The Acton Free Press

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 5, 1921

### LOVE'S LESSON

One lesson let us bear in mind,
Be very gentle with our own,
Be to their faults a little blind,
Nor wound them by a look or tone.

Put self behind, turn tender eyes,
Keep back the words that hurt and sting—
We learn—when sorrow makes us wise
Forbearance is the kindest thing.

Be patient lest some day we turn
Our eyes on loved one fast asleep,
And whisper as we lean and yearn:
"How often I have made you weep.

"Some loved you not, and words let fall
That must have pierced your gentle breast
But I—who loved you best of all—
Did hurt you more than all the rest!"

One lesson let us bear in mind:
To hold our dear ones close and fast.
Since loyal hearts are hard to find,
And life and love so soon are past.

—Jean Blewett.

## The Victory of Scotty McLean

Charles Moreau Warger

CLATTERING, roaring, muffler cut out, engine smoking, the truck of the telephone company came to a stop in front of the superintendent's office.

Nervously the superintendent ran to the side walk. "Do you think you are running a boiler factory? Why didn't you come into town with some cars?"

"Was just hurrying to get to supper, Mr. Green," calmly declared Scotty McLean, the driver, as he climbed down from the little cabin seat high on the front of the truck.

"This is the last time I am going to tell you to use sense in running that machine," announced the superintendent as he re-entered the office. Scotty stood silent for a moment, then with a carelessly whistled tune began unloading the tools from the truck and later sauntered to the crew's night quarters.

That was the trouble with Scotty. He was at once the worry and the joy of the superintendent. He was reckless and noisy and would not obey discipline, but he was faithful to the company and could be depended on to bring home the big truck no matter what the conditions. One night he slept with the truck on a country road, it having developed a serious case of engine trouble. When he came in next day he made the usual amount of noise, and twice the company had paid fines for his speeding through the streets. But that was not the worst. He was a very despot with the men of his crew so far as his authority went; more than once he had been threatened with dismissal. "Mealy" Simmons knew all about it. He had once been thrown from the top of a pile of timbers because he failed to hold properly a crane arm that Scotty was repairing. After that he had looked upon the young driver with great respect—and kept out of his way if possible.

The crew was working overtime these days. After long effort had been secured the funds with which to build the lines up to the Blue River valley and construction was well on the way toward Bannock. When the big truck rumbled out of town the morning following the superintendent's outburst, it was loaded with poles, wire, tools, and a dozen men. Scotty took the turns of the valley road almost on two wheels and the passengers clung with all their might to the rocking machine.

"Steady now," called out the wire chief, Mansur, as a particularly bad stretch of road was struck.

"Hee here, who's driving this truck?" was Scotty's reply and "stepped on her" just a little more.

With a roar the truck went swerving along the narrow road, crunched over a culvert, tipped perilously as it struck a stretch of sand and rounding a hill came out on a steep decline. Just what happened then no one ever could tell. But the truck left the road and went tearing through the weeds until it finally went sidewise into the embankment—and stopped. Most of the load was scattered along the slope, two of the men were thrown from their seats, the truck was a wreck—but Scotty sat holding the steering wheel unconcerned.

So Scotty was "demoted" in the ranks and became a digger of holes for the big poles of the line.

Day after day he went out with the crew and worked doggedly as if in disgrace—as indeed he was. The wire chief was in charge and he made it his especial duty to give Scotty the hardest job possible.

Steadily the crew worked northward, hurrying, as the upcing rains were due and the roads would soon be impassable for days. "Two weeks more will take us through," announced Mansur, "that is if we get past the Lockhart quarter, with a laugh.

"What's the matter there?" asked one of the newer workers.

"The old man says no telephone line can be built along his place. He will not have a string of poles to look at all his life and he has served notice that we can't build—but we are going to go through just the same."

As the crew came nearer to the Lockhart farm the weather grew more threatening. Then when the edge of the forbidden land was touched, a light rain commenced. But Mansur pushed on and next day the crew was digging holes and setting poles as usual—that is, it was for an hour.

Coming down from the farmhouse, his face showing his excitement, came Lockhart.

"Get off my farm," he ordered. "You can't come on here with your line, or there'll be trouble."

"But Mr. Lockhart," replied the wire chief, "this is a public work and we must build past here if we get to Bannock. You will have the advantage of being on a through line and you can get service from the system."

"I have told you," came the surly answer, "to stay off my farm."

He turned and started for his house. Scotty was the first to speak. "Where shall I dig the next hole?" That brought the silent crew to action and the work went on hour after hour until by night when the big truck was started for town a line of poles half across the farm's front pointed into the leaden sky.

"We got him all right," boasted Mansur. "He knew he couldn't bluff me."

For the next two days rain fell and when on the third the truck plowed its way up the valley road it was alongside a roaring flood in the river which now and then backed across the road. As the crew came in sight of the Lockhart corner, Mansur aware of something awry. Instead of the long line of poles pointing at the clouds there was a clear view—every one was missing. There they lay—stretched out on the side of the highway like so many fallen trees neatly chopped off by a well wielded ax. On the pole next to the line of those destroyed was a piece of paper. Drawing close the men read:

NOTICE

Any person trespassing on my farm will be prosecuted.

John Lockhart.

"Guess he meant what he said," mused the wire chief. "Somebody will have to go to the house and parley with him."

"Not me," exclaimed Mealy. "Nor me," added the others, backing away.

Mansur himself hesitated but he had not long to wait. A voice came from the rear of the party. "I'll go." It was Scotty.

"You won't get a friendly greeting, son."

"I know it—but I'll go."

"All right—good-by," and he was trudging across the field, his boots sinking deep into the rainsoaked earth. He was not altogether sure of his mission. Lockhart had the name of being a dangerous man, he had been embroiled in several quarrels with his neighbors and was known as a fighter. As Scotty approached the house, he walked more slowly, circled the barn and kitchen and came close to the window of what he thought was the living room. All was quiet. For an instant he thought there was no one at home, that the place was deserted. Then came a sharp cry, the cry of a child.

Cautiously the boy crept to the window and lifting himself, peered anxiously through its lower pane.

What he had taken for the living room had been transformed into a sick room. By a narrow bed in the corner stood the farmer and beside him his wife. They were looking anxiously at a little form tossing on the bed with an occasional cry of pain.

"But I must go," he heard Lockhart say, and then his wife begged him not to leave her alone. Puzzled by it all, Scotty tiptoed around to the kitchen door and gently knocked.

Lockhart himself came to greet him and looked dazedly at the caller. "Well, what do you want?"

"I—I want," Scott began, intending to carry out the superintendent's idea of finding out what could be done to get the line through, then changed to, "I want to know if I can help you."

"Come in." They passed through the kitchen to the sick room. The curly head of a child tossed on the pillow and the frightened mother knelt by the bedside.

"The baby's very sick. Came down last night and we don't know what to do. Mother is afraid to have me go for the doctor and—say, would you do it? I'll pay you well."

"Do it? You guessed right. Just you watch me," and Scotty made a rush for out of doors. Across the field again he plowed, the mud flying from his quick feet. The truck stood deserted, the remainder of the crew having gone back down the road to strengthen the poles weakened in their position by the rains.

Leaping to the seat he turned the machine with many a backing and starting until he had the wet highway before him. Then faster and faster until it was churning out a very shower of mud from the wheels. The men looked up in wonder, the wire chief held up his hands and ordered him to stop—in vain. On past them all he fled, enjoying the feel of the power beneath his touch. Around corners, along the edge of the steep river banks, splashing through water that overflowed the road he raced without a halt in speed. Two miles down the road was a farmhouse. He brought the truck to a stop. Without an "if you please," he entered the house and rushed to the telephone on the wall—he had been there before.

"Doctor? This is Lockhart's, up the valley. Come quick, baby sick! I'll meet you halfway to town."

Then out again and on with his big truck. Four miles farther he stopped and turned the truck ready for the next flight. In a moment he heard the rattle of the doctor's roadster, and it came puffing and steaming beside him, nearly worn out by the hard run.

"Leave her—get on here. Your machine can't make it through these roads." The doctor obeyed.

The crew was still wondering what had happened when again the big truck came splashing past them on its return trip, Scotty sitting behind the wheel and a stranger beside him. The driver looked neither to right nor left and ran the truck straight up the road and turned into the lane leading to the farmhouse. His hat had been lost far back, he was coated with mud until only the shining freckled face was recognizable.

"Hurry—get in here," he ordered and led the way to the door.

Then Scotty went back to his truck, lifted the hood from the overheated engine and, exhausted, threw himself into the truck and dropped face downward on the floor.

A touch on his shoulder later made Scotty turn to look straight up into the face of John Lockhart.

"That was a good job, and I appreciate it. We had a narrow escape. The child's better. The doctor wants to get back. But you didn't tell me what you wanted."

Scotty got to his feet and looked silently out toward the road where lay the long line of prostrate poles, then with a plucking of courage, "I'm one of the telephone crew." He could see the man's face become stern.

"I told your boss—" Mr. Lockhart began angrily.

"Wait—a minute. If we had had a telephone line to your house the doctor could have been got here hours quicker. Seems to me you ought, to have sense enough to see that I saved about one hour by stepping down the road where they had one."

He gazed reprovingly at the tall man and saw the stern face soften. Then, "Come in the house. We'll talk it over."

An hour later the men saw the big truck making its way from the farmhouse. The men gathered around it.

"Well," exclaimed Mansur, "you were long enough about it—what did he do to you and what did you mean by that crazy trip down the road?"

"Never mind about the details," spoke Scotty with his old superior air. "Go ahead and reset the poles—it's all right."

But he told the superintendent. So did John Lockhart later.

"What can we do for you?" asked Mr. Green kindly. "You saved a lot of trouble besides doing a good deal."

"I'd like—like," replied Scotty, "to be steady driver of the truck again." The superintendent laughed.

"That's modest and we will also use you for settling cases—but please, please, keep down to decent speed when you come through town, and calm that reckless spirit of yours."

Scotty promised.

### A SERIOUS QUESTION

Little Douglas had been told that he must always wait patiently until he was served at meals, and not cry across the table or help himself.

One day, whilst dining at a neighbor's with his mother, the little fellow was accidently overlooked.

He was very patient for a time, but at last he could bear the strain no longer. The sight of everyone feeding but himself was too much for the hungry child.

Leaning across to his mother, he said, in a loud whisper:

"Mother, do little boys who starve to death go to heaven?"

### THE FARMER'S PROSPERITY

School Teacher (to little boy)—"If a farmer raises 2,700 bushels of wheat and sells it for $1.50 per bushel, what will he get?"

Little Boy—"An automobile."—Western Christian Advocate.

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### JOAN'S SOMETIMES

"Yes, I'm going to get that record sometime." The words floated in to Aunt Ella as she sat at the desk in the corner of the hall writing her letter home. A queer little expression came into her eyes, and leaning back in her chair, she regarded her penholder thoughtfully. But she was not thinking of penholders. No. She was thinking—about Joan and her sometimes. Two weeks she had been in Joan's home now, and in that time how many, many things she had heard Joan declare her intention of doing sometime.

Joan's caller left, and the girl came into the house, and went out to the kitchen to help her mother prepare lunch. Still Aunt Ella sat before her unfinished letter, hazy plans drifting through her mind for helping Joan to realize how this habit of relegating things to sometime was growing on her. "She's a delightful girl," pleasantly ran Aunt Ella's thought. "And wonderfully interesting. But—indefiniteness is too great a flaw for me to close my eyes to. I wonder if perhaps a little straight-from-the-shoulder talk about this habit would not be the best course to pursue? When Joan really gets down to business she doesn't care about roundabout methods. I'll try it," she decided. "To-night, after dinner when we are having our usual porch visit will be a good time to talk the matter out." And Aunt Ella returned to her interrupted letter.

That evening as Joan's father and mother took their usual after dinner walk, she and her aunt disposed themselves comfortably on the broad porch. The girl herself gave Aunt Ella the opening she wished when she glanced over into a neighbor's yard where blue forget-me-nots made a pretty border, and said, "Sometime I want a border of forget-me-nots by our fence. Don't you think it will add to the yard, Auntie?"

"Yes," smiled Aunt Ella. "Yes, it would be very pretty." Do you know, Joan," Aunt Ella spoke very slowly, "do you know that your life promises to be very crowded—sometime?"

The girl's brows came together in a puzzled pucker. "I don't get your meaning, Auntie," she said at length. "What is it that's going to crowd my life so sometime?"

Aunt Ella's eyes met Joan's in a straight, direct look as she said, "Why, don't you realize how many, many times you are planning to do something, Joan? I couldn't begin to name all the things I've heard you say you were going to do sometime, since I've been here. And that's but a two-weeks' accumulation."

The frank brown eyes fell, but not before Aunt Ella's keen look had had caught the hurt expression in their depths. Quickly she leaned over and drew the tense girlish figure close to her side. "My dear girl," very tenderly the words came. "You are much too splendid in every way to let this habit of indefiniteness get a grip on you. Along the path of sometime too many have loitered—and never reached the goal. I want you to arrive. Not to look at the hoped-for, shining in the distance, and promise yourself pleasantly that sometime you will realize it. You understand, don't you Joan dear, why I want you to see and stop the sometime habit?"

Her face hidden on Aunt Ella's shoulder's Joan reached for her aunt's hand, and clasped it tight. Presently a flushed, tear-stained face was shyly lifted. A voice that had a hint of its usual merry cadence spoke.

"Aunt Ella, do you see that big elm tree in the meadow across the road? The one way over by the farther fence?" And Joan pointed to the left where a sturdy elm lifted its branches proudly in the evening light.

"Yes, I see it—" Aunt Ella's voice carried a note of inquiry. "All summer," went on Joan in answer to that unspoken query, "that tree's been calling me to come over and get acquainted. And all summer I've been answering back—'Yes, yes, sometime—'" she shot a quick glance at her aunt. "But I've decided that the sometime for my visit to the elm tree will be to-morrow. We'll pack a lunch and go over there about eleven o'clock and spend three or four hours. That's the way we'll settle that sometime." Glancing up, she caught her aunt's look of quick approval that accompanied her words. "And may the elm tree pic-nic mark the beginning of many sometime fulfillments."

### ELEPHANTS AT PLAY

Special facilities for observation of the ways of elephants is afforded at the elephant reserve in Cape Colony, South Africa.

One of the ponds visited by them has on one side a very steep bank. Sometimes the elephants, after drinking, amuse themselves by sliding down the incline, sitting on their haunches. The youngsters occasionally hesitate to indulge in this sport and they are then coaxed up to the top and shoved off.

This recalls another naturalist's observation, made by Dr. Carpenter, near Victoria, Nyanza. He says that the only entrance ways into some of the waters are grooves cleared in the bank by the heavy bodies of the hippopotamuses as they climb in and out. But these grooves are entirely in the way of business and not for fun.

As he was making his way down to the water along one of these passages it was perhaps natural that Dr. Carpenter should wonder what would happen if a hippopotamus should chance to choose the same moment for coming up. One thing was clear, the hippopotamus could not turn.

Dr. Carpenter gives the hippopotamus a good character; it is gentle if unmolested, he says, and it does not seem to have occurred to him that infringement of a right of way might have constituted molestation from the point of view of the hippopotamus.

### WHY THEY QUARRELLED

The lady of the house ushered the new cook into the dining room and began the usual interrogations.

"And now, tell me," she asked, "why did you leave your last place?"

"Oh, mum, it was somethink hawful. I couldn't stop there on no account. The master and missus used to quarrel like cat and dog."

"How sad!" said the inquisitor. "No wonder you couldn't stop; and what did they quarrel about?"

"Well, mostly," replied the domestic, "the way the dinner was cooked."

Prudent persons are like pins—their heads prevent them from going too far.

### WHAT SHOULD BE PLANTED IN THE FALL

There is such a rush in the spring to get seed sowing and planting done he good time that anything that can be accomplished in the fall to lessen the work in the spring should be done and particularly where fall planting is preferable.

At the Experimental Farm, Ottawa, it has not been found satisfactory, taking one year with another, to plant trees of any kind in the fall. Exposure to the long, cold winter beginning shortly after transplanting is not favorable to the trees. Any which will be below the snowline, however, have a much better chance, although in soils where there is danger of heaving, late fall planting is unsafe.

When low-growing shrubs and herbaceous plants are planted in the fall, which is a good time, the sooner it is done the better after the soil becomes moist enough to ensure their not dying from lack of moisture as, when set out early, the plants have a chance to take root again before winter and in the case of herbaceous perennials to make some growth.

Raspberries, gooseberries, and currants may be planted successfully in September, and the advantage over spring planting is that if any die they may be replaced in the spring, whereas if planted in the spring it is too late to replace them if they die and a season's growth is lost. If strawberries are planted in the fall they should be planted in September or before to ensure their rooting well and lessening danger from heaving.

As soon as bulbs can be purchased in the stores they should, if desired, be procured and planted at once as the longer time they have in the ground before winter the better the bloom is likely to be in the spring. The bulbs referred to include tulips, narcissus, hyacinths, crocus, squills, and other hardy kinds.

The fall is a good time to plant both rhubarb and asparagus. They may be planted with success any time between now and winter.

Usually there are good results from planting seeds of herbaceous perennials, trees, and shrubs in the fall. The action of the frost, especially on tree and shrub seeds, makes germination easier. When seeds of perennials are planted in the fall it is best to wait until just before winter sets in to make sure that the seed will not germinate before winter as if seed germinates a short time before winter the seedlings are liable to be killed. Seeds of trees and shrubs, however, and especially of fruits, should be planted as soon as ripe so as to prevent their becoming dry. Usually fall planted seeds germinate very early in the spring.—W. T. Macoun, Dominion Horticulturist.

### "IT'S GOOD ENOUGH"

"There! I guess that will do," said John, as he took a shovelful of ashes out of the stove. "The pan isn't empty but it's near enough; nobody will see it. If I can get the store swept in about five minutes, I can finish that story before anyone comes."

The store was swept much as the stove had been cleaned. The open spaces presented a good appearance, but out-of-the-way corners and underneath boxes and barrels told a different story. However, John said it was "good enough." The story was finished and the paper hidden out of sight before the clerks arrived. Then Mr. Willis, proprietor, came in, bade them all "Good morning," glanced around and went into his private office. Presently he called John: "Take these letters to the office as soon as you can. They will be just in time for the nine o'clock mail. Come right back."

John hurried to the office as he had been bidden, but having deposited the letters safely, saw no more reason for haste. Indeed, he even indulged in a game of marbles before returning to work. When he entered the store again, Mr. Willis made no comment on his tardiness, but remarked, "Well, John, I've almost learned my lesson."

John stared. "What lesson, sir?"

"Why, the one you've been teaching me lately."

John was more puzzled than ever, and all day long he wondered what lesson he could possibly teach Mr. Willis. The next morning John's work was done as speedily as and no better than the day before. Mr. Willis came before the clerks and sent John out on an errand. While he was gone the gentleman, with a quiet smile began to investigate the corners that John thought "nobody would see." When he returned, Mr. Willis said: "John, I told you yesterday I had almost learned my lesson. To-day I know it thoroughly. Would you like to hear it?"

"Yes, sir."

"You have been teaching me how well I can get along without you. I thought the stove needed cleaning and the store sweeping every morning, but it seems they don't. So I shall not need you any longer than this week."

### BRINGING OUT THE BEST IN OTHERS

One literary man writing of another said not long ago, "He brought out all the good there was in his friends." Sometimes two friends, both of whom have many excellent qualities, seem to bring out what is weak and unfortunate in each other, instead of what is best. We sometimes say that two sisters rub each other the wrong way. In each other's company they are irritable and disagreeable. There are some unselfish people who make the members of their family selfish. Even their sacrifices bring out the ignoble qualities in those for whom they sacrifice.

There is nothing for which we should strive more earnestly than to bring out the good in each other instead of the evil. It is not enough to be kind and generous and self-forgetful. We have failed if our unselfishness makes others selfish, if our courtesy moves others to irritability. We have failed unless the good in us brings out the best in others.

### COLLECTING OVERDONE

Miss Madge was making her first trip in a train.

The ticket collector came along and called for the tickets. Madge readily gave up her ticket.

But later they stopped at a station, and a station boy came down the platform calling:

"Chocolates!"

"Never!" cried Madge bravely. "You can take my ticket, but not my chocolates."

### "I CANNOT DO EVERYTHING"

That man of note, the late Rev. Edward Everett Hale, left behind him many words of cheer and encouragement some of which are immortal. His famous motto in regard to looking up and not down will no doubt be quoted while the world lasts. Equally inspiring should be these words of his:

"I am only one. But still I am one. I cannot do everything.—And because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something that I can do."

I have more than once heard it said of a young person I know that she will always help when she is asked to do it she can do "just what she prefers to do." Otherwise she will do nothing but relegates to others the things that it would not be entirely agreeable for her to do. A person of this type is never likely to achieve great things in life. Those who have done great things have behind them a long record of the little things they have done. No one can ever be of the highest service in the world without being willing to do little as well as great things. Nothing is more fatal to achievement than to have ambition beyond one's powers of achievement, and they who refuse to do little things have ambition of this kind. It is doubtful if there could be found in all the universe a sane person without some capacity for helpfulness. It is the God-given privilege of all of us to do something and the small thing will count for as much as the great deed in the eyes of the judge of all the world if the small thing is all that we are able to do. When the great war became such a sad reality and service was expected of all of us a very old woman said to her minister who was calling upon her.

"All I got to help with is these."

She held up four shining knitting needles as she spoke and added,

"I ain't got no money to buy yarn, high as yarn is now, but if anyone will provide the yarn I will knit up every ounce I can and that will give me the pleasure of knowing that I am helping some."

The yarn was provided and the very old woman knitted one hundred and ninety pairs of stockings for our boys. She had done what she could. She had said "I can do something" and she had done that one thing joyfully. From the lowest to the highest we are "only one" when it comes to ourselves—Paul Creighton.

Genius begins great works; labor alone finishes them.—Joubert.

Do you find yourself

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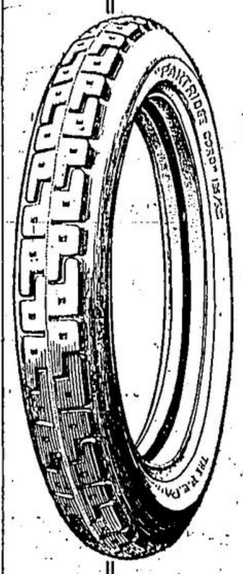


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