

The Free Press Short Story

"FREELY YE HAVE RECEIVED"

CHARLES HENRY LERIGO

GEORGE MACY was delighted to think that Doctor Neighbor would return to Sawtooth in two weeks, fully recovered from his accident and ready for work.

Young George entertained no uncertainty as to the nature of the surprise or its desirability; but he was in doubt as to how they were to obtain it.

George thought he might as well have another look at the new car that would be his own choice. A salesman approached him and nothing would do short of George slipping behind the wheel and trying the car out.

"Only sixteen hundred and fifty dollars, fully equipped!" There was the rub. George knew that the doctor could not produce half that sum; yet a car must be on hand in two weeks ready to take the place of the wrecked one.

"That was because he is a county official."

"So's Doctor Neighbor. He is our county health officer."

"You buying a car for Doctor Neighbor?" "If I can. We're planning a surprise for him when he gets out of the hospital."

"Say, I know about Doctor Neighbor. He can have as big a discount as the sheriff."

"That's kind of you. But it doesn't help much, because all the money in sight figures about half your price."

"Don't let price worry you. We'll trust Doctor Neighbor for all he can't pay!" "But how would my surprise look? Half of it is really paid for and they'll trust you for the rest."

"Don't be so easily discouraged," said the salesman. "You have two weeks yet. You'll find a way. I'm going to wrap this car up and put it away on shelf for you. It's sold!"

When George reached home, he told Sheriff Bunn all about the affair. "It's the very car for him," insisted George. "But the money on hand is scarcely half of the lowest amount this salesman talks about."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed the sheriff. "Turn some of his frozen book accounts into solid gold."

"Easy for a sheriff!" "Easy for anyone who goes after it. Trouble with you and that nurse is you sit there in the doctor's office and expect people to come in and drop money in your lap. If you want what's owing, go after it."

George told Aldah French, the nurse who had been carrying on single-handedly in the doctor's absence. "He's right!" she agreed. "The books show a lot of old accounts now due. We must get the money."

"I guess the doctor's a rotten collector, anyway," said George. "Most doctors are if they graduated more than five years ago. Now in my school we get supplementary lectures about keeping books and collecting."

"Such lectures give you new wrinkles!" "I'll say. Some doctors use what they call 'collection stickers.' They make out a bill to John Jones for fifteen dollars or so, and the 'sticker' they gum on makes him sit up and take notice. Maybe it reads, 'I did nothing to hurt your heart. Why not send me a check?' Red hot ones, some of them are."

"You try your stickers and I'll try writing some letters," said Aldah French. "Everybody knows about the doctor's accident. I'll give the news that his full recovery demands the gold treatment."

The man to whom George sent the sticker "Did I give you too much nerve medicine? Why not a check?" came to welcome him that very evening. He was so angry that he paid up his entire bill. When he gave the receipt George said, "Don't blame Doctor Neighbor for that reminder. He never saw it. But I know he'll write you a nice letter of thanks as soon as he is able." The man left, head in hand.

"Don't worry!" said Aldah French. "When he really needs a doctor again, he'll forget about being mad."

For her own part she had written pleasant letters. As a result many people sent money "on account," but no one paid in full.

All in all the result of a week of effort was encouraging. They collected nearly five hundred dollars, paid current expenses that had accumulated, and brought the automobile fund to more than one thousand dollars. "Another four hundred dollars would do it," declared George. "But we've sent out a statement of some kind to practically every account."

"All but that big one, you know." "Old Deacon Benfast, you mean? I've been a coward. I'll go to see him personally."

"If I can help get the money, I'll go with you." "You can. I need your moral support. I don't quite understand the way Doctor Neighbor entered the account in his books but I do know that he did a lot of work. Old Deacon Malachi was a wreck. Doctor gave him all kinds of treatment. The old man is a great Bible reader, I hear. I'd like to say 'Praise the Lord, O Lord, O Lord!' and tell him it's in the Bible. A deacon, too!"

"A deacon, is he?" responded Aldah French. "Did you ever have personal knowledge of a deacon who was not as good or better than the average citizen?" "What do you mean 'personal knowledge'?" "You speak as if I'd said something terrible. What don't you like?" "I don't like the way you speak about deacons. What's the matter with them?" "Oh, I beg your pardon! I didn't know I was on your corns."

"You wouldn't," said Aldah. "But my dad happens to be a deacon." "Well, perhaps he's different." "There's only one thing George," we'll just have to go to see Deacon Benfast. "Let's make a memorandum of the account and go this very evening. See; here it is. There were twenty-five visits at the home, quite a bunch of office calls, all kinds of tests, just about everything in the whole works. Only thing I don't understand is how come the doctor did not itemize his charges as usual. Only figure he has put down is the lump sum of five hundred dollars and that is in a bracket and in pencil."

"It was nearly nine o'clock when they reached the comfortable home of Deacon Benfast. He and his sister, who lived with him, were making preparations to close the day. 'We're just having our Bible,' he said to the young people, quite cordially. 'You'll join with us. Then we'll have plenty of time to visit.' As George listened, he was obliged to concede that the man was a wonderful reader. He almost made George forget to be suspicious. Was it possible that there might be a mistake? Up from his knees rose Deacon Benfast with his face in a pleasant glow. "And how does the good doctor progress?" "He is gaining splendidly," said George. Here was his opportunity to say that in another week Doctor Neighbor would be back in his practice and greatly in need of a new car; but the opening did not come at once.

"You treat me and the day I'm well that five hundred dollars goes to the church treasurer, which is me!" "Don't!" said Doc just that quick. "Well, I reckon I was a hard case, but Doc stayed by it. Just a day or two before the accident that sent Doc to the hospital Malachi Benfast paid me that five hundred dollars (me being church treasurer) and that same day the repairs got started."

"And did the five hundred dollars go as far as you expected?" asked Aldah. "It did wonders," replied the deacon, his rugged old face alight with holy fire. "I'm just waiting for the doctor to get back so I can show him what my five hundred dollars has done for Pleasant Valley Church."

"Did it leave you feeling rather poor?" asked George bluntly. "The deacon smiled. 'You know, young man, I never gave anything to the church yet that left me feeling poor. Give, and it shall be given unto you! That's the word. It's in the Bible. That money I paid out has just about come back to me already.'"

"But wasn't it really Doctor Neighbor who gave that money?" asked Aldah French timidly. "This time the deacon laughed out loud. 'Supposing I say it was?' he admitted. 'Well, right away he gets into an accident, gets laid up in the hospital, and doesn't even have money for a new car.'"

"Doc tell us all this?" asked the deacon. "Not one single word!" exploded George wrathfully. "No, nor he won't," replied Deacon Malachi. "Doc never was the sort of Christian that plays odds and evens between his right hand and his left. A son of God going forth to war is what Doc is. People like us have to look out for him. Reach the Book, Sister. Let the young man open it at Luke 6: 38. Read the verse, boy, and then tell us about that slip of paper I've stuck in there."

"Why!" exclaimed George. "It's a check for Doctor Neighbor for five hundred dollars! Why, Mr. Benfast, that's the most wonderful thing I ever heard of. It's just fine!" "Fine!" repeated the old Scotchman. "Aye, it's fine. God grant that you learn some day that the giver is the one who gets the joy. It'll be a grand day for me when I hand Doc that check."

Deacon Malachi never did hand Doctor Neighbor the check, however. Instead he listened to the plans of the two young enthusiasts.

When Doctor Neighbor came out of the hospital ready to go once more to his Sawtooth clinic, the new car waiting for him at the door was his without a cent of debt. The proud driver was George Macy, but in the back seat flanked on one side by his sister and on the other by Aldah French was the blue-eyed Scot George had once called Deacon Tightwad.

"On the way home we will stop a minute at Pleasant Valley Church," said the deacon. "The doctor will be wanting to see what kind of a job his five hundred dollars did."

"My five hundred dollars!" ejaculated Doctor Neighbor. "Sh—eh!" warned George Macy in low tones. "Don't try to argue with that old patriarch about giving. He'll convince you just as he did me. Believe me, doctor; he's a real deacon!"

A house in Scharmbeck, Germany, was plagued with rats, which raided everything eatable. A large rodent stole a ball of yarn and made off to its hole. A piece remained sticking out and the house-owner proceeded to wind it up. Inch by inch it emerged. Finally a fragment of the wall broke away with it and there was disclosed a rusty tin box, filled to the brim with gold coins.

"Boys and girls never make a mistake about the psychology of their teacher, any more than a horse is deceived about its driver."—Abbe Ernest Dimmet.

THE FARM AND HALLOWEEN—ORIGIN AND LEGENDS

No farm; no Halloween festivities. That is the position, although little thought may be given that the festivities of Halloween and the farm, as the producer of the fruits of the earth, are inseparable. Certainly, the apples and the pumpkin, two farm products, are popularly associated with Halloween, but the farm is also the supply-base of all the necessary essentials of the feast. Even the humble cabbage, apart from its culinary purposes, has a peculiar significance at Halloween, for do not some maddens ally forth in the darkness of the night to the cabbage patch to pick a stem, in order to divine the characteristics of their future husbands? If the stem be tall, or short, or crooked, so shall their future husbands be!

The pumpkin as a Jack-o-lantern in the hands of a frolicsome lad is the improved Canadian edition of the hunched, awed turnip in Europe, and to many a youth in Canada the pumpkin is the symbol of Halloween par excellence, either for food or frolic; but after all the apple is more closely associated with the feast than any other fruit or vegetable. There is a special reason for this. In pagan times, at the festival of Pomona, the goddess of fruit trees nuts and fruits, particularly apples (pomae) played an important part and originated the custom of roasting nuts, apple duckling, and the distribution of apples as gifts at this festive time. The Canadian boys who go from house to house asking for Halloween apples are doing exactly what little boys in other countries did three thousand years ago.

When Adam was appointed to dress the Garden of Eden and to keep it (Genesis 11: 15), the apple was fated to play an overwhelming significance to the whole human race. In this connection, the legend of the Apples of Paradise figured in the lore of ancient Egypt some 3,000 years ago. These apples were said to show in their top-sided shape the outline where Eve had taken a generous bite. In this Egyptian lore, there was mention of other apples, the apples of Ishtar, all sweetness on one side and bitterness on the other. In modern times, in the production of various kinds of apples, Canadian scientists have been and are in the forefront of world research.

In the Christian church, Halloween, or All Hallow's Eve is the name given to the evening of the 31st of October as the vigil of Hallowmas, or All Saints Day. Before the Christian era, however, the eve of the 31st of October was the occasion of harvest and other ceremonies in various countries. The festivities which gradually gathered round the Christian Halloween originated for the most part in countries under the sway of the Druid religion, notably Britain, plus a few indoor celebrations borrowed from the pagan Roman festival to the goddesses of fruit.

The two chief characteristics of ancient Halloween were the lighting of bonfires and the belief that Halloween was the only night of the year in which ghosts, warlocks, witches, imps of the earth and air, and evil spirits were permitted to wander on earth. On the 1st of November the Druids held their great fall festival and lighted fires to the sun-god in thanksgiving for harvest. It was a firm belief in the religion of the Druids that on the eve of this festival, Saman, lord of death, called together the wicked souls that had been condemned within the past twelve months to inhabit the bodies of animals. With regard to this belief it is interesting to note that in parts of Ireland, the 31st of October was, and even still is, known as Oldiche Shamhna, the vigil of Saman; in Scotland, bonfires, otherwise known as ball-fires, still are part of Halloween celebrations, a relic of the worship of Baal. Some cynics declare that the evil spirits of old Druidical times still exist in the shape of thoughtless youths who overstep the mark of pure fun at Halloween and cause injury to persons and damage to property.

While the apple still holds its premier position in Halloween festivities, particularly in Canada, pumpkin pie is also held in high esteem. At the same time

there are other pumpkin delicacies, for example, pumpkin chips and candied pumpkin, in the making of which at Halloween time the following recipes may be found useful:

HONEY PUMPKIN PIE  
1 cup cooked pumpkin  
1/2 cup honey  
1/2 teaspoon ginger  
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1 1/2 cups milk

Press the pumpkin through a fine sieve, add salt, spices and honey. Beat well. Add well-beaten egg; then the milk. Pour into a deep pie plate, lined with pastry and bake at 450 degrees F. for ten minutes; then reduce heat to 325 degrees. Bake until custard is firm. Pumpkin custard is excellent for children and may be served when pie is served to adults. For the custard, use the above recipe, omitting the spices. Bake in custard cups.

PUMPKIN CHIPS  
6 pounds pumpkin  
4 pounds sugar  
5 ounce root ginger  
2 lemons

Cut the pumpkin up, rejecting the centre seeds and hard outside rind. Cut the pulp into small thin chips. Use only the juice and the rind of lemons. Put all together in a granite pot. Bring to a boil and boil slowly for two hours, taking great care to prevent burning. Remove ginger root. Put away in sterilized jars.

CANDIED PUMPKIN  
Peel pumpkin. Remove seeds and cut in pieces one inch square. Weigh and add an equal weight of sugar. Let stand overnight. Drain. To each cup of syrup, allow one teaspoon of vinegar and a small piece of root ginger. Cook until the mixture coats upon the spoon. Add pumpkin and boil until the pumpkin has absorbed almost all the syrup. Drain thoroughly, then spread on plates to dry. When dry, roll in sugar, and pack between layers of waxed paper.

Baked Canadian apples, hot or cold, are always welcome at Halloween parties. Here are three recipes:

BAKED APPLES I  
Wipe, core, and score four Canadian apples. Place them in an agate baking dish and fill centre of apples with sugar and 1 teaspoon lemon juice or sugar and cinnamon, using 1 teaspoon cinnamon to 1 cup sugar. Roll in sugar and pack between layers of waxed paper. Bake in oven for 20 to 45 minutes, basting every 10 minutes. Place apples in a dish and pour the juice over them. When cold they may be served with or without plain or whipped cream.

BAKED APPLES II  
Pare and core good uniform Canadian apples. Put into baking pan. Fill the centre of each apple with sugar and add a bit of butter on the top. Add

enough water to cover the bottom of the pan. Cinnamon or nutmeg may be sprinkled on the top if desired. Bake in hot oven until soft, basting very often with the juice in the pan.

BAKED APPLES III  
Pare and core tart Canadian apples. Fill the cavities with raisins, citron, sugar and lemon peel. Place in baking dish and pour over them 1/2 cup of water. Dust with granulated sugar. Bake in a slow oven until tender. Sprinkle with soft bread crumbs and sugar. Bake ten minutes and serve hot with cream or pudding sauce.

FURTHER IMPROVEMENT IN EMPLOYMENT  
Employment in Canada at the beginning of August showed further improvement, continuing the moderate forward movement that has characterized the industrial situation during the last four months. Statements tabulated by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics from 9,705 firms showed 998,564 persons at work compared with 988,836 at July first. At the first of August a year ago 9,287 firms reported an aggregate payroll of 940,910 persons.

The improvement was quite widely distributed, geographically and industrially. There were gains in each of the five economic areas except Quebec, where a slight decline was indicated. The trend was also upward in all the main industrial groups, except logging and retail trade, both of which reported seasonal losses. Manufacturing, mining, transportation and construction recorded the largest additions to payrolls, while the gains in communications, services and wholesale trade were also considerable.

THE SAID IT  
Tenant: "What would you say if I told you there were mice over a foot long in the cellar?"  
Landlord: "Tats!"

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Common constipation keeps you from being at your best. It causes discomfort, and may lead to headaches and loss of appetite. You feel below par, lack your usual vigor.

So many people treat this condition as a slight matter. But it can be the starting point of serious trouble. It contributes to a general run-down condition. With lowered bodily resistance, you are more likely to pick up the first chance infection you meet in your everyday routine.

Common constipation in due usually to insufficient "bulk" in meals. Fortunately, a delicious cereal supplies gentle "bulk." Within the body, the "bulk" in Kellogg's ALL-BRAN absorbs moisture, forms a soft mass, and cleanses the system.

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HALLOWEEN

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Halloween-Wrapped Lays' Candy Kisses 2 Lbs. 25c
Fry's Breakfast Cocoa 1/2-lb. Tin 19c
Nestle's Evaporated Milk 3 16-oz. Tins 25c
Five Roses FLOUR 7-lb. Bag 33c
Garden Patch PEAS 2 8-oz. Tins 15c
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Sueded Lexia Raisins Pound 16c
Sure Good Choice Pie Pumpkin No. 2 1/2 Tin 9c
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