

THE LIBERAL SHORT STORY

ENLIGHTENMENT

By Granville Fortescue

Her mother's instinct sensed Billy's disappointment even before he spoke:

"Heck, Ma, I've been trailin' up and down Main Street, into every house on Elm, down Forster Avenue; all over and never picked up one new subscription."

He sighed dejectedly. "It looks like I'll not get that bicycle; Gosh, I wish I had a bicycle."

Within her, the mother felt the smouldering ashes of resentment flare.

"And I wish I had a fur coat; never a decent coat, now, for years, never, never—" she threw a pot on the stove while her eyes flicked to the room beyond; she saw the lean hands holding the newspaper hiding her husband from her; they tightened; Billy, she felt, was watching that vexing look, as if making excuses for her to himself; it exasperated her; it was because he didn't know. Now, it was time he did know—she'd tell him—

The boy traipsed into the room beyond, sat down beside his father. For an instant the newspaper lowered, a glance passed between father and son. Seven years! The mother's eyes grew remote while scenes slid past them vivid as montage in a motion picture.

She remembered everything that had happened that particular night as if it were yesterday. Aunt Mary was coming to sit with Billykin while the baby slept so she and Will could go to the motion pictures. Katherine could see the heroine now, Lillian Gish, wearing a mink coat, that covered her from neck to heels, a marvelous fur coat. She had exclaimed:

"Isn't she gorgeous in that coat, Dad? And so pretty."

"You're lots prettier," Will had whispered back and squeezed her hand.

Oddly enough she could remember little else about that picture. But what followed shone even now in her mind as vivid as Neon lights against a black sky.

At first she thought it was another preview. The screen pictured the interior of a motion picture studio; huge camera, bulky sound truck, a man in sport shirt waving a megaphone after the fashion of directors, shouted: "Action! Camera! Roll! Cut! Folks, soon you'll hear those words in this theatre. We want to make a local 'Our Gang' comedy with your boys and girls as the actors. Yes sir, a picture shot in your town, to be shown in this theatre, with local boys and girls as actors."

Katherine had felt her nerves begin dancing. Was her most secret, most cherished wish coming true? How often had that wish surprised her after hours of household toiling, when she watched Billykins playing on the floor? What was the man with the megaphone saying?

"Also this film of your children will be shown in Hollywood before the big producers looking for talent. Here's your chance. Any boy or girl between the ages of three and twelve may register. All will be given a chance to show what they can do. Register after the show in the lobby. Maybe your child has a Motion Picture Personality."

Katherine was squeezing Will's hand with nervous fingers.

"Hey, Kate, what is it?" he asked.

"Oh, Dad, it's — it's his chance," she gasped.

"Who are you talking about?"

"Billykins."

Will had loosened his hand. "You mean —? My kid grow up in pictures in Hollywood! Not while I have my strength!"

Going through the theatre lobby an usher was distributing cards. "Register for the local Our Gang comedy. Register your child for the local comedy," he cried, handing out the cards. Katherine stretched a hand for one. Will seized her arm. He hurried her out the door before she could take it.

The remote eyes glazed while her hands moved automatically about the cooking... Of course she registered him. And the next day the half lit theatre thronged with excited boys

and girls, their mothers or other relatives—when the director spied Billykins, he grinned. Billykins grinned back.

"Joe," the director called to the camera man as Katherine filled out the registration card, "look over this half pint of sweetness right now. He's got something." Her heart throbbed when they stood him under the spotlight. His bright little face lit with an expectant happy smile. "Here's mama, darling," she had whispered, and the smile was radiant. The camera man said: "Turn right—left—face the camera." Billykins twisted his head impishly, burst into a happy laugh. All the watching children laughed gaily in response. "That's fine," the director had said. "How old is your child?" "Three," Katherine said eagerly, and stood back to wait.

It was a long hour until the tests were completed. Her leg muscles started trembling when the director explained tactfully that many lacked screen qualities, those turned down must not feel slighted or hurt; then he read the list of children who passed the camera test.

"William Maury, Junior," Katherine caught Billykins up in her arms, hugged him. "Billy's certainly got what we're looking for, Mrs. Maury. If we can teach him to take direction—" She was smiling through damp eyelashes.

Somehow she skimped the money for rehearsal fees. She told Will nothing.

Some nerve in her mind sent a spark to those thinking eyes, setting them alight as her hands clattered plates on the table... She lived again the days that followed, rehearsing the Our Gang picture. Billykins in blue snout suit before the camera and sound truck. The director patiently teaching him "business," the happy laughter of the other children whenever Billykins came on scene, born of his own happy captivating smile.

"Billy's got it, Missus Maury; the kid's got what it takes, I know."

"Shooting" and "retakes" indoors and out came to an end. Away, each morning working on new construction. Will knew nothing.

The days that followed the director's goodbye, Missus Maury he's got it... then the letter. Heading and typed words were seared across her brain. "Star Comedy Motion Picture Company, Hollywood. Enclosed find... offer... six months... \$200 per week... \$200! The figures still burned in her mind.

The woman stood looking abstractedly down on the stove, the eyes were as hard as the iron they looked upon. The man was pictured in her mind, his lean face scarlet.

"Put my child in moving pictures! I'll not." He clamped his jaws.

"But two hundred dollars — think Dad, two hundred dollars! What that means—"

"Living off my kid's earnings— Me. It's out. I've got a job—"

Hotly she fought for Billykins, held the letter before his eyes. \$200 per week — He seized it, tore the letter. "My child stays here."

All her frantic pleas were vain. He stood there silent, with granite eyes.

"You're wrong, William. Dead wrong, and you're not fair to Billykins. Think what going to Hollywood will mean for Billykins, education, and—"

"I'm taking care of his education," he had said icily. "He's my son, he lives with me, grows up among his own folks, not in—in a place like Hollywood."

Rage filled her when she caught the scorn in his word. "I'm taking Billykins. I'm taking him. It's his chance, my baby's chance. You're crazy! Ask anybody — to throw away two hundred dollars a week — He sneered, eyes still granite hard. "I'm taking him—if we go alone."

"You're not taking my son—"

"I am, I am, I tell you. I am, you can't stop me—"

"Can't I?" he dragged on his hat, walked out the door.

She knew what he'd do—the law. It was useless to fight—

She heard the newspaper rustle in the room beyond; then young Billy's voice—

"Say, Dad, how is it for a bicycle? All the kids—"

Katherine whipped off her apron, pushed up the graying hair above her ears, and marched into the room beyond. She faced her husband with challenging eyes; "I've never mentioned this, not for seven years. I can be as silent as you, William Maury, but now I'm going to tell Billy why he can't have a bicycle, why we're poor, why you're still a construction foreman yet, and what we might have had.

"Thinking only of himself your

father was, wouldn't let you make your name in the movies, wouldn't live on his son's salary, too good for Hollywood. Passed up two hundred dollars that would've bought everything, things I've dreamed of—and now—" she scornfully concluded, "not enough money to buy a bicycle or me a fur coat." The boy was staring, eyes wide in astonishment.

"Is that a fact, ma? Is that a fact, me making a hit in movies when I was a baby—gee! Gee!" he repeated. "Suppose—" she watched a baffled expression cross her son's face. He glanced covertly towards his father. He shuffled his feet uneasily. "Heck, ma, I wouldn't be no Shirley Temple, not even that red-die what's-his-name. Movies are all right for girls, maybe, but — but —" Katherine saw the young face twist with inability to express the thoughts behind it — "Gosh, ma, Dad was right. You don't understand—Dad does. I'm going to build bridges, ain't I Dad?"

The father looked at his son. "You are," he said.

The woman glanced from one to the other, she saw the look of understanding pass between father and son. The boy continued: "I guess it would've been nice, ma, to have the money, but when I'm a real engineer, a big one, I'll make enough money—don't worry—heck, it's okay about the bicycle." He paused, looked sympathetically at his mother. "About that fur coat for you — just you wait—"

The woman turned in silence. Slowly she walked back to the kitchen. One by one she took the platters from the stove and set them and the steaming coffee pot on the table. She knew her husband was sitting silently in the room beyond, expectantly. Her eyes flicked nervously... "that fur coat—"... Now she knew. Always in her mind, every winter since—

"Supper's ready, Willie—" She twisted her tongue. The word came hard after seven years. "Supper's ready, Dad."

She saw his lean grown face come through the door and his eyes were smiling under his iron gray hair. He kissed her.

"Say," he blurted out Billy. "Ma's movie talk got you, Dad, you're stagin' a close-up."

PUBLIC NOTICE

COURT OF REVISION VILLAGE OF RICHMOND HILL

The Court of Revision for the Village of Richmond Hill will hold its First Sitting for the current year on Tuesday, Nov. 1st, 1938, for the purpose of hearing complaints and appeals against the assessment of the said village.

The Court will sit in the Council Chamber on the above date at 7.30 o'clock p.m., and all whom it may concern are requested to govern themselves accordingly.

A. J. HUME, Clerk Richmond Hill, October 5th, 1938.

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TRAGEDY OF THE JEWS

God's two greatest gifts to humanity, Jesus Christ and the Bible, came through the Jews, yet the world has never, and apparently never will, gladly accept members of that race. Like the Messiah whom they refused to recognize they are "despised and rejected of men." The story of the Jews is the great tragedy of the ages.

We of Anglo-Saxon blood living within the British Empire and the United States have been horrified by the cruel persecution of the Jews in Germany. We have recoiled in horror as we have seen them robbed of their possessions by government decree, and forbidden opportunity to make a living in the professions and the market place. We have joined hands with other nations in an effort to find homes for the hundreds of thousands who must leave the land of their birth because they are not of pure German stock. We shudder as we read that Mussolini is preparing to follow in the footsteps of Hitler, and that the children of Jews are to be forbidden an education in Italy if born outside that land. All of the violent extravagances of German anti-Semitism appear likely to be repeated in Italy.

The attempt of the British government to carry out Lord Balfour's promise to make a national home land for the Jews in Palestine has met with disaster. The Arabs will not share the Holy Land with the children of Israel, and British soldier police are having a very difficult job to prevent civil war on a large scale between Arabs and Jews. President Roosevelt's effort to arrange for Jews from Germany to receive asylum in other lands seems doomed to failure unless the Germans will allow the exiles to take along at least a portion of their wealth. No nation can afford to open its doors to hundreds of thousands of paupers, in these days of long relief lists.

Germany is not the first nation to attempt to stamp out the Jews. The Roman Empire had a go at it in the second century. After a Jewish revolt Jerusalem was turned into a Roman colony under the name of Aelia Capitolina, and no Jew was even allowed in the vicinity. The name of Jerusalem was henceforth to be obliterated from the mind of man! Jews were scattered all over the known world and suffered oppression. Again they were persecuted when the Roman Empire adopted Christianity under Constantine, but from 700 to 1100 A.D., sometimes styled the "Golden Age of Judaism," they flourished, particularly in Spain, where they led the world in culture, establishing great centres of learning.

With the beginning of the Crusades to rescue the Holy Land from the Saracen unbelievers came a new outbreak of anti-Semitism. The Jews had always been, as they are today, a separate community dwelling in the land, but not forming part of it, and this isolation led to most extravagant charges being made against them, such as that they slaughtered children for ritual purposes. Wholesale massacres followed in France and Spain, and the Jews surviving were despoiled of their wealth. They were excluded from agriculture and every honorable profession or handicraft.

Jew-baiting became popular in England also. A number of Jews, at the coronation of Richard I in London in 1189 were attacked by a mob, and a report spread that the King had ordered a massacre of all Jews. Many were put to death at York. Finally a decree was passed banning all Jews from England and confiscating their belongings, and before 1630 about 16,000 Jews had left England. Nearly seven hundred years have passed, and the Germans

have learned nothing from the failure of the English persecution.

Only in Italy under the influence of the Popes and in Turkey and Poland was there any toleration in the Middle Ages. Spain turned out 200,000 Jews in 1492, the year of Columbus' discovery of America. They were driven into hiding places all over Europe. Centuries of persecution resulted in the Jews degenerating into social pariahs and petty traders.

As freedom "slowly broadened down from precedent to precedent" in Great Britain the Jews began to take a larger place not only there but throughout Europe. Toleration in a measure succeeded oppression. Disabilities against Jews were gradually removed in England until finally equal rights were granted, and Benjamin Disraeli, one of the greatest of the race, became Prime Minister and a favorite of Queen Victoria. Jews today have all the privileges of citizenship throughout the Empire, and number some of the ablest of our scholars, scientists, writers, musicians and parliamentarians. And so it is in the United States, where the late Justice Brandeis, a Jew, was until recently a member of the Supreme Court.

Despite attempts that have been made by the German government to connect the Jews with Communism it is only necessary to read recent Russian history to discover that the Jews have had little better treatment under the Soviet than in the days of the Czars, when constant programs were directed against them. Trotsky was a Jew, the only one of the seventeen original Bolshevik commissars, but the worst possible crime in Russia today is to be a "Trotskyite." Death is the punishment. Communism is utterly at variance with traditional Jewish individualism, although of course, there are some Jewish Communists, just as Tim Buck, leader of Canadian Communists, is an Englishman. Less than three per cent of the Russian Communist party is Jewish. Not one of the hundred Communist deputies elected to the German Reichstag in 1932 was a Jew.

What is the world to do with the Jews?

Frankly, we do not know. We maintain, however, that the lesson of history is that they cannot be downed, that no matter how much they are persecuted and pillaged, they are sure to "come back." Hitler and Mussolini may succeed in driving them out of Germany and Italy today, but some day they will return and again occupy places of honor and distinction. Gentiles may dispute their claim to be "God's chosen people," but somehow or other they manage to play a big part in the world's affairs.

NOT SO GOOD

Pa—Well, son, how are your marks?

Son—They're under water.

Pa—What do you mean, under water?

Son—Below "C" level.

Reading of a rich man's strange bequests is always depressing. It seems so unfair that we get none of it.

"You look awfully nice!" pleases men more than women, but not because they are vainer. They don't hear it so often.

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HARVEST SERVICES DRAW LARGE CONGREGATIONS

Large congregations filled Christ Church, Woodbridge, last Sunday morning and evening for the annual harvest festival services. Both services were conducted by the rector, Rev. J. H. Kidd, assisted by Mr. Harry Watts, with the Rev. L. A. Dixon, M.A., of Toronto, acting as special speaker in the morning and Bishop Beverley, D.D., occupying the pulpit in the evening.

The church choir of 25 voices, under the direction of Miss Queenie Dumbleton, organist and leader, rendered an appropriate harvest anthem and another selection was sung by the men's section. An abundance of flowers, fruit, vegetables, grain and other crops were attractively used in decorating the church for the occasion. Officials reported a gratifying response to the special thank-offering.

Advertisement for Eastern Steel Products Limited, featuring 'GET FREE ESTIMATE ON YOUR ROOFING' and 'WRITE NOW' with an illustration of a house and roof.

Notice to Creditors

IN THE ESTATE OF FREDERICK W. DANBY, DECEASED.

All persons having claims against the Estate of Frederick W. Danby, late of the Township of York, in the County of York, Retired Farmer, deceased, who died on or about the 1st day of July, 1938 are hereby notified to send in to the undersigned on or before the 20th day of October, 1938 full particulars of their claims. Immediately after the said last mentioned date the assets of the said estate will be distributed amongst the parties entitled thereto having regard only to the claims of which the undersigned shall then have notice.

Dated at Toronto, this 21st day of September, A.D. 1938.

WILLIAM RIDDELL, Executor. By his solicitors, McMaster, Montgomery, Fleury & Co. 902 Temple Building, Toronto, Ont.

Advertisement for Real Estate Insurance, Conveyancing, Estates Managed, Rents Collected, J. R. HERRINGTON, 93 Yonge St. Richmond Hill, C.N.R. Money Order Office.

Treasurer's Sale of Land for Taxes in the Township of Vaughan, County of York.

BY VIRTUE OF A WARRANT issued by the Reeve, under the Corporate Seal of the Township of Vaughan, to me directed, bearing the date of the 4th day of July, commanding me to levy upon the lands mentioned below, the arrears of taxes due thereon, with costs, I hereby give notice that unless such arrears and all costs thereon, are sooner paid, I shall proceed to sell lands, or so much as may be necessary for payment of taxes and costs thereon, at the Township Hall, Vellore, in the Township of Vaughan on Wednesday, the 9th day of November, 1938, beginning at the hour of 10 o'clock A.M., Standard Time, in compliance with the Assessment Act.

JAMES M. McDONALD, TOWNSHIP TREASURER.

Table with columns: Parcel No., NAME and ADDRESS, Township Lot, Sub-Lot, Plan, Con., Acres, Taxes, Costs, Total. Lists 15 parcels for sale.

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