The Acton Free Press

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 1920

THE VILLAGES

I cannot hope that Barrow's feet forever and a day
Will pass my little House of Love where latticed sunbeams stray,
But when she lays her hand at last upon the swinging latch,
And steps where happy years have smiled beneath our spring-sweet thatch,—
Grant me, oh, God, this heartfelt prayer, that somewhere it may be
Where little, small-town sympathy may fold and comfort me.

The little, small-town sympathy that runs across the fields
In blue-checked gingham aprons, and with flour upon its hands,
That bakes and brews, and sweeps and dusts, that wakeful nerves and shields,
The little, small-town sympathy that knows and understands.

Thy cities, God, are builded high with carven stone on stone,
But hearts may ache, and lives may drop unheeded and alone,
And souls may dwell unknown, unloved, a single wall between—
Not on the quiet, home-sweet lives that fringe the village green.
Let others reap the splendors, Lord, but give instead to me
The homely round of living blent with small-town sympathy.

The little, small-town sympathy that stands off neighbor feet
From tiny lamp-lit houses down a maple-shaded street;
That lends its strength, on tear-dimmed ways its own bruised feet have trod,
The little, small-town sympathy—the very soul of God.

—Martha Haskell Clark.

THE PROFITEERS

By Mary M. Parks

THE cabin home looked as if it had sprouted, like the trees around it, out of the slope on which it stood. Jesse would have laughed at the notion, but Melissa would have understood instantly and have thrilled to the thought.

Well Jesse knew that it had sprung, not from the hillside, but from his own fertile brain and brawny arms. When he was only eighteen he had helped break the ground for a row of log cottages at a near-by summer resort. He had cut down trees, hewed logs, gathered stones and carried mortar; and not a stroke done by more skilled workmen had missed his keen eye or escaped his tenacious memory. Later he was able to reproduce in his own dwelling much that he had seen.

The foundation and half of the lower story were built of rough stones gathered from the hillside. On them rested hewn logs, every one carved all over with sweet memories. Melissa, clad in her Sunday-best pink gingham, swinging the stiffest of ruffled white sunbonnets, had spent many a long bright afternoon on a stump near by, exchanging with Jesse the gay banter of courtship.

Melissa could show you the very notch Jesse's axe had made one day when it slipped at her sudden outcry. Turning her head, she had spied a beautiful red fox calmly surveying them from the knoll on which the house was to stand. When Jesse looked round, the fox was only a red streak in the distance; but Jesse had seen it, so it was no hallucination. Melissa firmly believed it was an omen, although she vainly searched dream books and questioned all the old wives of the neighborhood. Now, however, after some years, she was prepared to assure anyone that the presence of a red fox on a prospective house site is the best of signs. She had watched her future home grow into a wonderful thing; and were not her three children strong and healthy and as beautiful as the day?

The cabin had a wide open hallway between two square rooms and a broad porch running full length back and front; but the high-studded upper rooms, the big stairway, the closets and built-in cupboards and large shifting windows, transformed the cabin of Melissa's childhood into a palace.

She would not have exchanged it for a real palace. It was set in a nook between two Ozark hills, facing the sunny south, sheltered from the wind. On the hillside to the left stood the colonial mansion in which Miss Matty Shelby lived alone; on the hilltop to the right perched the big farmhouse that belonged to the Carsons, a childless old couple. Both were flanked by broad acres of rich bottom land. Both were stately dwellings, piled with fine old furniture and stuffed with curios. Miss Matty's brothers had brought her treasures from every part of the world. The Carsons' only son, a sailor, had done the same for them before he was lost at sea.

In time of great need Melissa had sometimes been called on to help at both of the big houses. She admired them and their contents but would as soon have lived in a museum. "Cluttered," she called them. "The time Miss Matty spends dusting and polishing and moving things around!" she said to Jesse once. "And she's worried to death all the time about moths and things fading." She looked proudly at her own solid oak floors, as white as soft soap and sand could make them, and as safe from moth and rust as the ground itself. Her tables and rustic and splint-bottomed chairs were handmade.

"But thar," she added, "I reckon she has to have somep'n to 'fuss over. She's got no chillen to play with."

Melissa spent all her spare moments frolicking with her babies; but one mild spring afternoon when Pete, the youngest, was two years old they tried in vain to interest her. They climbed over her for a time like kittens over a mother cat; but except for an occasional preoccupied pat or kiss they could get no response, and finally they went alone to their mud pies. Left to herself, Melissa sat very still, with her fine eyes fixed on the road the road vanished into the woods. Jesse was ploughing at Miss Matty's. To-morrow he might have to go to the Carsons'.

After a while she rose and scanned the sky anxiously; then she surveyed a plot of newly ploughed ground where a flock of hens were foraging. Melissa was as content with their small acreage as with their simple dwelling; her own father had ploughed this patch for them. Her eyes turned again uneasily to the hazy sky. Although she had no carpets or furs to be eaten by moths, Melissa had her little worries; she knew Jesse would be late, and yet she could not long keep her eyes from that spot where the road vanished into the woods.

He was unusually late. The children were in bed and the moon had risen above the hill before she heard his wagon bumping over the rocky road; she ran to open the big gate. With a cheery greeting he drove in and climbed heavily down. He was very tired, but his smile was not forced.

"I'll leave the plough in the wagon and put the cover on," he said. "Got to go to the Carsons' in the morning, if it doesn't rain too hard. Pappy ploughed the patch, didn't he?"

Melissa had not meant to tell him until after supper, perhaps not until morning; but he had unwittingly touched the spring that released the afternoon's accumulated anxiety like a freshet.

"Jesse, Pappy says there's no seed taters in town; there's none anywhar. What on airth'll we do?"

Jesse's smile broadened. He stepped briskly to the back of the wagon. He lifted out a heavy sack and set it at Melissa's feet. Hoping and yet doubting, she reached into the bag, took out a tuber and turned it over and over as tenderly as if it had been a bronze turkey egg.

"Seed taters!" she gasped, unbelievingly.

"Miss Matty gave them to me. She paid me for a full day's work. She throw these in for good measure, she 'lowed."

"For good measure!" echoed Melissa. "And they worth mighty nigh their weight in gold! She's a good woman. Pappy's says hit'll rain before morning."

"Have to break the ground again," said Jesse regretfully. "Glad I got Miss Matty's in. She's a lone woman."

"Hit's getting late for taters. If it should be a hard rain—"

The moon was so bright that even from where they stood they could see the long, straight furrows in the mellow earth. The odor from Melissa's clover draws bees. A wild thought rushed through her mind. "Hit's light as day! But thar! You're tired."

"Shucks! Wait till I've had a smack and I'll be all right again," replied Jesse; "hit'll be a heap o' fun."

While he unhitched and fed his horses Melissa took up the bone and bacon that had been kept hot by the coals in the big fireplace. There was a dish of spring greens also, and honey from the bee tree Jesse had found the fall before. While he ate and rested, Melissa began cutting the tubers for planting; and when he had finished they carried the sack out into the moon light.

Jesse paused after a space and gazed meditatively at the moon. "Hit's plumb foolish, I reckon, but I cain't help feeling creepy about planting taters in the light o' the moon."

"Pappy don't hold that notion. Once when somebody axed him if he planted his taters in the dark o' the moon he 'lowed he usually planted 'em in the ground. He don't believe cats bring luck nor ary such thing. He laffed and laffed about my red fox. He 'lowed it was a sign we better have a tight hen-house and shut the door o' nights."

"Last time I was to Hawsonville, I got to talking to one o' those perfessors at the State College," said Jesse. "He was a right friendly feller. He 'lows seeds mebbe do start quicker in the light o' the moon. Tain't the light, he 'lows, but because the moon is closer to the airth and sorta sthe things up; but in the ground, or on top, he 'lows hit couldn't nidther. He 'lows that when things run to tops somep'n allus the ground." He glanced sidewise at his wife. "I'd like to send Buddy and Pete to the State College."

Melissa's knife slipped so that she nearly cut her thumb.

"O, Jesse, Sis, too?" she cried.

Jesse's face altered. "That's different. Sis won't need it."

Melissa's shoulders heaved and her eyes overflowed. "Sis, too; I'll save the egg money."

"Tain't the money," said Jesse. "You know I wouldn't begrudge Sis anything on airth. She'll marry and have a home to keer for. Hit's the happiest way for a woman. Sis won't need education. She won't want it. Would you 'a' keered for it?"

"I can read—and write—a little," Melissa answered.

"You made your mark when we signed that thar paper!" exclaimed the astonished husband.

"The first time I ever was to your daddy's, right after we come here, he was railing at books and larning—saying plain folks didn't need hit, and hit did more harm than good, and all that. You never said anything about it, so I kept still."

"Dad was a good man; he meant right always," Jesse declared. "I never studied much about it till I talked to that college man. He made it mighty plain. But, honey, I know why you made your mark. You was skeered your old man would feel 'shamed."

Melissa gave him a flashing look; half mischievous, half tender. "I could learn you, Jesse. Hit'ud come easy to you, Jesse. Nights when the chillen's asleep. They'll never know."

They exchanged a look of understanding. She was not ashamed of him, but the "chillen" might be some day.

"And, Jesse, 'twouldn't hender Sis marrying. When I was over to your mammy's this morning thar was a young lady thar. I gethered from their talk what she'd come up from. She wasn't dressed fine, and she was not stuck up; but I felt sorta skeered of her at first. She graduated at the State College a year ago, and she's been teaching off and on—substituting, they call it; but this summer she's to marry one o' the perfessors—Colton, his name is. Your mammy 'lowed you'd know her. Palestine Hart is her name."

"Pal Hart!" gasped Jesse. "That wild little thing that outer live with her granny in that tumble-down cabin by the ford. Pshaw! You've got it twisted somehow. Why, Colton was the man I talked to! 'Twas a shame the way folks treated 'im. Home said the old woman was a witch and Pal a witch girl."

"Nobody'll ever lay finger or tongue to her now, Jesse. I felt 'most skeered to talk to her at first; but she was so sweet and friendly I got over it. She's what I'd like Sis to be. 'Tain't what folks have that makes them looked up to, Jesse. Hit's edication. Pal's old granny is still living in that same old shack. She won't leave it. But no one'll ever lay tongue or finger to Pal again. Hit's edication made her safe, Jesse; and girls need it more'n boys. But will thar be money enough?"

"Shorely thar will, I 'low you're right, Melissa. I see what you mean. We'll save the tater money every year. Hit'll be enough if we save it all."

After that the planting was no longer a lark; it was a sacrament. Melissa dropped seed and Jesse covered; and into the ground with every tuber went the fervent expression of their hopes and dreams for their offspring. When they had finished, Melissa faced the beaming moon with a roguish laugh and a deep courtesy.

"Thank you, Mr. Moon," she said. Then she courtesied toward the mansion. "Thank you, Miss Matty." Her whole aspect changed. "Thank you—" Her voice broke, and she could not finish the sentence; but she was looking reverently upward, and involuntarily Jesse bowed his head.

Then she glanced pitifully from the lonely farmhouse, when a childless old couple lay asleep, to the big mansion with its solitary light, and over her shoulder at the cabin where their three restlings slept.

"Hit don't seem right," she murmured, her eyes overflowing again. "Tain't right that some should have so much and others nothing at all. Thar's one and others nothing at all. Thar's one apiece for all three houses, and we've got 'em all."

Jesse chuckled in spite of himself; but his face was very tender. "We air sorta like the profiteers we hear tell of," he said; "we've got about everything in sight that's worth having hereabouts; but, honey, 'tain't our fault. Hit does seem hard on them, but I 'low hit'll all be made up to them sometime.—Youth's Companion.

COUNTRY FAIRS

The harvest is over and threshed, the fall wheat is in, and country folk in every village and township having, most of them at least, spent their day at Toronto's wonderful exhibition, are turning their minds once again to the local fairs.

Like country garden parties, country fairs in Ontario have assumed such a uniformed and monotony that they make the average attendant feel as if, when he has seen one, or two, he has seen them all. And yet, to meet our old acquaintances once a year or perhaps some new faces, and to see how the country looks as we pass through it, we are still attracted to those trysting places of the man with the merry-go-round, the vendor of peanuts and popcorn and the dispenser of nice cool measures of grapes, ice cream and liquid refreshment. And the mode of transportation to and from these country gatherings has changed even if the display of live stock, grain, fruit, roots, needlework and home cooking and butter making have not. Strange faces from long distances, and bunches of city people too, are met with now that were not seen before—drawn thither by the incoming of the automobile and the consequently rapid means of annihilating both time and distance. That indeed forms the one radical change in, and innovation from, the country fair of the olden days. Line upon line, tier upon tier of these motors are now seen, aggregating hundreds in number, at every vantage point of the fair ground, for the auto has truly become the farmer's pleasure vehicle as well as that of the city man.

And the fair of to-day recalls in many ways those of the childhood days of our city people who were brought up on the farm. A scramble and a heated discussion that I saw and heard over some nice looking baskets of potatoes at Acton Fall Fair Tuesday evening reminded me vividly of the old days at Ancaster, although the names and kinds of potatoes we grew then have doubtless been long since discarded and forgotten. Buckeye, Early Rose and Carnichilli were the kinds in vogue then, although the first named of these three had at that time almost run their course. A new sort named the "Peach Blow" were being introduced and, on our farm, (now the beautiful Hamilton Golf Links) in a rich and sheltered spot not far from the house (now the club house) we had planted some of this new kind. I had resolved to show some of these, being convinced that they could not be surpassed in the neighborhood. The time I gave in preparing them for the show and the thought and labor I devoted to selecting, cleaning, etc., were amazing. For nights before the fair I hardly slept a wink thinking of my magnificent potatoes, the red ticket and the dollar it stood for, that were bound to be mine. I still felt just as convinced as I compared them, arranged alongside of their rivals, on "Fair Day" morning. But alas, although I could never believe that the judges were either impartial or incompetent, no prize adorned my bushel measure at the end of the day, and for many years afterwards I took no further interest in our old township fair and its exhibits.

Another little story, and a true one, and my "brochure" on fall fairs must close. This time the incident occurred at Ancaster too, but it was many years later, when I was a practising lawyer in Hamilton. One bright October morning, a man came in to consult me about his horse having been gored to death by a prize bull in making its way from the fair grounds. He was one of those travelling vendors of peanuts, etc., that I have just mentioned. The bull had broken loose or had got beyond the attendant's control and I advised my client that I thought he had a good action. "How much damages shall I claim," I asked, and the reply was "A hundred dollars." I wrote the cattle man, who lived near Woodstock, and in a few days he came in, apparently thoroughly frightened and anxious to settle. He said he had made some enquiries, however, and had heard that the horse was old, and he thought fifty dollars would be reasonable. I sent for my man, and after some parley he agreed to take this and it was paid. I deducted my fee of five dollars and gave him forty-five. An hour after the owner of the bull had left town the other man came in again with a happy smile on his face and told me he had made out pretty well at the Ancaster Fair. "How's that?" I asked. "Well," he replied, "I bought that old horse a week before the fair from a Jewish peddler and paid him five dollars for it." I wondered for a long time afterwards how hard he had tried to get out of the bull's way.—T. D. J. Farmer.

ELIMINATING THE POOR COW

The object of cow testing is to give the dairyman accurate knowledge as to the production of milk and fat of each cow in the herd. It is readily admitted that the average cow does not produce as much milk as she is capable of giving, and many dairymen keep one or more cows that do not even pay for their keep. Cow testing shows which cows are worth keeping in the herd and gives evidence against those that should be eliminated from the herd. "The progress of cow testing," bulletin 58, Dairy and Cold Storage Series by A. H. White, B. S. A., shows that many farmers rely on guess work to pick out their best cows from which to save heifer calves for the future herds. Frequently, these guesses are not correct; cows which have good conformation are not always the best producers in the herd. Dairy records will do away with guess work, and the farmer can safely select his best cows for breeding purposes. The bulletin, "The Progress of Cow Testing" may be secured free upon application to the Publications Branch, Department of Agriculture, Ottawa. In addition to giving the essential objects of cow testing it outlines the details of organization and gives some of the results obtained, which shows that many farmers have increased the production of their herds from 30 to 75 per cent, and some have doubled the herd average in a few years, a decided increase in the average production of each cow will be found.

THE BOY'S RETORT

One day on a road in Belgium a Boche officer met a youngster leading a donkey. He accosted him with the familiarity of his race, which tries to be agreeable and succeeds only in being rough.

"Ah, little one, you have a fine donkey there. What do you call it? Albert, I wager."

"Oh, no, sir," answered the child, "I love my king too much."

The officer raised his eyebrows; an annoying thought could be read on his wrinkled red face, and he said: "I hope at least that you do not call him William."

The boy answered quickly with ironic candor, "Oh, no, sir, I love my donkey too much."

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THEIR GLORY SHALL NOT FADE

In the special order issued to the Canadian troops on March 27, 1918, General Sir Arthur Currie wrote:

"To those who will fall I say, 'You will not die but step into immortality'—your names will be revered forever and ever by your grateful country, and God will take you unto Himself."

The pledge thus given is being faithfully fulfilled in relation to employees of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company by the placing of bronze memorial tablets at over a score of its principal offices and stations. Furthermore two imposing bronze statuary groups have been designed for the great C. P. R. stations at Montreal and Winnipeg to stand forever as tribute to the heroism and self-sacrifice of C. P. R. men who died in the cause of freedom. Far-flung and scattered are their graves, but single was their spirit and their ideal, the service of their country.

Out of 11,603 employees who were reported as joining the Forces, 1,096, or nearly ten per cent, paid the supreme sacrifice. These came from every rank of the company, from every department, and they served by air, land and sea—faithful unto death.

The bronze tablet, replicas of which will be placed at the principal railway centres in each province of Canada, and also in London, Liverpool and the Orient, has been designed by Mr. Archibald Pearce, of the Chief Engineer's Department of the company, and is being engraved at Worcestershire, England by the Bromsgrove Guild and Applied Arts. The tablet depicts an advancing army of infantry, calvalry, artillery, supplies, munitions, tanks and railway transport flanked on either side by a warship and a C.P.O.R. liner with aeroplanes flying overhead. Britannia calls with outstretched hands to the Overseas Dominions and points out the road to death and glory, while underneath is a scroll with the list of the chief battles in which the C. P. R. men fell. The inscription commemorates:

"Those in the Service of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company who at the call of King and Country, left all that was dear to them, endured hardship, faced danger, and finally passed out of sight of men by the path of duty and self-sacrifice, giving up their own lives that others might live in freedom. "Let those who come after see to it that their names be not forgotten."

The large bronze statuary group which will be duplicated for the C. P. R. stations at Windsor Street, Montreal and at Winnipeg, is the work of Count du Lion Manarthy, the well-known Montreal sculptor. In majestic and impressive allegory, it represents the uplifting of the soul of a hero from the battle lines to "that bourne from which no traveller returns." The armed figure of a soldier clad in khaki, battle-stained, yet tranquil in death, is borne heavenwards by a winged and laurel wreathed Angel of Victory. The figures in the group are of heroic proportions, over seven feet high, supported upon a marble pedestal.

Thus shall the memory of the gallant dead remain in inspiration to their comrades and to the world at large. By their sacrifice for the Empire, they kept clear and open the Imperial Highway, and on the stations of that Highway their glory shall forever be recorded.

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THE RECOIL

A small boy, finding a heavy piece of furniture in his way, drove back and kicked it, and then he gave a cry of pain that brought the family hurrying to see what was the matter. The boy had hold of one foot, and was hopping about the room on the other, his face distorted with pain. His silly attempt to wreak injury on an inoffensive piece of furniture had re-acted on himself and he was the chief sufferer.

The same rule holds when older people are trying to injure others. Unfairness, unkindness, malicious slander hurt no one so much as the instigator. Every piece of unkindness or injustice recoils upon the doer.

Remember that whenever you try to hurt another, you hurt yourself. And every ungenerous thought which leaves its object untouched, makes a cankered spot on your own spirit.

Rheumatism

Now is the time to get rid of it! Nature is pulling for you—The warm weather's here—This is your chance—grasp it—take

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2	Express horse to wagon, by J. R. Elliott, Deputy Reeve	5 00
3	Gentleman's tournout (carriage horse) the Bank of Hamilton $10 00	5 00
4	Lady Driver, by R. K. Anderson, M. P.	5 00
5	Fastest road horse, by R. K. Anderson, M. P. $10 00	5 00
6	Agricultural horse on line, by Bank of Nova Scotia, Norval $10 00	5 00
7	Draft horse on line, by J. L. Blandish, Reeve	5 00

CATTLE

1	Best herd Shorthorns, 1 male, 3 females, by Merchants Bank, Georgetown $10 00	5 00
2	Dairy herd, 1 male, 3 females, by Merchants Bank $10 00	5 00
3	Dairy Cow, by John Irving, Milton $3 00	2 00

SHEEP

1	Best fat lamb, by Jno. Smith, Milton	3 00
2	Best fat sheep, by Jno. Smith, Milton	3 00
3	Pen fine wooled sheep, 1 male, 3 females, by Joseph Beaumont $3 00	3 00
4	1 Leicester sheep, by E. Y. Barraclough, Glenwilliams $3 00	3 00

DAIRY

1	*Best 20 lbs. butter, 1 lb prints, by Erwin & Goldham	15 00
2	*5 lbs. butter, 1 lb prints, by H. Golkop	5 00
3	*5 lb. crock butter, by W. J. Campbell, Ltd. ....98 lbs. "King's Choice Flour"	

MISCELLANEOUS

1	Best cooked dinner artistically arranged, homemade cookies, bakers barred $10 00	5 00
2	Display of pickles, bottled fruit and honey artistically arranged	5 00
3	*Layer cake, by W. J. Campbell, Ltd, 24 lbs. "National Flour"	
4	*5 lbs. honey, by J. M. Mackenzie, Milton	5 00
5	*Dressed chicken, by Jas. Houston, Milton	3 00
6	*Pair dressed chickens, by C. Linham	3 00
7	$5.00 of Nursery Stock, winner's selection, for best bushel of apples exhibited, apples to be sent to donors, Brown Brothers Co. Nurserymen, Limited, Welland, Ont., promptly after the Fair	5 00
8	For the best year old dehorned steer of any breed, exhibited by an owner who has not won an Eaton prize at any fair since 1917, the choice of the following:	
	(a) Tea set, cat alogued, value	13 00
	(b) Camera, catalogue No. P8-980, value	13 00
	(c) Scale, catalogue No. 13-972, value	13 75
9	*10 lbs. honey, by H. A. Coxe, Acton	5 00
10	*Pair Hubbard Squash, Acton Free Press, 1 year	3 00
11	*Half-dozen apple turnovers, Acton Free Press 1 year	3 00
12	Best display of plants and flowers, case of silver by Robert Simpson Co., Toronto	
13	Best pair Shorthorn calves, born since 1st of Sept., 1919, by A. G. Farrow, Oakville $6 00	4 00
14	*Best and neatest 3 lbs. butter in half-pound prints, by H. D. Warren $3 00	3 00
15	Best display in hall by merchant or manufacturer $6 00	4.00

The Society will take extra precaution to protect above exhibits.
All specials marked * donate donor is as receive.

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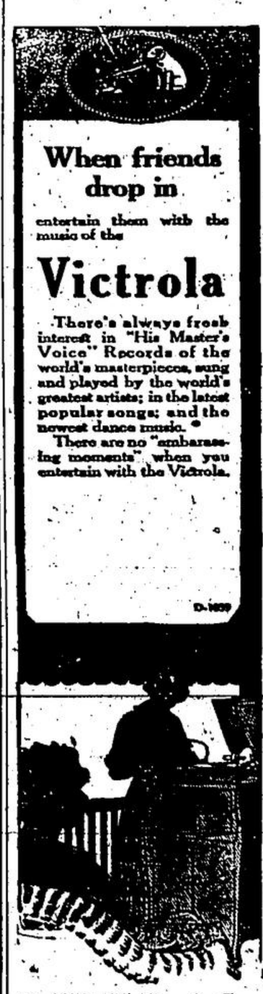

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