The Acton Free Press

THURSDAY, JUNE 15, 1922

THE COUNTRY ROAD

From the busy fields of farmer-folk,
It starts on its winding way,
Goes over the hill, and across the brook,
Where the minnows love to play;
Then past the mill with its water-wheel,
And the pond that shows the sky;
And up to the bridge by the village store,
And the church, with its spire so high.

You would never think that the country road,
From the hill to the store, could be
So long to a boy with an errand to do
And another boy to see.
You run never dream how short it is
From the farm to the frozen pond,
Nor how very much farther it always is
To the schoolhouse just beyond.

Oh, the country road! at the farther end
It runs up hill and down,
Away from the woods and the rippling brook,
To the toiling, rushing town.
But, best of it all, when you're tired and sick
Of the noisy haunts of men,
If you follow it back, it will lead you home
To the woods and fields again.

—Gussie Packard Du Bois.

THE GOOSE

Frederick E. Burnham

"CHATCH no use talkin', Hannah, I can't stand that Ezra no longer, an' what's more, I ain't goin' to. He's the most selfish piece o' human meat that I ever see."

"He does think a good deal of his stomach, Jared, I'll admit," replied Mrs. Spofford. "I don't know what is going to become of him."

"Stomach!" snorted Jared Spofford. "Stomach! That's only one part on him that he thinks 'bout the hull on him, worryin' for fear thet somptin' slip by an' him not get in. All is, he's goin' back to his Aunt Mary's, an' he's goin' to stay thar, so far as I'm concerned. She'll make him toe the mark. She's jest like him, only 'bout four times as big. What she don't get thet's good, has got to be nailed down purty solid. I'm goin' to take him down to the depot in the mornin' an' ship him off for good."

"What has he been doing, Jared?" questioned Mrs. Spofford.

"Got clean down to the village an' found that I hadn't a cent in my pocket. Got them things ye sent arter an' had 'em put on the book as usual. Stopped into Amos' arter a paper, an' while I was lookin' at the headlines, Ezra bought a stick o' candy. Put my hand in my pocket arter a penny to pay for the paper, an' findin' I hadn't got a cent o' money, I asked Ezra for one. Wall, if he didn't turn 'round an' start for the door a-suckin' his stick o' candy. 'Your credit must be bad, Jared,' laffed Amos. Thar was kind o' doses in the store, an' they all laffed. Wall, perhaps I wasn't mad clean through. I was thet hafred up thet I grabbed Ezra by the collar, an' the next instant I had him by the ankles an' I shook jest a dozen pennies out o' his pockets onto the floor. As luck would have it, Constable Ramsey was passin' the store an' Amos yelled to him. Amos was purty quick-witted I'll admit. 'A hold-up!' he roared. 'Officer! Arrest this desperado!'

"I had to laff 'long with the rest on 'em, Hannah, but jest the same I was tremendous het up. I didn't say nothin' to Ezra on the way home, but I was thinkin' purty hard, an' the upshot on't all is thet I'm goin' to ship him off in the mornin'. He may not be to blame, in a way, 'cause his father was jest thet cut; the hull o' thet side o' the house had thet narrow, contracted spearit, a'ways itchin' to get somptin for nothin'; but thet's neither here nor thar—I'm goin' to get shet on him."

It was now upwards of three months since Ezra Cottrell had come to live with his grandfather and grandmother. His father and mother were both dead, and for six months he had lived with his Aunt Mary prior to coming to his grandfather's farm, six months of unhappy existence for the boy.

Shortly after dinner, Grandfather Spofford called Ezra to him and in a few words told him that he had decided to send him back to Aunt Mary's. The boy cried, and well he might, for his had been a good home there on the farm, as he knew by experience the kind of a home his aunt provided. His tears, however, were all to no purpose, for his grandfather was a man who seldom altered his course, once he had made up his mind.

"Ezra, ye're to take with ye ev'rything thet belongs to ye' even to thet goose thet your gran'mother give ye when ye first come here," declared the old man. "Ye are goin' from here for good. I was expectin' to make a home here for ye until ye was twenty-one, but sech a thing is out o' the question. I can't stand no sech selfish way as ye have. Now ye'd better go back to Mary's an' try your best to overcome your selfishness. If ye don't mend your way, ye'll grow up to manhood, disliked by all thet know ye."

Early the ensuing morning, Mr. Spofford harnessed his horse and before eight o'clock he was on the way to the station with Ezra. It was a sharp December morning, the sky was overcast, and the cutting northwest wind threatened snow. In the rear of the pung was Ezra's telescope bag, containing Ezra's few belongings, and beside the bag was a big covered basket, within which was the big goose which his grandmother had given him upon coming to the farm.

Reaching the station, Mr. Spofford purchased Ezra's ticket to Rochester, two hundred miles distant, and waiting until the train rolled in, he helped his grandson aboard with his bag and basket.

"Remember what I told ye, Ezra," choked the old man, gripping the boy's hand. "Ye've got a hard battle ahead o' ye. Good-by, Ezra."

Snow began to fall before Mr. Spofford reached home that morning—a fine dry snow which shortly started to drift. By ten o'clock the storm was so thick that it was impossible to see anything two hundred feet distant.

Ezra's train shortly ran into the storm, and before noon, the engine was just crawling along, making scarcely eight miles an hour. Finally, about two o'clock, the train came to a stop, and presently the conductor coming through the train, told the few passengers that there was no possibility of going ahead before the next day. Then, he said, he hoped that a snow-plow would get through from the east and clear the road.

Getting hingry, Ezra opened his bag and took, therefrom two of several sandwiches which his grandmother had made for him. While eating them, he became aware of the fact that a child of perhaps ten years, two years younger than himself, was hungrily watching him. He ate the first one, and was about to bite into the second when something seemed to choke him. He recalled his grandfather's choking voice as he bade him good-by.

"I say, do you want a sandwich?" he questioned, reaching across the aisle.

The lad gave a leap forward with his hand held out eagerly taking the sandwich. He said, "I'm just about starved."

"Well, this is a great mess!" growled a man who had come in from one of the other coaches, addressing a gentleman who was seated in front of Ezra. "We're five miles from any town, and nothing to eat. We men won't mind it, but it will be pretty rough on the women and children aboard this train. I hate to think of the women and children passing the night hungry."

"Isn't there any food aboard the train?" questioned the other.

"Food! I've been through the whole train and all I've come across is a bag of salt. A man in the next car has got that."

"Mister, I've got a big goose," said Ezra, leaning over the seat.

"A goose!"

"Yes, sir. She's in this basket."

"Will you sell her?"

"No, sir, but I'll give her to you, if you can find a way to cook her," chuked Ezra. "I—I want to help."

"Well, young man, you're a generous soul!" exclaimed the man. "We'll find a way to cook the bird out in the engine. I guess that salt will come in handy after all. Wait until I go out and talk with the engineer. If we can get hold of a pail and rig some way of hanging it where the fire in the engine will have a chance at it, we'll have it boiled before many hours."

The gentleman was gone but a few moments and when he returned, there was a grin on his face.

Ezra lifted the basket onto the seat, and cautiously lifting the lid, reached in and seized the big bird.

"My! but that's a buster!" exclaimed the gentleman. "It is said that geese saved Rome at one time; now this goose will save the women and children from going hungry. You are sure that you want to part with it?"

"Yes, sir," replied Ezra, his chin quivering a bit.

The gentleman took the goose under his arm and went through the train to the baggage-car. There, assisted by one of the brakemen, he killed and dressed the bird, and fifteen minutes later the goose was hanging outside in the storm to cool. An hour later it was cut up and boiling in a big galvanized pail which hung before the door of the fire-box of the engine.

Before eight o'clock that night, every woman and child aboard the train had had a tin mugful of rich broth and a portion of the meat. All, except Ezra, who declared that he was not hungry, having lunched on the rest of the sandwiches which his grandmother had given him.

During the evening a young man came and took a seat beside Ezra and quizzed him at some length. He got Ezra's name and his Aunt Mary's address, and some other information, all of which he jotted down in a note-book.

Early the following day a snow-plow reached the scene and in short order the train was under way again. Before night, Ezra reached Rochester.

The ensuing morning Grandfather Spofford drove to the village and while there, purchased the morning's paper, and tucking it in his pocket, drove home again. Having put up his horse, he went into the house and sat down beside the kitchen stove to read the news. He had read but a short time when he sprang to his feet and stopped to the window where the light was mirkier.

"Hannah, thet boy is comin' back hera' ag'in!" he exclaimed, handing the paper to his wife. "Read thet, Hannah. Ezra's train was stalled all night in the snow five miles from nowhar. What did he do but give thet goose 'way so thet the women and children needn't go hungry. Wouldn't tech the broth nor the meat himself. They asked him how he come to do it, and he told 'em thet he give 'way a sandwich, an' it made him feel so good thet he jest wanted to follow up the givin' with the goose. That's the gist on't in a few words. Hannah, I'm proud o' thet boy. That's the makin' o' a man in him. He ain't goin' to stay with his Aunt Mary no longer than it'll take me to get thar arter him."

Two days later, Grandfather Spofford reached Rochester and having located his grandson, he grabbed him by the hand, saying, "Ezra, thar's a place for ye back home on the farm. Your gran'mother an' I both want ye. We heard through the paper 'bout the goose. Sure you've discovered thet it's more blessed to give than to receive. We're proud on ye, Ezra. Pack your bag so we can get the noon train for home. We can't get thar any too quick for me, an' maybe we can't for ye, Ezra. Your gran'mother has got six nice big geese an' a gander picked out for ye. They're down in thet shed back o' the barn, a-waitin' for ye."

VALUE OF MILK IN THE DIET

The chief duty of the milk specialist, Miss Helen G. Campbell, of the Dairy and Cold Storage Branch of the Dominion Department of Agriculture is to disseminate information on the value as a food of milk and dairy products generally. That she is fulfilling her task her recently published pamphlet entitled "Why and How to Use Milk," is abundant proof. Miss Campbell deals further with the subject in the May-June Agriculture Gazette under the heading "The Dietary Value of Milk." In this article, backed up by the universally acknowledged authority of Dr. E. V. McCollum of Johns Hopkins University, it is shown how milk adds to the nutritive value of cereals in body building, and consequently how important its generous consumption is to children particularly, and to adults generally. Milk in any form contributes to the making of bone and muscle and to the preservation of health. It contains the elements that our systems most require, such as mineral matter, lime and phosphate, and to a lesser extent iron, and a pleasant and necessary quantity of fat. It is helpful against scurvy and promotive of clear, healthy skin. It is the main sustenance of the infant as well as of the invalid in many cases.

In dealing with the subject the writer puts some pointed questions, which it would be well if every milk producer could answer in the affirmative. She asks for instance, if as much care as possible is exercised to keep the milk from contamination, if covered milk pails are used, if cows are cleaned and curried as they should be and their udders washed before milking, if clean hands, clean clothes, and clean places are insisted upon; if pains are taken to cool the milk as rapidly as possible and to keep it cold, and how many dairymen are really vitally interested in selling the best milk rather than just milk?—Issued by the Director of Publicity, Dominion Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, Ont.

WHAT THE REINDEER DOES

The teacher had been giving an account of the reindeer, its haunts, habits and uses. One little urchin was not paying the slightest attention so the teacher asked him:

"Now, what is the use of the reindeer?"

The startled urchin looked up, and said:

"It makes everything in the garden lovely, teacher."

Law of Supply and Demand

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"SALADA"

PLOW DEEP

"Well, boys, did the old gentleman have any last message for you?" queried Squire Harding, addressing the two grandsons of the late Lemuel Johnson.

"The last thing that he told us was to plow deep, Squire Harding," replied Henry Chadwick.

"And he said that we would find wealth," added his brother Bert.

"That was rather a remarkable admonition boys," declared the squire. "If I were in your place I would carry out his command to the letter."

"He started to say something about the south slope, but he never finished," said Bert. "I am going to dig there first."

"Dig?" queried the squire, an inscrutable smile playing about his lips.

"Why, yes, sir," replied Bert, looking puzzled.

"I understood Henry to say that your grandfather told you to plow."

"Yes, but we might never notice it with a plow," replied Bert, finishing. "You can sort of feel your way along with a spade."

"If I were in your place I think I would carry the old gentleman's command out to the very letter," declared the squire. "I would plow, plow deep, setting the share down to the beam."

The following day Henry and Bert stopped at the blacksmith's shop to get the horses shod. While the smithy worked he talked with them. "I've been wondering what your grandfather wanted of that sheetiron box he had me make for him just before he was taken sick," remarked the blacksmith, the while pumping the bellows.

"We didn't know anything about it, Mr. Cunningham," exclaimed Bert. "What kind of a box was it?"

"Oh, it was about a foot and a half long and a foot wide I should say," replied the blacksmith, "maybe it was six inches high. He told me that he was going to put on a heavy padlock. You don't suppose he had a lot of money salted away, boys?"

"No, I guess not," replied Henry guardedly. "That sounds rather odd about the box though. We haven't seen anything of that description about the house."

"I would sort of keep my eyes peeled if I was you, boys," said the blacksmith. "It might be such a thing as your grandfather having hidden it in some out-of-the-way place. Maybe he has buried it."

Bert exchanged glances with his brother, but said nothing.

The horses were shod in due time and very shortly thereafter the boys were headed for home. Once fairly away from the blacksmith's shop they both talked at once.

"That settles it with me, Henry," declared Bert. "I'm going to dig until I find it."

"Maybe I'll find it first, Bert, replied his brother.

"Well, we'll both dig until we find it, if that sounds better," laughed Bert.

"I'm going to plow," declared Henry, emphasizing the last word. "Squire Harding advised me to carry out grandfather's idea to the letter, and that is just what I am going to do."

"We can do both," said Bert.

"I guess by the time we have plowed all day, we won't feel very much like handling a spade," laughed Henry. "We'll just plow and set the share down to the beam, just as the squire suggested."

From that time on the two boys did little else than plow and harrow. In all they turned over about ten acres of land, and it is hardly necessary to state that the plowshare was set down in the ground to the beam. But although they kept a sharp watch, eagerly digging down with their hands when any obstruction was encountered, nothing more remarkable than sizeable rocks were brought to light.

The spring and summer passed and with the coming of fall splendid crops rewarded their efforts. It was remarked about the village that their various crops had withstood the drought of summer rather better than those of the average farmer thereabouts. When the last of the crops were disposed of there was a snug amount of money to their credit in the bank.

The fall and winter passed in due time, and with the coming of the warmer days of spring, the boys once more started the plowing of their fields. "Maybe we'll turn out that box this time, Bert," remarked Henry the morning that they started plowing. "We'll plow just as deep as we can, anyhow. It's a lot harder work, but I guess it pays in the end."

For nearly a week the boys plowed steadily day after day, first one and then the other holding the plow. They turned out numerous rocks, and each time the point of the plow struck something, their hearts seemed to fairly leap into their mouths. The time came that the point of the plow touched something which refused to budge. Bert was holding the plow and he was the first on his knees, digging down into the soft earth very much after the manner of a woodchuck. Suddenly he let out a yell which echoed from the surrounding hills.

"Hoo-ray! We've found it, Henry! Come here, quick!"

"Well, stop your yelling and let's see what it is," answered Henry.

"It's an iron box, Henry! Hold on a second! I've got my fingers under one end of it. There's a big padlock on it."

The box was very shortly brought to light, and from the blacksmith's description of the box ordered by their grandfather, it was very evident that this was the identical box.

Having unhitched the horses from the plow, the boys started for the barn, Henry driving them and Bert carrying the box in his hands, every whit as carefully as though it were full of nitro-glycerin. The boys made record time to the barn, and having tied up the horses, they turned their undivided attention to the sheet-iron box. In the tool chest were numerous padlock keys, but although they tried more than a score of them, there was not one that fitted the padlock.

"Let's take it down to the squire's, Bert," suggested Henry at last. "May be he wil advise us what to do. He might have a key that would fit it."

"All right," replied Bert.

Twenty minutes later the boys reached the squire's office.

"What's all the excitement about, boys?" questioned the squire, noting their flushed faces.

"We've found it!" replied Bert.

"Found what?"

"Why the iron box that grandfather buried!" cried Bert. "The blacksmith told us about it, how he made one for him. Last year we sunk the plow to the beam, but we didn't find anything."

"Not anything?" queried the squire in surprise.

"Not a thing but—"

"But good crops," interrupted the squire smiling. Then he said, "If a key is all you lack I guess I can furnish it. The fact is your grandfather left the key in my keeping. I have here in my safe."

"So you knew about the box all the time, Squire Harding!" exclaimed Bert.

"Yes, your grandfather told me about it some weeks before he died. I thought I wouldn't say anything about it, only hint to you that it would be a good idea to follow out the old gentleman's instructions to the letter—set the share down to the beam."

The key was located in the squire's strong box, and handing it to Henry, who was the elder, he told him to turn the lock. Henry needed no urging along that line, and after a bit of trouble, the lock being much rusted, it snapped open. Henry lifted the bar off the staple and then lifted the cover. Within was a slip of paper bearing the following words:

My dear grandsons:

Set the share of the plow down deep, clear to the beam, and other things being equal, you will win a fair measure of wealth from the old farm yet. This is the best advice I can give you, boys. Profit by it.

"I guess, boys, you discovered last fall that it pays to plow deep," said the squire, looking keenly into their astonished eyes. "You won out where many others failed. You may be a bit disappointed just now, boys, but with the passing of years you will learn that the wealth that is hard-earned brings the best harvest."

"Well, Squire Harding, I guess we both are a bit disappointed as you say," replied Henry, "but it opens one's eyes so he can see things he never saw before. I guess Bert feels the same. We did feel mighty proud of the results of our first year's farming, late prouder than we would feel if we had found this box solid full of money. We'll go ahead plowing with the share down to the beam, and back it up with the hardest kind of work. Eh, Bert?"

Many people are almost crippled with corns. But it is needless suffering when one can be painlessly relieved with Holloway's Corn Remover.

IT'S DIFFERENT NOW

Years ago when the early settlers came to Western Canada, mother used to place a lighted lamp in the window every night when the family retired as a guide to any stranger who might be lost on the trackless prairie. The doors were never locked. Fire guards were always ploughed around the house and barn. No one thought of being caught out on the prairie without a pocket full of matches as it was sometimes necessary to set fire to the prairie grass and get into the burned area to keep from being caught by the fire which swept over the country at times. Even then cow punchers when miles from any protection and forced to face the onrushing flames, learned to roll himself up in his blanket, lie down upon the ground and let the fire sweep over him, when he would rise, throw off the burning blanket and be safe.

No one at that time had read much about fire prevention. No fire inspector had ever called to tell them what they would have to do. No rules had been scattered broadcast. No fire extinguisher hung upon the walls of buildings and the law did not require an ornamental fire escape on the old school house, yet father, mother, and the entire family were better posted and gave more thought to "fire guards" and self-protection than they do now.

Grandsons of the old pioneers are now members of the school board in the little town built up near the old claim and are sending their children to school in a two-storey frame or brick building with wooden stairways and no fire-escapes. They are also running stores down on Main Street with a lot of boxes, excelsior, and crates piled up against the buildings at the back end. No oil lamp lights up a window in their home at night and the doors are securely fastened, but an electric light drop cord is hanging over a nail or hook in numerous places waiting for a few more worn threads to show up making a metal contact, when another fire will be reported and the cause given as "unknown."

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When did the R34 cross the Atlantic? Who was her pilot? On what date was Lord Kitchener drowned? What was the name of the ship that blew up and almost wiped out the city of Halifax? What German submarine torpedoed the Lusitania?

It is a safe bet that you would not get one correct answer.

Now do you see the necessity of persistent advertising? When the details of events of world wide importance are so soon forgotton how do you expect the public to remember you---and the price of your goods---unless you tell 'em---and keep on telling them?

Advertise In The Acton Free Press

ENGLAND'S LAST INVASION

Although we have lately passed through the greatest war in history, we must go farther back to find the last time that our island was actually invaded by a foreign enemy—that is to say, the last time a foreign invader actually stepped on British soil, says a London newspaper.

The man who led the invasion was an American adventurer, named Colonel Tate. His force of fifteen hundred men—most of them French ex-convicts and rascals—landed in Cardigan Bay, without opposition on our part, on one spring day in 1797.

They were merely a "side-show" in France's unsuccessful attempt to land troops in Ireland, and they did no damage. After twenty-four hours, our own troops were hurried up to engage them, and Colonel Tate offered to surrender on terms.

His offer was not accepted. He then surrendered unconditionally. No foe has succeeded in landing on British soil since.

And let us hope no foe ever will!

HOW HE REMEMBERED

A man went into a cheap restaurant and asked for the menu. The waiter said:

"We ain't got no menu, boss, but I can rattle the grub list off for you out of my head, if you like."

"All right," said the man. "Let's have her."

So the waiter rattled off a list of dishes about three yards long. The man said in astonishment:

"You must employ a very remarkable memory-training system. How on earth can you remember all that?"

"Easy enough," said the waiter. "I just look at the tablecloth."

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Summer Shoes

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Very low prices on a lot of good goods in small sizes.

The quality is there and the prices are as low as the sizes.

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