

The Free Press Short Story

DESTINY INTERVENED

By FREDERICK HALL

It was a big choir in Caldwell's... a hundred voices or more in the second semester, and it is made up of all classes—students, faculty, and private citizens.

All I had meant was to start conversation, but it shortly appeared that I had started something more. "Kin Porter?" he inquired.

"No, Austin Root," I returned, wondering at his question; for Austin, although only a student, is our regular tenor soloist.

"Oh, Austin." His interest oozed like the air out of a pricked toy balloon. Sometimes the dean has me guessing. "I noticed you stopped to speak to him," he went on accusingly.

"I didn't tell him anything I did not think was true."

"That!" grunted the dean. "Well, for that matter, it's true that Margaret Burns' hair is lovely, a shade like old polished copper, but—"

"I once told her that, practically that, I confessed. I am not a student, I have my full quota of gray hairs, and I do not mean to be flustered by any dean."

His silence seemed to convict me of total lack of discretion. I sought for safety in attack. "Did not his solo tonight get you?" I challenged.

"No," he returned promptly. "It didn't. His voice got me the first few times I heard it a year ago. Since then—Well, what do you think of that voice of his?"

"Kin Porter can sing higher—sometimes. We have, of course, voices more powerful. But Austin's notes are so effortless, clear as a meadow lark's—"

"A bird much overrated. Now say the rest. If you were his teacher, and were criticizing him, just what would you tell him?"

"I thought a moment. 'Well,' I conceded, 'a little sure of himself perhaps.'"

"Exactly. Put him in your meadow lark's meadow—his singing would be perfect. But with an admiring throng, mostly women—I tell you, he flamed out. 'It's all wrong.' Our colleges make some men—and kill others. 'Some of him lived, but most of him died': that Kipling quotation might be written on more than one college diploma."

"Just what do you mean?" I asked. "Art—all art," he spoke as though lecturing to a class, "should be the solace and the delight of the many and should provide daily bread for the very poor. Professor Vane writes good verses, but imagine him trying to live by them, three poems a day for syndicates! You and I have sung for thirty years, but—"

"Horror!" I pleaded. "We have not Austin's voice of course, but that is a gift of God, and no artist lives by their gifts. They live as the rest of us live, by good, hard work. Austin is none too industrious. Miss Bayne taught him that solo, note by note. Even his voice is no operative voice—I know that much myself. But, here in Caldwell, he is a prodigy and you and the rest gush all over him. Why can't you remember that we are a small college, with a weak musical department, in a state whose educational standards are none too high. Some day, far away from here, Austin is going to wake up to find, to paraphrase Mr. Tenney, that the cackles of this burg was not the music of the world. By that time he is likely to be simply another case of a 'littered' man not getting anywhere. You and the rest of the gushers," the dean finished almost vindictively, "can answer for it as you see fit."

"He may be saved yet," I ventured. "Some girl?"

"That's another trouble," he snapped. "There is a girl, one of the finest girls on the campus, but she is not musical. He may decide he must marry some one who can play the piano. Such things, you know, have happened."

"I'm warned!" I said humbly. "Austin may vie with Gabriel while he sings; I'll never compliment him again!"

"I kept my word. After that I watched Austin, too, and the more I watched, the more ground I saw for the dean's fear. Excepting for that golden voice of his, there was nothing especially notable about the young man. Good average stuff, capable of development, that was about all—that anyone could claim for him. His voice, however, gave him ten times the contacts with faculty members than other students had."

"For praise—I stayed around on purpose the following Sunday morning and at least six women spoke to him about his solo."

"A week or two later I saw in the college paper some verses I liked. They were signed 'S. S.," which I found meant Sadie Saks. Some one told me that Austin was her "regular." (There is nothing like a college town for keeping one's vocabulary up-to-date.) Here was an unhappy story: a childhood of scrubbing, washing, cooking, responsibility, and lack of appreciation, from which a brilliant aunt had rescued her and sent her to Caldwell, with just enough money to see her through. Here she had

met Austin and now there was danger, the dean thought, that our glittering prodigy might feel his career demanded that he should marry a girl who could play the piano.

I did not like Sadie's name—it was Sadie, not Sarah—but the girl had not chosen that. I was all for her and I confessed that I worried a little. Austin's voice distorted things so. The warm glow of the spotlight made all the rest of the scene dull and colorless. His studies sometimes looked that way.

There were no bouquets for work done in chemistry. No ladies told him how much they enjoyed his recitations in history. Neither did the limelight fall upon Sadie. Did she, too, I wondered, sometimes look drab. She was not dashing, provocative, as some girls are—as perhaps they cannot help being. Her beauty was of the quiet, whitful sort.

I dislike to think Dean Wilmarth in the role of The Enemy, sowing tares, and yet, as I studied Austin more closely, I confess to a lessened enjoyment of his singing. There was, at least I thought there was, a subdued complacency, an unobtrusive yet confident air of foreboding. Yet Austin was only a boy! His solos were still drilled into him, and almost note by note, as the dean had said. He was taking himself altogether too seriously.

It was a regular choir practice that the blow fell. Austin had risen for a solo and we were all hushed to attention. He had come to count on that, too, I think. The opening words, I remember, were "And the wicked," Austin sang. "And the w—"

He stopped. The leader looked up. "Try it again," he said.

Austin sang, "And the w—"

He stopped once more. "What's the matter, Austin?" demanded the leader. "The wicked too many for you?"

"Prog in my throat, I guess. Can't seem to get that note." It was only an F sharp.

"Want to try it again?"

"—No. I can't make it." Austin sat down.

"I don't know what was the matter," I heard him say after rehearsal. "Usually the higher the better, but this time—Oh, Doc—" He stopped Doctor Evans, whom I would have preferred that he should not have called "Doc." "Will you just look at this throat of mine?"

The doctor seated himself and peered down the orifice whence were wont to issue those golden tones. "Sore?" he asked.

"Not a bit."

"I can't see anything wrong with it. If you are not all right to-morrow, drop into the office."

The next afternoon I met Austin. "Sub-acute laryngitis," he reported. "It sounds impressive."

"It does not feel impressive." He was plainly annoyed. "My throat feels as sound as it ever did. I never knew that a thing was wrong until on that sharp note I just stopped. I can't hit it now, either. All right in a day or two, I guess."

"In a day or two Austin was not all right; and neither was he sick. His voice had gone on a strike, that was all. He did faithfully everything the doctor told him to, but gargles, troches, massages, had no effect. He could not take lessons; he could not practice. He dropped out of the choir and sat in the audience listening to Kincaid Porter sing his solos. Days, weeks, months slipped away. Christmas and New Year's Day came and went. Not a gleam of holiday spotlight fell upon Austin. We had students who had never heard him sing, did not know he ever had sung. People were saying that his future voice was better than they had realized and after the morning service ladies would crowd about to say "That was so beautiful this morning." Once or twice it was clear that Austin did not relish this. After all he was only a boy, and to have glory snatched from his very lips—really it did not seem nice of fate.

Some business took me east in January. For three nights I heard little from Caldwell. One evening, then, in the lobby of a New York hotel, I met Dean Wilmarth and we talked for an hour. I asked about Austin, among other things. "Doing the best work since he entered school," he returned cordially. "Really, there's something to that boy."

"When I left, he seemed—" I began. "Prog in his throat. Yes, I remember. He talked for four months, was simply 'peaked.' Then—I don't know perhaps Sadie did it; but something brought back his morale. It seemed to dawn on him that he had something to leades that voice of his, and he went to work all along the line. He surprised himself, I think, as much as any one. He did not know he was that good."

"And singing?" I questioned.

"Just as well as ever—better. I don't know but there's more to his voice than I thought there was. Anyhow one day that frog simply was not there. But it had done, fine work for him; it had

taught him a good bit about himself and something about the value of education. College—" The dean sighed. "College does not teach those subjects. I've often wished it did."

"LEFT OUT"

During your school days you may have stumbled into a group of your classmates who were much absorbed in one another, but who seemed to have no place in their circle for you. With sinking heart you went on your way. Possibly on a summer's night you sat on a porch or near an open window while a happy group of young people made their way down the street in a hilarious manner.

Sometimes you may have missed places where other young people were having parties to which you were not invited.

Loneliness in the solitude is bad enough, but loneliness in the presence of the cheerful comradeship of others is a terrible experience. The heart sinks into abysmal depths of anguish when you find that you are "left out."

Most of you have had this experience, and have somehow managed to survive. Common sense, plus experience, tells you that there are several ways in which the situation may be helped.

In such moments of gloom you are tempted to pity yourself. All the moments in your life when you have felt forlorn and forsaken come flocking back into consciousness. Your thoughts turn inward. You fancy that other young people are having a perfectly glorious time, which you are suffering. Your attention concentrates on your own woe. This is most unwholesome. Self-respect demands that you turn your thoughts away from yourself.

First you might fix your attention on the people who have left you out. Are they really as happy as they seem to be? Often you mistake noise for enjoyment. Making a racket is one way in which a crowd seeks to conceal its own stupidity. In any group of young people there are usually some who are bored. Most parties look merrier from the outside than the inside. As for clubs and other exclusive organizations, there is rarely much point to them after one has really "gotten in."

If you really know the people who have left you out, the folly of being unduly cast down by the experience may be more apparent. They are not demigods, but human beings like you and I, and sometimes they are terribly stupid.

Ask yourself just why you have been excluded. Rarely will you find that you have been "left out" on purpose. Young people are often thoughtless, but they are rarely mean. The most common reason for not inviting you to go with them is that they do not know you. You are overlooked far more than you are "left out."

One of the most effective vermifuges on the market is Miller's Worm Powder. They will not only clear the stomach and bowels of worms, but will prove a very serviceable medicine for children in regulating the infantile system and maintaining it in a healthy condition. There is nothing in their composition that will injure the most delicate stomach when directions are followed, and they can be given to children in the full assurance that they will utterly destroy all worms.

THE ONLY CORRECT MEASURE OF VOLUME OF DAIRY PRODUCTION IS THE POUNDS OF FAT PRODUCED, said J. P. Singleton, Dairy Commissioner, Dominion Department of Agriculture, in his recent address to the dairy conventions in the Prairie Provinces, and on this basis it appears that production in Canada was greater in 1934 than in any previous year in the history of the industry. The dairy industry of Canada has been going through a period of evolution, the most outstanding phases of which have been the decrease in the production of cheese and the increase in the production of butter.

As about 94 per cent. of the cheese produced in Canada is graded within a very short time after it is made, grading statistics furnish a fairly reliable index as to volume of production. The number of cheese graded in 1934 was 147,071 boxes less than during 1933.

The decrease is equivalent to about 13 million pounds. The make of cheese during the calendar year 1933 was slightly more than 111 million pounds. It appears, therefore, that production of cheese during 1934 will be somewhat under 100 million pounds, probably 97 million to 98 million pounds. This is the smallest make during any year since 1888.

Production of creamery butter during the entire year 1934 is reported as 231,448,702 pounds, which is 12,216,150 pounds, or 5.6 per cent. greater than for 1933. The increase in the production of creamery butter in Ontario and Quebec alone during 1934 is equivalent to more than 7,000,000 pounds of cheese while the decrease in cheese production in all Canada was only about 12,000,000 pounds. That is the increase in production of creamery butter in Ontario and Quebec considerably more than offsets the decrease in cheese in all Canada.

THE GRUFFS, the tallest animal in the world to-day; it stands nearly 20 feet in height. Despite the fact that its neck is amazingly long, it has no more bones than the necks of all other animals; all animals have seven neck bones, with the exception of the sloth, which has one more.

NO OTHER WAY



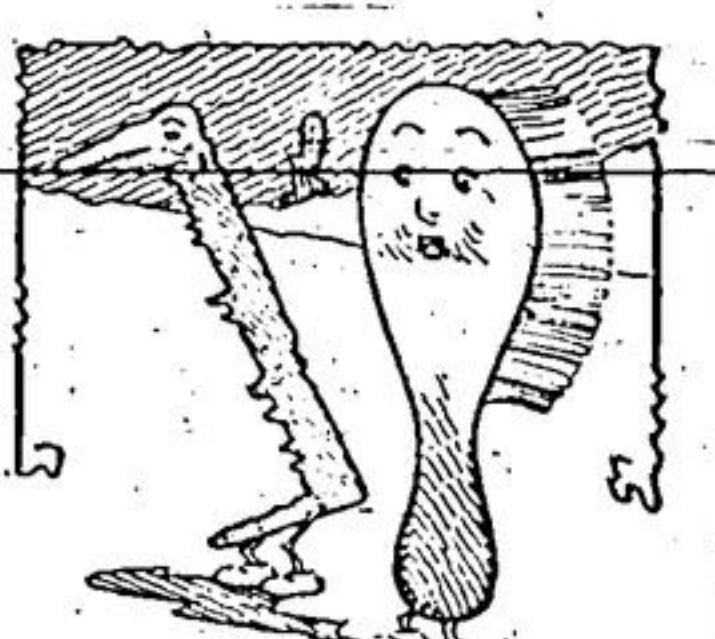
"Why didn't the chief of police investigate the matter before?" "How should you expect him to know anything until he sees it in the papers."

MAY RESCUE HIM



Her—Yes, I've thrown Tom overboard. Him—Then it is all over forever? Her—Oh, no, not forever. I may drop him a line at any time.

TOO OLD TO FLIRT



Miss Brush—The idea, no flirt with you? Why, you're so old you have lost all your teeth.

PROOF OF WORK



"Did Percy ever really work?" "He told me that he had moving pictures taken of himself while brushing his own hat to prove it."

SOME DULLNESS GONE



Mr. Dobb—This party is horribly dull. I guess I'll go home. Miss Street—That would remove some of the dullness, I'm sure.

OSTRACISM TOOK



"I hear Mrs. Newrich is fooling very bad on account of her being ostracized at a summer resort." "Did it take?"

DANGERS OF THE AIR



"Where did you get the black eye?" "I flew right across the other lane of a prize fight they were broadcasting."

THE FLAVOR THEY'LL NOT FORGET

By Betty Barclay

Everyday cooking, no matter how carefully planned, sooner or later becomes tiresome and tasteless, not only to the housewife but to those who partake of it. It is only when some new, rare, rich flavor ripens old dishes that husbands and children look up with pleased eyes and eagerly demand a second helping. For such unusual favors every good cook is constantly searching.

From the golden islands of the western sea, a new flavor has come to captivate the taste of Canadian epicures—the natural, unswartened juice of pineapple! This luscious juice, rich in fruit sugars, minerals and vitamins, has added a whole new series of recipes to the file-books of discriminating cooks.

The healthful value of the pineapple cannot be underestimated. An alkalinizing food, it tends to counteract the acid reaction of other frequently served staples. And flavor? You will have to try it yourself to understand the tang, the zest, the strange, delightful novelty it lends to old, familiar dishes.

Try fresh pineapple juice on your family for a morning "eye-opener." Watch its golden flow-waker a similar sparkle in their eyes. Then use it in your cooking, either with favorite dishes or as explained in the recipes below. In improving your accustomed vegetable recipe, remember to substitute 1/2 cup of pineapple juice in each cup of water your present recipes call for.

Do not confuse the juice from canned pineapples with fresh pineapple juice. Only the latter, which comes in various sizes of containers, has that rare and delicate flavor that makes meals memorable.

PINEAPPLE SAUCE For Fritters or Pudding 3 cups pineapple juice 5 tablespoons granulated sugar Juice of one lemon 2 teaspoons cornstarch

Boil the pineapple juice with a piece of lemon rind, and in another pan melt the sugar to a golden brown color, then add the pineapple juice and boil for a few minutes. Dissolve cornstarch with a little cold water and pour into sauce to thicken; boil for five minutes, and remove from fire. Add lemon juice, then strain. This may be served hot or cold with puddings or fritters.

PINEAPPLE GRIDDLE CAKES 3 cups flour 4 teaspoons baking powder 1 teaspoon salt 1 tablespoon sugar 1 cup undiluted evaporated milk 1 cup pineapple juice 3 eggs 2 tablespoons melted shortening

Sift the dry ingredients together. Beat eggs lightly with the milk. Stir the liquid into the dry mixture, adding the pineapple juice last. Add the melted fat or cooking oil and drop at once by spoonfuls on a hot griddle, turning as soon as possible. Serve hot with butter and pineapple sauce.

PINEAPPLE CHEESE SANDWICHES 2 tablespoons cream 1 package cream cheese 4 tablespoons pineapple juice

Add cream to the cheese and cream well. Add pineapple juice, mix well, and spread between buttered slices of nut and raisin bread.

PINEAPPLE PIE 3 tablespoons flour 1 cup sugar 3 tablespoons cornstarch 1/2 cups pineapple juice 2 egg yolks 1 lemon and zest Zest of 1/2 orange (grated rind) 1/2 cup crushed pineapple

Mix flour, cornstarch and sugar. Add the pineapple juice and bring to a boil. Cook in a double boiler until mixture is clear. (It will take from 30 to 40 minutes). Pour over the beaten yolks, beating all the time, return to the double boiler, add the lemon juice, lemon and orange zest, and crushed pineapple and cook until it thickens. It should be stirred all of the time it is cooking. When cool, pour into a baked pie crust and cover with meringue. Bake in a moderate oven (325 degrees F.).

HYDRO-ELECTRIC PROGRESS Canada's water-power development installations at the end of 1934 totalled 7,647,025 horse-power, or slightly over 17 per cent. of the 43,700,000 horse-power feasible installation. Although no new large hydro electric undertakings were initiated during the year, work was continued on several large developments which resulted in new installations aggregating 214,065 horse-power. The recovery in power demand which occurred in 1933 gained momentum during 1934 and the records of electrical output indicate that the total output for 1934 will not only greatly exceed that for 1933 but will have established an all-time record. This expansion of output is principally due to increased domestic, commercial and industrial demand, and not to increased export or use in electric boilers. The increase in installation during 1934 was due chiefly to the completion of the Rapide Blanc development of the Shawinigan Water and Power Company on the St. Maurice River and to the installation of an additional unit by the Beauharnois Light, Heat and Power Company. Other smaller installations were completed in British Columbia, Ontario and Nova Scotia.

"Nothing is ever accomplished by a committee unless it consists of three members, one of whom happens to be sick and another absent."—Henrik Van Loon.

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Boy Scouts' Campaign Excellence, the Governor-General of Canada challenging Canadian Boy Scout leaders to celebrate the coming visit to Canada this Spring of the World Chief Scout, Lord Baden-Powell. Inaugurated with a nation-wide appeal on February 18th by E. W. Beatty, K.C., J.L.D., Chairman and President of the Canadian Pacific Railway, who is also President of the Boy Scouts Association in Canada. This campaign has the hearty support of every thinking Canadian citizen.

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