The Acton Free Press

WEDNESDAY, MAY 24, 1922

A BUNDLE OF MAXIMS

A clever English school-boy has strung together a lot of our best-known proverbs as follows:

"Pots can't call a kettle black.
"Find the needle in the stack.
"A stitch in time a ninth will save.
"The fair go only to the brave.
"Take a look before you leap.
"Still are waters that run deep.
"Broth is spoilt by many cooks.
"Greet a gift-horse not with books.
"Lanes without a turn are long.
"Things united then are strong.
"Wait for no man time and tide.
"Falls come often after pride.
"Blind the blind can never lead.
"Haste's more and make less speed.
"Dogs, look not rejected bones!
"Glasshouse-dwellers, throw not stones!
"I must cease—for I am told
"Speech is silver, silence gold!"

LOU'S BACKYARD

"Oh, Bess, when did you get back?" cried Norma Talcott, as going down the shady street, she caught sight of her chum sitting on the porch of her home.

"Late last night," returned Bess. "Come on up, and let's talk awhile. I've beans to tell you." Catching Norma's hand, she drew her up the steps. "I mustn't stay long," said Norma, with a glance at her watch. "I'm on the way to the market to get some things that mother wants to cook for dinner."

"Oh, you can spare a little while for the chum you haven't had a glimpse of even in over two weeks," laughed Bess, as she pulled Norma down beside her in the porch hammock, and placed some pillows comfortably at their backs.

"Why didn't you write me you were coming last night?" asked Norma. "I had your letter Monday but you never mentioned coming home in that."

"Well," explained Bess, "I came quite unexpectedly. Lou's cousin came up for a few days—drove his car—and yesterday he was summoned home suddenly on some business. As his way took him right through here, he asked Lou and me to come along. So we very gladly did so," finished Bess gayly.

"And Lou's with you?" Norma's voice was expectant.

"No, she went on with her cousin for a few days' visit. But he's promised to bring her over here sometime next week, and then we'll keep her for awhile, you may be sure. I'll need her help in carrying out a plan," added Bess, a twinkle in her eyes.

Lou Henderson, Bess Arnold and Norma Talcott had been friends since kindergarten days. And it was a trial to each one when during their Sophomore year in High School, Lou's father turned his attention to certain business interests that necessitated the removal of the family to a distant village. It had been arranged that Bess and Norma should visit Lou together, but illness in Norma's family had made it impossible for her to go. She had insisted that Bess go just the same, and now Bess had returned from the visit.

"Do tell me all about Lou's home in Forestown. Is it as attractive as her home here always was?" Norma leaned eagerly toward Bess as she put her inquiries.

"Every bit," was the prompt reply. "And, oh, Norma, how I wish you could see Lou's backyard! I just wanted to live in that backyard! It's the bonniest spot!"

"Tell me about it," urged Norma, her eyes glowing with interest.

For a minute Bess thought. Then, turning impulsively to Norma, she said, "I'll tell you just how it looked to me the first time I saw it—shall I?"

"Yes, do," came quickly in response.

Bess cupped her chin in her hand and looked out across the lawn. Then she began to talk in a low, happy tone that one might use in telling of some scene that had spoken glad messages to the heart. "Lou and I had been sitting on the front porch talking. It was the first morning I was there. After awhile she went down to the office to help her father an hour or two. I read awhile, then decided to go in and see if I couldn't help Lou's mother in some way. When she heard me come in, she called me to come out on the back porch. I went on through the hall and dining room and kitchen. But when I came to the kitchen door, Norma, I just stopped—and looked." Bess drew a long breath, and Norma murmured, "Yes, yes—and then?"

"Norma, it was a picture—that back yard. I stood in the kitchen doorway, and just gazed and gazed. A long narrow flagstone walk led straight ahead, greenness closing in on either side. There were trees, and a grape arbor. Over at one side tall cannas stood at attention, while tiptoeing just behind them, and peeping above them like sunny fairies was a line of golden glow. There had been a little shower early that morning, and everything looked so fresh, so inviting.

"You know how some back yards look, Norma? So cluttered, uncared-for, forlorn in appearance. You just want to turn away from them—close your eyes and your thoughts to them. They don't say, 'Come,' as this back yard of Lou's did. There were gay red geraniums smiling welcomingly from their place on the porch rail, and contributing their bright touch to the picture. Oh, Norma, it was a back yard that had a loved look—you know what I mean?"

Norma smiled understandingly.

"It all put pretty thoughts in your heart," went on Bess dreamily. "Sang you a little song of cheer and peace and home-love. And, the little walk leading out and on—it was a delightful little challenge to go its length—to adventure into the unseen. A challenge that was more than half promise that beyond were posies, shady nooks, patches of sunlight, and all sorts of growing things."

For a few moments there was silence on the porch. Then Norma with an impulsive gesture, exclaimed, "Why can't we get busy with our backyards—take such care of them that they will have a loved look like Lou's has?"

Bess threw her arm about Norma's shoulder and gave her a quick hug. "We can. We're going to," her voice rang with purpose. "That's the plan I have in which we'll need Lou's help. She'll show us how—and you and I will have back yards that beckon folks into them, and sing pretty little songs to them, too."—Blanche Coonley Blessing.

WHERE HAPPINESS DWELLS AND BEAUTY EXCELS

A summer day is long in Algonquin Park, inviting to out-door pastimes of all descriptions. The nights are cool and restful, with clear lakes reflecting the great stars that hang low in the Northern skies, and there is silence, except for an occasional muted call, the dip of feeding trout or bass and the subdued song of water and stirring leaves. If you would experience such summer days as these, visit Algonquin Park, drink in with your lungs the air of its heights, with your eyes behold its manifold beauties and you will become a lover of this big unspoiled forest of the Ontario Highlands. Reached by Grand Trunk Railway. Illustrated booklet telling you all about it sent free on application to any Grand Trunk Ticket Agent or C. E. Horning, D. P. A., Toronto, Ont.

Continuing my recollections of Bower Avenue I now come to the property next to the Edward Moore lot at the corner of Wilbur Street. This street was named after one of the Adams boys. Wilbur Adams was quite a prominent citizen in his day, sixty years ago. He taught school for a time in the old school house.

Well, this lot and one on Mill Street comprised the home of the Ruddells in the early days. I cannot remember Mrs. Ruddell at all, but Mrs. Ruddell and Sam are as vivid to my memory to-day as they were fifty years ago.

When John Lawson, that fine old farmer on the fourth line, thought it about time to retire he bought this property. The old Ruddell house was torn down and the present commodious brick house erected. Then, when the time came to leave the farm John and Mrs. Lawson moved to the new house. The back lot made a fine garden and Mr. Lawson always had good crops there. At a good old age Mr. Lawson passed from this life and was laid away to sleep the sleep of the just. Then John, the son, better known as the Doctor, who practiced as a veterinary surgeon here for many years, settled there with his bride. His mother was a member of the home but she died a good few years ago. Then, in the winter of 1920 Dr. John Lawson passed away there. In the rear of the lot—the Bower Avenue front—there are a number of pear trees. These were a great temptation to the boys, from about the first of September until the fruit was picked. Few of the lads were venturesome enough to try to "hook" any of the pears, and thereon hangs a tale; Dr. Lawson was Chief Constable as well as a veterinary expert, and this was one of the places where the majesty of the law had a wholesome influence.

Mrs. (Doctor) Lawson and her three fatherless children still live in this home.

I forgot to say when writing about Mr. Lawson, Sr., that he was quite a genius. He had a great liking for making walking sticks, and had the knack of getting a fussy crook for the handle. These canes were smoothed and polished and then varnished, and were in demand. If Mr. Lawson took a liking to a man the presentation of a fancy and substantial walking stick invariably gave evidence. The late Rev. H. A. Macpherson was one of these fortunate friends. He carried the cane presented by Mr. Lawson until he was called to his reward, when the minister of Chalmers' Church, Toronto.

Across Wilbur Street were the four lots bought by Thomas C. Moore, away back nearly seventy years ago. They reached through from Wilbur to Frederick Street. The two lots facing Wilbur Street were eventually sold. The south easterly one was bought by George Wilson, who was then section foreman of the G. T. R. here. Mr. Wilson built the house which is now owned by Miss Elizabeth Moore.

Mr. Wilson had not been long in Acton when the G. T. R. authorities discovered in him a man of unusual ability as a railway man. He was promoted to the position of roadmaster of the Hamilton and Northwestern Division. In this more responsible position Mr. Wilson proved a success. His tragic death was a great blow to his family and to the community. With a gang of men he was testing out a new rotary snow plow between Barrie and a northern point one winter. The plow went into a big drift and fouled in some way, and Mr. Wilson and several workmen were instantly killed in the wreck. Mrs. Wilson never recovered from the shock and did not long survive her husband.

It was a compliment to the railroad ability of the family that Timothy Wilson, who worked here under his brother George on the section, was promoted to succeed George as roadmaster over the territory he had superintended. Timothy also made good in this responsible position, and I think he is still the roadmaster there.

The lot on the corner was the site of Thomas Moore's barn. Between forty and fifty years ago this was purchased by the Stafford family and the barn was converted into a very comfortable house. The family was an interesting one and comprised the following members: Misses Celia and Hannah, and John, and Cyrus, and Alva and Harvey. Harvey died there and the others eventually removed to homes in other places. Only Cyrus, of Guelph, and Alva, of St. Thomas, now remain of those who lived in this home. Mrs. Billy Robinson was a sister, but she married and left home before this house was secured.

Newton Hurst was the next owner of this property. Newton was an expert carpenter at the tanneries and took a live interest in the Fire Brigade. During one of our fires he received injuries which finally landed him in St. Joseph's Hospital, Guelph. After a long illness there death came to him, and Mrs. Hurst and their small family were left alone. With splendid efforts and motherly supervision they have managed well, and the family will always have kind memories of their father and will in the years to come cherish fond memories of a mother beloved, who sacrificed self for her children.

On the other side of the Avenue the triangular lot next the G. T. R. tracks was purchased by Billy Thompson when Thomas Moore put this subdivision of the Adams' farm upon the market. Billy will be remembered as an industrious railway employee with a home containing so many children that he and his wife could hardly find names for them all. Billy built a little house which was a home for himself and family and there they lived happily together.

James McIntosh bought this property when he came to Acton from Stewarttown. He improved it and had a very comfortable home there for a good many years. He moved from this house to "The Maples," where he now resides. When H. P. Moore went over to "Moorscroft," his new home, twenty-five years ago,

When John R. Watson became pump man at the G. T. R. pumping plant he came into possession of this house, moved it to the easterly limit of the lot. In a year or two there was a smashup on the G. T. R. tracks and a caboose was badly wrecked. Jack bought the wrecked car, and, with the excellent lumber it contained, built an addition to his cottage. Jack was a busy man, sweat freely when he was shovelling the soft coal used in firing for the pumps, and was often seen with an extremely black face. Some way referred to him as "Dirty-faced Watson." The name stuck. Jack, good-natured, did not kick at the honestly-earned cognomen. It is years since he left the employ of the Grand Trunk, but the opprobrious name still sticks.

With an enterprise which has characterized his residence in other parts of the town, Watson built a second house on the adjoining property, a two-story one this time, and much more commodious than the other. This was in due course sold to Arthur Rudman, an Englishman, who has since removed to Toronto. The present owner is Lewis Burkman, who is becoming quite an extensive owner of property in town. Previous to this there was another small cottage on this lot, but my, old memory doesn't function very well this afternoon respecting it. I do remember that Bob Morrow and his wife, Jennie, lived there a good while ago. One summer day Bob had an accident at the factory. He lay on a couch at the door while the Dr. was dressing his injuries and his wife was looking on. Bob saw her and said: 'Oh, my Jennie, this is hard on you."

The adjoining property was bought by the late Josiah Adams from Thomas Moore. Mr. Adams built the home there about forty-five years ago. After a few years there he disposed of the property and since that time it has been the home of a number of families. The Hon. David Hend. son and his family made this their home before purchasing the Adams homestead on which his present fine residence stands. This was also the home of Mrs. Graham, Mrs. James McIntosh's mother. Misses Martha and Elizabeth Graham lived there with their mother. It was here that the dear old lady passed her last days and finally fell asleep.

Joseph Lasby bought this property when he left the farm and came to town to live. This was not the first time Joe had his residence in town. A few years after his marriage he lived for several years in the house on Church Street next to Moorscroft. From there he went to his farm on the third line where A. M. McPherson is now. He sold that place to Archy McPherson, who died there. Mr. Lasby spent his last days in the Bower Avenue home. At his death Mrs. Lasby went to live with one of her sons.

Some forty years ago Isaac Francis decided to have a home of his own and he bought the lot between Josiah Adams' and the one where Thomas Moore built a brick house for himself. This was Isaac's first home and he and his family were proud of it and very happy in it. But as Isaac prospered, and money became plentiful, aspirations for a finer place grew. Finally a lot in the Christie and Henderson survey was purchased and a fine, two-storey brick residence erected. This is the house which is the present Methodist Parsonage. Isaac and Ida and their two children spent about twenty happy years in this new home. Then the fever to get to the city came and the place was sold to the Methodist Church. Some folks say it was the better opportunity to enjoy baseball matches that took Isaac to Toronto. They say he never misses a match on a Saturday afternoon. Be that as it may, Isaac has held down one job ever since he went to the city, and that is with the T. Eaton Co., and he has one of the coziest homes in the city, on Maitland Street, where he and his daughter abide. Mrs. Francis died in the city a number of years ago. But her body was brought back to the old home and laid to rest in our beautiful Fairview Cemetery. Mrs. Francis never lost her love for Acton, and I have the impression that Isaac's heart is still here too.

Well this is as far as we'll go up Bower Avenue this week. Perhaps next week I'll give you another consignment. Perhaps I'll not. I may go fishing or I may have to hoe my early potatoes. And these days every one of those spring showers sets my rheumatics going and I really don't feel much like writing for a few days after.

The Old Man

TOO SMALL TO TAKE NOTICE?

"Oh, he is too little to notice." How often one hears those words! Yet they are quite untrue. A baby is noticing all the time and among the earliest influences the strongest is the facial expression of the person who has most to do with the infant.

Everyone has observed the answering smile of a baby when his mother smiles at him. Surely, too, it has been noticed that a hasty expression of anger or bad temper results in an answering emotion on the baby's face.

Another strong influence in a child's early life is the voice of his mother and nurse. A gentle voice is more compelling to obedience than the harsh, strident one.

A wise mother, when not obeyed at once by her baby, used to repeat the command in a lower voice. It was extraordinary to see the wee mite pause and look at her enquiringly. The gentle voice took effect, whereas a louder tone would only have alarmed him.

GREATER TEA CONSUMPTION IN GREAT BRITAIN

The reduction of the English duty on tea by four pence a pound will undoubtedly result in greater consumption on the part of the public of Great Britain, which is now by far the largest tea consuming country in the world. This increased demand will tend to raise the present abnormally high market, and an increase in cost of tea throughout the world may be expected.

COAL AND CONCRETE

Two or three years ago a concrete floor was laid during the summer in the storage bins of a coal yard. On most of this floor anthracite has been stored continuously since then, and this part of the floor is in first-class condition to-day. But on a small section of the floor bituminous was stored; and last spring, after being used for nine months, this part of the concrete was found to be so decomposed as to be worthless. It was as soft as clay for a considerable depth. This phenomenon was attributed by the owners to chemical action set up by the soft coal or some of its constituents, and they have brought it to the attention of scientists in view of its very direct bearing upon the subject of concrete ships.

GIVING THE ORDER

Just for fun they went into a restaurant and heard the waiter give such orders to the cook as "Ham and chicks," "Hops and sinkers," and so on.

"Watch me confound that waiter with an order which I believe he won't abbreviate," remarked one of them at length as the waiter approached. Then he said:

"Give us poached eggs on toast for two, with the yolks broken."

The waiter, who was equal to the emergency, walked to the end of the room.

"Adam and Eve on a raft twice," he yelled down the speaking-tube. Then he added, "Wreck 'em."

MY NEIGHBOR'S SCREENED

One improvement that brings comfort and joy to any home is a screened porch.

One of my neighbors had an old porch that had been screened in years ago but it was worked over last spring and immensely improved.

This porch opens off the kitchen and dining room; it has an entrance from the front yard and one from near the concrete-covered cistern.

When the porch was remodeled, glass doors were placed at these entrances; a new floor was laid and painted a shade that does not easily show soil; the side and both ends were boarded up about two and a half feet and ceiled; window sash was set in such a manner that half of them may be slid behind the others for ventilation and coolness; galvanized screen-wire was used. The overhead is painted blue and the walls are white.

With blue-and-white china, blue-bordered table cloth, blue-bird curtains and a few flowering plants my neighbor enjoys a very attractive summer dining-porch. At one end is plenty of room for a sink and tables where many tasks may be performed away from the heat and confusion of the kitchen.

There is also room at the other end for the sewing machine.

DIDN'T THINK OF RACCOON

A teacher had told her class the story of the cap made for the little Abraham Lincoln from the skin of a coon killed by his father; and on the next day called upon a small boy to tell the story again in his own words.

Very reluctantly the pupil arose, and casting apologetic glances at a little negro classmate, stammered out, to his teacher's horror:

"Once—Lincoln's father—killed—a little—black—boy—and—and made a cap from his skin for his own little boy!"

THE PERISCOPE

Under the name of "periscope" a French scientist has designed an eyeglass which enables the wearer to see at the same time on all sides, and even behind. This is ingeniously effected by means of reflections. At the same time the glasses are so constructed as to correct myopia and other errors of vision. A use for the instrument that the inventor did not think of has been revealed to him, deaf persons employing it. They say that it increases their safety by enabling them to perceive the approach of dangers.

NOT CURED YET!

A young but exceptionally brilliant professor in a Western college was dismissed from the faculty because of his inordinate betting. The principal, interested in his career, secured him a position in an Eastern college. To the president there he wrote:

"The young man has a promising future, and anything you can do to cure him of betting will be a benefit to society."

The professor went East, and was cordially received. Conversation had proceeded but a few moments when he said to the president, "I'll bet you twenty-five dollars you have a wart between your shoulder blades."

The president hesitated. "Young man," he said, "I never bet; but just to teach you a lesson I will take it up."

He thereupon proved to the young man's satisfaction that he was in error, and the professor paid the twenty-five.

The president wrote West relating the incident, concluding—"I hope that I have cured him."

The other wrote back: "I fear the case is hopeless. The very day he left here he bet me one hundred dollars that he could make you take off your shirt."

HIS REASON

"Really, Bobby," said the teacher at a village school, "I am ashamed you! Why do you come to school with your hair in such a state—why don't you brush it?"

"I haven't got a brush," replied Bobby.

"But you could use your father's," said the teacher.

"He hasn't got one!" sighed Bobby.

"Not got a hair brush—how is that?" cried the teacher.

"He hasn't any hair!" said Bobby.

LONG DISTANCE IDEALS

The trouble with most of us is that we have what might be called long distance ideals. Every person who is worth anything at all, has an ideal, but very often it is a thing of the future. It has very little connection with to-day's work.

What we really need is an ideal that will take control of us when we wake in the morning, and keep us in charge throughout the day. We need an ideal that will apply to everything we do in the twenty-four hours, our eating and sleeping, our dress, our work, our recreation and social intercourse. And this practical, close-range ideal is not only consistent with the long distance one, but it is essential to its realization. The youth who is ambitious to be rich, but does not have an ideal that affects his daily work, will never see his dream come true.

If your ideal is off in the misty distance, that is not enough. It is important of course, to have an ideal for life as a whole, but you need just as much an ideal which will take the helm every morning, and direct your craft so as to make the most progress toward the goal.

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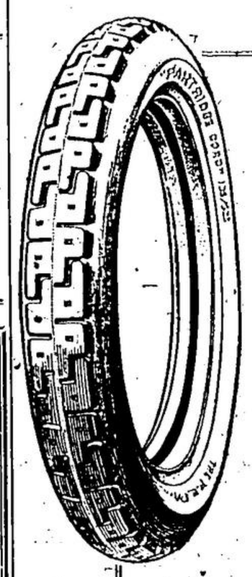

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