely, cheerfully and without pay, yet he is ashamed of me.

My name is Rum. Have you ever heard of me?—A. F. B.

HELPING THE EDITOR

This story is told by the editor of an Ontario weekly. He thinks a lot of his wife. Recently he took her to the big city, and there she was the guest of a woman who assumed a rather patronizing air.

"So your husband is an editor?" the hostess inquired.

"Yes."

"Since you have no children you must have considerable leisure time on your hands. I dare say you assist him now and then in his editorial work."

"Oh, yes," assented his wife who is asked to be a good cook, "I edit nearly all his inside matter."

A DAY OFF FOR THE HIRED MAN

If there were a law compelling every farmer to give his hired man a half-day off for fishing or hunting for every night he worked him till nine or ten o'clock at night in case of emergency, there would be fewer "cases of emergency."

Besides, matters would be more agreeable all round, if the hired man were given a fish-pole or a gun and allowed to go off on the river for half a day each month. The hired man who doesn't care such an outing isn't the kind of helper to have around the farm, and the farmer who is too narrow-souled to allow a faithful hand that much recreation, is not worthy of overseeing anything or anybody.

BE THANKFUL, JOHN

"How are you, to-day?" said a Scottish landlord to one of his tenants on meeting him on the road. "Vera weel, sir, vera weel," answered John in his usual way, "gin it wasna for the rheumatism in my right leg." "Ah, well, John, be thankful for there is no mistake you are getting old like the rest of us, and old age does not come alone." "Auld age, sir," replied John. "I wopder to hear ye. Auld age has nothing to do with it. Here's my fither lay feet as auld, an' it is quite sound and supple yet."

TWENTY YEARS AGO

Notes from the Free Press of Thursday, April 26th, 1894

The lawn mower is at work again.

The late Rev. Lachlan Cameron, of Thamesford, formerly of Acton, is reported to have bequeathed $1200 to missions.

The Council has been having the shade trees on the streets trimmed during the week. This will avert much danger of breakage by storms.

The funeral of Mr. D. Swackhamer, Sr., of the 4th line took place to "the Hill" on Thursday last. Rev. T. H. Adams preached an impressive sermon in the church.

A successful barn raising was held at the farm of Mr. Wm. Allan, lot 4, con. 2, Erin, last week. About 150 farmers were present. The captains were Robt. Brown and Joseph Leveson. The side of the former won by one rafter.

Knox Church Y. P. S. C. E. entertained a number of the members of the Georgetown Society on Thursday evening. Members of the congregation also were present and the proceedings were much enjoyed.

The Flower Committee of the E. L. C. E. on Tuesday evening conducted a very interesting missionary service. The school room was well filled. There was a profusion of flowers, and the programme was of a character calculated to inspire missionary zeal. Rev. W. Beyers gave an address on the "Progress of Missions." Mr. Chas. Jenner, Vice-President, was in charge.

A recent decision in Quebec by Judge Andrews of the Supreme Court is to the effect that drivers of horses are bound to take precaution to avoid accidents through running foot passengers down.

Mr. John R. Kennedy, of Buffalo, has been spending a few days with friends in Acton.

Rev. G. B. Cooke has returned from Guelph Hospital much improved in health.

BORN

WARREN—In Esquesing, on April 16th, to Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Warren, a daughter.

MARRIED

HUGHES-LAIRD—In St. Alban's Church, on April 9th, by Rev. G. W. Cooke, Mr. Harry Hughes, Welland, to Miss Jessie, eldest daughter of Mr. Samuel Laird, Acton.

DIED

McIVOR—Very Suddenly Corners, on April 14th, Alex. McIvor, aged 82 years.

JOHNSON—In Acton, on April 20th, Jeanette C. Campbell, wife of Angus Johnson, aged 50 years.

THE HIGH COST OF LIVING

A countryman living just outside of London drove in one day to buy provisions and other necessaries. He went first to a cobbler's and purchased a pair of boots. Not shoddy footwear carelessly made, or even machine made, but hand sewed and of strong leather. For this pair of boots he paid seven cents.

He next went to a butcher shop and bought a sheep for which he paid ten cents, and a dozen chickens, for which he paid eighteen cents or a cent and a half a piece. Two pounds of beef cost him a total of five cents for the beef was half a cent a pound. A visit to a grain merchant resulted in the purchase of a bushel of rye for 15 cents and at the fish market he bought twenty-five large fish for ten cents. At the draper's he purchased a suit of clothes for forty cents, for stout homespun cloth was selling at twelve cents an ell or nine and three-fifths cents a yard.

The countryman had no trouble in carrying his purchases home in his wagon. The wagon was large. He had driven to London with a load of firewood and he had sold the wood for twelve cents, which was a good price in those days.

It was early in the sixteenth century—about 400 years ago.

TO KEEP BOYS ON THE FARM

The way to attach the boy to the farm is by way of achievement. Think of the desolate home of the dairyman with a boiling herd—no paint on the house, no honeysuckle over the door and no time or money for the comforts within that go to make a home a home, such conditions are far reaching in their degrading effects, especially on the children.

But in direct contrast there are other farmhouses supported by dairy herds paying large profits, where the enthusiasm of the father has spread to the children.

Surrounding these homes are neatly mowed lawns with flowers, trees and vines around the painted and well-kept house, and where money is spent for the home comforts.

Here the question of how to keep boys on the farm never arises. Higher civilization costs something; the dairyman must increase his earning power.

THE REAL IRONY OF FATE

At the Authors' Club in New York one evening a number were swapping stories, when one told a tale, during the course of which more than once he used the term, "the irony of fate."

"That expression," remarked one of his listeners, "may well have filled the emergency of your story, but I have a better one. Once in San Francisco, when I was nearly down and out, I received a money order from home for $40, and the only man who could identify me was one to whom I owed $35."

THE VOTER'S PSALM

The politician is my shepherd. I shall not want for anything during the campaign. He leadeth me into the saloon for my vote's sake, he filleth my pockets with cigars, my beer runneth ever.

He inquireth after my family even unto the third and fourth generations. Yea, though I walk through mud and rain to vote for him and shout myself hoarse, when elected he straitway forgetteth me. I meet him in his own house and he knoweth me not. Surely the wool hath been pulled over mine eyes. Will some one please wake me.

MADE MOST OF THEIR TIME

Look over your list of friends and acquaintances and note their course. Did you not find on examination that those who to-day are men of influence and honor, were the youths who made the most of their valuable time, turning it to good account? And on the other hand do you not find those who stood at the corners with a cigar or pipe in their mouths, went from bad to worse, from worse to ruin?

WHAT THE KETTLE SINGS

I love to hear the kettle sing
In winter when the wind is blowing.
It sometimes makes me think of spring
Though it is snowing.

A little sort of chirp comes first,
And then a gentle drowsy humming,
That seems to say, "We're through the worst!
Yes, spring is coming!"

I know quite well, outside the room,
What isn't snow must be icy,
And yet I dream of fruit and bloom
In islands spicy—.

And little running, laughing streams,
And clear green woods, with vines and mosses,
And sunny places full of gleams,
When the wind tosses.

The leafy branches all about
Makes just another sort of singing!
And little furry things come out,
Leaping and springing.

And always when I get to this,
And feel a sort of pleasant creepy,
My mother wakes me with a kiss,
And "Oh, how sleepy!"

—Margaret Vandergift

CURE FOR HICCOUGHS

A young man, pale and weak, entered a physician's office.

—"Doctor," he said, "I have had—hic—I have had the hiccoughs for six hours. They are exhausting me."

"Let me see your tongue," said the physician. Out with it. Oh, further out. Out as far as you can put it. That is it. Now hold it out there till I go to the back office and get a depressor."

The physician disappeared. The young man, his long, pink tongue spread like a drappery over his chin, sat and waited with bulging eyes.

"By jove, he's long," the young man thought. "I wonder what can be keeping him."

"Just a minute," the physician called from the next room. "Keep your tongue out. I'll be there in a minute."

But it must have been five minutes before he returned. He was smiling.

"Did you keep your tongue out all the time?" he said.

"Yes," the young man answered.

"And you didn't hiccough, did you?"

"No."

"Then," said the physician, "you are cured."

The young man, as a matter of fact, was cured. The protrusion of his tongue had cured him. The physician said that this treatment rarely, if ever, failed to drive away the most obstinate attack of hiccoughs.—Ex.

POINTED PARAGRAPHS

A poor reputation may be better than none at all.

After a self-made man finishes a job he closes the factory.

A man's wife always agrees with him when he doesn't want her to.

The wise man does his duty and lets the other fellow do the explaining.

After a girl gets married she helps her girl friends to the same sort of trouble.

A friend may be a chap who hopes he can use you before you can use him.

No man can appreciate the loss of it until after he has got the worst of it a few times.

A bore is a man who, when he has an hour to spare, goes and spends it with one who hasn't.

A man never questions a woman's sanity as long as she doesn't interfere with any of his crazy projects.

Even if a man has no other bad habits he is apt to send souvenir postcards to his friends every time he has occasion to visit another town.

CORRECTING YOUR DEFICIENCIES

It is disheartening to recognize your deficiencies if you stop there. Possibly your education was not what it needed to be to fit you for the place in life to which you aspire. You make grammatical blunders, you mispronounce words in common use. If you realize these defects and go no farther, you will grow disheartened. But such deficiencies can be wiped out, if you bring to the task sufficient determination. Dictionaries are cheap. For fifty cents you may buy a book which will teach you how to pronounce all words you are likely to use in an ordinary conversation. And by imitating the speech of cultured people and reading good authors, you can correct vagaries of grammar which stamp you as uneducated. The realization of your shortcomings should be the preface to correcting them.

TONY'S VERSION

Young Tony of the Italian quarter, had been greatly interested by the teacher's story of the fox and the grapes. Arriving home from school, he repeated it in his excited, broken English to the family, following the teacher's version pretty closely until he reached the climax. Tony's conclusion was this: "De olds fox he say: 'D grapes no good, anyhow, alla sour, guess I gets de bannan.'"

WHERE HE WOULD FEEL AT HOME

A young fellow who wanted to join the army was asked by the recruiting sergeant whether he wished to enlist in a Highland regiment. "Not likely," he replied, "I'd rather go to a lunatic asylum than enlist in a Scotch regiment." "Aweel," said the sergeant, "I've nae doot ye'd feel mair at hame there."

The Pill That Brings Relief.—When, after one has partaken of a meal he is oppressed by feelings of fulness and pains in the stomach he suffers from dyspepsia, which will persist if it be not dealt with. Parmelee's Vegetable Pills are the very best medicine that can be taken to bring relief. These pills are specially compounded to deal with dyspepsia, and their sterling qualities in this respect can be vouched for by legions of users.

If Miller's Worm Powders needed the support of testimonials they could be got by the thousands from mothers who know the great virtue of this excellent medicine. But the powders will speak for themselves and in such a way that there can be no question of them. They act speedily and thoroughly, and the child to whom they are administered will show improvement from the first dose.