The Acton Free Press

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 1921

BEDTIME STORIES

A little clock grew weary,
As it sat upon the shelf,
"Twas tired of ticking all the time,
And murmured to itself:
"There isn't anybody else
That works so hard; I'm bleat
If I don't think it's time that I
Should take a little rest."

And so it stopped, and Mrs. Brown
Took all its works apart
And oiled them with a feather,
But she couldn't make it start.
So, when she found her little clock
Had really stopped for good,
She threw it out among the junk
Behind a pile of wood.

And there it lay and pondered,
Doing nothing all the time
But thinking, thinking, thinking hard
Among the dust and grime,
Until it saw the folly
Of the thing that it had done,
And then it felt so sorry
That it started in to run.

When Mrs. Brown came out next day
To get a load of wood
She heard the ticking of the clock
And gladly cried: "Oh! Good!
My little clock is running now."
And, with a beaming face,
She took it back into the house
And put it in its place.

And now the clock is happy
For this secret it has found:
"There's lots more fun in working,
Than there is in loafing round."

A Strange Legacy

By G. A. Stephens

WHEN news is scarce certain country newspapers are accustomed to print a column of "old news" under the caption, Harken Back to the Past. In it they republish accounts of what happened during the corresponding years and years before. Often the old accounts are amusing and for readers whose memory goes back so far have all the charm of intimate reminiscence.

Recently our county newspaper ran such a column for a while, selecting the items from the issues of thirty years before. The youth, then eighteen years old, who reported those old-time happenings afterwards won a national reputation as a humorist. There was plenty of fun in him then if we may judge from his items, of which we give three examples:

"Lew Fickett, Henry Wright and Jim Cousins went deer hunting to the lakes last week. They didnt get a deer, but contrived to shoot Jim in the calf of his leg and had to lug him out to the settlement on the door of an old logging camp. Fortunately the bullet flew low and selected a spot free from the vital organs—or so at least Dr. Hanbury remarked after extracting it."

"The widow Hannah Hobbs, who lives alone in the northern part of this township, has been terrorized by a tramp who pretended to be a pack peddler. Hannah fled her domicile by the back door and raised the neighbors viva voce. But when the assembled man power of the vicinity finally reached the place the pseudo-peddler had departed. Nothing was missing except a loaf of brown bread and a ball of butter. About all the description the widow could give of her visitor was that he wore an old yellow cap and had a boil on one side of his nose. If anyone sees a vagrant thus decapped and afflicted, Deputy Sheriff Coulson would like to have a word with him."

"Squire H——'s grandson Addison has fallen heir to a trunkful of Bibles. That old hermit who lived up in the great woods so long has recently died; two hunters found him dead in his hut. Very few people ever went near him, for he didn't encourage calling, but Addison used to go to see him once in a while and sometimes befriended the old chap. His only asset besides his hut was a little old leather trunk; and tied to one of the handles they found a letter stating that the trunk was to be given to Addison. It was locked up hard and fast with a particularly self-willed lock, and they couldn't find the key. But when they finally got it open they saw that it was chockfull of Bibles. Addison, we understand, isn't saying much about it; but when his friends meet him they put on a serious look and say, 'Search the Scriptures, Ad.'"

That last item, you may be sure, liberated a flood of memories! The old hermit was a strange character. While he lived we thought him a pathetic figure, and we continued to think so for a while after he died. No one ever really found out much about him. He did not leave a scrap of paper that threw the least light on his identity. He never said a word about his past life. Addison described him as the "remains" of a highly educated man who had Greek, Latin and Hebrew at his tongue's end. He added that he had once said with a wink that his name was Solomon Solus. Every two or three months he visited the general store at the Corners to buy groceries, for which he always paid cash. His hut seemed to be a kind of workshop for it contained numerous bottles of inks and chemicals and a little bench with stumps and dies. Some persons whispered the word counterfeiter; but they had no real evidence on which to base the charge.

We did know, however, that he occasionally slipped away at night from his hut in the woods and made trips no one knew where or why. Once he had been recognized at a railway station twenty miles distant. On that occasion he was clean shaven and neatly dressed in black—not at all like the stubbly bearded, shabbily dressed old fellow whom hunters and trappers were wont to see at his hut.

Addison used to go up to his hut and talk with him once in a while. Sometimes in the fall he would carry him a peck of apples or plums and, once or twice, a bag of potatoes. I think that Addison rather enjoyed calling on the old fellow, though the walk was so long that he did not go often.

When the hermit died Addison was at Cambridge where he was taking a scientific course. Theodora and I were attending school at the academy six miles from the old farm and came home only once a week. None of us were present at the fellow's funeral. He was buried at a little cemetery near our place; and afterwards the trunk, still locked, was brought down to the old squire's place and left there. We wrote to Addison about his legacy, but he did not come home until Thanksgiving, two weeks later. He had no curiosity about the trunk; he would have laughed had anyone suggested that it held anything valuable.

When Addison came home for the holiday he brought with him a fellow-student named Hyatt. They arrived the evening before Thanksgiving. After supper, when we were all gathered before the fire in the sitting room, the old squire brought the trunk from his bedroom and set it on the table in front of the fireplace.

"Here's your legacy, my boy," he said to Addison. "This paper is apparently a will and probably a legal one, for I see that the old recluse took the precaution to have it witnessed by two woodcutters who came to his hut."

We all gathered curiously round while Addison tried first one old junk key and then another in the lock but none fitted the ancient foreign lock. Finally, taking a hammer and a chisel, he cut off two rivets of the catch and raised the lid. The trunk was full of musty old books of various sizes, bound in mouldy antique leather. One by one Addison took them out and put them on the table. They smelled as old as they looked, and the pages were yellow with age and otherwise discolored. Most of them were either in Greek or in Latin, but six or seven were in English. Several of the volumes had lost half a cover and many pages; some were without both cover and title page and were tied together with strings. Not until we had laid out the entire collection on the table did we discover part of a Bible.

Hyatt, who was looking over the English Bibles, suddenly became interested. He pointed out that in some the books were not separated into chapters and numbered verses as they are in the King James Bible. "As I understand it," he said, "English translations of the Scriptures first began to be divided into chapters and verses as early as the middle of the sixteenth century. If that is so, you have a real find here."

Addison and he then began to examine the volumes more attentively, carefully separating the pages that age or dampness had stuck together. Between two leaves in the first English copy they looked at they found a slip of paper on which was written, "This is a genuine copy of the so-called 'Unrighteous Bible,' printed in the seventeenth century, which makes 1 Corinthians VI, 9, read, 'Know ye not that the unrighteous shall inherit the Kingdom of God?'" Addison hurriedly turned to Corinthians and found that the verse actually did read as the slip of paper said.

Over the title page of the next one that he and Hyatt looked at was pasted a slip of white paper on which was written, "This is one of the famous 'Bug Bibles,' printed in 1551, in which Psalm XCI, 5, is translated, 'Thou shalt not be afraid of bugs by night.'"

On the title page of another of the English Bibles Addison discovered an inscription saying that it was a "printers' Bible," published as early as 1702 and so called because a misprint makes the Psalmist complain that "Printers (Princes) have persecuted me without a cause."

That set the old squire laughing; for the old gentleman was thinking of the book he had written for boys and the incredible blunders made by the printers of the village.

"Well, I hope you will put find any more such stuff in the Bible!" exclaimed Grandmother Ruth in a scandalized tone.

But Hyatt had already puzzled out a marginal note in another copy that he had been examining. That Bible was printed in 1717 and, because Luke XX is headed the Parable of the Vineyard instead of the Parable of the Vineyard, is known as the "Vinegar Bible."

"Never mind, grandma," Addison remarked with a grin. "That's nothing to get sour over."

"And here is something to sweeten it with," Hyatt cried triumphantly, holding up another of the old volumes. "This is the celebrated 'Treacle Bible,' of 1568, in which the word balm is translated 'treacle!'"

The bind, the covers and nearly half the text of the last of the English Bibles were missing; what remained was held together with a leather thong. It purported to be one of the tragic Tyndale Bibles that William Tyndale translated and printed at Marburg about 1530. Tyndale, who had become a convert to what was then termed the Reformed Church, tried to publish a "true" version of the Scriptures. Such efforts were perilous in those days. Tyndale was seized and strangled, and his body was burned in a prison yard near Brussels.

The quaint, faded old copies in Latin and Greek gave us more trouble and a good deal less diversion. We puzzled over them till late that night, and, as a matter of fact, most of the next day.

According to custom, our Thanksgiving dinner was at three o'clock in the afternoon. After dinner Theodora and I drove to the village to bring home two of our classmates, Bronson Chaplin and Lucia Scribner, who were to spend the evening with us and remain overnight. When we returned at six o'clock Addison and Hyatt were still in the sitting room, pouring over the Bibles. The old squire and Ellen were also there with them; and, to judge from the sound of their voices, all were considerably excited. Ellen rushed out to meet Lucia and Bronson but hardly waited to greet them before she exclaimed, "What do you think that Addison and Mr. Hyatt have found among those old books? Some sort of Algerine Bible!"

"A what?" Theodora cried.

"Well, it sounded like that," Ellen said. "Anyhow, it is something very ancient; gramp says he has read that the last one that was found was sold in London a few years ago for two thousand pounds, and that, you know, is almost ten thousand dollars!"

We all hurried to the sitting room. Addison, Hyatt and the old squire were bending over an old volume beside the trunk on the table. Grandmother Ruth was standing back with her hands crossed, and looking on with a disturbed expression. Addison looked up long enough to nod and say, "Good evening!" and "How d'ye do?" to Lucia and Bronson and then turned eagerly back to the book.

"What's this Algerine Bible I hear you've found?" Bronson asked. "Tell us about it."

"Algerine Bible?" repeated Addison. "Oh, no; it's a Mazarin Bible—so named because a copy was found in the library of Cardinal Mazarin in Paris. Some say it is the first book ever printed with movable metal types."

"Well, I don't care!" Ellen exclaimed in confusion. "It sounded like Algerine."

Meanwhile Theodora found an opportunity to introduce Hyatt to Lucia, and that reminded Addison to introduce him to Bronson. They we all crowded round to see the dilapidated old book. To one of the last fly leaves at the back they had found pasted a much discolored sheet of paper on which was written, "This is a copy of the Holy Scriptures, presented to George Altoman by Cardinal Rizzio for the Mazarin Bibliotheque in return for three pouds of gold for the Cardinal's communion service."

You could see that Addison was greatly interested. He did not say much; but there was an unusual light in his eyes. The old squire, too, went and came that evening like one whose mind is engrossed. Hyatt and Addison had begun going more carefully through all the other old Bibles, particularly the volumnes in Greek and Latin; they looked between every pair of leaves. The idea had now taken possession of them that those musty old books might be of great value after all.

"Maybe you have a fortune here," Hyatt said. "Where do you suppose that old chap got all those Bibles? It looks as if he were an ancient Bible collector and had made a life job of it. My uncle collected violins," he added, laughing. "I know the kind."

Addison and he were going back to Cambridge the next morning and would have to make an early start to catch the train at the village station. Before going to bed Addison packed all the old volumes in the trunk and got it ready to take with him. He had decided to go to the Harvard University Library and seek the opinions of the librarians and of others who were familiar with old books. I think he had high hopes that his legacy might make him rich, or that it would at least defray the expense of his education.

We did not hear from him for a month or more; he was never a punctual letter writer. Finally, he wrote from Cambridge to the old squire; and I still remember certain paragraphs of the letter, or at least the substance of them.

"I have had all those old Bibles examined both here and over in the city," he wrote. "You will be surprised, sir, and I dare say disgusted (at least I was) to learn that they are all forgeries, or rather that they are old Bibles, cunningly altered and doctored to simulate far older or very rare Bibles such as command high prices. They were examined very carefully, and the evidences of fraud are, the experts tell me, conclusive. They are curiosities of imposture, and I have sold the whole lot for a couple of hundred dollars, which will help me out a little this year.

"Of course the only inference is that our old hermit friend was a counterfeiter of old Bibles, and that he sallied forth into the world at intervals to dispose of one or more of the products of his 'industry' to dealers in old books or to libraries. I was assured that if those Bibles had been genuine the contents of the old trunk would have been worth more than fifty thousand dollars. It is lucky for me that I had Hyatt with me, or some one might have suspected that I myself was the forger.

"What I surmise is that old Solomon Solus, as he called himself, imagined that I might be able to sell those volumes as he had done, and, feeling well disposed toward me, endowed me with that bequest of fraud! In other words, he thought it was all right to pass his crookedness on to me. The old chap must have been far gone in the depths of moral obliquity; and I am thankful to be clear of it. Hyatt stood by me loyally; but he has to have his joke about it. 'Well, how's the Bible counterfeiter feeling this morning?' he says to me once in a while, laughing."

THE CHALLENGE OF THE STORMY DAY

There's a difference in stormy days. In the spring a good rain is like a thorough sweeping in a littered room, leaving everything fresh and clean when it is over. A summer storm, with its rattle of raindrops, roar of thunder and flash of lightning is like a bracing tonic after a succession of languid, sun-soaked days. A quiet, rainy day in the fall is like the lullaby a mother sings to the baby she is rocking to sleep, but, a rainstorm in winter when we expect storms to be white and feathery and fair to see—that's quite a different thing. It takes real grace and grit not to be depressed by a winter rain.

Longfellow, whom everybody loves, wrote,

"The day is cold and dark and dreary;
It rains, and the wind is never weary."

and in closing,

"Into each life some rain must fall,
Some days must be dark and dreary."

Of course, we all see that into every life some rain must fall—for the good of that life. Think of what would happen around us if no rain fell—of a land parched with perpetual sunshine—no tender, springing grass, no flowers, no fruit. Then remember that every normal life—every worth-while life—must know a certain measure of trial and sorrow or pay the penalty by shrivelling in continued prosperity and pleasure. The dangerous thing about the shrivelling process is that one is never conscious that it is going on.

But that last line, "Some days must be dark and dreary;" there our good poet was mistaken. No matter how undesirable the storm may be, no matter how heavily falls the rain, no day need be entirely "dark and dreary." The stormy day is a challenge, whether the storm is out of doors or in the life. To a person with real strength of character the storm is a test.

Is one to sit down and sigh just because outside "the wind is never weary?" By no means! That is exactly the time to make the fire burn more cheerily and trim the lamp to a brighter blaze. When misfortune comes, or sorrow, is that the time to give up and listen for nothing but the roar of the next blast? Of course not! That is the time to lift the head, square the chin, throw back the shoulders and march on! Let us smile if we can, but at all events keep moving. We have known sunshine, and we shall find it again farther on.

The stormy day is a challenge to the soul—and who wants to raise the white flag in token of surrender?—Vera Strange Taylor.

WHAT COMES FIRST?

Study or work lie ahead of everyone. There are few choices that look easy and all look strange to the young school graduate. College or office? The factory or the farm? Where shall the new citizen, just out of preparatory school, invest his life?

A greater question, even than these, is also waiting for an answer. Deciding what kind of work to do, is not after all so important as deciding how it shall be done. There are a lot of shirkers in every kind of life. There are lazy and energetic people everywhere, and as the man does his task so his fellows estimate his value to the world and to them.

"A renewed sense of right" is said by one great man to be the first need of our world. That means remembering what we all know about the Golden Rule. It means thinking very little about profit or loss until we have decided on the right way that a task should be done. That means unselfishness, sacrifice if necessary, but nothing impossible. "A renewed sense of right" is possible for us all to gain. That comes first if we are to get ourselves back to the ideals of our forefathers. The world is getting better only as we help it. Putting first things first and letting our selfish successes come afterwards, will make happiness possible and success of all sorts certain.

Amiable people, though often subject to imposition in their contact with the world, yet radiate so much of sunshine that they are reflected in all appreciative hearts.—Delsey.

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is in its unique flavour of rich delicacy. And it never varies. All grocers sell "Salada" in sealed metal packets only.

INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT SEA FISHES

Herring

The quest for the herring constitutes one of the important branches of our extremely diversified fishing industry. More than 2,056,686 hundredweights of herring were landed last year on our Atlantic and Pacific coasts, with a first hand value of $2,255,506, and a market value of $3,337,738. No other fish were captured in such abundance, the cod, generally believed to be the most prolific, falling some 75 hundredweights short of the herring catch. From the standpoint of value it gave place only to salmon, lobster, cod and halibut.

The common herring (Clupea harengus) is beyond question, says D. S. Jordon, the most important of food fishes in the Atlantic, if not in the world. Distributed as it is throughout the whole of the north Atlantic it affords occupation to many thousands of fishermen. An estimate made by Prof. Huxley places the world's annual catch at three billion fishes or half that number of pounds, and some authorities place it even higher. But even three billion is probably no greater than the number contained in a single shoal if it covers half a dozen square miles, and shoals of much greater size are recorded. Professor Huxley says that there must be scattered through the north Atlantic at one and the same time scores of shoals, any of which would go a long way to supplying the whole of man's present-day consumption of herring.

The herring is found in the colder waters of the north Atlantic. It has been caught on the American shore as far south as Cape Hatteras, but it seldom prevails in abundance south of New England. It very seldom takes to brackish water, and it spawns in the open sea, the female depositing from thirty to fifty thousand eggs. Unlike most fishes, the herring is regarded as particularly delicious at spawning time and the most successful herring fisheries are prosecuted when the fish are in full roe, that is, ripe in eggs and in milk.

On the American side of the Atlantic the herring fishery is entirely a shore fishery. With the exception of a few occasionally taken for bait by the line fishermen on the banks, our herring are all caught in the immediate vicinity of the shore. Although the fishery on this side of the ocean has not assumed the importance it has long held in Europe, there is no doubt that the species obtains in as great abundance immediately off our shores as in the North Sea and European Atlantic. Our fishermen, however, never found conditions sufficiently inducing to invest in special equipment to fish off shore. The Fisheries Department, Ottawa, conducted experiments in 1915 and 1916 which seemed to indicate the prolificacy of herring in the St. Lawrence and Atlantic, and of a class adapted to "Scotch" curing, which is popular in the American and other markets. Generally speaking, the inshore fish are not suited for this cure. The herring fishery on our Atlantic coast extends from Newfoundland to Cape Cod, while the stretch from the Bay of Fundy southward is practically a continuous fishing ground.

The fishery is carried on chiefly by means of brush-weirs, gillnets and torching. The brush-weir is a wall of brush which diverts the course of the fishes, and leads them into a pound. The torching method is most primitive, and is employed only after the water has become cool. An oil torch—formerly a birch bark torch—is fixed to the bow of the boat, which is rapidly rowed through the water. The fishes rise toward the light as long as the boat is in rapid motion, and a man standing at the bow scoops them in large quantities with a dip-net.

The herring food consists of small animal organisms, chiefly two small crustaceans, known in the vernacular as "red seed" and "shrimp." It has a great host of enemies, including cod, haddock, pollock, hake, dogfish, albacore, squid, porpoise, seal and the fin-backed whale, each of which is very destructive.

Approximately two-thirds of our sea herring are produced on the Atlantic coast, where they are mostly pickled and smoked. The latter are known on the market as "kippered" herring or "bloaters," if they are unsalted and half dried in the smoke-house. A comparatively small quantity is canned.

On the Pacific coast there is another herring very similar (Clupea pallasi) which prevails in great abundance about Vancouver Island. An indication of its prolificacy in this zone was brought to light in a recent case before the Admiralty Court at Vancouver, B. C. Ira C. Happerson, master of a boat, is declared to have stated that 150 tons—300,000 pounds or a good-sized fare or fare for a steam trawler operating on the Grand Banks—had been taken in one haul of the seine on board the craft, and that frequently the catches were so heavy that one end of the net had to be released to dump one half the catch into the sea.

Pacific herring is mostly dry-salted and shipped in boxes to the Orient where an extensive market has been developed for it. A small quantity is canned, but the proportion of the pack treated in this way is increasing each year.

It is very striking that exceedingly small amounts of the Atlantic and Pacific herrings are used fresh in this country, despite the fact that they rank high in food value and palatability. They are obtainable in abundance all the year round—from the Atlantic coast during the months of May, June, July, August and September; and from the Pacific coast during October, November, December, January, February and March.

The herring, in addition to being an important food in itself, is instrumental in the capture of other important sea fishes. It is the chief bait used for the capture of cod, haddock, lobsters and halibut on the Atlantic and halibut on the Pacific. Large quantities are put in cold storage each year to provide bait for the season when they are less readily available.

No reference has been made in this article to the young herring canned extensively along the Atlantic coast as "sardine," nor to the fresh water herring of our lakes. Each of these is of sufficient interest to be considered separately.

PEOPLE JUST LIKE MONEY

"Yist'day," says Uncle Zeke Bones, "Ah dropped fouah cents on de floah, an' doy made a big racket. Ef doy had or bin fouah dollar bills nobody would have heard 'em drop. People is jest like money; dem dat makes the most noise ain't ains of de mos' account."

LOWER HIGHER THAN UPPER

"Let me have sleeping accommodations on the train to Ottawa," I said to the man at the window, who did not seem at all concerned whether I took the trip or stayed at home.

"For a single passenger?"

"No," I replied. "I'm married but I'm not taking anybody with me. A single shelf will answer."

"Upper or lower?" he asked.

"What's the difference?" I enquired.

"A difference of fifty cents," came the answer. "Our prices to Ottawa are $2.50 and $3.00."

"You understand of course," explained the agent, "the lower is higher than the upper. The higher price is for the lower berth. If you want it lower, you'll have to go higher. We sell the upper lower than the lower. It didn't used to be so, but we found everybody wanted the lower. In other words the higher the lower."

"Why do they all prefer the lower?" I broke in.

"On account of its convenience," he replied, "most persons don't like the upper, although it's lower, on account of it being higher, and because when you occupy an upper you have to get up to go to bed, and then get down when you get up. I would advise you to take the lower, although it's higher than the upper, for the reason I have stated, that the upper is lower than the lower because it is higher. You can have the lower if you pay higher, but if you are willing to go higher it will be lower."

THRIFTY SAYS

Saved dollars are the best ammunition in the hunt for success. They help you get the things that are worthwhile.

This old world we are living in is mighty hard to beat. We get a thorn with every rose, but ain't the roses sweet?

The things that go the farthest towards making life worth while, that costs the least and does the most, is just a pleasant smile.

HE KNEW—BUT

Little Teddie: "What time does the tide come in to-day, Mr. Fisherman?"

"Why, you young rascal, I've told you three or four times already. At five fifty-five."

Little Teddie: "Yes, I know, but I like to see your whiskers waggle when you say 'five fifty-five.'"

SLEEP

Oh! what a wonderful word that is! Can you do it? That is, drop off into a good sound refreshing sleep? If you are unable to, there is something wrong with your nervous system. It is a danger signal. Nervous prostration, melancholia, nervous dyspepsia are only a few of the serious maladies that are liable to develop.

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