The Acton Free Press

THURSDAY, JANUARY 15, 1925

THE OLD-FASHIONED WIFE

With behooded eyes and work her hands are full,
Yet hides her worries, neath a smiling mask;
With cheerful words she sends the "chicks" to school,
Then, happy in her home resumes her task.

To them all things unwomanly her aim
To spe the man is not her scheme of life;
The cigarette, the jazz, the gambling game
She deems unworthy of her husband's wife.

She leaves the men to guide the ship of State,
Knowing her place as all good women do;
They also serve who only stand and 'wait'
To greet the men who steer the good ship through.

Home is her kingdom, there she reigns supreme,
Her government shall never sustain a fall;
Her ministry adown Time's rippling stream
Endures through life, thus she is loved by all.

—Hope A. Thompson.

"WE KNOW HIM!"

A white colporteur once visited a part of central China into which to the best of his knowledge no white missionary had ever penetrated. Gathering a big crowd of Chinese round him in one of the towns, he began to read to them from the New Testament in Chinese. He read the story of Jesus' healing a blind man and also of his healing a lame man. Then he read of his healing lepers, like the lepers that crowded the streets of the town; whereupon the faces of the people lighted up.

"Oh, we know him!" they cried. "He used to live here. Our mothers and fathers have told us about him. He lived in a house down the street. We know where he is buried. His grave is here; we will show it to you, teacher. When the great plague came the rest left us, but he would not leave us. He gave us strange things out of a bottle. We took the things and were better. We had babies; they were blind. He washed their eyes and made them well; they could see. Oh, we know him very well! He has often walked down our streets and spoken to us when we were little."

"No, that could not be!" said the colporteur. "He lived in a land far, far from here. He belonged to a different nationality."

"No, sir," they insisted, "you are mistaken. He was right here. Come and we will show you the grave!"

He went and saw the grave and its inscription, which was in English. He looked up the history of the town and learned that the man whom the people had spoken of was a British volunteer, a young doctor who had just completed his medical course, who had gone up the Yantse River six hundred miles and, breaking into the central and northerly interior, had settled in the little town. The plague at last had taken his life.

And away out there years after when the people heard the words about Christ they called out: "We knew him! He lived here! We knew him well!"

WHY ICE FLOATS

If it were not for one peculiar property of water, the past history of the earth would have been completely altered and man himself might never have been born.

Almost everything gets bigger when it is heated and smaller when it is cooled, and in the ordinary course of events water does exactly the same thing. But the strange point is that if you cool water to seven degrees above freezing point it stops getting smaller and begins to expand, continuing to do so until it becomes ice.

That, of course, is why ice always occupies more space than the water from which it is made, and so easily bursts jugs and water pipes. It also explains why ice floats in water.

But if water followed the general rule, and got continually smaller as it grew colder, ice would be heavier than water and would form at the bottom of ponds, rivers, and seas instead of at the top.

That would mean that in past ice ages all the living inhabitants of the water, including the progenitors of man, would have been frozen to death, for numerous forms of life are always to be found beneath the ice-topped seas of to-day.

THE SECRET OF GOOD MANNERS

There was a young lady who wanted to know the secret of good manners. She wanted to be as gracious, so tactful, so thoroughly precise and correct that no one could find fault with anything she said or anything she did, no matter what the occasion. This young lady had studied books on etiquette till she had all the common and accepted rules of conduct committed to memory. Yet she could not be sure. For she learned that etiquette changes as regularly as styles and fashions. Things that were exactly proper last year may not be correct now.

So this young lady sought the advice of a wise man. And this is what the wise man told her,

"My dear, you have asked me to reveal the secret of good manners. Really, there is no secret to it. All good manners license bad manners offend—and that is all there can be to it."

Thus did the young lady learn that the unchanging rule of right conduct embraces the simple qualities of kindness, sympathy and understanding.

PROGRESS—ALWAYS

The pessimists are wrong. Progress, at least material progress, despite the jolts and stops, in the end always advances.

There still existed a few years ago a country that did not know the electric telegraph. It was the mysterious land of Tibet. Now it is all changed. As in the most civilized countries Tibet now possesses its telegraph system. The first telegram containing the salute of the Grand Lama to the Viceroy of India has been transmitted.

The pessimists are wrong. Progress is not a vain word.

CAUGHT NAPPING

A school teacher was asking his class the names of countries in which different towns and cities were situated.

"Now, William," he said, "where's Nancy?"

Before he received a reply, he spotted a dreamy-looking boy in the front row.

"Genoa?" he roared to the dreamy one.

"Yes, sir, but Billy Smith does. She's his girl."

CURED!

As an illustration of great devotion to truth a would-be M. P. out on a campaign for votes, told his hearers that he "underwent a severe thrashing when a boy for telling the truth."

Imagine the sickly feeling which came over the candidate when a voice called out from the centre of the audience: "I guess it cured yer, guy' soot."

The Free Press' Short Story

A Measure of Safety

BY EDMOND MONKLAY

MART RUSSELL was eating his breakfast with all the zest of clean-living, healthy youth.

For a time his mother, with a complacent maternal smile, watched the food disappear; then, having finished packing the aluminum dinner pail that her son was to take with him into the mine, she went to the front door to see whether the newsboy had delivered the morning paper.

She soon returned with it, and as she entered the room the flaring headlines across the front page caught Mart's attention. "Why all the ink, mother?" he asked.

Mrs. Russell scanned the headlines. "Night Warden McCullough has been murdered!" she gasped.

"My whom?" demanded Mart.

"That foreigner they arrested yesterday in connection with the hold-up of the pay wagon at Twenty-four Mile."

Mart rose and hurried to his mother's side. The details of the crime were meagre. A burly Slav named Steve Cholya, arrested upon the suspicion that he knew something of a daring highway robbery that had occurred near Wyndham a few days before and held in the local lockup pending a hearing, apparently had lured the night warden close to the door of his cell and then had reached through the bars and strangled him. Cholya then had taken the key to his cell from the body of his victim and had made his escape. The chief of police of the town had spread the alarm through the countryside and was confident that he would soon have the man back in custody. The officials of the Wyndham Black Coal Company, which owned most of the mines in the vicinity of Wyndham and whose pay wagon had been robbed, apparently did not share the optimism of the police. They offered a reward of one thousand dollars for the capture of the slayer, alive or dead.

"Poor old Mac!" exclaimed Mart. "He should have known better than to have come within reach of that gorilla."

"Poor Mrs. McCullough," Mrs. Russell said and sighed.

"I'd like to win that reward," Mart said a moment or two later.

"Now, Mart, don't you go roaming about the country, hunting for criminals," admonished Mrs. Russell. "You run enough risk, working in the mines, to keep me worried sick. You stick to your duties and let the peace officers attend to theirs."

"Of course I shall, mother. Still that thousand would prove mighty useful when I enter the school of mines in the fall."

"You can get through college without scouring the hills for a desperate man with a price on his head," declared his mother.

"Well, I shan't get to college at all if I don't hurry up," replied Mart, glancing suddenly at the clock. "I should have been at the office ten minutes ago."

He quickly traversed the half mile that lay between his house and the offices of the coal company. As he hurried into the drafting room of the engineering department Phil Blair, a young fellow of his own age, greeted him.

"Tough about poor old McCullough, wasn't it?" said Mart.

"Yes, it was. I hope they land Steve Cholya in the chair at Rockview without delay. He has been mixed up in all the devilry among the foreigners that has broken out in Wyndham during the last five years."

Dave Kane, a young mining engineer, entered the room, bearing a transit. "The foreman in Thirty-three Mine wants us to give him a bunch of sights to-day, boys," he announced. "We had better be moving."

At the mouth of the mine the three loaded themselves into an empty mine car that was one of a string attached to a squat, powerful electric locomotive. A few moments later they had left the glare of daylight and were rolling along under the widely spaced incandescent lights in the main heading. A short run brought them to the lateral heading in which they were to begin work. The cars halted, and the boys got out. The acetylene lamps on their caps lighted the way for them, as they started up the passage on foot.

They soon arrived at the place where they were to begin their survey. Kane set up his transit, and they were soon at work. With the hundred-foot steel tape Mart and Blair "chained" the distances between the stations that Kane established in the heading and the branches running from it. It was not work for the lazy or the fastidious; for the constant bending beneath the low rock roof of the passages called for considerable physical effort, and the damp grime of the mine and the greasy slime in the bottoms of the dips made handling the long tape a dirty job. They worked until Kane announced that it was noon; then they sought the spot where they had left their dinner pails.

Kane and Blair found their pails without difficulty, but the deep nook into which Mart had put his was empty. He at once announced that some one must have taken it.

He was hungry. To steal a fellow's dinner pail was a pretty mean trick! He said so in a loud voice.

"Are you sure you brought it along from the last set-up?" asked Kane.

"I certainly am! I put it right here in this hole in the rock pile."

"No use trying to find it," Kane decided. "Phil and I will divide with you."

Blair nodded in agreement. "Some of these miners would steal the fillings out of your teeth," he declared as he opened his pail.

The contents of the two pails furnished a meal that, although it was not bounteous, was sufficient to tide the three over the afternoon.

When they returned to the place where they had left off surveying Mart went on up the heading and dragged the steel tape toward a new station. A sharp jerk on the tape made him halt abruptly. Thinking that it was a signal from Blair, he peered back through the darkness at the bright pin point of light that marked the position of his comrade.

"Why don't you go on?" came Blair's clear hail after a few moments.

Mart pulled at the tape; it refused to come. He gave it a sharp, impatient twitch—and then something hurled him violently to the floor of the passage. Dazed, he clambered to his feet and started back toward his companions. He found Blair blinking at him foolishly. "Were you shocked, too, Phil?" Mart asked in bewilderment.

"Oh, no—just exhilarated!" replied Blair ironically. "What were you doing with that tape?"

"It caught on something," began Mart, "and I gave it a flip—"

"Yes," Blair interrupted him, "and you flipped it up against the trolley wire and gave me a lovely jolt!"

Mart gazed speculiatively at the wire running along under the low roof of the heading.

"Both of you got off lucky," asserted Kane, "but it's a safe guess that you made hash of a ten-dollar tape."

Kane's words proved to be true. The electric current had burned the tape through at two places where it had swung across the wire.

"You're elected to go back to the office for another, Mart," said Kane. "Phil and I will put some plugs in the roof for the station, eyelets while you are gone."

Mart immediately started back to the office. In the main heading it was his good fortune to catch a "trip" of loaded cars going out of the mine. He flattened himself on top of the coal in one of them and soon arrived at the mouth of the mine.

At the drafting room he found several tapes. "Are all those in good condition?" he asked a clerk.

"Don't know. Better look 'em over."

Mart pulled one of the tapes from its leather-covered reel until the hundred feet of it were coiled upon the floor. The tape was perfect. In a hurry to return to the mine, he did not rewind it, but gathered it in his hand in a succession of large figure-eight coils such as engineers make when the tape is too dirty to wind upon the reel.

Mart boarded a trip of inbound "empties" on the tipple and quickly reached the entrance to the heading in which he had left his companions. Alighting from the car he started upon the long walk up the heading; he walked as rapidly as the rough footing in the narrow-gauge permitted.

He had gone several hundred feet when the gleam of a headlight far ahead warned him of the approach of a trip of cars. As the squat motor drew nearer and its headlight began to illumine the passage he caught sight of a furtive form slinking hurriedly from the increasing glare into the darkness of one of the mined-out rooms at the side. A fleeting glimpse of an aluminum dinner pail in the man's hand caused Mart to make a hasty mental note of the spot where he had disappeared.

As Mart stopped from the track and flattened himself against the rock pile at the side of the passage while the trip went by he resolved to find out a thing or two about that pail. The man's anxiety to avoid the light was suspicious.

When the last car had passed Mart hurried to the entrance of the room into which the fellow had disappeared. As he peered through the opening the beam from the lamp on his cap stabbed back into the darkness and revealed a burly miner squatting beneath the low rock roof of the room. The dinner pail at his side was plainly marked with Mart's initials.

"Say, hunky," Mart began indignantly, "what do you mean by stealing—" His tongue seemed suddenly to have become dry. The man was Steve Cholya!

Mart backed away from the entrance with the haste of a man who has inadvertently walked into the lair of a dangerous animal.

Cholya followed him closely. "Huh! So you know me, hey?" he snarled.

Mart's thought raced madly. He knew that in a fight he would be as a child in the grasp of the ape-like miner. Flight, too, on account of the uncertain footing, and the darkness was hazardous. A third chance remained. Backing warily he shifted the coils of tape from his left hand to his right; in his left hand he retained the reel that was attached to one end of the tape. A swift glance told him that the trolley wire was only a yard from his face. Mart's maneuvering had puzzled Cholya and then roused his anger. "Me teex you so you no tell me here!" he roared and made a savage rush.

The Slav was only two steps away when Mart suddenly cast the sinuous coils of tape into the man's face; the next instant he tossed the reel over the sagging trolley wire and jumped to one side.

There was a bright flash as the current short-circuited. Cholya was hurled heavily to the floor of the mine, and the tape, burned in two, dropped beside him.

With pounding heart Mart watched the man for a sign of life. Cholya remained motionless. With cautious steps the boy edged nearer and finally stood over the inert body. Taking the lamp from his cap, he held it near the brutal face; whether he was looking upon insensibility or death he could not decide.

He was pondering his next step when he remembered the price that was on Cholya's head. The reward was his! But first he must establish an incontestable claim to it. He dared not leave his captive lying there while he went for help; the man, if he were not dead, might recover consciousness and escape, or some one might happen to come along and finding him, claim the reward.

Finally Mart decided to drag the man into the low room in which he had found him. Having performed that task, he hastily removed his overalls and jumper and, tearing them into strips, began to bind the miner's hands and feet. Midway in his work he heard some one whistling the notes of a Welsh hymn in a plaintive minor key. "That must be Owen Davies!" With a sigh of relief Mart hurried from the room and accosted the foreman of the mine as he trudged up the heading.

When the little Welshman fully understood the meaning of the breathless story that Mart poured into his ear he clapped the boy on the shoulder. "Stand by your prize, me lad," he said. "I'll soon bring ye help."

After a swift inspection of Cholya, Davies said, "He's alive, lah. You'd better finish trussin' him up while I go for your friends."

Mart's captive was beginning to show signs of consciousness when Davies returned with Kane and Blair. Then while Mart's companions in the engineering corps stayed to help him the little Welshman departed to bear the tidings to the outside world.

"Good boy!" said Blair when Mart had finished telling them of his encounter. "And you get a thousand simoleons for doing it! Yours is a sad case, Murth."

Kane was examining the second tape that Mart had ruined that day. "You're hard on steel tapes, kid," he said, "but I'm glad you found this one a measure of safety. Well, why don't you laugh at my joke?" he continued with a chuckle. "Hundred-foot tape—measure of safety!"

"TIME IS MONEY"—AND MUCH MONEY

Few of us realize the connection between the day, the hour, in which we are living, and our success, our happiness, our destiny.

When I see a young man who seizes every odd moment for self-improvement, who has an ambition to make each day count, then I know that there is something, a very big something coming to him in the future.

Our to-days are the blocks with which we build our future. If these are defective, the whole structure of will be exactly what you put into your life will correspond. Your future to-days.—Success.

THE FARM WOOD LOT

According to the 1910 census the value of forest products produced on the farms of the United States east of the great plains was close to $200,000,000. In 1913 over 100,000,000 cords of wood were burned on American farms or sold off the farms to town and city dwellers. Throughout Eastern Canada the value of forest products sold on the average farm is probably greater than in the United States.

Except in the more thickly settled sections of the country lucrative employment is found for farm labor and teams during the winter months cutting and hauling logs, ties, pulpwood, pit timber, and cordwood. Even in the thickly populated portions of the Eastern townships of Quebec where the farms have been cultivated for well over one hundred years, it is quite common for farmers to handle from 100 to 200 cords of firewood in a season. This year stove and furnace wood is selling for from $10.00 to $14.00 per cord. This will give an idea of the important part the farm wood lot plays in helping farmers through periods of depression or financial difficulty.

In many sections considerable revenue is derived from the sale of maple sugar products.

Forest areas conserve moisture for springs and wells, act as windbreaks, make the landscape more attractive and utilize land unfit for cultivation. Every farm should have, at least, enough home grown timber to supply fuel, fence posts and lumber for repairs to farm buildings.

A little care given each year to the protection, proper thinning and utilizing of the timber would nearly double the yield from the average wood lot. Instead of slashing half grown trees of the useful marketable varieties for home requirements, if the less valuable varieties, windfalls, and trees showing signs of insect damage and rot were used, the remaining trees would make more rapid growth.

Open spaces should be avoided as much as possible because once a grass sod is formed the growth of the trees is checked. Tops should be topped to ensure more rapid decay and to lessen the danger from fire. The main idea is to keep a blanket of leaves and wood on the forest floor to hold moisture and encourage the growth of the young trees.

It is bad practice to allow sheep or cattle to pasture in the wood lot, because they destroy the young growth which should come on as soon as the heavier timber is removed.

Of the hardwood trees the hard or sugar maple is the most valuable. Besides supplying sap for sugar making, the wood is valuable for fuel, the manufacture of agricultural implements, furniture, hardwood flooring and distilled products. Other valuable hardwoods are, birch, beech, brown and white ash and elm. Basswood and poplar grow more quickly than other deciduous trees and are useful for reforestration. Among the conifers spruce is the most important wood, supplying the bulk of the timber and rough lumber for building purposes. Besides, it is useful for pulpwood and pit timber. Pine is not often found in farm wood lots, but is useful for manufactured lumber. Fir and hemlock are used mainly for building lumber and pulpwood. Cedar makes the best shingles and is also used for telephone and telegraph poles, cross-ties and fence posts. Tamarack, although not a common wood, is very durable and is valuable for fence posts, ties, mine and crib work timbers.

Wherever there is plenty of moisture a second growth usually springs up where the heavy timber has been removed. Because of their rapid growth the spruces, firs and poplars often supplant the original hardwood forests. Fully stocked with trees an acre of soft woods will grow at the rate of one to two cords per year, will supply posts or pulpwood in 15 to 25 years and saw logs in 20 to 40 years. Hardwoods grow at the rate of one-half to one cord per year, a cord being equal to about 500 board feet of raw lumber. By proper management rocky, waste and swampy land if allowed to grow up under forest may be made to yield a worth while income.—M. D. MacCharles, Assistant Superintendent, Experimental Station, Lennoxville, Que.

A SENSIBLE "ENTRANCE" EXAMINATION

Writing in the Illinois Teacher, Mr. Henry Louis Adams calls attention to the numerous failures of college students in their first and second years, and gives a common-sense entrance examination which he thinks every prospective Freshman should be able to pass before he leaves home. Here is the list of questions:

Are you man enough to get up promptly every morning, go to your meals and to school on time every day, and go to bed at a fixed hour every night, all of your own initiative, without a word of reminder from anybody?

Are you man enough to go off by yourself every day and study all your lessons till you know them, without having anyone tell you to get to work?

Are you man enough to carry loose change in your pocket without spending it?

Are you man enough, when another fellow's answer is within easy reach, to fail on an examination rather than obtain unlawful aid?

If a student cannot answer these questions in the affirmative, the writer does not believe he has much chance of escaping failure during his first year away from home. But if he can honestly say "Yes" to them, all roads leading to success in college life will stand open to him.

BUSINESS CONDITIONS

Our statistician, after interviewing various people, gives the following reports on business conditions in general:

The first person interviewed was an artist's model, who admitted that she was just making a bare living.

"Business is dull," remarked the scissor grinder.

"Looking up," declared the astronomer.

"Dead," said the undertaker.

"Fine," said the judge.

"Quiet," said the bootlegger.

"Looking better," said the beauty doctor.

"Fair," said the street car conductor.

"Rotten," said the egg man.

"Pretty soft," said the mattress maker.

"Light," said the gas man.

"I have seen the worst," said the butcher.

"Hard to beat," said the bass drummer.

"Just sew, sew," said the seamstress.

"Hum," said the hobo.

"Looking brighter," said the boot black.

The preacher, who was the last one seen, admitted that he was working to beat the devil.

ROUGH IN PLACES

A youth who had accomplished a good deal in football, but little in his studies, was dropped from one preparatory school and immediately invited to enter another. He had been there but a few days when he met a member of the faculty.

"Well," said the professor, "how do you find it here?"

"Pretty fair," said the boy.

"That's good. Find it smooth going, eh?"

The boy reflected. "Well, shouldn't like to say that exactly," he remarked. "This field's sort of rough yet in places, sir."

SLEEPERS

Why are railway "sleepers" so called? The common explanation, of course, is that the lying-down pieces of wood are called "sleepers" because they are in the bed of the railway.

Unfortunately for this theory, the particular word occurs not only in connection with railways, but in other industries, being always used as a technical term for pieces of timber or metal fixed in a horizontal position.

Its real origin is the Norwegian "sleip," which meant timber, metal, or even stone, laid across to form a convenient surface to drag things over.

Originally used as a technical term in the days when our railways were in the building, it did not take long for our navvy laborers to corrupt the word into the nearest English. It sounded like, and so sleips became our common "sleepers." Our word "slab" comes from the same Norwegian word.

ABOUT NOTHING

Doing nothing is equivalent to doing wrong.

When a man tries to get something for nothing he succeeds in acquiring experience.

Some ambitious people rise from nothing to something worse.

It would not be so bad if people who have nothing to say would let it go at that.

It takes a quick-witted man to know when to say nothing.

Sir James Barrie is said to have made "saying nothing into a fine art."

What a man is depends largely upon what he does when he has nothing to do.

The man who knows nothing insists on letting it be known.

A philosopher said that if you want to be happy you must be surprised at nothing.

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Did you ever stop to consider just all that a subscription to the Free Press really means. Of course, if you're interested in your town you are interested in the doings of your town and what goes on in the vicinity surrounding it.

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For the Old Folks — Then for the old folks there is the "Old Man's" Reveries each week. One, two and sometimes three columns of old-time doings around this town that delight the hearts of the old people and recall the days of long ago, and the happy times spent. It is also an historical record of Acton. Then for the younger old folks there is the "Twenty Years Ago" column, with a true chronicle of what went on here a couple of decades ago.

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