

"Excellent!" he cried. "I am glad to hear that one member of the family has grasped the true principles of commercial success."

"I'm sure I don't know where Millicent gets her ideas from," sighed Mam. "When I was her age I could no more have said such thing than I could have flown."

"And you certainly were never built for flying, less now than ever," smiled her husband. Of course I paid little heed to all this huff, because I was bolting half that jam sandwich, which Minkie had dropped. Evangeline saw what happened and said nothing, so it will be "Whistle and I'll come to you, my lad," tonight. But I woke up to the sounds of battle when Mam wanted to know who was going to church. Everybody said "I," except Schwartz, who had letters to write. You ought to have watched his face when Minkie said quietly: "In that case you will miss seeing Jack Stanhope, the friend of whom I was telling you yesterday."

"Jack! Is he at home?" Dolly blurted out and then blushed right down her neck.

"Yes. Didn't you know?"

"How could I? If it comes to that, how do you know?"

"He sent me a Christmas picture post card last evening, one of the new ones, with the season's wishes and a lot of robins on one side and a ha'penny stamp with the address and a little bit of a letter on the other. Here it is. Shall I read it?"

"Yes," said the Guv'nor, rather grimly. Outside the gang he understood Minkie better than anybody else, and he evidently wondered why she was making such a dead set against Schwartz.

Minkie produced the card from the pocket which held the ju-ju. It was a deep pocket, lengthened by herself. She often needed it to hide a young rabbit when I had induced one to leave his home and friends, because keepers make a beastly fuss about these small matters if they hear of them.

"It has the West Strand postmark, 9 a. m., Dec. 24," said she, "and this is what he writes:

"Dear Minkie—Just arrived from Marseilles, ex-S. S. Persia. It was enough to freeze Dan's tail off crossing the channel, but I am glad to be here early, as I can do a bit of shopping (being in need of decoration) before I run down to Dale End. I shall be strolling past the lodge about 6 o'clock and will be delighted if you are visible. Otherwise we shall meet at church tomorrow and exchange winks if Grampus is there too. Yours ever, JACK.

"P. S.—I have brought you a pet mongoose.

"That is all."

"Quite enough too. May I ask who 'Grampus' is?" said her father.

"His uncle. Jack depends on him for his allowance, so he has to humor him, but he never agreed with him about that shooting squabble, you know."

"I know nothing about his views and care less, and I do not wish you to exchange either post cards or winks with him or any of his name."

"Tom," put in Mam gently, "this is Christmas morning."

"I have not forgotten that, my dear. Nor have I forgotten this day two years ago, when the other Stanhope ignored my proffered hand before a dozen of our mutual acquaintances. You hear, Millicent? I have spoken."

"Yes, father, dear, but it is such a pity about the mongoose. And I had a new word I wanted to surprise Jack with. Christmas picture post card is such a mouthful, so I intended to call it a Chris-card. Don't you think that rather neat?"

"I do, but it is not comparable to the neatness with which you draw a red herring across the scent. Of course if he sends you the mongoose you may keep it and write a civil note of thanks, but we can hardly indulge in a close friendship with the nephew when the uncle cannot find a good word to say for us."

I was that delighted that I scraped Minkie's leg to tell her I was underneath the table. A mongoose coming to join the family! What is a mongoose, anyhow? Has it four legs or two? Can it fight? I must have murmured my thoughts aloud, because the parrot gave a screech that made Schwartz jump.

"Go and hide in the nearest rabbit burrow, little dog," he yelled. "Run away and bury yourself with a bone. When that mongoose turns up he'll chase you into the next parish. Oh, Christopher! Aren't we havin' a beano? Another rum 'ot, please, miss."

I kept my temper. There is no use arguing with a parrot. You can't get at him, and he has an amazing variety of language at command. But I must state one small point in his favor. If you pay no heed to his vulgarity and cut out of his talk the silly bits which seem to please people who wear clothes, he gives one a lot of useful information. He will not say a word in a friendly way, same as I give even Tibbie the nod if there's a mouse in the kitchen. The best plan is to sauce him or sneer at him. Then he flies into a rage and talks like a book.

"So, Polly," said I, "you shouldn't strain your voice in that fashion. It will make your feet ache."

He knew what I meant well enough, because just then he was hanging head downward from his perch. He reached out and took a grip of a steel bar in his beak, pretending he had hold of me by the neck.

"If I were you, I'd whitewash my face in the hope that the mongoose would not recognize me after the first round," he croaked.

"I believe you are afraid of the thing yourself."

"Say not so, whiskers. Kiss me, mother, kiss your darling. A full grown mongoose will make you the sickest dog in the British isles. Whoop at him, Boxer! Back to him, Bendigo!"

"Evangeline," said Mam, "put the green cloth over that bird. He grows worse daily, and I cannot make out where he learns so much cockney slang."

Minkie kicked me under the table. She guessed I had been teasing him. At any rate, the parrot clearly expected to witness a first rate set-to when the mongoose arrived. In his own mind he had already taken a ticket for the front row of the stalls, and I meant to oblige him with a star turn. A mongoose may be able to catch a snake, but he must not put on airs with a dog who killed thirty rats in one minute the last time Farmer Hodson thrashed his barley stack.

I heard Schwartz telling Dolly that he had changed his mind and would go to church, so at half past 10 they walked off to the village. It was quite warm in the sun, but the air was nippy, so I gave Tib a run across the lawn when I found her stalking a sparrow. Then I went round to see Bob. He was busy eating. I suppose a horse has to get through a lot of hay before he fills up.

Anyhow, when I asked Bob what a mongoose was he was rather,



A Word Breaker.
 "Fine looking old gentleman."
 "Yes, but he was never known to give a man his word that he did not break it."
 "Dishonest, eh?"
 "Nope; he stutters."—Houston Post.

Dignity and Ignorance.
 "So you have decided to call in another doctor?"
 "I have," was the reply. "The absurdity of the man prescribing linseed tea and mustard plasters for people of our position!"

A Noble Parent.
 In writing a sketch of Washington a pupil ended her essay by saying, "Washington married a famous belle, Martha Custis, and in due time became the Father of His Country."—Delineator.

Kind words are benedictions. They are not only instruments of power, but of benevolence and courtesy, blessings both to the speaker and hearer of them.—Frederick Saunders.

Ten Doctors Said He Would Die

"In 1903 we wrote you regarding my husband, who was suffering from heart trouble. He was superannated by the North Georgian Conference. Ten doctors at different times said he would die. You advised Dr. Miles' Heart Remedy and Restorative Nervine; we did as advised, and improvement was apparent from the very first. He recovered and the Conference in 1904 gave him a charge. He never felt better, although he has very heavy work and does a great deal of camp meeting work. I am so glad we took your advice and gave him the medicine, and feel that I ought to let you know of the wonderful good results from its use."
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Hon. B. W. GREEN, President,
 Hon. JOSIAH HOWARD, Vice President.

John E. Smith, Joseph Kaye, W. S. Walker,
 N. Seger, W. L. Sykes, J. Pitt Felt.
 T. B. LLOYD, Cashier.

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Did you ever think of it in this way? If you save \$100, from your earnings during the year, it is the same amount you would receive on a \$2,000 investment for one year at 5 per cent. To save, one must sacrifice. The best things of life are gained in this way. If you want to lay aside a part of your earnings, come to this bank and open an account. A bank account will assist you greatly in the undertaking.

\$1.00

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Retrench

The time to retrench is after the Holiday festivities. The extra expense incident to this season of good cheer thrust upon you the realization that you must spend less—that you ought to save a part of your income.

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