The Acton Free Press

THURSDAY, JANUARY 19, 1922

DYNAMO OR COG

A cog wheel turns, from day to day,
Always in just the self-same way;
Its time is set, its movement fixed,
With other cogs wheels it is mixed,
It never knows and never asks
The part it plays in all its tasks,
Monotonously on, it grinds,
To do the work of thinking minds.
The self-same course each day it takes
Until at last it wears and breaks

And there are human cog wheels, here,
Content to turn from year to year;
They never know and never ask
The part they play in every task.
They do their bit of turning well,
But why it's done they cannot tell.
Their hours are set, their work is planned,
They labor only with the hand;
When problems rise they stand about
And let some thinker work them out.

Boy, let your brain control your hand;
Know why a certain bolt is driven,
The reason for the task that's given.
Think clearly as your fingers move.
Avoid monotony's dull groove.
God gave to you a ready brain
To spare you drudgery and pain.
Whate'er your trade, whate'er your art,
Refuse to play a cog wheel's part.

—Edgar A. Guest.

The pupils of the Public and High School are requested to cut out and paste it in their readers.

TWO OF A KIND

By Harriet Lummis Smith

THERE are certain streets like certain people, that are easily overlooked, and Mortimer Place was one. Many years before a number of rather imposing residences had been built in a new development of the city, and between the rear of their grounds and the ravine—a deep gash on the city's smooth cheek—lay a narrow, irregular strip of land seemingly destined to be left to the tender mercies of the juvenile baseball enthusiasts. But in the course of time a street had been cut through and rows of modest, two-story houses built on either side. Except for those who lived on Mortimer Place, the postman was the only person who seemed positive of its existence. Even the delivery men had had hard work to find it.

Helen's room on the second floor overlooked the tall brick wall which Mr. Lafayette Jordan had built around his property and as she was that sort of girl, she probably derived more pleasure than the owner himself, from Mr. Jordan's grounds. While they were not extensive, there was room for a number of trees, among them a cherry, which in blossom was the delight of Helen's heart. There were rose bushes which added not a little to the joys of June, and several formal flower beds containing tulips in April and later, red geraniums set off by dusty millers.

The bulldog deserves a paragh to himself. He was a big, brindled dog with a tremendous chest, short bowed legs, bulging eyes and a protruding jaw. He was always kept chained except when Mr. Jordan himself released him for his necessary exercise. It was Helen's opinion that between the bulldog and his master there was a strong family resemblance. Mr. Jordan, too, was big and full-chested. His rather protruding eyes behind shell-rimmed glasses were decidedly like those through which the bulldog viewed life, while something about his expression suggested that if once he took hold of a thing, he would never let go until he had crushed out of it all power of resistance.

It was shortly after the Bowen family had moved into their present quarters that Mrs. Bowen made an interesting discovery concerning her neighbor. A new postman had left at 2406 Mortimer Place a letter directed to 2406 Washington Avenue. The letter was addressed to Mr. Lafayette Jordan and Mrs. Bowen stood looking at it as if she were looking far back into the past.

"That's not for us, dear," said Helen. "Don't you see the name's Jordan?"

"Yes, I know. I was wondering if it could be the same man. Lafayette Jordan is a rather unusual combination."

"Why, did you ever know anybody by that name?"

"Yes indeed! When I was a little girl, father—your grandfather—had a Lafayette Jordan in his office. He brought him home to dinner every now and then. He was a bright young fellow and father was interested in him. He used to call him Dumpty."

"What a funny nickname. Why?"

"I don't know. Father was fond of nicknaming people."

"I hope it is the same Mr. Jordan," Helen exclaimed. "Then after Roland graduates, he can take him into his office and pay back what grandfather did for him." She looked very much pleased at the solution of a problem which was admittedly a serious one, and her mother smiled faintly at the ease with which she had disposed of it. "I'm afraid," she said gently, "that people aren't always as anxious as they might be to pay that sort of debt. And very likely it's a different Mr. Jordan."

Because of her especial interest in Mr. Lafayette Jordan, Helen was not long in learning all that the neighbors could tell her about him and they were unanimous in assuring her that the resemblance between Mr. Jordan and his bulldog was not superficial. The part of wisdom was to keep as far from both as possible. It was surprising how many little stories she heard illustrating the inherent savagery of the two. Mr. Jordan had purchased the dog when the boys troubled him by stealing his cherries. Now the kennel stood almost at the foot of the cherry tree, and the cherries were as safe as if they had already been canned and put away in glass jars. After a time Helen reluctantly relinquished her intention of stopping Mr. Lafayette Jordan on the street someday, and introducing herself as the granddaughter of his old friend, Mr. Ingalls. If half she heard was true, the part of wisdom was to keep one's distance.

But though it seemed useless to make friendly advances to Mr. Jordan Helen set herself to scrape acquaintance with the dog. She was sorry for the animal, partly because everyone but his master was in deadly fear of him. Even the maid who fed him, placed his food on a tin plate at a distance of several yards from the kennel, and then pushed the plate in the dog's direction by means of a long pole. Helen was sure that this attitude must be painful to any self-respecting watch dog as indicating a disbelief in his ability to discriminate between members of the family and malefactors.

As Helen did not know the dog's name, she decided to call him Dumpty, using his master's boyish nickname. And frequently when she sat on the tin roof of the kitchen which served her as a porch, mending her stockings or drying her hair after its monthly washing, she amused herself by trying to lighten the loneliness of Dumpty's lot. She would attract his attention by a whistle, and then when he turned upon her an interrogative gaze, she would address him in friendly not to say affectionate terms. But though she called him a "good dog," instead of "a manly brute" which was the housemaid's favorite title, the dog never acknowledged her courtesy by as much as a wag of his tail.

Helen's customary sympathy for the dog was replaced one Saturday afternoon by a feeling of envy. The spring weather had been holding off capriciously, and the days remained cool, with frosts predicted night after night. Then all at once, it had gone to the other extreme, and the grumblers had been presented with a day stolen from mid-July. Helen who had taken her sweater to the office, returned home at two o'clock in the wilted condition which is the inevitable sequel to hard work on the first hot day of the season. Her mother had taken one of her rare holidays, and Helen let herself into the house with her latch key.

Slowly she climbed the stairs to her room. Though the windows were wide open, the atmosphere was hot and close and in addition there was a noticeable odor of smoke. Helen went quickly to the window, but a glance allayed her apprehensions. The servants at the Jordan place had been burning a pile of rubbish at the back of the house, and the blackened heap still smoldered, a faint column of blue smoke rising wraith-like from the ashes.

Having satisfied herself that the odor of smoke did not mean danger, Helen looked for the bulldog. He was stretched by his kennel asleep. The high brick wall cast a shadow that included his resting place. The cherry tree was full of blossoms and the grass was beginning to turn green. Dumpty's domain looked cool and peaceful and inviting. Helen whistled softly and the bulldog opened an eye and looked at her.

"Nice down there, isn't it, Dumpty?" called Helen. "If you were neighborly you would ask me over. This room is stifling."

The bulldog having satisfied himself as to the source of the whistle, again laid his head on his paws and lapsed into slumber. Helen looked about her. Apparently the unseasonable heat had dispersed her neighbors. Many of the houses in the row had a shuttered look as if they were empty, and she guessed that many of the occupants were improving the half-holiday by a trip to the parks or the country. She wished she had decided to do the same, and then, yawning, she decided that she was too tired to enjoy such an excursion. She threw herself down upon the couch, planning to rest a few minutes and then find some entertaining book.

When Helen awoke, a scream was ringing in her ears. She sat up gasping, under the impression that she had wakened just in time to avoid a nightmare. Then the scream was repeated and Helen sprang to her feet, fully awake, and ran to the window.

Whatever vague anticipations had had time to take shape in the half-minute since her awaking, the reality was infinitely different. She stood dazed by the spectacle, powerless to move. Flames were shooting up into the branches of the cherry tree. For an instant in the fantastic, fiery fountain she failed to recognize the familiar outlines of the kennel. Then she saw the bulldog straining at his chain, grimly silent, even in his terror.

The next minute Helen was down the stairs outside and facing the brick wall. There was a barrel in the yard, half-filled with rubbish collected from the spring cleaning. She overturned it, rolled it to the corner and using it as a step-ladder, mounted to the top of the wall.

Avoiding as far as possible the broken glass with which the top was strewn, she gripped the ledge with her fingers, lowered herself on the other side and dropped. The wall was higher than she realized and the fall was a disagreeable shock, but she climbed to her feet, though swaying dizzily. She noticed that the blood was dripping from several cuts in her fingers.

Helen saw the screaming housemaid run toward her, ready for orders. "Whatever shall we do, Miss?" she gasped.

"Unchain the dog first and then put out the fire."

"But we never go near him, Miss."

Helen looked at the bulldog, straining at his chain. There was a wildness in his eyes, due to doubt to terror As she looked ,the dog uttered an agonized yelp.

"Nonsense," Helen exclaimed, "I don't believe he'll hurt us." She advanced toward the animal chained to the burning kennel with less assurance than was indicated by her brave speech. It occurred to her that this unaccustomed fear might render Dumpty more savage than ordinarily. He might hold her responsible for his present danger and discomfort. It was necessary to be cautious and yet there was not a minute to waste.

"Dumpty! Good old Dumpty!" she coaxed. "Quiet, old fellow."

Again the dog yelped desperately, and Helen laid a tremulous hand on his collar. He leaped up—for a moment she thought his objective was her throat—and then she saw the short tail hysterically agitated. "Down, Dumpty, down," she ordered and fumbled with the chain.

The kennel had been built on a generous scale, and the heat of the flames was considerable. Before Helen could find the spring that released the chain, a spark fell on her dress, instantly burning a hole. Helen slapped it smartly, extinguishing the spark and smearing the unlucky garment with stains from her bleeding fingers. Then again she gave her attention to the chain.

The dog knew the instant he was free. He leaped away, and then facing the fire at a safe distance, began to bark furiously. Helen ran toward the kitchen to which the two servants had retreated in anticipation of her feeding the dangerous dog. "Get the garden hose, quick," she panted.

But the garden hose, it appeared, was outside, and neither woman would venture out to assist her in finding and adjusting it. They gave her directions more or less intelligible, from the window and Helen did the rest. But at last the hose was in place, and a steady stream of water was showering the kennel. It was too late to save it, but not too late to save the tree from serious injury. Dumpty took his stand at the side of the amateur fireman and watched the operation with the keenest interest.

The fire was practically out. The falling water swished through a big hole in the roof of the kennel and ran out through the charred door. Helen had forgotten everything but her fascinating employment, when a stern voice boomed a question in her startled ears.

"What is the meaning of this?"

Helen whirled about. She had momentarily forgotten the garden hose, and a stream of water struck Mr. Lafayette Jordan in the chest. "Oh," Helen screamed, "I didn't mean to do that." She proved the truth of her words by turning the hose on herself, and she was drenched so quickly that she wondered dully why it had taken so long to put the fire out. (Without realizing it, she dropped the hose and the water streamed away recklessly across the starting grass.

"What is the meaning of this?" repeated Mr. Lafayette Jordan, in a sterner voice.

"I was trying to put the fire out. I—"

"How did it take fire?"

"I'm not sure, but I think they had been burning rubbish and thought the fire was out. But it wasn't. There was a little smoke when I went to sleep."

"When you went to sleep?"

Helen pointed to her bedroom window. "I live there," she explained.

"Oh!" Suddenly Mr. Jordan seemed to realize that this parlorly manner toward a neighbor who had done him a service, was hardly becoming. His voice took on a propitiatory mildness. "You live there! And how did you get here?"

"Some one screamed and waked me, and when I jumped up, the kennel was blazing. And I couldn't leave poor Dumpty to burn to death."

"Dumpty?"

Helen's face, flushed from the heat and excitement, took on an added shade of scarlet. "Oh, excuse me. I—I didn't think."

"You called the dog Dumpty. How did you happen to select that name?"

"Well, you see, my mother— I'm afraid you'll think me very disrespectful."

"What about your mother?"

"Why she knew you when she was a little girl and she said that grandfather—"

"Grandfather! Your grandfather?"

"Yes, his name was Ingalls."

"You are William Ingalls' granddaughter, and one of my neighbors!"

"A sort of back-door neighbor," Helen laughed. She was losing her feeling of embarrassment and timidity. Mr. Lafayette Jordan seemed decidedly less formidable than he had been painted, almost human, indeed. And when after smirking of his master's trouser leg and wagging his tail, Dumpty came back to her and sat down heavily on her foot, she realized that in the case of Dumpty, too, appearances had been deceitful.

"I'm afraid I must seem a little bit stupid," said Mr. Jordan meekly. "But if you wouldn't mind beginning at the beginning."

Helen did not mind. She started with the ghostly column of blue smoke that she had seen ascending from the pile of charred rubbish, and went on briefly through the story of her awakening, her smelling the smoke and hearing to the bulldog's rescue. Once Mr. Jordan interrupted. "Then you weren't afraid of him?"

Helen hesitated. She did not wish to claim more courage than was really hers. "Oh, well, a little," she said, "but not enough to—"

"Not enough to stop you, I see. Go on."

"That's about all." As a matter of fact, Helen compressed the rest of her story into very few words. But when she had brought it to the point of sprinkling Mr. Jordan with his own hose, he still had some questions to ask.

"How long has your mother known that she and I were old friends?"

"Well, almost ever since we lived here, nearly three years. A new postman left one of your letter at our house one day."

"Are you the only child?"

"I have a brother Roland. He's studying law." Helen tried to make the announcement matter-of-fact, but a wild hope thrilled her.

"Will your mother be at home this evening? If so, I should like to call and renew old friendship. There are few people I remember as distinctly as little Ellie Ingalls."

Helen went home by the road under a sun umbrella which Mr. Jordan insisted on lending her. She was glad of it, not so much as a protection from the sun, as because with its aid she could partially conceal the fact that she looked as if she had been taking a shower bath. Her mother had reached home before her, and when Helen burst in dripping and too excited to talk coherently, it is hardly strange that it took some time to persuade Mrs. Bowen that there was "no reason to be frightened."

Mr. Lafayette Jordan called that evening and many times thereafter. And the stern face and gruff manner that frightened people proved to be only a mask, hiding a kindly nature as was the case of Dumpty's forbidding physiognomy. It was at Mr. Jordan's suggestion that Roland entered his office after his graduation, but Helen always remained the favorite of their eccentric neighbor. Indeed it was on Helen's account that a gate was cut through the brick wall so that when she wished to sit in the shade of the cherry tree or play with Dumpty, it would not be necessary for her to go round by the road, or scale the wall again.

But though Helen had made a lifelong and generous friend, and though Mr. Jordan paid in full his debt to the man who had given him his start, this was not the most valuable result of the acquaintance, as far as Helen was concerned. For it strengthened her in a conviction which had been temporarily weakened by the incredulity of others, that a prickly exterior—a sort of human chestnut burr—may disguise real worth and sweetness and that most people—as well as most dogs—are kinder than they look.—Campanion.

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A Bright Milton Lad's Essay

Which Won the Gold Medal for Milton School, Presented by the Ontario Fire Marshall

The Milton Champion published last week the following very creditable essay on Fire Prevention, written in the competition for the Ontario Fire Marshall's prize, which won the Gold Medal. Cavers Marshall was the essayist:-

"Tom Henry's house burned yesterday
And burned his neighbor's too,
For careless Tom had in his house
An 'old, defective flue.'"

Defective flue! Yes, but that's not the only thing that has caused a neighbor's house to burn. From the beginning of time fire has played a most important role in the world's evolution. It has made and unmade continents, it has been used to generate power, and with it nine-tenths of our food is prepared. Properly controlled it is our most important ally, but it can destroy and has destroyed in one hour what nature has taken centuries to create, or what man has spent years in fashioning. How, then, can it be prevented?

In the home, cleanliness of house and surroundings is the most powerful factor in preventing fires. An old saying, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," is very true in this case. If people would clean up their rubbish every assessment and leave nothing ignitable around it would safeguard their own and their neighbor's properties. I said every season, but that is not enough. Supposing a fire had come before the cleaning day! It would be better not to allow any accumulation of rubbish.

Sometimes combustable oils on rags have been carelessly thrown aside and the air has set them on fire. I know a woman once who threw a rag after varnishing a floor, on a bench outside, and after a while there was a big fire. On seeing the flames we gave the alarm and it was soon extinguished.

In the factory, too, we must always be on the lookout, for if it is burned down, the men that worked there would lose their jobs and many families would suffer. Here it is that the greatest cleanliness should prevail. All rubbish and oily waste should be kept in iron receptacles. Smoking in factories should be strictly forbidden.

The building itself should be properly constructed, using as little wood as possible. It is better to be made of concrete, steel, or brick, with openings to avoid direct draft. From upper stories there should be fire escapes with regular fire drill for the employees. All chemicals and explosives should be removed from crowded parts so that the danger would be less in case of fire. Fire extinguishers should be easily obtainable in case of fire.

Lightning rods on all buildings does away with the danger of lightning. These should be freely employed on both home and factory. As lightning has caused so much loss of both life and property, our government should make it compulsory to use lightning rods. Electricity is a very useful agent, both in home and factory, but we should guard its use by having all wires covered and inspected.

With the education the children are receiving to-day on ways and means of preventing fires, surely the next generation will see very few fires.

CAVERN MARSHALL.

ORDERING SEED FOR THE BESY VEGETABLES

In order to obtain the best results from the garden, it is a well known fact that good seed of the best varieties is one of the important features which will insure certain success. In this regard many of the old standard varieties are still giving satisfactory results, but it is a good policy at this season of the year to study the records of past years, to ascertain if the crops obtained then, compare favorably with the requirements of to-day.

Procrastination on the part of those intending to order seed may end in disappointment, because the bulk of seed orders received by seed houses are received late in the season. Those orders that are sent in early, are liable to receive exactly what is asked for, whereas, orders sent in later may receive many substitutions.

The requirements, whether general or specific, as the case may be, will have some influence on the choice to be made. However, it is a well-known fact, and most people are well agreed upon it, that earliness, yielding ability, uniformity and quality are the chief deciding factors when making a choice of varieties for a garden, whether commercial or for home use. It is here, that discrimination has to be applied, because, there are many novelties being offered which may prove satisfactory and may be not. Where it is desired to introduce new early varieties, it is a good policy to refer to definite data dealing with this particular question, and in this way, find out from the reports of experiments the performance of such sorts. For instance, in the case of early corn, there is Early Malcolm and Sweet Squaw, both of which are fully ten days earlier than our best early variety. Both of these are white, but possess such quality, earliness and yielding ability that they can be recommended to the public with certainty. The same performance holds in the case of tomatoes, of which there is the Alacrity. It has become quite well known as a variety for earliness, quality and yielding ability. If such varieties are added to the garden tests, or other varieties that have become known, there is little doubt, but that the results will be very satisfactory.

Buy only good seed, sow plenty of it to insure having plenty of plants, from which the most vigorous ones can be selected.—T. Fred Hitchie, Assistant in Vegetable Gardening.

THE SABBATH

The Sabbath is God's witness to the importance of spiritual things; the call He sends out every week to the weary world to pause in its labors and return to Him for that rest which can be found nowhere else. Absorbed in the things of time and sense, men are prone to forget God, and without the Sabbath they would no doubt lose sight of His claims altogether. The Sabbath is the great bulwark not only of Christianity, but of civilization, protecting the soul from the encroachments of the world. The Sabbath and the Church stand or fall together. If the Sabbath goes, the Church goes, Christianity goes civilization goes, and red-handed anarchy takes possession of the world!—Christian Observer.

WE CAN BE PREPARED FOR ORDINARY CONTINGENCIES OF LIFE

Many of us are taken by surprise and to our undoing, in matters where we should have been prepared. If the first freeze finds the householder with no coal in the cellar he cannot hold anyone but himself responsible. In November he may expect cold weather. One who leaves the house without an umbrella when the sky is overcast has no reason to grumble if he gets a wetting. The rain took him by surprise, but he ought not to have been taken by surprise. He should have looked at the sky and foreseen the likelihood of rain.

Without laying any claims to prophetic gifts, we can be prepared for most of the ordinary contingencies of life if we use ordinary foresight and ordinary intelligence.

OUR MISTAKEN STANDARDS

The things that humiliate are frequently an indication of false standards. A girl is humiliated over being discovered washing windows, when if that work needed to be done, and she was the one to do it, there is no reason or excuse for her feeling of embarrassment. We are humiliated by wearing shabby garments when considering our responsibility to others, our appearing in fine clothes would be discreditable.

To be ashamed of doing necessary work, or of dressing appropriately for the work we are doing, shows mistaken standards. Give your humiliation for the time when you are irritable or unkind, or selfish, when you deliberately transgress the laws of right doing.

HER DEFENDER

A heart may beat true under the raggedest coat. That instinct of chivalry which rushes to the defense of the weak and the oppressed dwells in every manly boy, be he rich or poor, big or little.

He wasn't very big, but he was a sturdy little chap, with a face that bore the marks of much thinking and premature responsibility. He was calling his evening papers good and loud on the corner of two streets.

A ragged young girl was selling flowers near by, when a man, rushing to catch his car, knocked her against the side of the building. Without stopping, probably without noticing what he had done, he continued his rush, when the boy stopped in front of him defiantly: "Say, what do you want to knock a girl down for? Hit me; I'm big enough."

The man paused in surprise, and then glanced around. He saw the flower-girl picking up her wares, and understood. Without a moment's hesitation he went back to her, gave her enough money to make her eyes sparkle with joy, and said:

"I'm sorry, my dear, that I hurt you. I didn't see." Then, turning to the boy, he continued: "You said you were big enough, young man, but you're a great deal bigger than you think. Men like you will have a lot to do with keeping this world in a condition of self-respect."

Then he caught his car, and the boy and girl stood there wondering what he meant.—H. H. Messenger.

A BEATING THAT SERVED TWO PURPOSES

A little fellow sat on a doorstep crying bitterly. Presently a sympathetic old lady came along.

"What's the matter, little boy?" she asked.

"Got my new breeches covered with dust," sobbed the boy.

"But they're clean now, dear," continued the woman.

"I know they are," wailed the lad.

"Then why do you still cry, child?"

"'Cos mother wouldn't let me take them off while she beat the dust out."

MARMALADE

The name "marmalade" comes from the name of the fruit—Portugese quince—called marmelo, from which it was orighally prepared. It is frequently mentioned in old cookery books as "marmlade." The name "jam" comes merely from the method of preparation—to jam, or crush, the fruit and sugar together.

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