

The Free Press Short Story

SNOWED-IN

BY NELGA GARDNER WHITE

It was a cold, gray morning and the drabness seemed to creep in through the windows and enter Anne's heart.

"Oh, I can't ever teach another day! I can't!" whispered Anne Winters as she pulled the covers up, higher under her chin.

"She went downstairs slowly, the thought of another of the Sloan's heavy breakfasts sickening her. The rest were sitting down, all but Ned. Her pretty face hardened as Anne glanced at Ned. If it had not been for the boy, maybe she could have managed Number Six!

"Going to be a dreadful day!" said Mr. Sloan. "Starting to blow!"

"After breakfast she took her books and started out. Just a few rods behind her came Ned, his old red mackinaw showing brightly through the snow. It was this way every morning, she trudged ahead through the drifts with the boy just behind. Angry tears stung frostily on Anne's cheeks.

"The snow was growing heavier and the storm cut her face unmercifully. She was getting used to storms, but she thought she would never get used to Number Six, with those big boys, the noise, and the silly girls, always writing notes!

"First came the fire. That was part of her job, for right in the contract it had said it "and janitor service." Ned had done it at first, but she had put a stop to that.

"Yeah! I certainly do commend the board! she could hear his drawing voice. "Silk stockings and a shingle bob for Durkee Hollow!"

"Of course, after that she had had to build the fire! She got the papers and kindling and kerosene. Soon the fire was roaring. The windows were thick with frost and Anne shivered as she arranged her desk.

"Ned stood by the stove. "Well, you've done a good job this morning, Teacher!" he drawled presently.

"Anne flushed. There was always that little edge of laughter in his voice that seemed to cut her worse than sharp words might have done, and that "Teacher" he knew how that word irritated her!

"She had a good many scores against Ned—the day she had been unable to get an example in compound interest and had looked up to see his gray eyes mocking her with their laughter; the day the president of the board had come and Ned had incited the other boys to unendurable mischief; oh, there were a dozen of them!

"The Slavon boys came in and Molly Durkee and then Otto Sommesson and his sister, Greta. They were covered with snow and had a great time stamping and laughing and teasing. Anne waited until nine-thirty, but no more came.

ing off your fine clothes, ranning Dickens down our throats."

"I have wanted to be friends! Fine clothes, do you mean this?" She touched her red dress scornfully. "I thought it was so sensible and pretty! And Dickens—I was brought up on it when I was little, I love Dickens!"

"Brought up on it?" "Yes, I was! I'd read it by the hour up in the playroom! Oh, I haven't meant to be snobbish. I can't help it because my father has so much money, and I have been used to having so many things! I can't help that, can I? But I was trying to make my own way! I wanted to show dad I could be somebody by myself, but it seems I can't. I guess I am soft, but I could have stuck it out if I had one friend here just one!"

"Ned Sloan looked away from her for a moment. When he spoke, his voice was embarrassed. "Guess I had you sized up wrong. Thought you were just showing off, pretending all your fine manners. Sorry, but I guess you haven't understood us either. Did you think I was going to school just to make trouble for you? I've been wanting to go all my life, but we've been poor, terribly poor, and I've had to help out on the farm. One year the school was closed, that year, and I had to work on the farm. One year the school was closed, that year, and I had to work on the farm. One year the school was closed, that year, and I had to work on the farm."

"I don't know. I guess I thought you'd know it without being told."

"I should have. Her eyes were wistful and lonely. "I should have! I think I did in a way, but you made me so angry always! We were both in the same boat, weren't we, really? Both of us reaching out after something more real than we have now! Only—only I've tried me as I've given up reaching! You won't give up!—You'll go on to high school and college, won't you?"

"I don't know. I thought I would, but if you quit, I don't know as I'll have the courage."

"Well, I'm not quitting! And I'll get you started in algebra, shall I?"

"Oh, you haven't," cried Anne. "I see now that you haven't been mean! It's just that we haven't understood each other!"

"Suddenly there came a sound through the storm, the sound of sleigh bells. Ned ran to the door. "Hey! Hey, there, Ellisworth!"

"Anne and Ned reached home at last through terrible drifts and cutting storm. Mrs. Sloan met them at the door. "Good land, Ed, begun to think you were lost!" And she and Ned gave each other a quick smiling look. The look said, "Lost! Why, we've just found ourselves!"

"Hello, Miss Winters! Is my Greta and Otto there? Miss Sommesson, she tank mabbe the drifts get too bad by night. I guess I take them home!"

"Yes, they had! I hadn't realized that the drifts were! Maybe you'd better take the rest, too, if you will, Mr. Sommesson. "There's just Molly and the Salvin boys. Have you room for them?"

"Sure, Miss Winters!"

AMERICAN CRIME WAVE RECEDING

It will be a surprise to most Canadians to know that there is some evidence that the crime wave in the United States is receding.

Dr. Geo. W. Kirchway is a widely known authority on crime. He has been Professor of Law in Columbia University, Commissioner of Prison Reform in New York State, Warden of Sing Sing Penitentiary, President of the American Institute of Criminal Law, Director of the National Society of Penal Information and in addition holds many other positions connected with penal reform and criminology.

"Based on his remarks on the official figures of the United States census, Dr. Kirchway says: "The official record covering the eighteen years 1910 to 1927 inclusive shows a marked decline of from 35 to 40 per cent. in the general crime rate in the United States and this notwithstanding the immense number of new crimes resulting from liquor, drug and traffic laws enacted since 1910."

"That the offenses for assault, fraud, vagrancy, prostitution and larceny should have fallen off by 50 per cent. or more, and burglary by 10 per cent.," he claims, "should give pause to the student."

The decreases are most marked in the small centers but marked decrease even of the more serious offenses are found in many large cities.

In New York City arrests for burglary per 100,000 population for five years ending 1919 were 44. These fell to 34 for the five years ending 1929. For the same periods the arrests for larceny were in the first case 161 and in the second 127. For drunkenness, arrests in the first period in New York City averaged a year 229 per 100,000 population as compared with 150 for the five years ending 1929, a decrease of over 40 per cent.

For crimes against property—arson, burglary, confidence games, larceny and robbery, there were in 1927, 12,336 and in 1931, 10,484. There was a decrease in each of these crimes and in the total a reduction of 14 per cent, notwithstanding an increase of half a million population in the period covered.

Meanwhile, Ontario's crime record shows a marked tendency to increase. Can anyone suggest why this should be so?—From the office of Ontario, Prohibition Union, December 1931.

THE CARE AND CULTURE OF HOUSE PLANTS

Our homes, especially during the winter months, are much too hot and dry for most plants. High temperatures combined with too little sunshine produce weak, spindly growth and under such conditions flowering plants often drop their buds. As the home can only be heated to a very slight extent, plants must be chosen that can adjust themselves to such environment. Many failures to grow plants successfully are due to: faulty drainage, careless watering and insect injury.

Soil—Sods and barnyard manure composted and allowed to rot make splendid soil for plants. To this may be added a small amount of rotted leaves or other organic material. When potting ferns add a larger amount of leaf mold.

Watering—After potting the plant should receive a liberal watering and then no water given until needed. Blooming plants require more water than the slower growing plants such as palms. With a little experience one can tell when plants really require water. The appearance of the plant is, of course, a good indication of its requirements. A method commonly followed is to tap the pot with the knuckles; if it has plenty of water the sound is dull, if it is dry the pot will ring. Occasional syringing is beneficial especially for ferns and other foliage plants.

Insects—Red spiders thrive under house conditions and are hard to overcome. At the Experimental Station at Charlottetown good results were obtained by dusting carefully with flowers of sulphur. "Sucking" insects are controlled with nicotine sulphate, one teaspoonful of arsenate of lead to the same amount of water. Scale insects on ferns may be controlled by miscible oils now on the market.—Experimental Farms Note.

HONEY CONTAINERS

The producer of any food commodity realizes that his success in the marketing of that commodity depends upon the willingness of the consuming public to purchase it, and in the face of keen marketing competition he also knows that in order to create and maintain such a willingness in the mind of the buyer, his commodity must not only be of high class quality, but that it must also be packed in clean and attractive containers.

When they were gone, there was Anne alone with Ned and the roaring heater. "You may go, too, any time," she said coolly. "I won't keep school this afternoon."

"I guess we'd better wait till somebody goes by," said Ned, quite seriously, for him. "The drifts are worse than I thought. We'd never get through the cut, I'm afraid. I saw Ellisworth going to town this morning. I'll listen for his bells coming back!"

"Anne wanted to put on her wraps and walk out and up the road toward her boarding place, but the drifts had frightened her. She sat down and began to look over papers.

"She forgot about her lunch as she sat there. Anyway, if she ate lunch, she might have to talk to Ned and she could not talk to him now. She would not talk to him if they were snowed in forever! After a long time she looked at Ned. "The horse, he'll be stuck!"

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WHEN DAD SPANKS

This hurts me more than it does you," remarked Police Judge Cavin Muse, of Dallas, Texas, when he fined his daughter \$10 for "speaking and" for running past a stop sign, and then dug down and paid the fines himself.

Launched in 1932

We are now launched into 1932. It's a New Year, full of promise and opportunity. The old year has gone. Its errors can be best used as experience in the New Year.

To a great extent your measure of happiness and prosperity for 1932 depends on yourself. It's impossible to secure a marked degree of either just by wishing, no matter how sincere that wish may be made.

Every successful business man makes a study of his customers' needs; strives to anticipate their wants and fulfil them promptly. That is taken for granted in the average business man of to-day. He doesn't buy something he never expects to be asked to supply or can create a demand for.

BUT---

No matter how careful the buying, no matter how big the stock, or how courteous and prompt the service, if you don't tell the buyers of the things that make your store outstanding in your estimation they will not become your customers. It's a long way round, waiting for your friends to do your advertising. It takes all their help and all the other aid in these days of keen business competition.

EVERY WEEK

You can address between 4,000 and 5,000 prospective customers (allowing an average of three readers for each paper). Certainly they don't all live in Acton, but THE FREE PRESS circulates in a wide territory in the country surrounding. If you have an attraction for these readers you can get acquainted with them real intimately by your message to them each week.

PROSPERITY IN 1932

Will come to a great extent in just the proportion you go after it. Among the sages and spokesmen for big business interests better times are predicted in many quarters. What share will you play as an individual in having it come to your community and to you? Now is the time to make your plans for 1932.

We Have Many Facilities

Never was there a bigger field presented to serve you in Acton's paper, THE FREE PRESS. Never were we able to present a better service to you. We will be glad to go into detail with you if you will call us and arrange a suitable time.

May We Assist You in Your Plans for 1932?

The Acton Free Press

Constantly Striving to Maintain Leadership for Acton with a Representative Newspaper