The Acton Free Press

THURSDAY, JUNE 10, 1920

CONSOLATION

Not dead—oh, not but borne beyond the shadows
Into the full, clear light;
Forever done with pilot and cloud and tempest,
Where all is calm and bright.

Not even sleeping—called to glad awakening
In heaven's endless day;
Not still and motionless—stepped from earth's rough places
To walk the King's highway.

Not silent—just passed out of earthly hearing
To sing heaven's sweet, new song;
Not lonely—dearly loved and dearly having
Amid the white-robed throng.

But not forgetful—keeping fond remembrance
Of dear ones left awhile;
And looking gladly to the bright reunion
With hand-clasp and with smile.

Oh, no, not dead!—but past all fear of dying,
And, with all suffering o'er,
May not that I am dead when Jesus calls me
To live forevermore.

—By Amy Parkinson.

MILDRED'S CHANGED VIEWS

MILDRED HILL had been born into a home where there was always a dearth of money. It was one of her earliest resolves that as soon as she was earning money she would save and get ahead. When Jim Scott persuaded her to give up selling hosiery and marry him she felt that her opportunity had come.

Jim was earning $15 a week and he regularly turned over his unopened pay envelope to Mildred. She did all and more than she had anticipated. Sometimes her economies surprised even herself.

Jim could not but marvel at his thrifty wife. He had been scarcely able to get through the week on his salary, but here was Mildred managing for two and saving besides.

Mildred revelled in her knack for saving as some women revel in their gift of beauty. When Margaret was born she dismissed the "help" at the end of ten days and did her own work. She did the same when Elizabeth came, bringing on an illness that made her drag wretchedly around the house for months.

As the years passed Jim's salary increased, but nothing in proportion to some others—Jack Meeker's, for instance. Meeker's promotions were a puzzle to Jim. Business seemed to rest so lightly on him.

"After the day we've just put in I don't see how you can throw off everything the way you do," remarked Jim to him the evening on the way home.

"The office door slammed on my business worries," replied Meeker. "And if I did carry them home they'd die a quick death once I got to the wife and kiddies. Anyway, what does worrying get you?"

It hadn't got him much, Jim admitted, as he covertly compared his shabby suit with Meeker's new one. As he passed the Meeker house, with its bright lights and the sound of music, Jim unconsciously compared it with his own dark house just around the corner, which showed but a single gleam from a back window, and wondered whether such a home might not dispel even his business worries.

When Mrs. Meeker and the children waited for Jack in the outer office Jim observed with what pride his fellow-worker greeted them. Not even to himself did Jim ever admit why he always arranged to meet Mildred and the girls in a department store instead of having them come to the office. Though he could not have told wherein it lay, yet he knew that there was a difference between them and most of the wives and daughters of the office force. There was nothing about Mildred to thrill a man with the pride of possession. And Mildred had unwittingly done all in her power to belittle the girls' natural attractiveness by garbing them in garments wholly ugly. They were always economically several sizes too large to begin with and well outgrown before they were discarded.

"How much does Jack Meeker get?" asked Mildred sharply one evening. "Looks to me as if they're headed for the poorhouse."

"I don't know exactly, but a good deal more than I'm getting," replied Jim.

"Why, Jim Scott!" exclaimed Mildred. "And you got Jack in there yourself! You've been working there years ahead of him!"

"I know."

"I should think you'd feel mean about it."

"I guess he deserves it," replied Jim. "They do things on the square in our office, and a man gets about what's coming to him. I don't suppose you'd let me have the office force out here some Saturday afternoon?"

"What for?" asked Mildred.

"All the fellows have been doing it."

"But you haven't been going on account of your clothes, so why should you have them here? It would cost, anyway, $5 for refreshments. No, you can't have them."

"Five dollars to feed twenty-five men?" scoffed Jim. "It would be more like $25 to do it right."

"Well, you're not going to have 'em!"

"Anyway, I'm going to buy some clothes," said Jim with a determination that Mildred had not seen since their marriage. "Meeker's having the crowd a week from Saturday and I promised him I'd come. I'm going dressed as good as the best of them for once in my life."

"Why, Jim Scott! With winter nearly here and all the coal to lay in! You'll do no such thing!"

"See here, Mildred, I'm going to get those clothes, and that's flat! You can't see anything in life but a dollar, and not what it's good for. I give you credit for being economical, but you'll get no praise from me for being stingy. I've been opening my eyes lately. You say the Meekers are headed for the poorhouse. You'd think we'd already arrived, from the way we live. What the Meekers spend makes Jack so fit that he just forges ahead. They don't huddle around a kitchen stove to keep warm, nor strain their eyes reading by a kerosene lamp to keep down bills. Their house isn't as good as ours in itself, but they've taken it away out of our class by the way they run it. They've got heat and lights and books and music. I've figured it out that the reason I'm in a rut is because there's no inspiration for me to do differently. We're not living as well now as we did on $15. If I got $50 I'd never smell a cent of it, nor have clothes that a man in the outfit wouldn't be ashamed of. You'd tote it all off to the bank."

Jim stalked out of the room. It seemed incredible to Mildred that Jim, who had never before complained since their marriage, could have uttered the words that were ringing in her ears.

"And holding up that extravagant Maxie Meeker for an example to me!" was her indignant thought.

Mildred looked on Jim with eyes of awe the day of the Meeker affair. She knew that for once he had bought regardless of expense, and she saw that he was a different man. With his shabby clothes he had doffed a slovenly manner and a slouchy gait.

He came home from Meekers' and calmly announced, "We'll have the crowd here the last Saturday of next month."

"You can't, Jim!" shrieked Mildred. "We haven't any dishes, nor silver, nor linen nor chairs! We haven't anything! You can go gallivanting around as much as you please, but you can't have one here!"

"Say, Mildred, how much have you saved up?"

"Six thousand eight hundred and sixty-one dollars."

"Well, we're going to spend the $861 in making things livable here. Why haven't I the same right to live that the other fellows have? What does anything count for if we can't have any home life? And there are the girls."

"Think of it!" said Mildred to Mrs. Meeker. "Wanting to spend $861 to fix up up!"

"What are you saving for Mildred," used Mrs. Meeker.

"Why, to get ahead so we won't be so poor. Of course, you don't believe in saving—"

"Don't I? I believe in saving in proportion to what a man's getting. We save 15 per cent. of Jack's salary, and always have. But a man wants to live according to his income or there's not much incentive for him. Don't you see, Mildred, that Jim's not had a chance with the other men? You know there is a saying that tendeth to poverty. Some folks with a big bank account are mighty poor. My advice is, to go ahead and spend the money that Jim wants you to in fixing things up, and I'll help you plan if you want me to. You'll never be sorry, for it will all come back to you in some way."

What two women could do with a few hundred dollars was a revelation to Jim Scott. He was so proud of his home, his wife and his children on the day he brought out the force that he fairly radiated goodwill and confidence.

"A magnetic personality! A magnetic personality!" muttered Daniel Hitchcock, who was the big power in the office. "Strange I never noticed it before!"

"Mildred, how about it?" asked Jim, catching her in his arms after the guests had departed. "Sorry you did it?"

"No. Was everything all right?"

"Couldn't have been lighter! You know you're a picture in that dress, and with your hair all fixed up so fine. And the girls! Wasn't it worth it?"

"I guess so," replied Mildred. "Let's turn out the lights and go to the kitchen."

"Not much; we don't turn out the lights until we're through in here and I've told you something. What do you think? Mr. D. H. wants to see me in his private office Monday morning. He says he shouldn't wonder if I could take Buck's place. Buck went over to a rival firm yesterday."

"And what is Buck's place?" asked Mildred.

"It's miles ahead of where I am now. A big jump for any man. Oh, Mildred, at last—"

"Maxie said it'd come back to us," said Mildred.

ADVANCEMENT THROUGH RECREATION

The young worker who hears it suggested that he could at himself for a better position by taking up some line of study through a school of correspondence, a night school, or independently, is very likely to show, dismay at the suggestion. "But that would mean," he objects, "that I would have to work all the time. A fellow has to have some change, some recreation."

There is, of course, something in this point of view. One whose daily occupation is confining and demands hard work, must make a decided sacrifice to devote several evenings a week to study. The two occupations are of the same kind. Only one who is physically vigorous, as well as determined, can undertake such a programme.

But the young man who leaves his desk Saturday afternoon at one, and goes out on the tennis court, is not exactly resting, as he runs and jumps and whips the little white ball across the net. He is working like a stevedore. When he finishes he is tired enough to drop down where he stands and fall asleep. But he goes home cheerful, nevertheless, and tells his mother what a fine time he has had. He has been working hard, but it is such a different work from that to which he is accustomed that he looks upon it as play. There is a reason for the popularity of football among the college students. The young fellows whose chief occupation is study are many of them just off the farm, and of the other no small proportion are accustomed to make vigorous use of their muscles. Football would not seem such an agreeable recreation to a farmer's son after a day spent in pitching hay. It might seem a very pleasant change to that same youth, after a day upon integral calculus and history.

The youth whose day's work has been out of doors, and who has used his muscles more than his brain, ought not to think of a little study at night as a continuation of his toil. It is a change, and should have in it an element of recreation. When it comes to that, most of our work is play, viewed from a certain standpoint. Very few occupations demand such labor as foot ball. One who plays chess must do as hard intellectual work as is called for in most lines of business. We call chess and tennis recreation because it is out of the line of our ordinary activities, not because they are different themselves. If you are a manual worker and go to your night study in the adventurous spirit with which you would undertake a game, you will not find it work so much as play.

It should be remembered, too, that much can be done by a little study every night. If you can have finished dinner by quarter of seven, and spend the next hour in study, by quarter of eight you have the evening before you free for other pursuits. No one wants young people to work all the time, but many of you could fit yourselves for more congenial, better-paid work, by doing a little regular study, so unlike the labor by which you earn your daily bread that it will seem almost a recreation.

WISE CHILD

A miserly landlord was going round collecting his rents the other day. At one house he was greatly interested in a little girl who watched open-mouthed and open-eyed the business of paying over the money and accepting the receipts.

He patted her on the head and started to search his pockets, saying: "I must see what I have for you."

After searching his pockets for some time he at last brought out from a remote corner a peppermint.

As he handed it to the girl he said: "And now what will you do with that?"

The little girl looked it, then at him, and replied: "Wash it."

PETE

Pete was fishing below the bridge when the minister spied him. "Hello, Pete!" he called. "Any luck to-day?"

Pete looked up languidly, hardly stirring his lazy figure. Then he nodded to the man on the bridge, and turned again to contemplate the river at his feet. He knew the minister quite well and did not need to look at him long. The minister stood still, his hands behind his back, watching the motionless line with eager blue eyes. As it gave a twitch he started and in a moment was scrambling down the bank, regardless of his well-creased trousers and shining shoes.

"Well, you are having luck," the newcomer remarked, cheerfully, turning to view the well-filled basket near by.

"Pretty fair," the fisherman admitted, reluctantly. Then he relapsed into silence. The minister liked conversation, but he was a good fisherman himself, and so he remained contentedly silent, his eyes on the line. They looked an ill-sorted pair, the well-groomed clergyman, and shambling, unshaven Pete, but neither of them thought so.

It was Pete's day of good things, and he hailed in perch after perch, his companion, fairly bubbling over with enthusiasm. Pete himself was unmoved. After awhile he turned to the man beside him and handed him the rod without comment. The minister's face flushed with pleasure.

"Why, thank you," he said heartily. "I would like to try my hand at it, if you don't mind." His companion made no response, but stretched himself full length on the ground and closed his eyes. People said that Pete never sat up if he could help it, since he was the laziest inhabitant of his native town. Suddenly his rest was disturbed by a startled exclamation which caused him to open his eyes in mild surprise. The clergyman handed him the fishing rod and sprang to his feet. "I forgot the hour," he exclaimed in dismay. "What will they think? Thanks ever so much, Pete. We'll try it again some day soon." And he was gone.

Pete turned and watched the generous figure, which reporters called commanding, until it was out of sight. It seemed strange to him that one should be summoned away from doing what he liked. He never was. Pete did not often think strenuously about anything, but to-day his mind was rather active and the subject of his cogitations was a man with a fresh-colored, benignant face, framed in silver hair, who had looked at him with kindly eyes as blue as the sea. "And him a parson!" Pete murmured wonderingly.

It was a very warm clergyman who officiated at a wedding a few minutes later. He had surreptitiously cleaned his boots with his handkerchief, and, mindful of his collegiate son, had anxiously scanned his trousers. Fortunately, he did not know that his collar had wilted, but his wife saw it. She was not in a critical frame of mind, however, for she had conjured up terrible pictures in the moments of waiting for the minister. Promptness was one of the reverend doctor's virtues, and his gentle lady had felt that only some awful catastrophe could have detained him on such an important occasion.

That night at dinner the smiling maid deposited a huge platter of well-cooked perch before her master. "Pete brought them, sir," she said, and her mouth twitched.

"Pete!" exclaimed the minister. "Well, he is a good fellow, to be sure!" People did not usually say that of the fisherman, and it must be confessed that the members of the minister's family had never regarded him so charitably. They thought as pleasant things of him as they could while they partook of the feast which he had provided! The minister did not need to try to think pleasant things, for did he not know Pete very well indeed?

After this it grew to be a custom for the clergyman and his odd acquaintance to go fishing together. People wondered at it, and some said that the reverend doctor was encouraging shiftlessness. Pete's hard-working wife pondered over the matter as she scrubbed and ironed and cooked from morning till night, and she pondered still more as she sat in the gallery of a Sunday and listened eagerly to the sermon which always brought cheer to her soul.

"Folks needn't look down on Pete. I guess if he's good enough for the parson, they can put up with him," she said to herself angrily.

One morning the minister met Pete with his rod, and his face grew wistful.

"I wish I could go, too, Pete," he said regretfully, "but I must work to-day. There is a sermon to finish, and several of my people are ill. Well, good luck to you."

Pete never had less enjoyment than on this special day, although the shining little beauties fairly courted his hook. "They ain't no business to make parson work so hard," he said to himself. His wife would scarcely have recognized his face had she seen it then. Half of the contents of Pete's basket found its way to the parsonage that night.

The next Sunday, after the service had begun, a shambling figure crept through the doorway of the church, on the corner, and Pete took possession of the back seat. His face was as immovable as ever, and, regardless of the well-dressed congregation, scarcely heeding the music, he sat with his eyes riveted on the erect figure behind the pulpit. He saw the soft light falling through the colored window, resting on the silver hair. He heard the quiet voice he knew so well lifted in prayer and benediction, and awe mingled with love took possession of Pete's heart.

It was the next day that he stumbled into the minister's study and asked in a few words for work.

The minister looked earnestly at his guest for a moment, and then his face became illumined with one of those smiles which men and women and little children prized so dearly.

"Why, yes, Pete," he responded cordially, "I am sure we can manage it someway. But I must tell you, Pete, it will be hard at first. You'll want to run a hundred times. The river and those little beauties which your hook knows so well how to tempt will keep calling to you. I feel just that way myself often. But a man must do a man's work in the world, and there will be play days for you and me after all. Oh, yes! We'll manage it."

Then the minister took down some fishing rods and he and Pete gravely compared them.

After the visitor started to go he lingered a moment.

"I won't go back on you, parson," he said. And he never did.

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That venison will still be dear.

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REPUBLIC'S TWO GREAT DAYS

The republic of Ecuador celebrates two national holidays, and, strange to say, both are "independence days." Both are observed with the same enthusiasm and patriotic fervor that is displayed in the United States on the anniversary of the adoption of the immortal declaration according to the Pan-American Union.

The liberty-loving patriots had to shoot two bolts at Spanish domination before they succeeded in gaining permanent independence. The first time they had a quiet but determined revolution in Quito, the present capital of the republic, the patriots assembling at the house of Manuela Cañizares, a brave and beautiful woman, on August 6, 1809, when they prepared their declaration of independence and chose the officials who were to compose the provisional government. That night the conspirators gathered their forces in different parts of the city, and Captain Salinas, who communicated the two companies of regular troops and guarded the city, sent to their barracks, read to them the declaration and won them over to the cause of the patriots. They overpowered the bodyguard of Ruiz de Castilla, the Spanish governor, early on the morning of August 10 and thus established the first republic without shedding a drop of blood. It lasted only about a year, when Castilla succeeded in overthrowing the patriotic government and again brought the country under Spanish dominion.

The fires of liberty had been kindled, however, and the Ecuadoreans kept up their heroic struggle notwithstanding many reverses, until in 1820 the people of Guayaquil, the leading seaport of the country, succeeded in rebelling on October 9. With the aid of Gen. Simon Bolivar, the great Venezuelan emancipator, and of his compatriot, Gen. Antonio Jose Sucre, the Ecuadoreans after many bloody battles succeeded in completely annihilating the Spanish forces and establishing freedom in Ecuador forever. Therefore it is that the Ecuadoreans celebrate two "independence days" August 10 and October 9.

THE ANXIOUS DEAD

Everyone, nearly, in the English-speaking allied countries are familiar with those beautiful, haunting, incomparable lines, entitled, "In Flanders Field," written by Col. McCrae, of Guelph. We reproduce below another of his poems, of almost as great merit. They show that he possessed very rare poetical qualities and might, had he lived, taken high rank among the poets of this century. He wrote a number of other poems before the war, and our readers will be glad to know that these are about to be issued in book form:

O gun, fall silent till the dead men hear
Above their heads the legion pressing on!
(These fought their fight in time of bitter fear
And died not knowing how the day had gone.)

O finding muzzles, pause and let them see
The coming dawn that streaks the sky afar!
Then let your mighty chorus witness be
To them, and Caesar, that we still make war.

Tell them, O guns, that we have heard their call:
That we have sworn and will not turn aside;
That we will onward go till we win or fall:
That we will keep the faith for which they died.

Bid them be patient, and some day, anon,
They shall feel earth unwrapt in silence deep.
Shall great hr wonderment the quiet dawn,
And in content may turn them to their sleep.

IF YOU

Talk about your ill health, it will make you less healthy.

Worry about your work, it will make you less capable.

Imagine you are disliked, it will make you less likeable.

Find fault with others, it will make them faultier.

Anticipate evils, you will be sure to bring them upon you.

Talk much of what you are going to do, you will never do it.

Sit bemoaning the past, you will never get on in what you have.

Complain of lack of opportunities, you'll miss what you have.

Wail bitterly that it is an unjust world and life is not worth living, you'll find it come true for sure, in you own case at least.—Philadelphia Bulletin.

BUSINESS AS USUAL

A Hebrew and an Irishman were fishing in separate boats, some distance apart. The Irishman got a bite and was so nervous that he fell out of his boat. He sank twice and as he came up the second time the Hebrew rowed over and called out: "Mister, can I have your boat if you don't come up again?"

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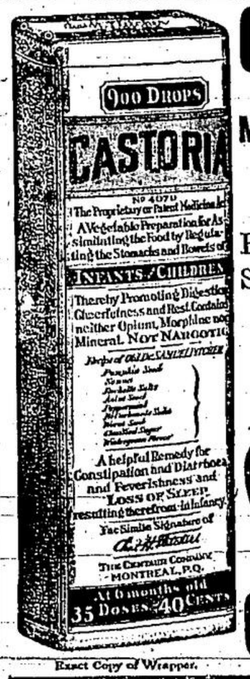

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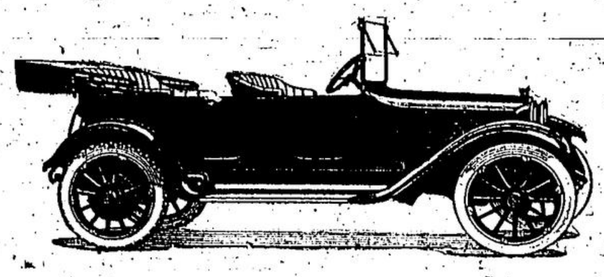

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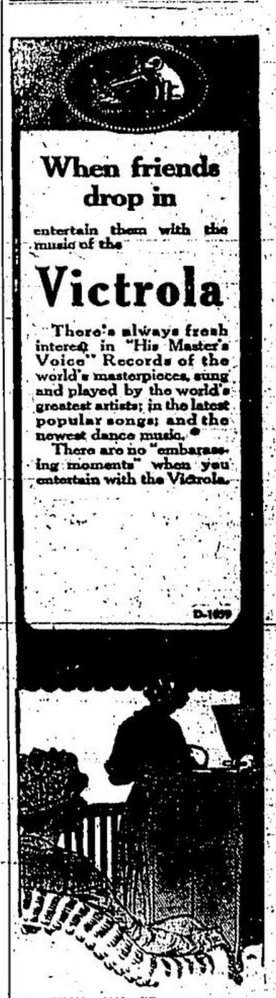

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