

Folks Back Home

Sketches by J. H. Striebel

By Robert Quillen



Uncle Gus.
Uncle Gus removed his glasses, placed them in the book he had been reading, and began to fill his blackened corn-cob pipe.

"When I fust set up house-keepin'," said he, "I bought a set o' hickory chairs from big Bill Telford that owned that plantation down on the forks o' the river. They was a danged good chairs, an' my boy John's wife has got some o' 'em right now. Bill took a slight o' pains with his chairs, an' folks come from miles to buy 'em. But it wasn't long till Bill got kind o' behind with his orders an' went to doin' shoddy work to ketch up, an' the chair business didn't last long.

"This book I been readin' reminds me o' Bill. The author wrote a mighty fine story here last spring an' his name got in the paper's right frequent. I notice the critics said he was a genius an' like as not he'd git better an' better. But he's like Bill was. The editors an' publishers keeps after him, I reckon, fo' mo' stuff, an' he's spreadin' it mighty thin. I wouldn't be surprised if he's gittin' rich, but it won't last.

"You can milk a cow seven times a day, but you got to put a lot o' water with it if you expect to make a showin' ever' time."

Competition.
When the two Howard boys were in high school everybody agreed that Richard, the younger, would amount to something. Tom wasn't dull, but he was slow and bashful and quiet.

Aunt Het.
"I may be old-fashioned, but it's my notion that it was easier for married folks to be square when they danced the old-fashioned square dances."

and gave little promise of setting the woods afire. Richard was quick-witted and given to clever remarks, and his mind worked like a steel trap. Moreover, he worked hard and asked no favors in spite of his popularity.

Both boys went off to college, working during vacation periods to pay their way, and both found jobs with clothing merchants when the college course was finished. Tom got a job here at home, and Richard went to the country seat, where the outlook was brighter.

That was fifteen years ago. Now

Tom owns the "Haberdashery" and the brick building that houses the business, and has an eight-room bungalow out on Fairview street.

Richard hasn't done so well. He pays \$60 a month for the privilege of living on a good street in the county seat, and his present salary is \$250 a month. People say his superiority was only superficial, but that wasn't the trouble. He found a broader outlook, but he found a keener competition along with it.

Hints to the Boss.

You have perhaps, made efforts to

The Girl Across the Street.



The girl across the street came in as we were finishing breakfast this morning and entertained us with comment on the art of holding hands.

"I had a perfectly beastly time at the party last night," said she. "Hiram was sick and couldn't go, and I was paired with that smart-Aleck Howard boy and he had been drinking something. I thought his breath smelled funny, and I noticed he told the same story three times, but I wasn't sure until he tried to hold my hand. He just reached out boldly and took it right where I could see it, just like picking up a book or something, and I know he was drunk. "That bashful little Wilkins boy grabbed my hand that way one time, but he did it because he was scared and had to act quick before his nerve failed. "There's only one right way to

hold a girl's hand, and I'll always love Hiram for the way he did it the first time. He waited till my hand was where I wasn't looking at it and then he took it right easy, talking all the time as though he didn't know he was doing it. I think it's so much more romantic to be a little bit sneakin' about it."

Good Night Stories

By Blanche Silver

Dotty Learns Something New About Mrs. Moth.

My! but Dotty was excited when she saw the dear little bead-like bracelet hanging around a branch on the plum tree!

"I'll bet anything it's some fairy's, and she washed it out and hung it up to dry," Dotty mused. "Maybe she's lost it and is wondering where it is." "One more guess, then you're through," laughed a merry voice, and Happy Giggles, the little elfin from Makebelieve Land, hopped down from the plum tree on the grass beside Dotty. "No, Dot, you've another guess," he chuckled. "But I'll have to admit from down here they do resemble beads, but they're not."

"Then what in the world are they?" laughed Dotty. "I didn't see anything like that hanging in the plum tree yesterday."

"Certainly not," spoke up a third voice, and a pretty yellowish-brown-winged creature flew out beside the row of beads. "Certainly they weren't here yesterday. But what difference does it make? Please don't tear them down." And her pretty wings trembled until the leaves on the plum tree shook.

"My goodness!" laughed Dotty. "I wouldn't harm them for the world. They looked so much like fairy beads I just thought that's what they were. I never dreamed of them being butterfly's eggs."

"They're not butterfly's eggs, neither," laughed the yellow-winged creature. "They belong to me, and I'm a moth—Mrs. Moth, if you please, Mrs. Butterfly's cousin." "Well, I'm glad to see and know you, Mrs. Moth," said Dotty, trying not to laugh. "And pray tell me what will your children look like when they hatch out? Will they still live in that circle until they're grown?" "I'd suggest you ask one question at a time," laughed Happy Giggles. "It's rather confusing to Mrs. Moth." "Don't you believe it," laughed Mrs. Moth gayly. "The more the merrier. It does me good to have little folks interested enough in me

train a dog, scold and kick him, and he will look bewildered and seem a fool; pat him on the head, and he will do his darndest.

And you have helped little Bill with his arithmetic. Be patient with him and keep him in good heart and he will muddle through; scold him and his face will darken with sullen despair while his mind slips over to the idle pulley.

Now about that employee who rasps your nerves at intervals. He isn't faultless, else he would have a better job. His mind doesn't function as smoothly as yours, else your job wouldn't be safe. But unless your ragging has made him sullen, he is making honest effort to deliver the service he is paid for.

Now one man in a thousand may do better work when you make him mad; and one in a hundred may be scared by ragging and improve his output to hold his job; but the average man is trying hard to deliver the goods, and he will try the harder for a little commendation.

When every man on the job seems a fool and a loafer, it isn't a new force that is needed. The boss needs something for his nerves.

Willie Willis.
Little Willie Willis has tasted the sweets of fame. Rather than take a dare, he jumped from the roof of the hardware store to a sandpile in the alley, and now even the ninth-grade boys call him "Bill."

to ask questions, for I'm sorry to have to tell you that grown-folks don't like my children, and when they see their cradles hanging in the trees they burn them up."

"What, burn up your children?" Dotty fairly gasped.

"Certainly they do," replied Mrs. Moth. "You see, when they hatch out from those eggs they are only tiny little caterpillars, and don't



"The More the Merrier."

know very much. So they go to work at once and build a little silk bag large enough to hold them all. Then when they are about half-grown they each one bite a hole in their tent house and travel off, each in the direction he pleases, and then build a single tent house for himself—a thin, clear cocoon, and powder it all over with yellow dust. When he comes out of that cocoon he'll look just like I do. But folks don't like to see those wobby tents in the trees, and burn them out. I was in hopes when these children hatch out they'd move over in that deserted orchard so folks wouldn't bother them."

"I'll tell them myself," laughed Dotty, and she waved good-by to the pretty Moth Mother and ran into the house to tell her mama what she had just heard.

Seven Sentence Sermon.

It is not enough that we "sit together in heavenly places," we must stand together in unheavenly places. —Charles M. Lamson.

Spend not where you may save; spare not where you must spend. —Anon.

Where'er a noble deed is wrought, Where'er is spoken a noble thought, Our hearts in glad surprise To higher levels rise. —Longfellow.

Discretion of speech is more than eloquence; and to speak agreeably to him with whom we deal is more than to speak in good words or in good order. —Bacon.

In nothing be anxious, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. —Paul.

Thrice blest is he to whom is given The instinct that can tell That God is in the field, when He Is most invisible. —Faber.

Self-conquest is not an easy or a pleasant task, but it must be undertaken in downright earnest; and

there is a rich reward for those who do overcome, which is exactly proportioned to the extent in which they overcome. —H. H. Sharman.

True Enough.
Johnson was tired of the noisy city where he worked, and when his holiday came around he plunged into the heart of the country and tried to forget newspapers and telegrams and clocks.

It happened that he wanted to know the time, and meeting the country postman, he stopped him and asked him what time it was.

"Four o'clock in the afternoon by the railway time, sir."

"By railway time!" ejaculated the young man. "I should have thought you country folk would have taken your time from the sun."

"Why?" asked the postman. "Beatin' we much closer to the railway?"

though (to reassure the audience) of course you've never seen me before, have you, my fine little fellow?" "No papa," piped the little boy.

His Indigestion.
A certain minister was scheduled to preach at an out-of-town church, and was to be met on the arrival of the train.

His would-be host missed him at

the station, and on a venture went up to a stranger who was standing on the platform, saying, "Excuse me, sir, but are you a minister?"

The stranger looked at him sadly, and replied, "Oh no; it's my confounded indigestion that makes me look like this."

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