The Acton Free Press

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 19, 1922

"WHAT WILL THEY SAY OF ME?"

These verses, written by Dr. Byron Stauffer, a year or two ago, seem to his friends to have summed up his own view of his own self:

What will men say of me when I am dead?
Oh, they will say: "He was a funny chap;
He had his faults; he often lost his head;
He blundered much; he made some big mistakes,
And wasted strength in many a useless scrap."

I fear all that is true—all that and more—
And little I can do to alter it.
But may none say that, losing, I felt sore;
Or that in fighting I had fouled a foe;
Or for the truth I failed to do my bit.

Oh, may men say of me when I am dead
That I at least was fair in every fight;
And that my faults were not of heart, but head;
That, though too often I was harsh in word,
When thus I erred I set the matter right.

If they will say that I stood by the weak,
Never forgetting him whom fate brought low;
That 'twas my habit cheery words to speak,
And when I saw one crushed by sin and shame,
Felt sorry for the man and told him so—

If they will say that little children came
And showed me all their playthings without fear;
That folks with burdens spoke about the same
With open hearts, believing I would hear,
Perhaps the Lord will count my record clear.

Arobine Simmons, Assistant

By Lillian Grace Copp

THE LIBRARY at Pleasantvale was what Arobine Simmons designated as "a little, one-horse affair, taken as a matter-of-course by the villagers, and wholly unappreciated."

When her remark reached the ears of the trustees they were at first indignant, then grudgingly admitted that the girl was right. Miss Morrison had been librarian ever since the small building was dedicated to the purposes. If she had any ideas of adding to the usefulness of the library, she kept them to herself. Few ever took advantage of the reading room, and the children's room had long been closed. Except on Saturdays the exchange of books dragged woefully.

"If I had charge of that library I'd arouse the villagers' interest if I had to stay awake nights to think up a plan," Arobine declared one day to a group of classmates just before graduating from the high school.

The sudden hush which greeted her words caused her to look around quickly. Her eyes and the eyes of Mr. Knowlton, chairman of the trustees, met in a challenging glance. All undismayed Arobine nodded her sunny head, and added stanchly: "I would."

"I wonder if you really would," he weighed each word carefully, sweeping the girl's erect figure with an appraising glance as he spoke.

"I really would," she repeated, laughingly, then hurried down the street. From that minute the trustees kept their eyes on Arobine. She spent long hours of her freedom from school work among the dusty books in the stock room, for with the beginning of the college year she expected to take a course on library work in a neighboring city. Glad of her company, Miss Morrison taught her their system of filing, of keeping records and accounts, and of the annexing of new volumes to their store four times each year. By the beginning of September Arobine knew nearly as much about the work as did Miss Morrison.

At the next monthly meeting of trustees Arobine was offered and accepted the position of assistant. The villagers received the news with varying degrees of astonishment. Why should property holders be taxed for two salaries, when there wasn't enough work to keep one busy? Even at home they refused to take the appointment seriously.

"Six dollars a week for just looking pretty!" teased Arobine's brother John, a student at the college in the next city. Miss Morrison's position is a sinecure. It looks as if yours was going to be pretty nearly clear velvet."

"Well it isn't," gave back Arobine, with sparkling eyes. "I am going to earn every penny of that six dollars. It is a disgrace to have a village so unappreciative of such a far-reaching good, as Pleasantville is of our library. We are going to do our best to make them realize what a village without a library would mean."

"Oh, I see! You are going to revolutionize the town," laughed John. "How are you going to induce people to make use of what has been a free gift for twenty years?"

"How?" Arobine's voice thrilled with hope. "In the first place I am going to take advantage of that extension course offered at Swanson. I am to have every Thursday afternoon free, that I may go into the city to join the class.

"And then we have ideas—lots of them. You wait and see!"

"I'll wait!" John picked up his books preparatory to going to his room for an evening's study. As he went he threw back the words: "I'll wait three whole months—if you last that long."

Arobine threw back her head, and met mother's laughing eyes valiantly.

"I don't mind John's teasing, not a bit. Perhaps, I might if I expected our work to end in failure, but I don't. And even if I did—" She paused and mother finished for her:

"And even if it did you are not the crying kind. You never were. But truly, Arobine, I don't see how it will be possible for you to earn your salary."

"Oh, I'll earn it all right," she flashed undauntedly. "The trustees held a meeting this afternoon. They said that we might as well close the reading room now as wait until later. Miss Morrison has kept a record of how many use it. And in a month, mother, just three have been inside.

"The children's room just off the main room has been closed for two years. Mr. Knowlton said he doubted if ten people in the village were even aware of the fact."

"It has been closed?" Mother's eyes opened wide. "But there aren't so very many children in the village," she began defensively.

"Just forty in the first two grades." Arobine gave the figures glibly. "Miss Morrison and I have been talking these past four days. We arrived at the conclusion if we could get the children interested, we could get the older ones, as well.

"Day after to-morrow is Saturday," she broke off to announce significantly.

Mother looked at the girl's cheeks, flushed with earnestness, and let her sewing drop unheeded in her lap. "Saturday?" she echoed weakly. "What are you going to do with it?"

"Make it a record breaker for attendance at the library. Miss Morrison made a suggestion to the trustees. They told us to go ahead as far as we liked. I am going in to the first two grades to-morrow, and invite every child to report at the library at ten o'clock Saturday morning.

"There are hundreds of pictures in the stock room which can be used to win the children's interest. We are going to ask for each one to bring paste pot, scissors, and a blank book. Miss Morrison is going to select a story for me to read to them, and let them illustrate it with pictures. The trustees approved of the plan so warmly that they are going to offer a prize to the child who presents the best book for a month."

Mother arose hastily, and crossing over took the girl's rosy face between the palms of her hands.

"You are going about the work in the right spirit, Arobine, when you make the suggestions appear to come from Miss Morrison rather than from yourself." She gave the girl no opportunity to reply, but quickly added: "The mothers will appreciate having the children cared for Saturday mornings, and the kiddies will never mistrust they are being instructed as well as entertained. To them it will be a marvellous game."

The next morning Arobine carried the invitation to the children. The teachers were as interested as the pupils.

"I think that I will drop in for awhile to-morrow to see how you are progressing," Miss Coleman, teacher in Grade One, told Arobine. The teacher was scarcely older than the girl herself. Away from home her Saturdays had dragged interminably. Once or twice she had gone to the library for a book, and tarried for a few minutes' chat with Miss Morrison. But the older woman's dry phraseology held no appeal, and after that Miss Coleman had used the day for sewing, mending, letter writing, and an occasional call. Arobine was quick to see the possibilities of that proposed "dropping in," and urged warmly!

"Do come! We'll need your help. We'll all have to be optimists to-morrow though, for the first day of a new venture is apt to be a big disappointment."

Elated over Miss Coleman's co-operation, Arobine flitted up the stairs to Grade Two. There a genuine surprise awaited her.

"Your idea is a wonderful one!" Miss Fales had never before been known to accept another's plan with such a display of enthusiasm. "But whatever will you do with all the sticky fingers, and the disordered table which will be sure to result from having forty children around it?"

"You think of everything, don't you?" laughed Arobine. "But Miss Morrison and I thought of that part, too. As a beginning we are paying for enough paper towels out of our own salaries to insure the children leaving the building with clean hands. After our idea has passed the experimental stage the trustees will attend to that part as one of the necessary running expenses of a public institution."

Miss Fales looked at the girl keenly, then remarked with her usual abruptness:

"I will say one thing, Arobine Simmons, if you make a success of this experiment, I will personally compliment the trustees on doing a big thing for the village when they made you assistant. I thought it just a waste of money when I heard you were to be Miss Morrison's helper. But I am already beginning to change my mind. Instead of being assistant to the librarian, you are being assistant to the entire village.

"I'll be on hand to take charge of my grade to-morrow morning. Don't thank me! You'll find your hands full with both Miss Coleman and me there to help you."

Arobine felt as if she were treading on air when she sped back to the library to report her progress to Miss Morrison. The drudgery of preparation was nothing in comparison to what the result of the venture would be. There could be no question of its not being a success. No carefully planned, unselfish effort was ever wasted, the girl told herself over and over again through the golden hours of the day.

Thoughts of success were with her the next morning when she slipped into a crisp blue linen dress, adding spotless collar and cuffs to give it a dainty as well as a finished touch.

"It isn't going to be easy, but it is going to be every bit worth-while. What is work compared to teaching the children to love, value, and appreciate books? We'll win!" she nodded confidently to her reflection in the mirror, and ran swiftly down stairs.

"My, if you don't look good enough to eat," admired John, openly. "I shouldn't be a bit surprised if you woke up sufficient enthusiasm in this burg for the trustees to keep you on the job permanently, after all.

"Guess I'll drop into the reading room some time to-day. I have some references to look up, and if I can find the books it will save me the trouble of going to Swanson."

"If you can find them?" scoffed Arobine. "If you aren't every bit as bad as the rest of the villagers, John Simmons. Don't you know that we have a fine list of reference books in our library? It's just that you have gotten into the habit of going into Swanson for everything, and forgotten to look for the riches close to your own door."

"There seems small danger of anyone ever forgetting again," laughed John. "I never before realized what an asset a dyed-in-the-wool assistant could be."

Under the light words was a note of genuine admiration, causing Arobine to flush with pleasure. Being an assistant held possibilities of which the girl had never dreamed. She would do her utmost to be worthy, she resolved, finishing her breakfast, and hurrying down to the library.

She found Miss Morrison already there, worried and uneasy, lest their plan might end disastrously. Arobine hastened to reassure her. But with the advent of Miss Coleman and Grade One, her optimism again fled. She threw her assistant a pleading, wistful, despairing look when close on their heels came Miss Fales and Grade Two.

Immediately things began to happen. It required several minutes and much diplomacy to get the children amicably settled around the two long tables. Then Arobine began reading. She began with Mother Goose rhymes, making the pictures presented by the lilting, tripping lines vivid to each child. Then taking the pictures they taught the children how "Little Boy Blue blowing his horn," could be told on the blank pages with the aid of paste-pot and pictures as readily as by words.

The first morning was taken up with sorting, selecting, and pasting the pictures to illustrate three rhymes. The enthusiasm of the children was unbounded when they learned they could use their imagination to make the stories more real. It was the noon-hour before anyone thought of being tired.

The children teased so ardently to be allowed to come back in the afternoon that Miss Morrison compromised by having them come in at four o'clock for a story hour. Arobine would tell the story they were to illustrate the next Saturday. Each one could ask all the questions desired.

They carried home such glowing reports of the morning spent in the room which had been closed for two whole years, that in the afternoon their mothers were out in full force. Since the opening day of the little library, twenty years before, there had not been such a constant coming and going as there was that day. Both Miss Morrison and Arobine were kept busy with the issuing of cards, and books.

"It's all right for you to entertain the children," Alys Hersey, one of the girls in the grammar grade, told Arobine when she was stamping a card which recorded the first book Alys had drawn from the library in months, "but what about us older ones?"

"There will be sure to be something for you," promised Arobine, one of her pet ideas trembling on the tip of her tongue. But she restrained it. Before mentioning the plan Arobine had in mind, she wanted to talk it over with Miss Morrison. If the woman agreed, she should be the one to bring the idea to the attention of the trustees.

The idea had had conception at the meeting of the trustees Thursday afternoon. Mr. Knowlton had remarked a bit dryly that it was perfectly all right to begin with the children but that the girls and boys of grammar school age needed to be instructed in the free use of the library, as well as did the children.

Turning over his comment in her mind Arobine remembered the dreaded monthly essays which had made her grammar-school days miserable, until a writer friend of her mother's had on a brief visit, imparted a secret which turned the work into play. If she could only win Miss Morrison's interest, they could establish a Rhetoric Class, having it meet once or twice a week. They would work out the lessons in a manner that would make essay-writing become instead of a hated task, a fascinating game. In that way they could gain and hold the interest of the older girls and boys just as they were doing to the children.

But there was not time to mention it then. Arobine was too busy exchanging books, and making newcomers acquainted with the use of the catalogue to do more than to let the idea flash through her mind at Alys' words. In the lull of the dinner-hour she and Miss Morrison would sift the plan thoroughly, she decided, just as the clock trilled the hour of four, and a horde of clamoring children swarmed into the room.

The next hour held not a second for stray thoughts. It kept every faculty keenly alert to answer the questions that besieged Arobine from every quarter. But the story hour was a tremendous success. Possessed of an active imagination, and the ability to understand children, the minutes fairly flew. It was only the promise of another Saturday as full as the present one had been, which induced the children to pass quietly out at the conclusion of the period.

Half an hour later came a cessation of the strenuous work of the day. But instead of having the quiet time for a discussion of her proposed plan, Arobine found herself in charge of the library. She was busily at work sorting the books on the table, when the door opened, and Mr. Knowlton entered.

Afterwards Arobine wondered how she happened to mention the idea of the Rhetoric Class to him, before securing Miss Morrison's approval. Only his warm praise of the day's work suddenly loosed the girl's tongue, and rapidly she sketched her plan. He shook his head gravely.

"It won't work. They will say that they get study enough in school, without putting in extra hours which they can avoid."

"But it won't be a bit like study, Mr. Knowlton; any more than pasting those pictures in for the children." Arobine's face was an inspiration as she explained. "If we can give them information sugar-coated, they'll be eager to have it. I know how the majority of them feel, for I used to hate creative writing intensely. Then when mother's friend taught me that the foundation stone of all writing was a large vocabulary, sentence structure became just play.

"Why can't we have a contest, and begin with little easy things? In the spirit of working for a definite aim, they'll absorb the ideas almost unconsciously. If we could begin with having them search for words that portray sound, instead of hunting for just words, they would get lost in the fascination of the game."

"I am not sure that I just understand!" Mr. Knowlton looked puzzled.

"That is because I haven't put it plainly." Arobine pushed the books toward the lower end of the table, and leaned forward eagerly. "No single word will describe a sound in all its phases. You know how it is with rain? It falls, and pours, and beats, and splashes, and soaks, and patters, and soothes. That is the way it is with other sounds. To search for words for a definite object, then work out the idea in sentences, without even having to think those sentences are going into an essay, but just that we are making a picture, is nothing in the world but just pure fun.

"To be eligible for the contest every one will have to take part. And to take part each one will have to make free use of the books. Books are such vital things it seems as if every one is deprived of a great good if he does not feel the need of them. Don't you think it can be done?" She held her breath for his answer.

"Yes, I do," he declared emphatically, his glance on Arobine's sparkling face, glowing with youth and earnestness. "If, Miss Morrison doesn't want to help with the class, with you for a leader, I'll donate two evenings a week for the work. I'll trust you to find the way to keep them happy and interested.

"The idea of making words from pictures as a way of winning interest is every bit as valuable as your idea of having the children use pictures to illustrate words. You have made a record this week. If you can only keep it up!"

"Keep it up?" repeated Arobine, her eyes two deep wells of darkest blue. "We'll improve upon it. If we keep the children interested, and establish a Rhetoric Class which will make the girls and boys excel in English, we have got to work. If we work we can't stand still. We have just got to go ahead.

"I am glad and grateful every minute that you made me assistant. It is glorious to spend long hours among the wonderful thoughts of world-renowned writers. I am glad to try my hardest to make you know just how glad I am."

"I think that I know already. With that spirit there is no doubt but what you will keep up the record," he approved just as seven-year-old Johnny Stearns came in for a book for his mother. As Arobine turned her attention to making a wise selection, Mr. Knowlton murmured under his breath:

"There is no doubt about what you will accomplish, but what I wonder is; How long will we be able to keep you for our assistant?"

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SAY IT WITH WORDS

It may be true that "Silence is golden," but there are times when it might better be called leaden because of a certain heaviness of heart that it creates. It takes on this quality when our lips give no expression to some of the gratitude and appreciation we may have in our hearts. We are apt to take too many things for granted. We allow too many things to be simply "understood." Young people often take on this attitude of mind. We have a case in point. A girl verging upon womanhood was away from home, and was praising her mother's cooking and declaring that she was "the most wonderful housekeeper."

"Do you ever tell her so?" asked the girl's hostess.

"Oh, yes, indeed! Often and often! We hardly ever eat a meal without telling her how good this or that dish is."

Her hostess sighed and said with a little tremor in her voice:

"Keep on telling her, so, dear. I know that she thinks that it is a rich reward for all that she does to win and deserve your gratitude and praise."

Now this hostess was also a "wonderful housekeeper," and an equally "wonderful" cook, but rarely indeed did any member of her family tell her so. They would have resented it had any one charged them with not appreciating all that she did for them, all that she did to give them a perfectly kept home and a table that could not be surpassed in its excellence; but their gratitude and appreciation were simply "understood." A pound of such appreciation is worth less than an ounce of spoken praise.

The greatest reward that comes to many a mother is the spoken word of praise on the lips of her husband and children. Heartfelt appreciation is of no value to the mother if it never gets beyond the heart.

We read of "The word fitly spoken," if ever they become sweet and gracious. It is when they are spoken in praise of those nearest and dearest to us who deserve our praise.

Confucius said that words were "the voice of the heart." The silence of the heart when it is full of kindly and tender feeling is a silence that deprives many homes of the happiness that might be there. Xenophon declared that "The sweetest of all sounds is praise." We doubt if a sweeter sound ever comes to the mothers of the world who are trying hard to do their duty in the home of the world.

The poorest and flimsiest excuse that can be made for any of us is that we "mean well" when we constantly do ill. Too much of the meanness of the world is excused on this score, but it is about as easy to excuse a shortcoming of this kind as it is to excuse those who may have gratitude in their hearts but who never "say it with words."—Morris Wade.

MUSINGS

A sanctimonious hypocrite can never see anything but the rotten side of life.

The prude's version of the seventh commandment: Thou shalt not commit a statutory offence.

It was such an unusual word, too, and seemed to mean so much. It's a shame to lose it. Isn't there something else we could call "whiskey?"

Wives, to some people, are like tricks at bridge. The first six don't count.

The Irish Free State treaty doesn't seem to have taken the ire out of Ireland.

Some churches close for the heated term, but Satan never closes his heated terminal.

A movie actress of spirit is one who does her own shooting, instead of hiring it done.

HALTON—"TOWN UPON A HILL"

Interesting Bit of History Concerning Our County's Name and Early Extent

H. H. Hart & Co., Ltd., of Toronto, designed a coat of arms for the County of Halton, suitable for municipal stationery for county officials. The company found the following information in "Nothing But Names," giving the origin of the names of the counties and townships of Ontario. It was written by H. F. Gardiner, formerly editor of the Hamilton Times.

This is what it said about Halton:

"Halton County, organized 1816. This county was named after Major William Halton, who was secretary to Mr. Frederick Gore, Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada, 1806-1811, 1815-1817. After his return to England Mr. Halton acted as agent for Upper Canada and was engaged in editing the manuscript journals of the province.

In a letter from Gore to Goulburn, September 18, 1821, announcing Halton's death, the ex-Governor said that the assembly of Upper Canada has designed to cancel Halton's appointment, but the Senate would not concur. Now during the vacancy the office will probably be abolished.

Gore also wrote to Maitland, January, 1822, respecting the journal of the hands of the Halton family and stating that Halton's heirs had offered to pay over the money Mr. Halton had, applicable to the journals.

The present County of Halton was originally included in York and was part of the Indian reserve. But when Halton County was constituted it included besides its present limits, North Wentworth, North Brant, Wellington and Waterloo.

By the Union Act of 1840 the County of Halton was divided into two ridings, the east riding consisting of the townships of Trafalgar, Nelson, Esquesing, Nassagaweya, East and West Flamborough, Ering and Belleville. The west riding consisted of Garafraxa, Nichol, Woolwich, Guelph, Waterloo, Wilmot, Dumfries, Puslinch, Kramosa, each riding to elect one member.

The word Halton signifies "Town upon a hill." There are twelve villages in England bearing name.

Two of the names of townships in the west riding of Halton will puzzle readers, "Ering" and Belleville." The first should no doubt read "Erin," but it is hard to account for the second, "Belleville."

IN THE FOREGROUND

Amateur photography is very likely to show some portion of the anatomy painfully exaggerated, because the beginner is not sufficiently careful as to what gets into the foreground. Brother George, reposing in an armchair, with his legs crossed, gets a shock when he sees his counterfeit presentment, in which his right foot seemingly measures not less than thirty-six inches.

We get the wrong effect in other things sometimes, and for the same reason. You remember how changed the world seemed when you discovered that Ernestine was not the loyal friend you have believed her. To your face she professed affection, behind your back, contempt. The secrets you entrusted to her were made the means of entertaining her listeners at the moment.

Most of us have had similar experiences at some time or other, but you made this mistake. You began to feel that friendship was a sham, that Ernestine was typical. You put her disloyalty into the foreground and in the picture as you saw it, it was the biggest thing in your experience. And yet that is no more true than that Brother George's foot is a yard long.

Some people are disloyal friends, and sooner or later we come in contact with that sort. The experience is a painful one, and is bound to leave a sore spot in the heart, a spot which may be sensitive as long as we live. But disloyal friends are in the minority. Constancy is commoner than treachery. Do not make the mistake of putting in the foreground the injustice and disloyalty which you rightly resent. If you do so, you will give them an importance they do not deserve. And what is more, you will spoil the picture.

THE GENDER WAS MUDDLED

In a country church a babe was brought forward for baptism.

The minister, taking the child in his arms, spoke as follows:

"Beloved hearers, no one can foretell the future of this little child. He may become a great astronomer, like Sir Isaac Newton; or a great soldier, like General Pershing. He might even become the Premier of Canada."

Then, turning to the mother, he asked:

"What is the name of this child?"

"Mary Ann," was the reply.

THE REMEDY

Jack Brokely—I told your father I loved you more than any girl I ever met.

She—And what did papa say?

Jack—He advised me to try and meet some more girls.

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COURT OF REVISION

CEMENT SIDEWALKS

TAKE NOTICE that the Council of the Corporation of the Village of Acton has constructed as a Local Improvement a cement sidewalk on the northwesterly side of Knox Street, between the north-easterly limit of Prospect Park and the north-easterly limit of Lot Number Twenty-five, Plan Number Ninety-eight.

The total cost of the work is $440.00, of which $240.35 is to be paid by the Corporation and $199.65 by the owners of the property affected. The estimated life of the work is twenty years.

A Court of Revision will be held on Tuesday, the 24th day of October, A. D. 1922, at eight o'clock p. m. at the Council Chamber for the purpose of hearing complaints against the proposed assessment or the accuracy of frontage measurements, or any other complaints which persons interested may desire to make and which are by law cognizable by the Court.

Any person wishing to examine the Special Assessment Roll prepared by the surveyor may do so between the hours of 9.30 a. m. and 5 p. m., Wednesday and Saturday afternoons excepted, at the office of the Clerk.

14-2 H. N. FARMER, Clerk.

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The following grades on hand:

MANITOBA AND PASTY FLOUR
OAT CHOP AND ROLLED OATS
BRAN AND SHORTS
FEED FLOUR AND OILCAKE
HAY AND STRAW

at Lowest Prices.

ALEX. L. NOBLE

HENRY AWREY, Manager