

The Story of Waitstill Baxter

[Continued from page 6, Col. 3]

"No, you must go back to the house at once, Patty, dear. Father might wake and call you and that would make matters worse. It's beginning to drizzle or I should stay out in the air. Oh, I wonder if father's mind is going and if this is the beginning of the end! If he is in his sober senses he could not be so strange, so suspicious, so unjust."

"He could be anything, say anything, do anything!" exclaimed Patty. "Perhaps he is not responsible and perhaps he is; it doesn't make much difference to us. Come along, blessed darling! I'll tuck you in and then I'll creep back to the house if you say I must. I'll go down and make the kitchen fire in the morning; you stay out here and see what happens. A good deal will happen, I'm thinking, if father speaks to me of you! I shouldn't be surprised to see the fur flying in all directions. I'll seize the first moment to bring you out a cup of coffee and we'll consult about what to do. I may tell you now I'm all for running away!"

Waitstill's first burst of wretchedness had subsided and she had recovered her balance. "I'm afraid we must wait a little longer, Patty," she advised. "Don't mention my name to father, but see how he acts in the morning. He was so wild, so unlike himself, that I almost hope he may forget what he said and sleep it off. Yes, we must just wait."

"No doubt he'll be far calmer in the morning if he remembers that, if he turns you out, he faces the prospect of three meals a day cooked by me," said Patty. "That's what he thinks he would face; but, as a matter of fact, I shall tell him that where you sleep I sleep, and where you eat I eat, and when you stop cooking I stop! He won't part with two unpaid servants in a hurry, not at the beginning of haying." And Patty, giving Waitstill a last hug and a dozen tearful kisses, stole reluctantly back to the house by the same route through which she had left it.

Patty was right. She found the fire lighted when she went down into the kitchen next morning, and without a word she hurried breakfast on to the table as fast as she could cook and serve it. Waitstill was safe in the barn chamber, she knew, and would be there quietly while her father was feeding the horse and milking the cows, or perhaps she might go up in the woods and wait until she saw him driving away.

The deacon ate his breakfast in silence, looking and acting very much as usual, for he was generally dumb at meals. When he left the house, however, and climbed into the wagon, he turned around and said in his ordinary gruff manner: "Bring the lunch up to the field yourself today, Patience. Tell your sister I hope she's come to her senses in the course of the night. You've got to learn, both of you, that my 'say so' must be law in this house. You can fuss and you can fume if it amuses you any, but 'twon't do no good. Don't encourage Waitstill in any whinin' or blubberin'. Jest tell her to come in and go to work and I'll overlook what she done this time. And don't you give me any more of your eye snappin' and lip poutin' and head in the air impudence! You're under age, and if you don't look out you'll get somethin' that's good for what ails you! You two girls jest aid an' abet one another—that's what you do, aid and abet one another—an' if you carry it any further I'll find some way o' separatin' you, do you hear?"

Patty spoke never a word nor fluttered an eyelash. She had a proper spirit, but now her heart was cold with a new fear, and she felt, with Waitstill, that her father must be obeyed and his temper kept within bounds until God provided them a way of escape.

She ran out to the barn chamber and, not finding Waitstill, looked across the field and saw her coming through the path from the woods. Patty waved her hand and ran to meet her sister, joy at the mere fact of her existence, of being able to see her again and of hearing her dear voice almost choking her in its intensity. When they reached the house she helped her upstairs as if she were a child, brought her cool water to wash away the dust of the haymow, laid out some clean clothes for her and finally put her on the lounge in the darkened sitting room.

"I won't let anybody come near the house," she said, "and you must have a cup of tea and a good sleep before I tell you all that father said. Just comfort yourself with the thought that he is going to overlook it this time. After I carry up his luncheon I shall stop at the store and ask Cephas to come out on the river bank for a few minutes. Then I shall proceed to say what I think of him for telling father where you went yesterday afternoon."

"Don't blame Cephas!" Waitstill remonstrated. "Can't you see just how it happened? He and Uncle Bart were sitting in front of the shop when I drove by. When father came home and found the house empty and the horse not in the stall, of course he asked where I was, and Cephas probably said he had seen me drive up Saco hill. He had no reason to think that there was any harm in that."

"If he had any sense he might know that he shouldn't tell anything to father except what happens in the store," Patty insisted. "Were you frightened out in the barn alone last night, poor dear?"

"I was too unhappy to think of fear, and I was chiefly nervous about you, all alone in the house with father."

"I didn't like it very much myself. I buttoned my bedroom door and sat by the window all night, shivering and bristling at the least sound. Everybody calls me a coward, but I'm not. Courage isn't not being frightened. It's not screaming when you are frightened. Now, what happened at the Boyntons?"

"Patty, Ivory's mother is the most pathetic creature I ever saw." And Waitstill sat up on the sofa, her long braids of hair hanging over her shoulders, her pale face showing her traces of her heavy weeping. "I never pitied any one so much in my whole life. To go up that long, long lane; to come upon that dreary house hidden away in the trees; to feel the loneliness and the silence and then to know that she is living there like a hermit thrush in a forest without a woman to care for her it is heart breaking!"

"How does the house look—dreary?" "No. Everything is as neat as wax. She isn't crazy, Patty, as we understand the word. Her mind is beclouded somehow, and it almost seems as if the cloud might lift at any moment. She goes about like somebody in a dream, sewing or knitting or cooking. It is only when she talks, and you notice that her eyes really see nothing, but are looking beyond you, that you know there is anything wrong."

"If she appears so like other people, why don't the neighbors go to see her once in awhile?"

"Callers make her unhappy, she says, and Ivory told me that he dared not encourage any company in the house for fear of exciting her and making her an object of gossip besides. He knows her ways perfectly and that she is safe and content with her fancies when she is alone, which is seldom, after all."

"What does she talk about?" asked Patty.

"Her husband mostly. She is expecting him to come back daily. We knew that before, of course, but no one can realize it till they see her setting the table for him and putting a saucer of wild strawberries by his plate, going about the kitchen softly, like a gentle ghost."

"It gives me the shudders!" said Patty. "I couldn't bear it. If she never sees strangers, what in the world did she make of you? How did you begin?"

"I told her I had known Ivory ever since we were school children. She was rather strange and indifferent at first and then she seemed to take a fancy to me."

"That's queer!" said Patty, smiling fondly and giving Waitstill's hair the hasty brush of a kiss.

"She told me she had a girl baby, born two or three years after Ivory, and that she had always thought it died when it was a few weeks old. Then suddenly she came closer to me."

"Oh, Wait, weren't you terrified?" "No, not in the least. Neither would you have been if you had been there. She put her arms round me and all at once I understood that the poor thing mistook me just for a moment for her own daughter come back to life. It was a sudden fancy, and I don't think it lasted, but I didn't know how to deal with it or contradict it, so I simply tried to soothe her and let her ease her heart by talking to me. She said when I left her: 'Where is your house? I hope it is near! Do come again and sit with me. Strength flows into my weakness when you hold my hand! I somehow feel, Patty, that she needs a woman friend even more than a doctor. And now, what am I to do? How can I forsake her, and yet here is this new difficulty with father?'"

[Continued next week.]

The beautiful water lily roots in the mud below the stream. All the fragrance and fairness of the flower are affected as the root is affected. If the root is injured the flower droops and its whiteness is marred by blot and blemish. A woman's beauty is intimately related to the health of the delicate female organs. No woman who suffers constantly from female weakness can retain her good looks. One of the facts noted by women who have been cured of diseases of the delicate womanly organs by Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription, is the return of the color to the cheek and the brightness to the eye when the cure has been completed. "Favorite Prescription" has been well named by women who have been healed by its use. "A God-send to women." It dries debilitating drains, removes inflammation, ulceration and female weakness, and re-establishes the ailing woman in sound health. Sick women are invited to consult Dr. Pierce, by letter, free. All correspondence private. Address Dr. V. M. Pierce, Buffalo, N. Y.

Pessimistic Judge. Counsel in a case before Mr. Justice Darling at the Old Bailey, London, England, wanted a shorthand note of a statement which was being made. His lordship replied that the note was being taken; he could see the shorthand writer at work. Counsel said the judge had noticed what he had not. Mr. Justice Darling: "There are some advantages of being on the bench; there are not many."

Benjamin Franklin on War. Benjamin Franklin said in 1783: All wars are follies, very expensive and very mischievous ones. In my opinion there never was a good war or a bad peace. When will mankind be convinced and agree to settle their troubles by arbitration?

Always Enough. "Supply governs demand," quotes the Wise Guy. "Yes," agreed the Simple Mug, "in spite of the fact that so many people want to borrow trouble there is always enough to go around."

The Pass of Thermopylae

By HERBERT KAUFMAN

Author of "Do Something! Be Something!"

XERXES once led a million soldiers out of Persia in an effort to capture Greece, but his invasion failed utterly, because a Spartan captain had entrenched a hundred men in a narrow mountain pass, which controlled the road into Lacedaemon. The man who was first on the ground had the advantage. Advertising is full of opportunities for men who are first on the ground.

There are hundreds of advertising passes waiting for some one to occupy them. The first man who realizes that his line will be helped by publicity, has a tremendous opportunity. He can gain an advantage over his competitors that they can never possess. Those who follow him must spend more money to equal his returns. They must not only invest as much, to get as much, but they must as well, spend an extra sum to counteract the influence that he has already established in the community.

Whatever men sell, whether it is actual merchandise or brain vibrations, can be more easily sold with the aid of advertising. Not one half of the businesses which should be exploited are appearing in the newspapers. Trade grows as reputation grows and advertising spreads reputation.

If you are engaged in a line which is waiting for an advertising pioneer, realize what a wonderful chance you have of being the first of your kind to appeal directly to the public. You stand a better chance of leadership than those who have handicapped their strength, by permitting you to get on the ground before they could outstrip you. You gain a prestige that those who follow you, must spend more money to counteract.

If your particular line is similar to some other trade or business which has already been introduced to the reading public, it's up to you to start in right now and join your competitors in contesting for the attention of the community. The longer you delay the more you decrease your chances of surviving. Every man who outstrips you is another opponent, who must be met and grappled with, for the right of way.

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Eastern National Forests.

In the White mountains the latest surveys show 138,572 acres that now belong to the government. They cover the northern slopes of the Presidential range, the eastern slopes of the Carter-Moriah group, and a portion of the northern slopes of the Franconia mountains. In the South, where more extensive purchases are made, reports for June, 1914, show 916,000 acres. These include, says an account in the *American Review of Reviews*, portions of the high mountains in North Carolina surrounding Mt. Mitchell, "the great black dome," which is the highest point between the Rockies and the Alps, the North Pole and the Andes. Large forest tracts have been taken in the rocky uplands of western Tennessee, and in the National Bridge country of Virginia, but not including the bridge itself. These southern mountains include the headwaters, not only of the Tennessee river and other important tributaries of the Ohio, but also the Catawba, the Yadkin and many mountain streams that feed the long navigable rivers. The latest purchase at the South comprises the famous Pisgah forest, near Asheville, N. C., 86,000 acres, long held in charge of a trained forester by George W. Vanderbilt. This does not include 5000 acres surrounding the mansion at Blount. More than 1,000,000 acres have now been made a part of the Eastern national forests.

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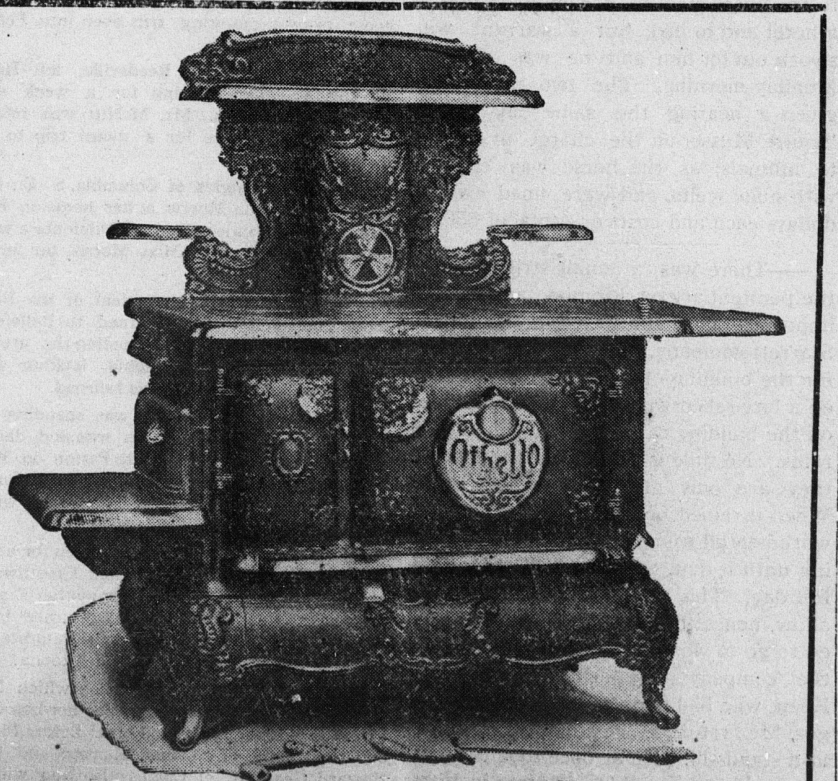
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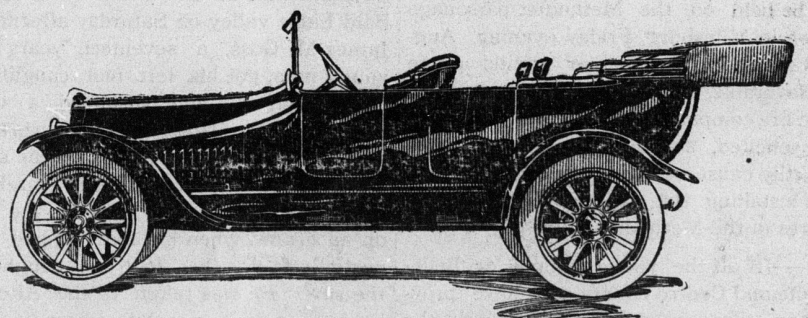
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