

How Amy Was Saved

By Florence B. Hallowel

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"There! read that," cried Amy Fitzhugh, as she burst into the room where her sister Gertrude sat sewing, and threw a letter into her lap. "If that doesn't turn your hair white nothing but old age will do it."

Gertrude looked meditatively at the open letter lying upon the sheet she was hemming. It was addressed to her sister and was written in a large, slanting hand on the thickest of parchment note-paper, which exhaled an odor of hellebore. The writer was Mrs. De Councey Barristow, the president of the Humane Society, and she informed Miss Fitzhugh that all arrangements having been completed for the art loan exhibition, for the benefit of society, she ventured to ask from them the loan of two or three family heirlooms, feeling that they must have many treasured relics of by-gone generations which could not fall to be of interest to the general public. She promised that everything entrusted to her care should be carefully guarded and returned intact at the close of the exhibition.

"I don't see that there is anything to be done except to tell her frankly that we have nothing to lend," said Gertrude calmly.

"Yes; and have her look completely overwhelmed with surprise; beg my pardon, and say she is so sorry, and that she wouldn't have asked me for the world, if she dreamed for a single moment that we could not comply with the request. Oh, I know her! I know her only too well.

"If I could only beg, borrow, or—Gertrude!" Amy sprang up suddenly from the old lounge on which she had thrown herself. "I have it! That box belonging to our revered great-aunt! In that—"

"Oh, Amy, you wouldn't, you couldn't open that."

"Yes; I would and I could—under these desperate circumstances. Where would be the harm? Aunt Reliance is in California and would never be any the wiser, and there is no end of old china in that box. I'll get the hatchet and open it now. Glorious thought!"

Gertrude looked grave. Her old great-aunt, Reliance, was so exacting, and so imperious, that all her relatives stood in awe of her. The previous fall, on going to California to spend the winter, she had sent a large box to Miss Jane, with the request that it should be stored until her return. Incidentally, she mentioned in the accompanying letter that the box contained the superb antique vase which had been left to her by a maternal uncle, and the white and yellow flowered teapot which had belonged to her grandmother Fitzhugh. Amy, who had once paid a visit to Miss Reliance, recollected both heirlooms perfectly, and had described them minutely to Gertrude.

"Suppose the things should be broken?" said Gertrude.

"We won't suppose anything so unlikely," rejoined Amy, who was in high spirits, now that she had solved her perplexing problem.

Amy received a most effusive letter from Mrs. Barristow, in which she asserted that she could never be sufficiently grateful for the privilege of exhibiting heirlooms so beautiful and so rare, and would hold herself responsible for their safety.

The Art Loan Exhibition—thanks to the tireless energy of the efficient president of the Humane Society—was a pronounced success. People were pleased at the idea of exhibiting their family relics, and of having an opportunity to air their pride of birth; and those who did not contribute came to criticize, admire and gossip.

Amy and Gertrude arrived a little late, and after a ramble around the room stationed themselves near the table on which the fat teapot and the top-heavy vase had a conspicuous place. Upon each was a card bearing the words: "Loaned by Miss Fitzhugh." And Amy felt a momentary pride as she called Gertrude's attention to them.

While they were standing there, Mrs. Barristow came rushing up to them, her face radiant.

"Here you are, mounting guard over your beloved treasures, I see," she cried, in her most cordial voice. "How can I ever thank you sufficiently, my dears, for lending them? That teapot is just too sweet for anything, and the vase is a perfect love! They have been so much admired! I assure you, my dears, nothing in the whole exhibition has attracted—"

"Look out! Look out there!" cried a loud voice, and a man came rushing toward them, waving his arms frantically.

Amy looked around, then up—just in time to see a large oil portrait, which hung above the table by which they were standing, plunge forward.

The next instant there was an awful crash, the sound of which rang in her ears for many a day, and the portrait lay in the middle of the table, among those hallowed relics of the past.

For a few moments she was too much dazed to realize exactly what had happened; then she became conscious that people were uttering exclamations of dismay and regret, and

she felt Gertrude's hand on her arm. "The teapot is in 50 pieces," Gertrude whispered, "and the vase is utterly demolished. Come away."

They made their escape from the hall, somehow, and hurried home. Amy did not utter a word until they reached their own doorstep. Then she burst out suddenly into something very like a groan.

"My pride! my wretched pride!" she said. "Gertrude, I am well punished."

The morning's mail brought a graceful little scented note from Mrs. De Councey Barristow, saying that her mortification and sorrow over the accident which had occurred was so great that she did not feel equal just yet to a personal interview with her dear Miss Fitzhugh.

Amy looked gloomily out of the window.

"The vase and the teapot were the only things broken, except a hideous jug and a decorated cup and saucer," Gertrude continued. "It seems like



The Next Instant There Was an Awful Crash.

the irony of fate. Amy, you'll have to write to Aunt Reliance."

"What am I to write her? How can I excuse my folly?"

At last an idea dawned upon Amy, after a fortnight of anxious thought. She wrote to Aunt Reliance, asking if she would sell the vase and teapot.

The answer came two weeks later, while they were all at breakfast.

Gertrude hastened to read the important document aloud. Aunt Reliance, while expressing appreciation of Amy's very natural desire to possess the teapot and vase, positively refused to sell them; she would, she said, as soon think of selling her grandfather's bones, and wondered that Amy could have thought her so lacking in respect for her ancestors. She announced, in conclusion, that having found the climate of California beneficial to her health, she had decided to remain there permanently, and would soon send for the box they had so kindly stored for her.

What Amy suffered mentally during the next six weeks is best left to the imagination.

She lost her appetite, grew pale and thin, and was so despondent and irritable, that Gertrude became anxious about her.

"This vase-teapot trouble must come to an end," Gertrude said, one morning, as she sat sewing in the sitting room, and glanced up to see Amy gazing idly from the window. "If you don't write to Aunt Reliance, I will. She must know it anyhow, when we send the box, and what is the use of waiting?"

"There's the carrier now," said Amy, listlessly, and walked slowly out into the hall, closing the door after her.

Five minutes passed, and she had not returned. Gertrude, growing anxious, put down her sewing, and went out into the hall, half-expecting to see her sister in a swoon on the floor.

"But Amy was standing by the hat rack, her eyes shining and a flush on her cheeks.

"Saved! Saved by a miracle!" she cried, as she waved a letter above her head. "Read this, Gertrude, and—"

"Tell me," interrupted Gertrude, impatiently.

"Well, our blessed great-aunt wants her box sent at once, and says she makes me a present of the vase and teapot as a return for my trouble in sending it, and she hopes that my admiration for these precious heirlooms is sufficiently great to cause me to preserve them with sacred care and hand them down to future generations."

"It seems to good to be true!" cried Gertrude, sinking down upon one of the hall chairs.

"Doesn't it! And now listen to me—never, never as long as you live say family heirlooms to me again. This Fitzhugh has had enough of them," and then—girl-like—Amy burst into tears.

NOT ALL A DESERT

WORLD LEARNING TRUTH ABOUT THE SAHARA.

Water More Plentiful Than the Natives Will Admit—Explorer Found Many Lakes in One Part of the Country.

Propheying that the Sahara sand ocean will in time, be completely changed into a fruitful territory, the journal of the Berlin Geological society, according to another German contemporary, goes on to say:

The Sahara rivers all hide a rich subterranean stratum of water, and form the natural passage of the Sudan, on which, with very little trouble, vegetation can be largely developed. In the south of Temassinim and in the Igharghars there are groves of tamarinds, gum trees, etc., two miles in length, scarcely separated by grassy and clover-covered plains. The rivers, which in spring are full of water, are from three to ten miles wide. When the water retreats the beds of the rivers are changed into rich meadows.

The date seed planted by travelers at El Biod have grown without the least care into fine trees, and the same is true for the seeds planted near the cisterns of Tebabbalel, in spite of the inconsiderate manner in which the Tuarges get in the harvest. Trees are not so rare in the Sahara as is supposed. Natives will deceive travelers about the scarcity of water, when the truth is the wells are hidden, and the Tuarges, who serve as guides to caravans, always choose the most difficult and desolate routes, in order to keep the caravans in a state of dependency.

Caravans become more frequent; travelers succeed each other; but the secret of the Sahara is well kept and its reputation of barrenness is well preserved. For example, Oscar Lens crossed the Sahara and reached Timbuctoo without seeing anything but desert land, and yet he mentions that behind a chain of hills which he passed there was a place called by the natives "The Head of the Waters." Dr. Barth, who was for four months in Tuargy camps and was the guest and friend of Shiek el Babey, was told innumerable facts about the traditions and manners of the land, but its geography was hidden from him. When he explored the region of an arm of the Niger he found a lake nearly 100 miles long, and when he extended his excursions he found not only one but 20 lakes, all very large, and stretched far to the north into the very heart of the Sahara.

It is asked, if there be no water, and therefore no vegetation, where does the charcoal come from which is sold by the Tuarges? Where do they find nourishment for the numerous camels, sheep, horses, asses and goats they possess?

Those Educated Jokes.

The gentle dissipation in which college men are supposed to indulge furnish many a would-be joker with a theme. "Drunk" jokes became so numerous that only recently the edict went forth from the Harvard Lampoon sanctum that they must be veritable masterpieces of humor to receive any consideration from a bored editorial staff. Poker, too, comes to the tolling candidate's aid, and inspired this classic epitaph on a pictured tombstone:

Here Lies the Body of Mary McFord; She raised five and was called by the Lord.

Smoking is not only a favorite pastime but a favorite theme. "My gracious, little boy," says the good old lady to the puffing mucker, "do you smoke cigars?" "No use hintin', lady," replies the clever one, "de butt's promised." This view of woman's smoking is taken:

Helen—Do you think a lady would smoke a cigarette?
Mae—Not if it's the only one a gentleman has.—K. B. Townsend in the Bohemian.

Always Man of Determination.

Herr Dernberg of the German colonial office in the early days of his career served an apprenticeship with a New York banking house and at that time made many acquaintances in Wall street. It is said of him that he was one of only two or three out of an office force of 50 who reported for duty the day of the great blizzard 19 years ago. This was suggestive of the determination which helped him much in his later life on advancing him to his present position, to which he was named by the German emperor for the purpose of reducing to order the chaos which had existed in the administration of the German colonies.

Not in His Line.

"Who discovered steam?" asked the man who is always looking for information.

"Don't know," answered the man who is abnormally chilly, "but I am willing to bet it was not the janitor in our apartment house."—Washington Star.

At the Dinner Table.

Guest—Why does Huber never say anything?

Neighbor—Because his wife always declares that two people should not speak at once.

A La Card.

Miss De Style—How did that "club" sandwich I made taste?
Miss Gumbusta (sarcastically)—Like the "defce."

SURPRISE FOR ALL CONCERNED.

Convivial Russian Party Broke Up in Some Disorder.

As all the world knows, queer things happen in the land of the czar. There are a grand duke and a grand duchess in St. Petersburg who do not refer in private conversation to an incident in which they both figured. A theatrical company arrived in the Russian capital from Berlin. The leading lady was pretty and the tenor was an Adonis. The grand duke and the grand duchess enjoyed the first performance very much indeed. The next afternoon the grand duke had an engagement and went alone to a first-class cafe in the city, where he was joined by the leading lady he had seen the night before. The cafe is so arranged that it has a number of small rooms facing a central hall, at the top of which a band discourses sweet music. The grand duke found the actress beautiful, but lacking in wit. He was having a stupid time and envied the occupants of the next room, who were shrieking with merriment.

"I know what we'll do," his highness finally said to his companion. "Let's go into the next room. A party of four ought to be congenial."

"But they may object," the actress suggested.

"Oh, no, they won't. I am the grand duke."

The couple walked into the next room.

Tableau.

To the horror of the grand duke, there was the grand duchess sitting at a table with the tenor of the company to which the actress belonged. The tenor looked at the actress with as much amazement as the grand duke and grand duchess did at each other. Shouting at the grand duke that he had insulted his wife (for this was the relation he had with the woman) he rushed at him, and for a few minutes there was a great mixup in the little room. The attendants hurried to the scene and separated the combatants. The tenor drove away with his wife and the grand duke took the grand duchess to their palace.

The next day the theatrical company lacked two of its principals. The tenor and his wife had been given passports early in the morning and escorted to the train by the police.

"Never Let It Occur Again."

A young Chicago matron was much annoyed one morning at the nonmaterialization of her milkman in time to furnish the cream for breakfast. When he finally did appear about ten o'clock, she took it upon herself to deliver the deserved lecture, for had not the young husband shown displeasure at drinking coffee sans cream and did not that fact alone brand the milkman too great a culprit to be reproved merely by a maid?

The young wife is quite deaf, and with confining sounds of traffic in the street and her baby daughter's crying within, she could not hear the defense of the sinful purveyor of pure milk, but she thought he looked penitent, even sad, and so ended her stern tirade with a magnanimous:

"Well, see that you never let it occur again."

After he had left she said to the cook:

"What did he say, Mary?"

"He said his horse dropped dead, mum," answered Mary.

And she had wisely admonished him "never to let it occur again."

Tidbits for Their Sunday Dinner.

"Every little while," said the manager of a dogs' boarding house, "the owners of these animals prefer a request that seems utterly absurd. The strangest of all was made by a woman who came to secure accommodation for two of her pets.

"What do you feed your boarders on Sunday?" she asked.

"The regulation fare," I told her.

"Oh," she said, "that won't do for my dogs. They have been used to something extra for Sunday dinner, and if there was a change in their fare for the worse, now that they have gone to boarding, I am sure that they would suffer. Kindly see that they have a good Sunday dinner. I am willing to pay extra for it, if necessary."

"In consideration of that extra remuneration clause I promised to provide some fancy dishes for the two dogs on the Sabbath day. I am quite sure the dainties won't agree with the little beasts, but the contract calls for tidbits, and tidbits I'll provide if it kills them."

An Enterprising Editor.

"The editor is a philosopher, and so enterprising!"

"He is?"

"You bet! Why, while his office was being consumed by fire, he caught the hot lead from the melting type, molded it into buckshot, and went gunning for delinquent subscribers!"

Watery.

"Looks like rain to-day," said the milkman, as he poured the customary quart from the can to the pitcher.

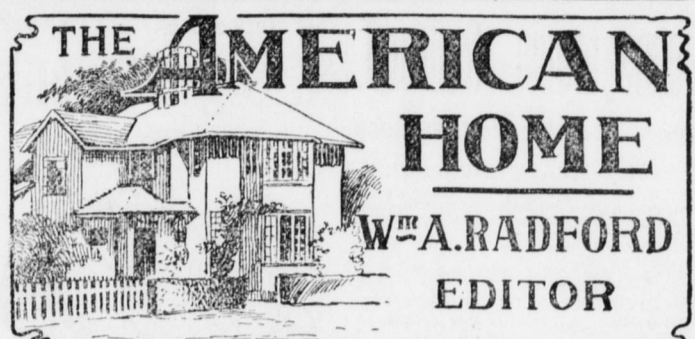
"It always does," replied the housewife, compressing her lips with cold significance.

Stilling an oath, he took up his liquid burden and departed heavily.

A Tardy Commendation.

"Nero fiddled while Rome burned!" explained the student.

"Well," replied Mr. Growcher, "that's better than the custom many violinists have of practicing at a time when everything is nice and quiet otherwise."

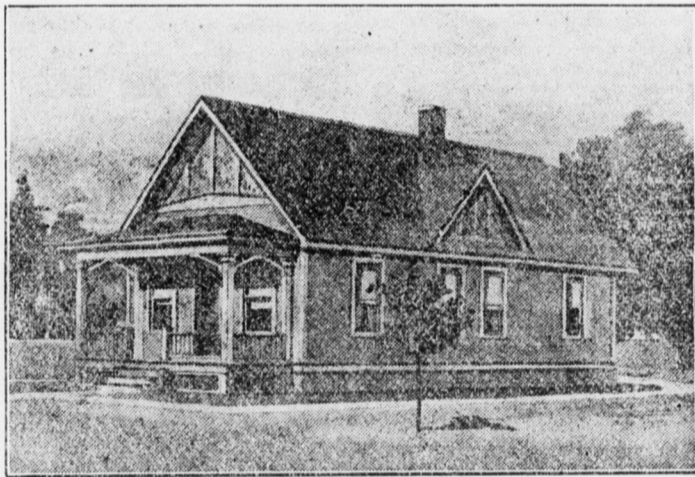


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All the essentials of a home are embodied in this little cottage. "Be it ever so humble, there is no place like home" applies with especial force to a neat little cottage that is built for comfort and surrounded by well-kept grounds. A cottage house well kept looks a great deal better and generally contains a great deal more comfort than a larger house that is in a measure neglected.

In building a small house it is customary with some builders to slight the work in certain directions, because it is only a cheap affair, anyhow, but this is a mistake. It does not pay, for instance, to use outside doors that are less than one and three-quarter inches in thickness. You can put on cheaper ones and dress them up so they look all right for awhile, but after a time the panels split and the doors warp until it is an aggravation to open or shut one. Then repairs are necessary and you put more expense on the job than would be necessary to do it right in the first place.

If you are building a house to sell, sometimes you can skin it in places and get out from under, but it is a poor way to do business. If you want to drink from a sieve you must drink quick. Sometimes a house built for sale don't sell right away. If it is



well built it may be rented to advantage until a purchaser comes along, but you must not rent a poorly built house unless you are looking for trouble.

The cheapest way to build a house is to put up a box like this and put a straight roof over it. It makes all straight work, stock sizes of everything work in without waste, and cheap labor may be used to advantage in putting it together. Everything for the house may be purchased, ready to go together, at the building supply dealers'.

Years ago it was considered necessary to put up some fancy design in order to have it look right when finished, but this was a mistake. Nothing looks better than a plain house if the proportions are right. Of course you must have a relief of some kind. In this case you get it in the veranda, and a good many nights of worry, all of which may be avoided by making the proper start. A little house may be buried in vines partially hidden by shade trees and beautified by a yard full of flowers until the house is forgotten and the cozy home only is remembered.

AROUSING FEARS OF FARMER.

Thought He Was a Member of the Standard Oil Company.

They told me of a farmer two miles away from the Connecticut farmhouse where I was stopping who had a cider mill and was making a few barrels of the sweet, and one day I took a walk over to the place. The farmer had made only two barrels of cider and was through grinding. I asked him about the apple crop, the price of cider, and so on, but found him disinclined to talk. In fact, it was plain that he distrusted me. I told him how I used to walk five miles to a cider mill in my boyhood days, and did my best to thaw him out, but the most that I could get out of him was that he intended to sell one barrel and keep the other for himself. He was evidently much relieved when I took my departure, and I could not make him out at all. Two days later I ran across him in the village, just as he was unloading one of the barrels at a grocery. He tried to dodge me, but I hailed him, and he came forward and said:

"I couldn't get but three dollars for it."

"But that's a fair price, isn't it?"

"It's tolerably fair, and I hope you are not going to freeze me out."

"I don't exactly understand you," I said.

"Why, hain't you from the Standard Oil company?"

"Of course not."

"And you hain't run cider up to five dollars a barrel and threatened to freeze out any one that sold it for less?"

"My friend, you are away off."

"Honest Injun?"

"I have nothing whatever to do with the corporation you name."

"Gee-whizz! but I took you for the boss of it himself, and I've been shaking in my boots ever since you showed your nose in the mill!"—N. Y. Times.

Just as Good.

Walter—One of the gentlemen is asking for some Spanish wine.

Proprietor—Well, give him a bottle of our sweet wine and charge him two marks extra. That will be quite Spanish enough for him, I expect.—Fliegende Blatter.

