The Acton Free Press

THURSDAY, MARCH 8, 1923

FOLKS NEED A LOT OF LOVING

Folks need a lot of loving in the morning;
The day is all before, with cares beset—
The cares we know, and they that give no warning;
For love is God's own antidote for fret.

Folks need a heap of loving at the noon time—
In the battle hill, the moment snatched from strife—
Halfway between the waking and the crown-time,
While bickering and worrying are rife.

Folks hunger so for loving at the night time,
When wearily they take their home to rest,
At slumber-song and turning-out-the-light-time—
Of all times for loving that's the best.

Folks want a lot of loving every minute—
The sympathy of others and their smile,
Till life's end, from the moment they begin it,
Folks need a lot of loving all the while.

PRIZE ESSAY ON THE VALUE OF CANADA'S TIMBER

Several hundred thousand Canadian school children will be well informed on the forest conservation problem of the Dominion as a result of a School Essay Competition for which the Canadian Forestry Association has just awarded provincial cash prizes. Sixty thousand copies of the competition prospectus were sent to teachers and inspectors and thousands of the schools were at once inspired to make their essays accurately reflect local conditions. The cash awards for the Province of Ontario by the Canadian Forestry Association were as follows:

1st Prize, $25.00—Mildred Gibbon Sundridge, Ont.

2nd Prize, $15.00—Helen Kelly, Pembroke, Ont.

3rd Prize, $10.00—Marie Belanger, Ottawa.

The idea of the competition was to stir the children's interest in forestry as a national cause, using local conditions as a starting point. For example, the child on the treeless prairie wrote on tree planting, the child in Central Quebec specialized on forest industries, forest employment, etc.

The first prize essay was as follows:

FORESTS AND FORESTRY

In speaking of the importance of our forests it is hard to place too much value on our timber. So much of our daily work is connected with timber that it is hard to realize what we would do without it. In the early days here, as elsewhere, everything was wooden, and in clearing the land the biggest job was to get rid of the timber by fire, or any other way, and no attempt was made to prevent the fire from spreading to the bush and doing a good deal of damage by burning over great tracts of land that have since grown up with berry bushes and trash, spoiling forever the natural beauty of our forests.

My father came here forty years ago and at that time timber of all kinds was not worth anything, only in the way of building and fencing. Fine big pine trees that are nowadays looked on by anyone that may have a few as being a prize, were burned in great heaps, also birch, spruce and balsam, also maple and all other kinds of timber that grow here were logged up and burnt and no attempt was made to save or preserve the standing on account of money. Those who are timber. All kinds of timber are looked to the future are not wasting anything in clearing land. What will make logs, are drawn to the mill and sold. The rough wood and limbs are cut into stove and furnace wood and sold in the villages and to the dealers who ship it out to the cities. Then the lumber camps give steady work to an army of men and teams from early fall till the snow is all gone in the spring. All our neighbors for miles around here work in the bush all winter, either in camps or taking out pulp wood and stove wood. A great deal of money is brought into the homes that way and we depend entirely on wood to cook our meals and keep us warm. In the early days I have heard my father say that a real dry summer was unknown and it was because of so much green bush around that kept the air moist, but as the clearances got bigger and the bush fires were a yearly occurrence, the ground dried up and the crops suffered for lack of moisture. I think every farm should have a wood plot left or planted. Waste or stony places should be planted with trees that will grow on that kind of soil and great care should be taken when clearing land so that fire does not get away in the bush and burn in a few days or hours what has taken hundreds of years to grow.

A great many fires are caused in this way, but not all. Tourists and campers are sometimes not as careful as they should be. Camp fires are not carefully put out, and matches are thrown away by careless smokers, and fires starting destroy hundreds of acres of valuable timber that in a few years grow to a thicket of berry bushes and pin cherries. Of course these give place to other and more valuable timber in a few years, but nobody, or at least not many, are living to-day that will earn much money taking out timber or wood from land that has been burnt over and has grown up with second growth timber.

I think that greater care should be taken by everybody to stamp out this enemy of our forests. I must say a word before I get through about one of our best paying side lines to farming. I mean the maple sugar bush. Thousands of gallons of maple syrup are made every year in this part of the country and is sent all over Canada and some is sent to foreign countries, and a good deal of money is made by those having a good sugar bush. And the best of it is it never wears out, but is ready every spring with its crop of syrup and sugar.

CHOIRMASTER'S TROUBLES

The work of a choir director is hard, but it is not wholly without humor. The other day Mr. Bishop was telling of his experience with the boy choir of an English cathedral. "I was teaching them," he said, "to chant the Litany and flattered myself that we were getting along unusually well, when I noticed the words they were chanting for the response. Every last one of them was saying, 'Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable singers!' Surely it was true enough of most of them."

A GREAT REMEDY

A cyclist was riding along an English lane when his hat blew off. A passing countryman picked it up and took it to him as he circled round, saving him the trouble of getting off his machine.

"I weally must get some string to keep this hatty hat on," muttered the cyclist, as he wheeled off without a word of thanks.

The other's reply was short but expressive, "Get a nail, guv'nor!"

The Free Press' Short Story

The Goat Tender

MAX HALE

DUFF BAKER stood in the shanty door and waved his good by farewell to the lone driver of the buckboard. Just now the low-swung rig was dipping out of sight beyond the distant ridge. When it disappeared the youth held his gaze for awhile on the spot where he last had seen it. There came upon him the feeling of a marooned sailor on a deserted isle. As far as he could see spread the endless ranges of the Sierra Madres, with nothing to break their dull brown monotony save the clumps of gray sage, dwarf pines and stunted junipers. Here and there a tall cactus lifted its prickly arms above the rocks.

Yet there were living things on those brown hills—a thousand of them, all in Duff's care. Only a few moments ago, as Jake Biddle the ranch boss, made ready to drive away, he laid a big hand on the youth's shoulder while he spoke the parting reminder: "Remember, boy, I've left you here to care for the goats. That will be your job for the next two months, and I'm expectin' you to make good. In four weeks more the kids will be comin'. I've kind out your routine, so stick to it close—till I return."

Duff went inside the shanty and slumped down on the cot. For a few moments he was overwhelmed by a feeling of utter dejection. It was not alone the truth that he was the sole inhabitant of this vast, sun-baked region. Other things more potent and personal, made Duff Baker disconsolate and blue. "I'm a failure!" he told himself. "I'm a human fizzle all right, or I would not be obliged to take such a job as this. A goat tender—working for old Jake Biddle on the Lone Yucca ranch!"

While he sat on the edge of his bunk, his elbows propped on his knees, his chin on his hands, he bitterly recalled the attempts in other lines of work, and his repeated failures. He had failed to be graduated from high school with his own class, and because he failed he lacked the courage to return and win the needed credits. Then he had tried to make a place for himself in the busy world—tried to serve as a reporter on a city daily, and failed—tried to be a bookkeeper, and failed—tried his hand at salesmanship, and failed. The one thing that had consistently come to him was failure—failure! He wondered if it would come to him out here, where there would be no other human element to consider, and where he must fight his way alone.

Duff was aroused from his unhappy reflections by the touch of a warm, silken nose against his knee. He looked down into a pair of kindly, trustful eyes. The youth stooped and stroked the dog's shaggy mane. "Pueblo, old pal," he told the collie, "you and I are going to be real bunkies—now, aren't we? Sure thing! And it's up to us to take care of this bunch of long-whiskered billies, and long-haired nannies. Can we do it?"

As if to demonstrate a willingness to do his share, Pueblo uttered a few short yelps, leaped up on the bunk to make a rapid circuit, and then scooted out of the shanty, scurrying away toward the hillslope where a straggling bunch of wayward Angoras threatened to break from the main herd.

Duff was glad, anyhow, that he could claim dumb, faithful Pueblo for a friend. "Pueblo will do most of the work," old Jake had assured. "He has lived on the Lone Yucca since the day he first opened his puppy eyes—an' all he knows is goats. You stick to things here as close as Pueblo does, an' you'll be sure to make good."

Duff was glad of another thing. His sister, Mazie, didn't know his exact whereabouts. She knew only that he had work—and would hear from him in time. Truly, he would not break her heart by letting her know he had dropped to the level of a goat tender! Through all his season of misfortune and failure she had remained cheerful—encouraging him, helping him, begging him to try again. His last letter to her, now on its way to the post, but with no address indicated, was a message of hope, promise—and heartfelt gratitude. For her sake, he told himself, rising with a sense of renewed determination, he must make good!

During the days that followed, Duff had no chance to further bewail his luck. There was too much work. The care of a thousand goats, in late winter, even in California where open range is offered the year through, proved no small item. Every night the entire herd had to be driven down and placed inside the corral. Not only that, but the whole number were counted as they passed in through the gate. This was one phase of the work upon which Jack Biddle placed great stress. The youth did not see the need of it. If the goats were all driven down and confined inside the stonewalled enclosure that ought to be enough.

Then some of the nannies began showing up with little ones. Most of the tiny newcomers appeared in pairs—wobbly-legged twins that seemed woefully helpless when they first came into the world. Only for the diligence of Pueblo some of the foolish nannies would have remained outside over night. For the mother goats were inclined to seclude themselves in the hillside growth with their new-born kids.

One evening, after an unusually hard day's work, in which he had rounded up more than a score of nannies with young ones, Duff let the herd enter the corral gate without counting. He and Pueblo had made such a thorough job of beating the brush and scouring the hills, that Duff felt confident none were missing. Moreover, he was dead tired. So he marked all present on the record book, which the ranch boss provided for making the daily count.

Duff didn't sleep well that night. Several times he awoke, with a sense of uneasiness troubling him. Up till that evening he had done his work thoroughly and well. No detail had been slighted. This one breach in regular routine brought upon him a feeling of apprehension. He tried in vain to make himself believe that it didn't matter. If all the kids were driven in, they were in, that was all there could be to it, whether he had counted them or not. So why worry?

But with all his attempts at self-assurance, Duff could not drive that feeling of dereliction from his mind. So, the next morning, he counted the goats. Three nannies were missing. Once again he endeavored to square his conscience by telling himself he made a mistake in the count. Yet there rested upon him the absolute conviction that he had neglected his duty. All through the day the feeling of guilt followed him, like a hovering shadow. When evening came again he made a careful count of the herd. His count of the morning was confounded. Three nannies were missing. If they were mothers, with new-born kids it meant that the flock was nine short. Jack Biddle would be fuming if he knew the truth.

That night Duff did not sleep in the shanty. There was a possibility of the missing ones having been taken from the corral by some prowling animal of the range. This would mean that old Pueblo, who kept constant guard over the herd, had been negligent. With canine understanding, the dog looked troubled when Duff gave voice to such a suspicion. Also the collie was peeved when Duff spread a pallet under a dwarf pine near the corral. This evident lack of faith was anything but pleasing to the dog.

Late in the night the herder was awakened by the muffled padding of cushioned feet. He lifted himself to an elbow and, after rubbing the sleep from his eyes, peered around. A million stars glittered like lambent lights close over the range, bringing the mountains and ridges, the shanty, adjoining sheds and corral into plain outline. Duff glanced first at the foot of his bed, where Pueblo had curled up earlier in the night. But the dog was gone. Looking farther on, he detected two creeping shadows moving with silent stealth toward the corral. Watching them closely, and following them till they came out into the open, a short distance from the gate, the shadowy figures took the shape and form of a pair of coyotes. Though they could not be seen by the goats within the stone-walled enclosure, a wary old buck scented trouble and began thumping the ground warningly. In an instant the whole herd was awake and milling excitedly round and round.

But where was old Pueblo? Why was not the vigilant collie offering a vicious repulse to these daring intruders? Duff lay quiet a few moments. Soon another shadow emerged from the corral wall, and creeping into the open, soon took the shape and form of a dog. It was Pueblo, the trusted guardian, presenting a sniffing, friendly muzzle to the midnight marauders. Not a growl, not a yelp, not a single threat of danger met the stealthy approach of the sneaking pair.

A hot flood of indignation swept through the young herder's veins. Leaping to his feet, he seized a convenient club and swept down upon the trio. "Pueblo—you coward! Pueblo—traitor!" he shouted wrathfully. Whereupon the collie turned upon the coyotes and barked savagely, routing them, in swift flight, from the vicinity of the corral, and driving them over the ridge.

No word of commendation, no affectionate pat on the head awaited the dog at the end of the chase. Duff was sitting on the pallet when the dog returned. Even before Pueblo reached Duff he sensed trouble. Pueblo flattened himself prone on the ground and whined pitifully. Traitor that he was, he seemed to expect nothing better than severe punishment. Creeping slowly forward, in the bright starlight, he was an abject picture of dumb pleading.

Duff still held the club in his hands. His first intention was forgotten. The flood of hot anger cooled in his veins. He tossed the stick aside and extended a friendly hand. To his mind came a reminder of his own shortcomings, his failures, his neglect. The dog's quivering muzzle rested on his outstretched palm. "Pueblo—old pal—I'm sorry this has happened," Duff told the dog sincerely. "Both of us have something to forget, and bigger purposes to prove. We must protect the herd. That's our job. We must not fail—do you understand? Mazie would be utterly ashamed of us, if she knew—"

Which was as far as the contrite Duff could get, for a great lump came into his throat, and his hand trembled. The dog got up and brushed his head against the youth's cheek. A better understanding came between them. Pueblo put in the remainder of the night stalking tirelessly round and round the corral, while Duff slept peacefully.

The days went by, bringing rapid signs of approaching spring—frequent downpours, followed by windstorms. Golden poppies flaming on the hillsides, primroses blooming on the desert, yuccas lifting their silvery plumes, grass blades raising succulent stems through the rich earth. Came also a rapid increase of the herd, by the arrival of a multitude of wobbly-legged creatures, till the air was a babel of babylike cries or of bleating nannies. Duff and Pueblo worked from daylight till dark. Clipping time would soon be on. Jake Biddle would be coming with the shearing crew, and the youth was determined to have the flock in fine condition. Very few of the kids had died. The old goats carried a magnificent coat of mohair, and there had been no serious loss since that first careless night.

By this time Duff had become thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the range. Its bigness and wideness filled him with an ever-growing purpose. Its charm, the changing colors of the desert hills at sunset, the wonderful nights with their million scintillating stars, the thousand and more silken fleeced creatures that browsed the slopes—all this, and the superb health he enjoyed, made him glad to be alive. Moreover, there had come upon him the infinite satisfaction of worth-while accomplishment.

Not a day did he relinquish his vigil over the flock. Nor did Pueblo ever again prove unfaithful. On the contrary, there came a time when the full measure of both, as keepers of the flock, was put to the test. One afternoon, while searching for a wandering nannie, Duff, climbed a steep bluff and reached a level shelf under a lava pinnacle. This was so high and isolated that none of the herd ever before visited it. Hence this mother goat had sought its seclusion. Duff was led to it by the quick barking of the collie. He heard the baby-like cries of a pair of kids as he climbed over the bluff rim. The cries were followed by an answering bleat, and then by more yelps from the dog.

Carrying his heavy staff, the herder ran on across the shelf, back there near the pinnacle, caught in a rock crevice from which there seemed no escape, the lost nannie and old Pueblo were fighting a pair of range wolves. The twin kids, huddled in a protecting niche, cried in terror. For a brief moment, Duff hesitated. The snarling wolves had turned upon him. He caught the look that gleamed from their eyes. It was plain that they would brook no interference. When they came toward him bristling, Duff raised his staff. Pueblo leaped from his place of vantage. Then the battle was on.

When it was over, and the pair of badly battered animals had been sent scuttling down the bluff, Duff leaned for support against the rock wall. He was gasping for breath and his strength was all but spent. His clothes were torn, his cheeks and arms scratched and bleeding. Old Pueblo, showing similar signs of combat, curled at his feet, a red tongue lolling. But in the dog's eyes, as he looked down into the upturned face of the collie, Duff saw the reflection of his own sense of joyful triumph.

"We beat them—did pal! We drove them off—you and I!" Duff exclaimed proudly, as he stooped and thrust his trembling hand into the collie's tangled mane. "And now we must go back to the ranch."

A moment later Duff had lifted the two tiny kids from their hiding place and pressed them close against his breast. Night was falling as he came down the slope toward the corral, driving the main flock ahead of him. He still carried the new-born twins in his arms, and as he raised up, a bit surprised, when he noted, for the first time, a buckboard standing in the lee of the shanty. A little team, unharnessed, was feeding at the rack. Jake Biddle, his round face fairly beaming, opened the corral gate. Nor was this all. When Duff turned his gaze toward the shanty door, a girl came running down the path, her brown hair flying in the wind.

"Mazie! Mazie!" Duff shouted in amazement. "What on earth are you doing here? How did you know—"

"I've come out to see you," she answered. "I've known for the past month that you were here, and Mr. Biddle said he'd bring me when asked—"

She came to a quick stop, her wide-open eyes held on the sun-bronzed stalwart youth. She not only noted how big and strong he was, but observed, with an expression of alarm, his torn clothing, his scratched face and arms. "Duff—" she exclaimed, "what has happened? Have you been in an accident—or a fight—"

"Not an accident, Mazie," he assured her, as he came closer, holding the baby kids against his breast, "but a real fight, and a good one. Old Pueblo and I were determined to protect the flock."

"I know it was in you, Duff, my boy!" cut in old Jake with a chuckle as he swept a pleased eye over the herd. "I never saw this bunch of Angoras looking so fine."

"I'm so glad to hear you say that," said Mazie. "I want everything my brother undertakes to look fine."

"If that's not just like a girl," said Duff. But for all there was a light of gladness shining from his eyes.

THE COURTESY OF THE "MR."

One will to-day find at the windows of banks or on the desks of employees in great offices the names of the employee at the desks or windows, and the prefix "Mr." is always before the names. Now we read that the conductors on the omnibuses on Fifth Avenue in New York City are wearing badges having on them their names also the "Mr." prefix.

"What's the good of that?" some boy or girl may ask.

The answer is that there is a certain appeal for courtesy in it all. It is so much more agreeable to hear one called by his name than by the word "conductor," or being asked to do this or that without the use of any word relating to his personality. It is interesting to know what the conductors themselves think of the wearing of the pretty green and gold badges having their names conspicuously on them. This is what one of the conductors has said recently:

"It is this way: the passenger who wants to be pleasant, and the one who wants to kick, both find the name plate convenient. People use conductors' names all sorts of ways. One will ask: "Will you please let me off at the next corner, Mr. Jones?" Then there is the woman who wants to ask a favor, such as being let off in the middle of the block, near her own door. She begins by saying, 'Mr. Jones, may I trouble you just this once to stop?' etc. The passenger seeking a privilege usually makes sure of your name before beginning. He often repeats it again at the end of the question also. The passenger with a grievance catches on to the name plate right away. If he is particularly angry he drops the Mr. and it is, 'See here, Jones, I'll report you for this.'"

Of the happier side of the experiment this conductor says:

"After they get to know us they usually smile or nod. Later they will wish us a 'good-morning,' or a 'good-night.' Since the name plates have come in they add our names and it is 'Good-morning, Mr. Jones,' and more of them are doing it every day."

As a nation we are much more polite than we once were. This is true in particular of young people, and it should be still more true of them. The use of names when speaking to others is a pleasant courtesy that is growing in favor, and the knowing of the people with whom we come into contact on street or railway cars when they are on duty has a certain subtle tendency to make us more courteous to them. The pleasant little courtesies of the travelling public go far to offset some of the discourtesies to employees one sees on trains or street cars or other conveyances used by the travelling public. And never is this courtesy more agreeable than when it is revealed by the young.—J. L. Harbor.

CHARACTER FROM LAUGHTER

You can tell a person's character by the way he laughs.

This is the conclusion reached by an Italian professor who has been studying the subject. A laugh, he says, is a surer indication of character than handwriting.

The best kind of laugh is the hearty "Ha, ha, ha!" This shows an open and frank disposition, while "He, he, he!" is the sign of a moody and gloomy man.

The "Hi, hi, hi!" laugh usually belongs to irresolute and undecided people. The opposite meaning is attached to "Ho, ho, ho!" which comes from the strong and generous. The worst kind of laugh is the "Hu, hu, hu!" The man who laughs in this manner is not to be trusted.

So be very careful how you laugh. You may give yourself away!

DOES PROHIBITION PROHIBIT?

A 9 foot by 24 foot banner has been posted on the Milano Hotel in San Jose, California, which states: "This building closed for one year for violation of the United States Prohibition Act, by order United States District Court." Such measures applied fearlessly and without discrimination would tremendously discourage the opposition to the Prohibition law.

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KING PARDONED KING

In the second year of the reign of King George III a man of the name of George King was convicted in Halifax of a capital felony. He drew up a memorial, to the King, which he forwarded with the following lines:

George King to King George sends
his humble petition,
Hoping King George will pity poor
George King's condition;
If King George to George King will
grant a long day,
George King for King George for ever
will pray.

The man was pardoned.

DESERVED SPANKING

A little boy who roaring lustily just for meanness. A friend of the mother, who was visiting the hollse, was visibly disturbed. "If he was my child," she said, "he'd get a good spanking."

"He deserves it," the mother admitted, "but I do not believe in spanking a child on a full stomach."

"Neither do I," said the visitor, "but I'd turn him over."

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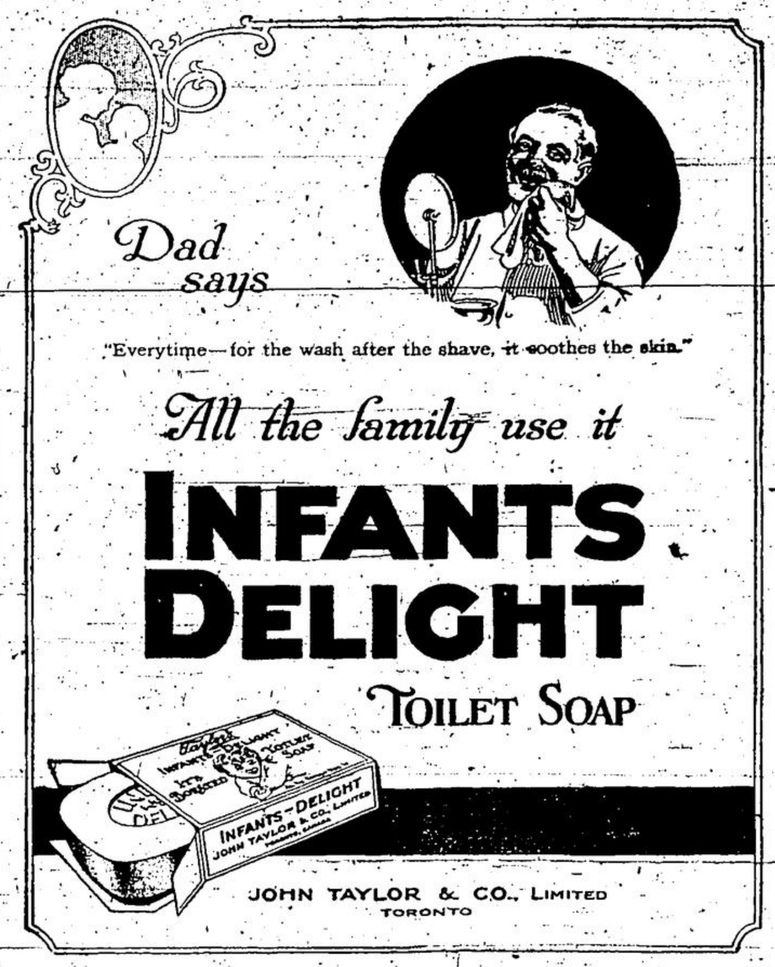

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