The Acton Free Press.

VOLUME XL.---NO. 22. Every Subscription Paid in Advance ACTON, ONTARIO, THURSDAY MORNING, NOVEMBER 26, 1914. Subscription Price, $1.00 Per Annum. SINGLE COPIES---THREE CENTS

The Acton Free Press

IS PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY MORNING AT THE

FREE PRESS-BUILDING MILL STREET, ACTON, ONT.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION—One dollar per year strictly in advance, $1.50 to subscribers in the United States. All subscriptions discontinued when the time for which they have been paid has expired. The date to which every subscription is paid is denoted on the address label.

ADVERTISING RATES — Transient advertisements, 10 cents per Nonpareil line for first insertion and 5 cents per line for each subsequent insertion. Contract display advertisements, for 50 or inches more, per annum, 10 cents per inch each insertion. Yearly contracts for reading matter 5 cents per line each insertion.

Advertisements without specific directions will be inserted till forbid and charged accordingly. Transient advertisements must be paid in advance.

Advertisements will be changed once each month, if desired. For changes oftener than above mentioned the extra composition must be paid for at regular rates.

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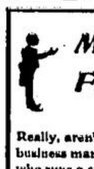

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Poetry.

FAITHFUL CANADA

You have heard of the call to arms, sir,
Of Canada, loyal and true,
To fight for the mother country,
Under the Red, White and Blue.

And you noticed how well they'v responded,
The bravest of Canada's sons,
Were ready, aye, ready, when called for,
And anxious to shoulder their guns.

Unmindful of what lay before them,
On battlefields over the foam,
They decided to fight for Old England
And forfeit the comforts of home.

They came from the town and the country,
To make one fine, glorious stand,
For liberty, justice and freedom;
The pride of their native land.

'Twas a sight that would fill you with pride, sir,
To see the brave boys go away
To the camp at Quebec where they drilled them
And got them in shape for the fray.

Each heart was as light as a school boy's,
Not a sign of regret did they show,
When a boy shouted, "Are we downhearted?"
From each came the clear answer, "No."

But, see, on the platform is standing
A mother with face pale and sad,
The heart brimming over with sorrow,
As she bids a farewell to her lad.

"Good-bye and God bless you," she whispers,
"Although it is breaking my heart
To see you go off to the battle,
'Tis duty and we must part."

Wives, sweethearts, mothers and sisters,
All gather to bid them God-speed,
And the train speeds away. There's a sample
Of Canada's heroes indeed.

And just a few weeks have elapsed, sir,
Since we gave them a last farewell,
When they went to camp for training,
And I think they have done real well.

For to-day they're in Old England,
Waiting the word to go,
All willing to do their duty,
And ready to meet the foe.

Some people would have us believing
That it's loyalty Canadians lack,
And that our desire is to sever
Ourselves from the Union Jack.

But just let that man come before me,
That ever dare raise such a kick.
And in less than no time he'll be singing
A jump on his hand from a brick.

For, sir, you can rest with assurance
That Canada's aim is to do
The same for the dear old Homeland
As the Homeland has done for you.

As a daughter will stick to her mother,
And meet trouble hand in hand,
Just so will our fair Dominion
Stick to the Motherland.

—W. Jas. Savage.

Select Family Reading

STRANDED, YET SAVED

By J. Marvin Nicholls

ARE WE EVER to forget the wild fascination that lingers about California in the early fifties? Gold dust blew like chaff through the monte halls and faro banks. Everybody breathed the perfumed air in a reckless freedom that made each a law unto himself. Men were staged for tragedy in those days and women forgot conventionalities.

Mamie Coultrane was a beautiful Pennsylvania girl. The youngest child in her home, pretty and graceful, she became the household pet. Sixteen summers had served to increase her beauty and found her still a schoolgirl.

Adjoining the Coultrane estate was that of old Colonel Bertrans, a family of wealth and influence. Charlie, the son and sole heir of the vast Bertrans estate, sought to win the heart of Mamie Coultrane. After frequent and persistent visits to her home, Charlie at last proposed a marriage. Knowing that this would be of immense financial advantage, Mr. Coultrane determined to bring the game of hearts to a happy consummation.

When Mamie heard the story of Charlie's love she seemed startled like a fawn. That strange, bewildering dread, so often felt and so little spoken, crept into her sensitive nature, for she knew her father agreed for gold. There came before her visions of girls sold bodily that wasting fortunes might be replenished. And it was this dread—the despoiling dread—when she remembered the tragic end of all such matrimonial alliances.

Charlie persisted in his devotions and pleaded for her consent. Each time Mamie told him she did not and could not love him though all his weight were gold. When he was gone Mamie's father made the hours hideous in his urging of Charlie's suit. At last, to save her father's love, she consented to join her fate with the fortunes of the Bertrans.

The wedding day came. Underneath the smiles and music of that festive hour, Mamie read in tearful silence the handwriting on the wall. The days of the honeymoon drew out their weary length. She did not, she could not love him for the sake of gold. For the want of such affection she caused one day to even respect him. In the atmosphere of lavish wealth he had been steeped until he unconsciously grew cold, selfish and jealously jealous.

In the first rapturous possession of the Pennsylvania beauty Charlie petted and flattered. Mamie endured his caresses. One day the young husband woke to the fact that his sweetheart did not love him; then oppression, then cruelty set in. For the sake of the baby, whose eyes were so much like Mamie's, she tried to love him. But she could not; she could not love the man whose gold had bought her body and not her heart.

The financial panic came on. The Bertram fortune was swept away. The Bertrams were poor now. It proved the parting of the ways. Mamie saw one more step in the prophecy of the handwriting on the wall. It was only the eyes of this fated girl who saw those words on that wedding night. Charlie, under the loss of his inheritance, grew more distrustful, cold and callous. She knew he loved no more. The certain was about to fall, to rise again on the last scene of the tragedy of hearts—life's real and only tragedy. For love's fitful flame was expiring and Mamie knew it.

The gold days were raging in California. El Dorados, lavish and princely, were found in streams and hills and gulches. Colossal fortunes were made in a day and as quickly lost. Charlie began his dream of gold. Leaving Mamie, the girl he had ceased to love, in the Coultrane home, he joined the motley crowd that set their faces toward the Golden State.

Weeks and months dragged by and still no word. One day the postman brought a letter from the far away West. Charlie, under the awakening of love's first rich dream, wrote encouragingly of his success. Her hagged her to come. Clelia, the baby, who loved him still, was sweetly sleeping on the hillside near the old home. Indulging one faint hope that it might be different, she started on the long journey. And it was Mamie's journey into a far-off land where she would be known no more. For something whispered—the ghost said this was the last scene in the tragedy.

He promised to meet her in San Francisco, the city of human wrecks and achievements. The steamer had passed through the Golden Gate. At the docks now, but her wild gaze caught the vision of no familiar face in all that gay crowd. Hope gone, baby dead, no strong arm on which to lean, sold for gold but without a dollar, she wept bitterly and began to drift—and drift—and drift.

One morning Mamie, still as beautiful as a dream and as bewitching as an elf, drifted into Lancha Plana, the gambling hall of California in her palmiest days of the gold fever. Everybody gambled. Women dealt monte; nobody thought it strange.

The largest gambling hall was owned by old Tom Reno, Lancha Plana's most respected citizen. He proposed to Mamie that she should deal monte for him. Her Pennsylvania blood chilled just a bit at the thought. Tom Reno poured a stream of gold into her lap. He promised protection. A stranded, poor, helpless girl, Mamie at last consented.

It was a shrewd move for old Tom Reno. He knew the power that would act like the flame on the firefly. California gamblers crowded the tables where this new queen of hearts presided. Gold flowed in steady streams into the coffers of Tom Reno.

Drifting on and on, out into the night and sold for gold. At last, without even a tremor, she saw men shot dead at the table where she dealt. Young men robbed of their last dollar rushed out for suicide. Old men clenched their fists and tore their gray hairs in the wildest frenzy.

This was akin to the dark and troubled dreams that Mamie saw that fateful wedding night, and now she knew its horrors would never pass away.

Father Loyola was just passing out of Santa Barbara Mission. The bells had just tolled out the Angelus over that parfumed and enchanted valley. The Santa Ynez Mountains lay back of him, propped like sentinels against the sky, cold and gray. In front of him lay the placid waters of Santa Barbara Channel.

With a swinging stride there stood before him a tall, dark-skinned man. He was a fine specimen of manly beauty. His face was handsome and winsome. About his shapely figure was the dash of California abandon. Father Loyola noticed at once that the man's eye had a tigerlike glitter.

Excitedly the stranger said: "Father, won't you give me just half an hour?"

"Certainly if I can help you," said the priest. And he made as though he would lead him to the chapel.

"Not here, not here. Some private place. I must tell somebody; I must tell you," he said in nervous snatches.

An insane gleam glowed in the fellow's eyes. Each walked in silence until Father Loyola's office was reached. Just as the good priest offered the man a chair he stepped to the door, locked it, and shoved the key into his pocket, muttering "I don't intend to be bothered." He drew from his hip pocket a heavy Colt's revolver and laid it on the table. Looked in with a mad man Father Loyola felt a strange uneasiness. The deadly plated looked ugly and dangerous.

"Have you ever been hounded by suicide?" the poor fellow blurted out.

"No. Why ask the question?"

"Because the thought is driving me mad. For a week I've lain with a drawn pistol in my hand. Somehow something holds me back."

"Where did you get such an idea, my man?" said the priest in the softest possible tone. For there are times when the softest breath will sweep a man off his feet. Despair is the very outer verge of hope, beyond whose chasm there is no light.

"My life's a failure. There's nothing left. I'm a failure, I tell you, a stranded wreck. When there is no hope left, isn't it time to die?"

Father Loyola would have tried to answer his terrible questionings, but the madman shrieked:

"Listen to my history, the story of my life; then tell me if I must die!"

As he thus commanded, the poor fellow laid his hand on the ugly revolver.

"My name is Frank Renola. I am the son of an honored prelate in the East and am a graduate of Harvard. I came to this land of gold, driven by the highest and noblest ambition. My father is poor and aged. I dreamed of building a fortune for his declining days, for I was the idol in the old home. On the steamer that came in through the Golden Gate I met a woman from the East, a woman of ravishing beauty. In time each of us drifted into the Lancha Plana region. Her beauty proved a snare. I found myself helpless in the entanglement of the web she spun around me. For eight years I've toiled in slavish bondage to this illicit idol that charmed me. I never sent a dollar to the old folks at home, though I made piles of gold at the monte table where she dealt. And one night, furious and wild, in that gambling hall of Tom Reno's, an insanely jealous man from France plunged a long shiny blade into the breast of Mamie Coultrane. The tragedy freed a life content to live in shadows, for there's nothing else for a woman cursed like crosses the borderland. And that which sat her free delivered me. Attracted to this place by the bewitching beauty, I learned to play the game. After the tragedy I determined to play no more. In the next two years I had saved my twenty thousand. About that time a strange, overpowering sense of the old life life took hold of me. I made my way to Tom Reno's place. Crazed by drink I raked by fast dollar and lost. I sneaked away, despising myself. The next day I swore off again. It was not until my earnings had reached the thousands. The strange sensation came back again. An old friend begged me to stake him for a hundred in a new claim. The mania was on, irresistible, overpowering. My friend was a typical miner. He proposed that we take the hundred to a faro bank and break for another hundred. I had done it in other days when my queen ruled at Tom Reno's. In the reckless fury of that night I lost the hundred—and my thousands."

Frank Renola paused in the terrible recital. He paced the floor, his finger on hammer of the gun. Cocking the revolver he turned suddenly and said:

"Father, shall I do it? Is it not best that I blow my brains out?" And he raised the vicious weapon to his temple.

"How old a man are you?" said Loyola sharply.

It served to arrest his attention long enough for him to say:

"Thirty-five."

"I should think that as young a man as you are you would have too much manhood left to sneak out of life through the back door."

It was a fit word at the very crisis. Father Loyola had swung his man around.

Frank Renola saw suicide in a new light. It was not heroic, and he could not be a coward. Saved! He handed Father Loyola his pistol and sank limply into the chair.

"A brave man will never give up the struggle; the brave never do," said the priest.

"Give me the pistol," said Frank. "The devil has left me; my ghost is gone. You may trust me."

From these wild and tragic experiences Frank fled to Manitoba, where he found a pretty Canadian girl who loved him. They were married. He grew rich and that girl thinks her Frank is the handsomest and the noblest of them all.

A THREE YEAR OLD

"Mother," said a three-year-old girl, "I don't think you know much about bringing up children, do you?"

"What makes you think that, dear?"

"Because you always send me to bed when I'm not a bit sleepy, and make me get up when I am."

Britain's Greatest Soldier

EARL KITCHENER
BRITISH MINISTER OF WAR

From the latest Photograph of the Great War Secretary in his Service Uniform

A HAPPY TIME FOR "MOTHER DEAR"

Elizabeth is the youngest granddaughter of a very charming little lady who is never called "grandma" but always "mother dear." Mother dear was raised in an old-fashioned farmhouse, and lived there until her husband died; then she came to town to spend the rest of her life with Elizabeth's mother. She is surrounded by new conditions, and while she is sweet and brave there are times when she is homesick.

Just before her last birthday, mother dear talked wistfully to Elizabeth of old times.

"You have never seen a quilting party, such as we had at the old farm," she said. "The women worked all day and in the evening, when the quilt was finished, the men came and there was a big supper and maybe a sleigh ride to end up with."

Elizabeth had this conversation in mind when the grandchildren and children of mother dear began to talk of a birthday celebration. Someone suggested that they give a reception and present mother dear with a dozen American Beauty roses and a new set of furs. But Elizabeth had a better plan.

"She is just longing for her old friends," she said, "and I think we ought to give her a grandmother party."

They heard her with interest and adopted her plan with enthusiasm.

The next day Elizabeth telephoned to a half-dozen girls. "Come over and bring your thimbles, and some pretty scraps from summer gowns." They came, and she told them radiantly.

"We will sew the patches for a quilt, and the grandmothers are to have a quilting party, but they must not know it yet.

The invitations to the party were extended to mother dear's old friends, who lived back in the country, and to the grandmothers of the girls, who sewed the patches. Three big automobiles were sent to bring the guests to the place of meeting. For the day, the living room of the very modern house had been transformed into an old-fashioned parlor, with mother dear's two china dogs on the mantel and jars of sweet peas everywhere.

Mother dear had not dreamed of the surprise in store for her, and when she entered the changed room, and saw the circle of sweet old faces gathered about the quilt, she almost broke down.

"Why, it's lovely, lovely," she cried; "who thought of it?"

Elizabeth laughed. "It's your quilting party," she said, "and you must forget that you aren't right back in the old farmhouse."

Tongues and needles were busy all the morning and at noon the little old ladies sat down to a lunch of hot biscuits and honey, of gingerbread and tea and cottage cheese. It was served on mother dear's own blue china, and thin teaspoons and placed silver cake basket gave an air of old-fashioned luxury.

Mother dear made a flushed and happy hostess. She was radiant with the spirit of familiar hospitality. At receptions and at formal dinners, she had been merely a depreciating little shadow, unused to modern ways but here she was on her own ground, and she poured tea and led in the conversation with equal grace and spirit.

The afternoon was occupied with finishing the quilt, and at five o'clock the lamps were brought in, for electricity would have spoiled the effect—and with the lamps came the grandfathers.

Only those who can see deep into the hearts of the old can understand the joy of mother dear at the reunion of friends of her own age. There were men whom she had known as a little girl, now white-haired, but still holding on to distinctive boyish traits. The old minister teased her just as he had teased when they went to school together, and when she tucked her hand into the arm of an ancient judge, who was to take her out to supper, he asked "Do you remember when I buried your doll and dug it up after dark because you cried?" Mother dear remembered, but as the dining room doors were open, she found little time to answer, for there was a chorus of delighted exclamations as the table was revealed.

The centerpiece was of fruit, at one end was a baked ham, and at the other a roast chicken. These were flanked by preserves and whole cakes—cocoanut and chocolate—and by molds of blanc mange. But best of all was the steaming oyster stew with which the meal began; mother dear and her venerable friends had lived in the time when to serve stewed oysters was to prove one's self socially knowing.

There were speeches after supper and old-fashioned songs. The quavering voices made the hackneyed music seem full of melody, and mother dear's high, thin voice led the rest.

At the end they presented mother dear with a memory book, in which the old folks signed their names.

When they were all gone, the little grandmother kissed Elizabeth.

Yet it was a very simple thing that made mother dear happy. Just a meeting with old friends and with old fashions.—Kansas City Times.

THE BLACK COW

A particularly ingenious example of the methods employed by German spies at the front for communicating information to their troops is given in The London Times. A favorite sign of the German spies is a black cow. This animal, crudely sketched in black crayon on walls and gates and fences, was frequently noticed by the French as they passed and was so badly drawn that it aroused no suspicion. The only remark it called forth was that it was much out of proportion. Sometimes it was small, sometimes large, now rampant, now constant, and often the horns were ridiculously long in comparison with the rest of the animal. A little cow signified that the road was only weakly defended; a moderate-sized cow meant that the Allied troops were in the neighborhood; a large cow was a warning that there were earthworks or trenches near by. The direction in which the cow's head pointed indicated where the danger was. If it pointed in the air, that meant that the Germans had better reconnoitre the ground by aeroplane before advancing.

The only thing wrong with money is that there isn't enough to go around.

AFTER THE GREAT WAR

When the war's last battle is ended, when
the last grim bullet has spoil,
When the hills and the plains and the
valleys are strewn with the millions
dead.

When the banners have ceased their waving o'er the serried ranks of the brave,
And the mother sorrows unending for her son in a nameless grave.

When the Britons have won the struggle for honor and home and right,
When they've shattered the German legions and broken the Kaiser's might.

When the homes of the conquered nations mourn thousands of loved ones slain,
And there's no one to care for the children, who know naught but hunger and pain.

When the last brave foeman is vanquished, his country brought to its knees,
And the Union Jack of Old England in victory floats on the breeze.

Then a prayer of glad thanksgiving will ascend to the Throne above
Fierce passions will be forgotten, and will dawn the reign of Love.

Then the men of our great Dominion to their brothers beyond the sea
Will extend the hand of forgiveness, of friendship and charity.

And the nations that see desolation and hunger for every one,
Will come in their boats to Canada, the freest land 'neath the sun.

Then the Reign of Peace shall be ushered in, and the war no more shall be,
And the nation great mount to high estate on the wings of Destiny.

—H. E. Bluart, Moosimin

LIBERTY.

They tell us, sir, that we are weak, unable to cope with so formidable an adversary. But shall we be stronger? Will it be the next week or the next year? Will it be when we are totally disarmed and when a British guard shall be stationed in each house? Shall we gather strength by irresolution and inaction? Shall we acquire the means of effective resistance by lying supinely on our backs and hugging the delusive phantom of hope until our enemies have bound us hand and foot? Sir, we are not weak if we make a proper use of those means which the God of nature hath placed in our power. Three millions of people, armed in the holy cause of liberty and in such a country as that which we possess, are invincible by any force which an enemy can send against us. Besides, sir, we shall not fight our battles alone. There is a just God who presides over the destinies of nations and who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us. The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone. It is to the vigilant, the active, the brave. Besides, sir, we have no election. If we were base enough to desire it, it is now too late to retire from the contest. There is no retreat but in submission and slavery. Our chains are forged. Their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston. The war is inevitable, and let it come! I repeat it, sir, let it come!—Patrick Henry.

TWENTY YEARS AGO

Notes from the Free Press of Thursday, November 20th, 1894

Butter sold on Guelph market on Saturday for from 16 to 17 cents.

Pauline Johnson is engaged for an evening in Acton next month.

The revival services just closed in the Methodist Church have been of great spiritual profit and largely attended throughout. Rev. Mr. Ranton's farewell meeting was attended by between 600 and 700 persons. Rev. Mr. Howell received 41 new members last Sunday, and more will be received next Sunday.

Mrs. Dr. Payne left last Thursday for her home in Richland, Iowa.

Thanksgiving Day last Thursday was observed in some of the churches. A number of people visited in town, and several of our citizens visited elsewhere with friends.

CREWSONS CORNERS

Messrs. Forbes and Cripps are busy with their chopping mill two days a week.

The navigation season being over, Mr. Wm. Coleman, who has been sailing this summer is home for the winter.

Mrs. N. Forbes and daughter had a narrow escape from serious injury by being thrown from their buggy while coming from Acton. Mrs. Forbes' injuries were the most severe, including a broken rib.

A number of the members of the church here went last Wednesday evening to Mr. Robt. Brown's, formerly of the corners, now in Acton. Mr. R. G. Brown was for some time leader of the choir here and during the evening was the recipient of an address read by Miss Bella Kitching and a handsome watch chain and charms at the hands of Mr. Lewis Cann. Messrs. George Cann, Lewis Cann, Nicholas Forbes and Wm. Gray were the signers of the address on behalf of the congregation.

BORN

STALKER—In Maquasing, on November 25th, to Mr. and Mrs. John Stalker, a daughter.

MARRIED

HURT-THOMPSON—In Erin, at the home of Mr. Joseph Thompson, on November 21st, by Rev. W. J. Brandon, Mr. J. H. Hurt, to Miss Lillie Thompson, all of Erin.

MACKLAY-SWINDLEHURST—At the Methodist Parsonage, Georgetown, on November 21st, by Rev. D. A. Moir, Duncan Sinclair to Mary Jane Swindlehurst, both of Erin township.

NAMED

"Who is that powerful giant who looks like a modern Samson?" asked the stranger.

"That is Percival Algernon Cyril Milk," replied the native.

"And who is the delicate, sickliest looking chap with him?" asked the stranger.

"That is John L. Sullivan Hercules Strong," replied the native.—Stanford Cinqarral.

A HANDY MAN

A woman in the country recently advertised in the local papers for a "handy man."

"What I want," she said to the first applicant, "is a man that will do odd jobs about the house, run errands, one that never answers back and is always ready to do what I want."

"Ah," said the applicant as he turned away. "It's a husband you're looking for, ma'am."