The Acton Free Press

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1922

WHEN DAYS ARE DARK

When days are dark, remember
The brightness that is past;
Call up the glad spring music
To mingle with the blast,
Think of the merry sunshine
And host of scented flowers,
Let memories of the summer
Take gloom from off sad hours.

When days are dark, be cheerful;—
Because the days must fade,
Thy hopes need not be cast away,
Nor thy heart be dismayed.
This is the time for laughter
And happy household song;
Hours that are filled with cheerfulness
Are never sad and long.

When days are dark, be thankful—
Light is not always true,
And useful are the shadows,
The silence, and the rest.
God gives whate'er is good to some,
The day and then the night,
And those who find their joy in His
Live always in the light.

—Marianna Farmingham.

Room Number Fifteen

Frederick E. Burnham

"I AM very sure, were I in your place, that I would decide on Room Fifteen," declared the college proctor. "Room Fifteen has the reputation of being a very desirable room. It is the poorest room in the entire dormitory, but—well, pleasant surroundings are not everything, Mr. Whittemore."

"I am going to take your advice," said Amos Whittemore, the while standing beside the solitary window of Room Fifteen, a window which looked out upon a dingy row of brick tenement houses. "As you say, pleasant surroundings are not everything. I won't have much time to look at the scenery."

"You have made a wise choice," remarked the proctor enigmatically. "I have showed this room to fully a dozen Freshmen to-day, but they all turned from it with the exception of you. Yes, Mr. Whittemore, you have made a wise choice."

It was about three months before Whittemore knew why the proctor considered him such a "lucky fellow." Then it was that he was summoned to the office of the president of the college, there to learn that a scholarship was connected with Room Fifteen, a scholarship which provided for all legitimate college expenses for four years, provided that the occupant of the room proved himself worthy of the same. "You are not to mention this scholarship to any of the students," Mr. Whittemore," declared the president of the college. "The donor is very explicit in his commands in this line."

The first thing that Whittemore did upon reaching his room that memorable day was to write a letter to his father and mother, telling them the good news, cautioning them, however, to keep it a secret, and explaining the reason for so doing. Whittemore felt like writing that day, and his letter was a lengthy one. For weeks he had been at his wits' end to figure out how to meet expenses. The ways and means which he had planned on at home had for the most part failed, and ready funds were ebbing.

Whittemore was a country boy. One could tell at a glance that he knew little of the city. While his clothes were clean and neat, they were ill-fitting and were of cheap material. "He dresses quite in keeping with Room Fifteen," remarked one arrogant youth. And there were others who agreed with him.

There was nothing more brilliant about Whittemore in the classroom, but he soon ranked with some of the keenest of the students. It was long hours of study which accounted for his progress.

Whittemore was very prudent with what little spending money he had. In truth he had to be, would he keep out of debt, and that was one thing which he was determined to keep clear of. He knew several Freshmen who were being hounded by tradesmen for long overdue accounts and he had no desire to be in their shoes. The story was started that Whittemore was stingy and as the year was drawing to a close he found himself being shunned by certain students he had been more or less friendly with.

"You are too close for me, Amos," remarked Bert Cole, with whom Whittemore had chummed around quite a deal. "I don't believe you have spent five dollars for fun since you came here." That was two days before Christmas.

"Dollars are too hard to get hold of up where I came from for me to spend them foolishly," he said.

The ensuing day came a box from home. Having opened it, Whittemore found within a most tempting array of home-cooked food—a roasted chicken, cranberry sauce, a loaf of bread, a pat of homemade butter, two mince pies, a frosted cake, a bag of cookies, and last of all, but not least, a big bag of hickory nuts, which his brother had sent on from his winter's hoard.

He promptly hunted up Cole and invited him to a spread in his room on Christmas Day. Cole declined the invitation.

Christmas morning Whittemore arose with a raging headache. He had been awake the greatest part of the night and fretting over Cole's coolness to him. He in no wise regretted the economy which had marked his life there at college, yet the result had been deplorable. With Cole gone, he was practically friendless so far as the students were concerned. By noontime, however, his head felt so much easier that he picked up a book and began to study. Although it was Christmas Day, he knew that the time would pass much quicker were his mind occupied.

It was about two o'clock that afternoon that a smart rap on the door brought Whittemore to his feet. Throwing wide the door, he was greeted by the same proctor who had shown him Room Fifteen the day that he arrived at college. Beside the proctor stood a rather shabbily-dressed man of perhaps seventy years. "Mr. Whittemore, this gentleman is Mr. Morse," declared the proctor. "Mr. Morse wishes to see Room Fifteen." Then he hastily withdrew.

"Won't you come in, Mr. Morse?" asked Whittemore. "This is not a very pretentious room, but it answers my needs."

Mr. Morse entered and stepping across the room to the window, looked out upon the disreputable tenement houses. For fully two minutes he stood there in silent reflection. When at length he turned, Whittemore saw him wipe his eyes.

"Perhaps I am detaining you," he remarked.

"I have the entire day to myself, sir," replied Whittemore. "To tell the truth I was feeling rather lonely when you came, it being Christmas Day. I am very glad indeed that you have called."

"If that is the case, I will be very glad to tarry for a time," declared the old gentleman. "I—I have a great deal of love for this modest little room. Fifty years ago I left it after a sojourn here of four years."

"And you roomed here fifty years ago!" exclaimed Whittemore.

"Yes, this is where I fought it out with poverty, where I put in four years of hard study."

"Would you be offended were I to offer to share a little spread with you, sir?" questioned Whittemore. "Just a box of food which my mother sent me."

"It will be a great pleasure I assure you. It cannot but call to my mind a few, a very few treats of a half-century ago."

Whittemore hauled himself at once with the setting of the table. He was decidedly short of dishes, but what he lacked along that line he made up in abundance of food! It proved a spread never to be forgotten! For more than two hours they lingered at the little table, Mr. Morse regaling Whittemore with stories of college life in the old days. At last the guest took his departure, leaving his entertainer full of courage and cheer.

That evening Whittemore met the proctor who had guided the old gentleman to Room Fifteen. "A very interesting gentleman is that Mr. Morse," remarked Whittemore.

"Yes, indeed, and especially so to you, I presume," replied the proctor, smiling.

"To me?"

"Mr. Morse is the donor of the Room Fifteen Scholarship!" replied the proctor, clapping Whittemore on the back.

"And I never once thought of it!" cried Whittemore. "I wonder what he thinks of me."

"I can tell you, Mr. Whittemore," replied the proctor. "He is very favorably impressed with you. He told me so less than fifteen minutes ago."

That evening Whittemore wrote Mr. Morse a letter of gratitude. Ten days later came a reply, and that letter to-day although many years have passed, is a most highly-prized epistle which is safely stowed away in the safe of one of the leading physicians of Massachusetts.

THE NEW MANAGER OF THE BRANCH STORE

"What in the world are you doing with the geometry, Al?" exclaimed Will Cutler, locating his fellow clerk out by the coal pile in the rear of Jonathan Saunders' grocery store.

"Figuring out how much coal there is here," replied Al Perkins. "Here is a cone of nut coal that is ten feet high and twenty-two and a half feet in diameter at the base. Nut coal weighs about fifty-five pounds to the cubic foot. I am getting at it, Will, but it's slow work, for I'm a bit rusty when it comes to solid geometry. Mr. Saunders asked me to figure it out for him so here I am. We will have to pass up the ball practice this noon."

"Guess at it, Al," laughed Will. "Guess at it; Mr. Saunders will never know the difference."

"No," replied Albert. "I am a poor guesser, Will.—I don't practice enough along that line. I like to know."

It took almost the entire noon hour to figure out the amount of coal that was on hand, but at last Al knew, and he smiled as he handed his figures to his employer.

Saunders turned to his desk [illegible] Albert's figures, and [illegible] from a slip of paper. As he [illegible] the tops of his spectacles [illegible] young man, he said, "You and [illegible] very closely," handing over a slip of paper. "We came within thirty-five pounds of each other."

"So you measured it, Mr. Saunders!" exclaimed Al, flushing.

"Yes. It has been a good many years since I studied geometry, but after a time I figured it out. I wanted to prove my own work, and at the same time see how accurate you were."

It was about a month later that Mr. Saunders leased a small store in another village of the township. He said nothing of his plans to either Albert or Will. In fact no person in town knew just what he planned to do. The only definite statement that he did make was that he intended to have the new store open for business the first day of January.

"I'd like to be manager over there, Al," remarked Will a few days after the leasing of the store.

"That's the work for a man who knows the business from A to Z," laughed Albert. "Neither you nor I are in that class. I guess if we watch the papers we'll see an advertisement calling for such a man."

"Well, as long as you put yourself in my class, Al, I'll take no offence," laughed Will. "In a way, I suppose you are right about it. It does take a pretty capable man to run even a branch store. Lots of men who are good clerks turn out to be poor managers. Just the same, I'd like to try it. If I made a fizzle of it, it would be no money out of my pocket."

The day following Christmas Mr. Saunders took account of stock. Notice had been given the customers that there would be no delivery of goods that day, although the store would be open for business as usual.

"We are going through this store to-day and take account of every article of merchandise," declared Mr. Saunders upon opening the store that morning. "I don't want either of you to miss one single item, however trivial. Every sale that is made, set down, and at the same time tell me what was sold, the amount and the money received. Albert, you may start with the top shelf in this corner; you, Will, at the other end of the counter; I will start in very shortly."

At three o'clock that afternoon Will announced the fact that he had completed his work, and was about to drop wearily upon a box when Mr. Saunders called him to the desk. "Here are the cost prices, young man," he said. "You are not much more than half through. Now figure up the sum total. You certainly have done some rapid work to-day. Albert has a long way to go yet." Will smiled. Somehow he failed to note the tinge of sarcasm in his employer's note.

It was nearly five o'clock before Albert was ready to tackle the cost of the goods, and it was nine o'clock before he submitted his figures to Mr. Saunders. Long since, Will had gone home. When he was about to leave, Will whispered in his ear: "Al you're a slow match. I had to laugh when I saw you counting those sticks of candy in the vase. I guessed at them, and I have an idea that I wasn't very far out of the way. There were lots of things you could guess at. I reckon Mr. Saunders did a bit of guessing if the truth were known."

Both Albert and Will watched the papers closely the next three or four days, but neither saw any advertisement which could possibly be construed as coming from Mr. Saunders.

"He has got track of some man down in the city," remarked Will one morning, "for he has been to the city three or four times within a week."

"He must have settled on somebody, for next Monday the store is supposed to open for business," replied Albert.

"Albert, I want to see you for a few moments after we close up to-night," said Mr. Saunders just as Will was slipping into his overcoat, preparatory to going home for the night. "There are a few matters which I wish to talk over with you."

"Al is in for it this time," chuckled Will to himself, smiling as he noted the serious face of Mr. Saunders. "He must have done something that stirred up the old man."

Ten minutes later Mr. Saunders slipped to the door and locked it. A moment later he was at his desk and motioned Albert to a seat beside him.

"What do you say to being manager and sole clerk, for the present, of the new store?" queried Mr. Saunders, leaning back in his chair.

"Me!" said Albert, showing his surprise.

"Why not?"

"Why—why, I'm only a clerk!" gasped Albert.

"Yes, but a very accurate one," replied Mr. Saunders, smiling. "Comparing your account with mine the other day, I found that your itemized statement of the stock in trade here agreed with mine in every part cular. Your cost figures tallied to a cent with mine. To-morrow morning the goods will arrive for the new store. As soon as they come you may go over to the store and set things to rights. Your salary will be increased."

"All I can say, Mr. Saunders, is that I will do my very best to meet your needs."

Will could scarcely believe his own ears the following morning when he learned of Albert's good fortune. For a moment he stood stock still, then said, "Here I've been in this store two years longer than you, Al, and Mr. Saunders picks you for manager over to the new store."

A year later Mr. Saunders said to Albert one morning, "I think I will let you have Will, he is honest so far as money goes, but he needs to brace up and make the best use of time. Help him all you can."

"I shall be glad to," answered Albert and was as though a bird suddenly began a song in his heart. Turning he said to himself, "I will make a man a man of Will yet."—Josiah Hwott.

SUPERVISED

"Doris!" called a shrill voice from the recess of the house. "What are you doing out there on the piazza? It is getting dark and growing rather chilly; you had better be coming in!"

"We are only talking," came back the quiet answer, "and it is not a bit cold."

"All right, Aunt Milinda," and Doris sighed, as she looked at the manly form dimly outlined in the twilight before her. "We have a good supervisor, Jim," she spoke slowly.

"We have, at that," he said teasingly; "but I do not blame her, when she is your guardian."

"Doris! D-o-r-i-s!" Came the call again.

"Yes, Aunt Milinda, we are coming." And with a final, wistful glance at the harvest moon, they entered the house.

Aunt Milinda sat beside the kitchen table knitting, and did not seem to notice their approach.

"Would you like some music, Jim?" Doris asked.

Jim opened his mouth to agree heartily with this proposal, but shut it up with a snap, for Aunt Milinda was ready before him.

"No, Doris, it is too chilly in the parlor this fall evening, and anyway, the lamp needs fixing."

Doris sighed, and Jim unconsciously joined in. It was hard being in love with a girl for four years, who had an aunt like Aunt Milinda.

The old-fashioned clock ticked away heartlessly, but somehow the conversational powers of the trio were limited.

Finally Aunt Milinda looked at the clock suggestively and peered over her gold-rimmed spectacles at the caller.

"It seems to me the men folks make rather late calls on the girls nowadays. When I was a girl the boys always went home sharp at nine o'clock!"

"Perhaps I had better be going," Jim said, rising to his feet, apologetically.

"Please don't," Doris begged, "you have just barely got here."

Then the rapid clicking of the steel needles grew slower and finally stopped entirely. Aunt Milinda's head fell back against the chair and she was asleep!

"Shall we see if that harvest moon is still there?" a deep voice asked joyfully.

"Of course!" a softer voice replied, and two dim forms crept stealthily from the house.

"Has your aunt ever been in love?" Jim asked abruptly, as they wandered along the river bank.

"Yes, once, but she lost faith in her lover and is now a sworn man hater," she answered. "His name was Paul and they were going to be married, but a little trouble arose just before the wedding, and the wedding was cancelled. But Paul wrote to her and asked to be allowed to come to her home to explain. Aunt Milinda was very proud, but decided to let him come. She wrote to him, telling him so, but he never came and died very suddenly a short time afterward."

"That was unfortunate," Jim spoke seriously, "and I can understand now why she is so opposed to me."

They walked along thoughtfully and contentedly, forgetting how rapidly the time was slipping by.

Aunt Milinda opened her eyes in fright and jumped to her feet. Where was she, and why was she alone? She rubbed her eyes in bewilderment and reached anxiously for the lamp.

"Doris! Doris!" she called, but there was no answer. The clock struck ten.

It did not take long to light the lamp and begin a hurried search for her beloved niece.

Suddenly she heard a little scratching and a wierd scuffling in the wall.

"Mice!" shrieked Aunt Milinda, and with a frantic bound landed on top of the table. There was a crash and a crumbling sound, and the next thing she knew she was sitting on the floor, surrounded by pieces of an old kitchen table.

As she sat there, trying to discover what had happened, she saw an old yellow letter in the ruins, addressed in her own handwriting.

"Well, I declare," she spoke excitedly, reaching nervously for it. "I never mailed that letter to Paul, after all. It must have slipped in" a crack of the table when the other letter were mailed. No wonder he never answered!"

Doris and Jim heard the crash in the house and came rushing in to see what had happened. There sat dignified Aunt Milinda on the floor with a broken table around her and a letter in her hand.

"Oh, Aunt Milinda," Doris cried, "are you hurt?"

"Only my pride," she answered brightly, as they helped her carefully to her feet, "now, you two young folks go out on the piazza and visit the moon. I am going to bed." And she started up the stairs.

"But Aunt Milinda—" Doris began—

"No 'buts' only wrap up warm; it may be chilly," and she disappeared with the letter clasped tightly in her hand.

Jim looked at Doris and Doris looked at Jim—and then two happy people hurried out to the piazza to visit with the moon."—Ethel M. Farmer.

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TEA

Black-Mixed-Green-Sealed Packet Only.

CURRANTS AND GOOSEBERRIES

If a current or gooseberry plantation is properly cared for, at least eight to ten crops may be expected before it becomes unprofitable because of its age. Productive fields over twenty years old are not uncommon in some sections. Although the number of years a plantation will continue in good bearing condition depends to some extent upon location and soil, the most important factor is the care which it receives. The period of productiveness of both currant and gooseberry plants is longer in northern regions than toward the southern limits of their culture and longer on heavy soil than on sandy soil.

In gardens where the available land is limited in extent, currants and gooseberries may well be planted permanently. The shade of the trees protects the fruits from sun scald, and the foliage is usually healthier in such locations than when grown where it is freely exposed to the sun.

A place with good air drainage is preferred for gooseberries. In low, damp places mildew attacks both fruit and foliage more severely than on higher sites where the air circulation is better. Currants, however, are seldom severely attacked by mildew. Therefore, when the site is a sloping one, currants may be planted on the lower parts and gooseberries above. As both fruits blossom very early in the spring, neither should be planted in low pockets where late spring frosts may kill the flowers.

Gooseberries ordinarily are propagated by layers. The plant from which layers are to be procured should be cut back heavily before it begins to grow in the spring. By July it will have sent out numerous vigorous shoots. It should then be mounded with earth half way to the tips of the shoots. By autumn the shoots will have rooted. Those with strong roots may then be cut off and set in the nursery, to be grown for the field. If the roots are not well developed, it will be better to leave the shoots attached to the parent plant for a second year.

DETERMINED TO SUCCEED

The following is one of the traditions of a manufacturing firm in Glasgow, Scotland. Thirty years ago a barefooted, ragged urchin presented himself before the desk of the principal partner and asked for work as an errand boy.

"There's a deal o' running to be done," said Mr. Blank, jestingly affecting a broad Scotch accent. "Your qualifications 'd be a pair o' shoon."

The boy with a grave nod disappeared. He lived by doing odd jobs in the market and slept under one of the stalls. Two months passed before he had saved enough money to buy the shoes. Then he presented himself be- Mr. Blank one morning and held out a package. "I have the shoon, sir," he said quietly.

"O!" Mr. Blank with difficulty recalled the circumstances. "You want a place? Not in those rags, my lad. You would disgrace this house."

The boy hesitated a moment and then went out without a word. Six months passed before he returned, decently clothed in course but new garments. Mr. Blank's interest was aroused. For the first time he looked at the boy attentively. His thin, bloodless face showed that he had stinted himself of food for months in order to buy those clothes. The manufacturer now questioned the boy carefully and found to his regret that he could neither read nor write.

"It is necessary that you should do both before we could employ you in carrying home packages," he said; "We have no place for you."

The lad's face grew paler; but without a word of complaint he disappeared. He now went fifteen miles into the country and found work in stables near to a night school. At the end of the year he again presented himself before Mr. Blank.

"I can read and write," he said briefly.

"I gave him the place," the employer said years afterwards, "with the conviction that in process of time he would take mine if he made up his mind to do it. Men rise slowly in Scotch business houses, but he is our chief foreman."

Protect the child from the ravages of worms by using Mother Graves' Worm Exterminator. It is a standard remedy, and years of use have enhanced its reputation.

A GOOD TURN ELECTED HIM

James Davis, for years Congressman from Missouri, told at a Washington Scout celebration the story of how a typical Scout good turn had elected him.

"One morning," he said, "when I was about twenty I was riding my horse into town when I met a boy who had been riding a mule loaded with a sack of corn. The sack had fallen off, and the boy was not able to put it back on single handed.

"I dismounted, took off my coat, and put the boy and the corn back on the mule. Then I went on and forgot all about it.

"Nearly twenty years later I was a candidate for Congress in the primaries. I didn't have much chance in the 'enemy's country,' but learned that some one there was very busy getting votes for me. I had no idea who he could be. In the end I was nominated by forty-seven votes.

"At the county mass meeting which followed to celebrate the victory a big, sturdy young man elbowed his way through the crowd to the speakers' stand and held out his hand. "I don't suppose you know me," he said. And I admitted that I did not.

"'Well,' he continued, 'you may remember a boy and a mule and a sack of corn in the road twenty years ago. Three men passed him before you came along, but you, the fourth, stopped to help the boy and the corn get back on that mule. I'm the boy, and I made up my mind that day that if I ever had a chance to pay you back for the good turn you did for me I would. My chance came, and I've made good on it. We gave you a majority of sixty-eight votes in our township.'

"That one little good turn," said Congressman Davis, "elected me."

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Use Murine Eye Remedy Night and Morning.

Keep your Eyes Clean, Clear and Healthy. Write for Free Eye Care Book. Murine Eye Remedy Co., 8 East Ohio Street, Chicago.

A MOTOR CAR FOR WINTER USE

The Wharton Echo describes a newly-adapted motor car, remodelled in a Durham garage for winter use:—

The car is owned by Mr. C. Smith, of Durham. Mr. Smith and his son are motor car dealers there.

It is what might be called a "winter Ford." It was built for travel over snow roads and its ability to do this was demonstrated by the fact that it came from Durham, 28 miles, in two hours. Although the roads are drifted in pretty badly in some places, it came all the way without having to be pulled out by any power but its own.

The winter Ford has been practically built in the Durham garage. The chassis has been out down so that the rear wheels are now the same width apart as sleigh and cutter runners. The front wheels are replaced by runners which are moved by the same steering gear as was used to turn the wheels of the car.

On the outside of each rear wheel a steel tractor wheel is fastened. This steel wheel is not so large in diameter as the ordinary car wheel and so does not touch the ground unless the car wheels sink into the snow about three inches. Then these steel tractor wheels pull the car out of the rut.

Although the car is rather rough in design, the idea is a first-class one and if developed might prove itself worthy of being developed in commercial numbers.

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