

The Free Press' New Year's Story

Lending Library

MARGARET E. SANDGREN

LEILA ELLINGTON sat alone in the back of the counter of her lending library and surveyed the world of passersby through a plate-glass window.

"Nobody wants a book," she thought, and loneliness welled in her heart. "But why should anyone want to read tonight? Here it is New Year's Eve, and everybody's on the way to some party!"

It was quite true. The world seemed bent on partying. Leila's window looked out upon the lobby of a hotel—rather a quiet family hotel, usually—and even that unpretentious place was thronged with people arrayed in gala frocks and dinner coats, none of them wanting a book to read.

"In the whole of the city," Leila sighed, "I'm the only person who's at loose ends."

And then she laughed, wryly, realizing that despite her lack of company she wasn't in the least at loose ends, for the hotel management had insisted that her lending library be kept open until nine-thirty.

Edly, for want of something better to do, Leila began to sort the filing cards which she kept neatly stacked in her little record box. The cards contained the names of the regulars—clients who borrowed books at stated times. She was faintly amused to see how the books ran true to form. Her regulars didn't take liberties with their reading. They went in rather generally for detective types of literary entertainment.

reason is a silly one. I haven't lived here long, myself, and the few people I've met—of approximately my own age seem so purposeless. Does that sound selfish? I don't mean it so. But I was brought up on an isolated farm and never knew many young people, and practically from the time I was born I had to depend on my ideals and ambitions for companionship. When I was left to do for myself, an uncle who has an interest in this hotel gave me a chance to run the lending library, and she made a futile gesture with her hands, "I put away the ideals and ambitions and accepted the library with intense gratitude."

Henley Gibson sat down in the lending library's extra chair. He had the air of an invited guest—a staying guest. "You're an interesting girl," he said. "Incidentally, you're the most interesting girl I've met since I came back from my job. Say, I'm afraid I'm beginning to sound like a district attorney with my questions, but I can't help being curious to know the nature of the ambitions and the ideals that didn't come true."

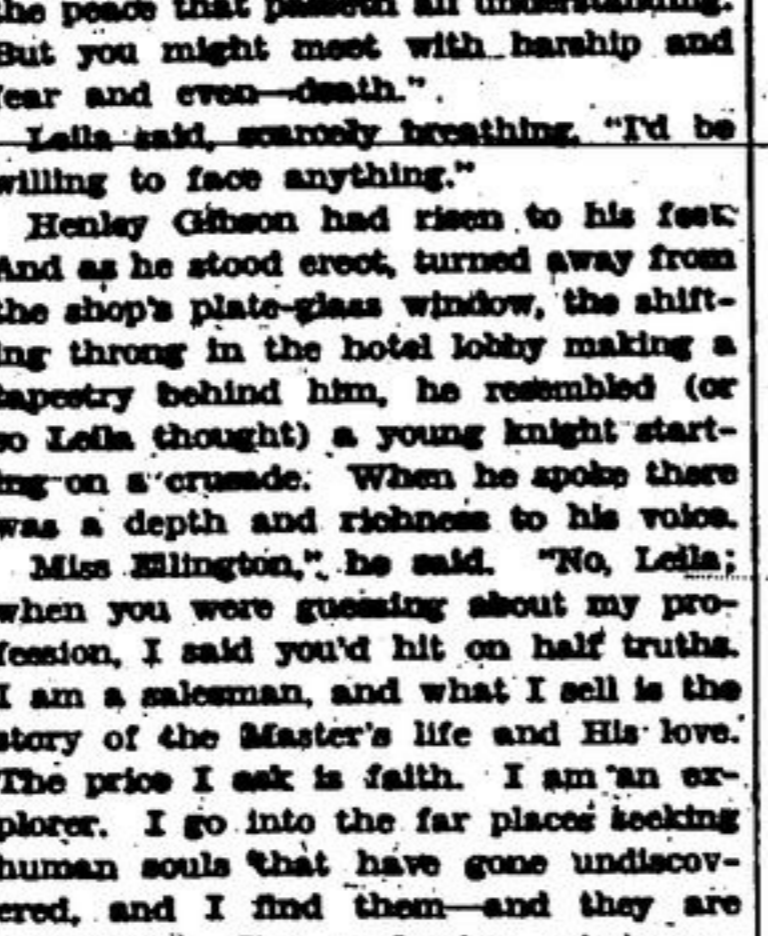
Leila said slowly, "I've thought from the first time I saw you that your work wasn't a cut and dried affair. I've told myself that you were out of the ordinary; and I haven't felt so, either, because of the books you take from my shop. It's in the very air—your career! It's in the strength with which you carry your shoulders and in the set of your chin."

Henley Gibson spoke with no sense of bandying. "I'm no end flattered," he said, "that you've thought about me at all, Miss Ellington, because in the last several weeks I've done more than a little thinking and speculating about you."

Leila was flushing, but despite her embarrassment she hurried on. "I mean," she said, "you don't appear to be the kind of man to spend his life in an office behind a desk juggling figures or writing items into a ledger or balancing sets of books. You don't look like a salesman, either—not in the ordinary sense. You might perhaps—she hesitated ever so slightly, "sell big things. But not shoes or soap or magazines or neckties. I've told myself that you were an explorer—that you went to far places and more marvelous discoveries. I've thought that was why you seemed so anxious to read books on China, and—"

Henley Gibson was extremely interested. There was a bright, intense expression in his eyes. And yet for all the brightness there was a gravity in his manner. "In a way," he said, "you're correct about me. You've struck what might be called near truths. I don't sit at a desk and add figures and write in a ledger. But I am a salesman. And what I sell is the biggest thing in the world. Furthermore, I am an explorer. And I do go to far places and in each of the far places that I've visited I've made a marvelous discovery."

AIDING FINLAND



Pictured at his desk here is Premier John Nygaardsvoll, of Norway, leading light in the attempt to organize a Scandinavian bloc to obtain material aid for Finland in its gallant fight against the Soviet Russian invasion.

IT WORKS

Try it on your friends some time. She: "So next year is leap year again." He: "Yes, next year Christmas will be on a Wednesday and New Year's Day will be on a Monday."

CLUNG TO THE KILT

Although the kilt is no longer fashionable fighting garb in the British Army, it is known that one Scottish unit sailing with the First Division of the Canadian Active Service Force wore the beloved filibeg. However, this garment will later be discarded for the new battle uniform in order to establish and maintain a standard in dress.

BORN

BLOW—In Acton, on Monday, December 29th, 1919, to Mr. and Mrs. Fred Blow, a daughter.

DIED

WARNER—At the residence of her son-in-law, Mr. G. H. Anderson, Napanee, on Christmas Day, Melissa Garrison, widow of the late A. C. Colebrook, and mother of Mrs. L. B. Shorey, Acton.

Twenty Years Ago

From the Issue of The Free Press of Thursday, January 1st, 1920. Leap Year opens to-day. Rev. J. C. Wilson, B.A., has received a call to Weyburn, Sask., Presbyterian Church, with a stipend of \$2,500.

The Sunday School Lesson

FOR SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14. FRIENDS AND FOES OF THE KINGDOM. Golden Text—Ye are my friends, if ye do the things which I command you.—John 15: 14.

Direct to Downtown

You go direct to downtown in every town enroute when you travel by motor coach. When planning your next trip consult your local agent for all travel information. HAROLD WILES - Phone 58

GRAY COACH LINES

Special—First Grade Creamery BUTTER 1b. 28 1/2c. Special—Tiger Tomato CATSUP 18-oz. btl. 10c. Queenland Sweet Mixed PICKLES 27-oz. jar 10c.

Special—Libby's TOMATO JUICE 3 19-oz. tins 20c

Canada Dry Sparkling WATER 30-oz. btl. 19c. Assorted Fish PASTES tin 5c, 10c. King Oscar SARDINES tin 17c. Brunwick SARDINES tin 5c. McCormick's or Christie's "B" SODAS 2 pkgs. 23c.

Special—SHRIMPS 2 tins 27c

Golden Hollow DATES 2 lb. 19c. Mixed NUTS in shell lb. 17c. Pitted Sars DATES 2 lb. 25c. Mixed CANDY lb. 10c. Jewel Shortening 1-lb. pkg. 13c. CHIPSO pkgs. 9c, 20c. IVORY pkgs. 23c. Good cake 5c.

Special—Carroll's Dandee COFFEE 1-lb. bag 27c

Large Fresh Head Lettuce 2 for 17c. Extra Large Juicy ORANGES, dozen 35c. Bright Red CRANBERRIES, lb. 23c. Fresh White CELERY HEARTS, per bunch. 10c.

MILL STREET FREE DELIVERY PHONE 158

CARROLL'S

New American Mystery Plane



Streamlined as a bullet, the new Vultee Vanguard plane, designed as an interceptor-pursuit ship, is shown in flight at Los Angeles. The greatest secrecy is maintained about the testing of this plane, which, it is said, will travel at better than 400 miles an hour. It is powered by an air-cooled radial engine of radically new design. The ship is all-metal and designed so that it can be manufactured rapidly in large numbers.

SO LITTLE CHILDREN MAY PLAY ONCE AGAIN. Your help is urgently needed. Please mail a donation Today! The continuance of this essential public service depends on funds contributed by charitably-minded Ontario citizens—the money can come from no other source.

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