

In the Days of Poor Richard

By IRVING BACHELLER

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CHAPTER XIX

The First Fourth of July. Mrs. Scott and her child lived in the family of General Herkimer for a month or so. Settlers remote from towns and villages had abandoned their farms. The Indians had gone into the great north bush perhaps to meet the British army which was said to be coming down from Canada in appalling numbers. Hostilities in the neighborhood of The Long House had ceased. The great Indian highway and its villages were deserted save by young children and a few ancient red men and squaws, too old for travel. Late in June, Jack and Solomon were ordered to report to General Schuyler at Albany.

"We're getting shoveled around plenty," Solomon declared. "We'll take the women and the boy with us and paddle down the Mohawk to Albany. They kind o' fell from heaven into our hands and we got to look after 'em faithful. Fust ye know o' Herk'li be movin' er swallered hull by the British an' the Injuns, like Jonah was by the whale, then what 'ud become o' her an' the Lettie Cricket? We got to look after 'em."

"I think my mother will be glad to give them a home," said Jack. "She really needs some help in the house these days."

The Scotts' buildings had been burned by the Indians and their boats destroyed save one large canoe which had happened to be on the south shore of the river out of their reach. In this Jack and Solomon and 'Mis' Scott' and the Little Cricket set out with loaded packs in the moon of the new leaf, to use a phrase of the Mohawks, for the city of the Great River. They had a carry at Wolf Kill and some shorter ones but in the main it was a smooth and delightful journey, between wooded shores, down the long winding lane of the Mohawk. Without fear of the Indians they were able to shoot deer and wild fowl and build a fire on almost any part of the shore. Mrs. Scott insisted on her right to do the cooking. Jack kept a diary of the trip, some pages of which the historian has read. From them we learn:

"Mrs. Scott has bravely run the gauntlet of her sorrows. Now there is a new look in her face. She is a black-eyed, dark-haired, energetic, comely woman of forty with cheeks as red as a ripe strawberry. Solomon calls her 'middle sized' but she seems to be large enough to fill his eye. He shows her great deference and chooses his words with particular care when he speaks to her. Of late he has taken to singing. She and the boy seem to have stirred the depths in him and curious things are coming up to the surface—songs and stories and droll remarks and playful tricks and an unusual amount of laughter. I suppose that it is the spirit of youth in him, stunned by his great sorrow. Now touched by miraculous hands he is coming back to his old self. There can be no doubt of this: the man is ten years younger than when I first knew him even. The Little Cricket has laid hold of his heart. Whig sits between the feet of Solomon in the stern during the day and insists upon sleeping with him at night.

"One morning my old friend was laughing as we stood on the river bank washing ourselves.

"What are you laughing at?" I asked.

"That gol darn leetle skeezucks!" he answered. "He were kickin' all night like a mule fightin' a bumble bee. 'Twere a cold night an' I held him ag'in me to keep the leetle cuss warm."

"Hain't you better let him sleep with his mother?" I asked.

"Wall, if it takes two to do his sleepin' mebbe I better be the one that suffers. Ain't she a likely wome'n?"

"Of course I agreed, for it was evident that she was likely, sometime, to make him an excellent wife and the thought of that made me happy."

They had fared along down by the rude forts and villages traveling stealthily at night in tree shadows through "the Tory zone," as the vicinity of Fort Johnson was then called, camping, now and then, in deserted farmhouses or putting up at village inns. Setting out from their last camp an hour before daylight they had heard the booming of cannon at sunrise. Solomon stopped his paddle and listened.

"By the hide an' horns o' the devil!" he exclaimed. "I wonder if the British have got down to Albany."

They were alarmed until they hailed a man on the river and learned that Albany was having a celebration. "What be they celebratin'?" Solomon asked.

"The Declaration o' Independence," the citizen answered.

"It's a good idee," said Solomon. "When we git that 'ere o' rifle o' mine 'll do some talkin' if it has a chanst."

Church bells were ringing as they neared the city. Its inhabitants were assembled on the river front. The Declaration was read and then General Schuyler made a brief address about the peril coming down from the north. He said that a large force

under General Burgoyne was on Lake Champlain and that the British were then holding a council with the Six Nations on the shore of the lake above Crown Point.

"At present we are unprepared to meet this great force but I suppose that help will come and that we shall not be dismayed. The modest man who leads the British army from the north declares in his proclamation that he is 'John Burgoyne, Esq., lieutenant general of his majesty's forces in America, colonel of the Queen's Regiment of Light Dragoons, governor of Fort William in North Britain, one of the commons in parliament and commander of an army and fleet employed on an expedition from Canada!' My friends, such is the pride that goeth before a fall. We are a humble, hard-working people. No man among us can boast of a name so lavishly adorned. Our names need only the simple but glorious adornments of firmness, courage and devotion. With those, I verily believe, we shall have an ally greater than any this world can offer. Let us all kneel where we stand while Rev. Mr. Munro leads us in prayer to Almighty God for His help and guidance."

It was an impressive hour and that day the same kind of talk was heard in many places. The church led the people. Pulpiters of inspired vision of which, those days, there were many spoke with the tongues of men and of angels. A sublime faith in "The Great Ally" began to travel up and down the land.

CHAPTER XX

The Ambush.

Mrs. Scott and her little son were made welcome in the home of John Irons. Jack and Solomon were immediately sent up the river and through the bush to help the force at Tl. In the middle and late days of July, they reported to runners the southward progress of the British. They were ahead of Herkimer's regiment of New York militia on August 3 when they discovered the ambush—a misfortune for which they were in no way re-



CAMPING NOW AND THEN IN DESERTED FARM-HOUSES.

sponsible. Herkimer and his force had gone on without them to relieve Fort Schuyler. The two scouts had ridden post to join him. They were about half a mile or so ahead of the commander when Jack heard the call of the swamp robin. He hurried toward his friend. Solomon was in a thicket of tamaracks.

"We got to git back quick," said the latter. "I see sign o' an ambush."

They hurried to their command and warned the general. He halted and faced his men about and began a retreat. Jack and Solomon hurried out ahead of them some 20 rods apart. In five minutes Jack heard Solomon's call again. Thoroughly alarmed, he ran in the direction of the sound. In a moment he met Solomon. The face of the latter had that stern look which came only in a crisis. Deep furrows ran across his brow. His hands were shut tight. There was an expression of anger in his eyes. He swallowed as Jack came near.

"It's an ambush sure as hell's ahead," he whispered.

As they were hurrying toward the regiment, he said:

"We got to fight an' ag'in big odds—British an' Injuns. Don't never let yerself be took alive, my son, less ye want to die as Scott did. But, mebbe, we kin bust the circle."

In half a moment they met Herkimer. "Git ready to fight," said Solomon. "We're surrounded."

The men were spread out in a half-circle and some hurried orders given, but before they could take a step forward the trap was sprung. "The Red Devils of Brant" were rushing at them through the timber with yells that seemed to shake the treetops. The regiment fired and began to advance. Some 40 Indians had fallen as they fired. General Herkimer and others were wounded by a volley from the savages.

"Come on, men. Foller me an' use

yer bayonets," Solomon shouted. "We'll cut our way out."

The Indians ahead had no time to load. Scores of them were run through. Others fled for their lives. But a red host was swarming up from behind and firing into the regiment. Many fell. Many made the mistake of turning to fight back and were overwhelmed and killed or captured. A goodly number had cut their way through with Jack and Solomon and kept going, swapping cover as they went. Most of them were wounded in some degree. Jack's right shoulder had been torn by a bullet. Solomon's left hand was broken and bleeding. The savages were almost on their heels, not 200 yards behind. The old scout rallied his followers in a thicket at the top of a knoll with an open grass meadow between them and their enemies. There they reloaded their rifles and stood waiting.

"Don't fire—not none o' ye—till I give the word. Jack, you take my rifle. I'm goin' to throw this 'ere bunch o' lightnin'."

Solomon stepped out of the thicket and showed himself when the savages entered the meadow. Then he limped up the trail as if he were badly hurt, in the fashion of a hen partridge when one has come near her brood. In a moment he had dodged behind cover and crept back into the thicket.

There were about 200 warriors who came running across the flat toward that point where Solomon had disappeared. They yelled like demons and overran the little meadow with astonishing speed.

"Now hold yer fire—hold yer fire till I give ye the word, er we'll all be et up. Keep yer fingers off the triggers now."

He sprang into the open. Astonished, the foremost runners halted while others crowded upon them. The "bunch of lightning" began its curved flight as Solomon leaped behind a tree and shouted, "Fire!"

"Tain't too much to say that the cover flew off o' h—I right thar at the edge o' the Bloody Medder that mornin'—you hear to me," he used to tell his friends. "The air were full o' busted injun an' a barrel o' blood an' grease went down into the ground. A dozen er so that wasn't hurt run back ercross the medder like the devil were chasin' 'em all with a red-hot iron. I reckon 'll allus be called the Bloody Medder."

In this retreat Jack had lost so much blood that he had to be carried on a litter. Before night fell they met Gen. Benedict Arnold and a considerable force. After a little rest the tireless Solomon went back into the bush with Arnold and two regiments to find the wounded Herkimer, if possible, and others who might be in need of relief. They met a band of refugees coming in with the body of the general. It was reported that the far bush was echoing with the shrieks of tortured captives.

"Beats all what an amount o' sufferin' it takes to start a new nation," Solomon used to say.

Next day Arnold fought his way to the fort, and many of St. Leger's Rangers and their savage allies were slain or captured or broken into little bands and sent flying for their lives into the northern bush. So the siege of Fort Schuyler was raised.

CHAPTER XXI

The Binkussing of Colonel Burley.

Solomon had been hit in the thigh by a rifle bullet on his way to the fort. He and Jack and other wounded men were conveyed in boats and litters to the hospital at Albany where Jack remained until the leaves were gone. Solomon recovered more quickly and was with Lincoln's militia under Colonel Brown when they joined Johnson's Rangers at Ticonderoga and cut off the supplies of the British army. Later having got around the lines of the enemy with this intelligence he had a part in the fighting on Bemus Heights and the Stillwater and saw the defeated British army under Burgoyne marching eastward in disgrace to be conveyed back to England.

Jack had recovered and was at home when Solomon arrived in Albany with the news.

Solomon spent a part of the evening at play with the Little Cricket and the other children and when the young ones had gone to bed, went out for a walk with "Mis' Scott" on the river front.

Mrs. Irons had said of the latter that she was a most amiable and useful person.

"The Little Cricket has won our hearts," she added. "We love him as we love our own."

When Jack and Solomon were setting out in a hired sloop for the Highlands next morning there were tears in the dark eyes of "Mis' Scott."

"Ain't she a likely wome'n?" Solomon asked again when with sails spread they had begun to cut the water

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Fuss Over Missing Button

A woman is so used to pinning things that she can't understand why a man should make so much fuss over a missing button.



PETER AND THE FAIRIES

PETER loved the beautiful green fields and all the wild flowers, but best of all he loved the pretty golden-eyed daisy with her ruffled bonnet, and never would he disturb a daisy though it grew in his very garden.

All around the poor cottage where he lived alone grew the daisies in profusion, and one night Peter awoke and saw all the daisies dancing in the moonlight. He jumped out of his bed and ran to the window, thinking he must be dreaming.

It was true. The daisies were all dancing, and among them, taller than the others, was a little lady wearing a ruffled cap, but instead of one golden eye she had a pretty face and two eyes though they were not golden.

Peter slipped on his clothes and ran into the yard, and the little lady smiled and ran, but she beckoned to Peter to follow her.

Peter was so intent upon watching the running figure that he did not no-



The Little Lady Smiled and Ran, but Beckoned Peter to Follow.

lice he was in a strange place right in the midst of a daisy field.

The little lady ran up the marble steps and held out her hand to Peter. "Come," she said. "You are the friend of the daisy fairies and they sent me to bring you here for tonight. We are to have a grand feast and dance and the fairies said it would be complete without you, because you never harm the daisies."

Then into the marble palace she led Peter, and for the first time he thought of his ragged clothes. "Don't worry about your clothes," said the little lady who seemed to know his thoughts. "I shall take you to our Queen and she will make everything right for you."

Peter next was taken to a big room hung with white and gold, and on a throne made of daisies sat a tiny little creature with hair of gold color and dressed all in white. She wore a ruffled cap, too, just like the little



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The Why of Superstitions

By H. IRVING KING

THE MOUNTAIN ASH

ANYBODY who knows anything at all about witches knows that a branch of the rowan tree—or, as it is more generally called, mountain ash—will keep those objectionable persons at a distance and act as a counter-charm to their sorcery. In some parts of the country the rowan is accounted equally efficacious against thieves. In Maine housewives stir their lye, in making soap, with a stick of rowan, in order that the soap may be hard and of good quality. And everywhere they will tell you that to beat a child with a rod of mountain ash stops its growth.

The superstition with regard to the mystic qualities of mountain ash has northern Europe as its country of origin and flourished there in the early days. In northern Europe it still lingers and from northern Europe we inherit it. Formerly in some parts of Ireland the villagers used to appear on May day bearing a hoop covered with marigolds and sprigs of mountain ash, within which hung two balls, one covered with gold paper and one with silver, to represent the sun and moon. The marigolds were, of course, to supplement the yellow ball, the sun. Which would indicate that anciently in Celtic mythology, at least, some connection was conceived to exist between

the other decoration, the rowan, and the moon-goddess.

Be that as it may, it is reasonable to suppose that the rowan got its mystic reputation in Norse mythology—as it got its common English name—from the resemblance of its foliage to that of the true ash, the sacred tree of our Scandinavian forefathers—Igdrasil, the tree of life. One old name for the rowan was the "quicken tree"—quicken in the sense of to make alive—which would seem still further to connect the mountain ash with the sacred Igdrasil.

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A LINE O' CHEER

By John Kendrick Bangs.

AS TO LUCK

I DO not pray for Luck, Since I've small use for chance.

I'd rather win by pluck Than whimsy circumstance; But if Good Luck comes by, Demanding that I share it, Believe me, I shall try To grin and bear it.

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Tom Moore



This popular "movie" star was born in County Meath, Ireland. The family eventually moved to America and settled in Toledo, Ohio. He began his theatrical career in Chicago and, after several years in stock and road work, turned to motion pictures. He lives in California. Tom is a brother of Owet Moore, also prominent in the business

man gave him a big reward, and, best of all, he asked Peter to come and work for him and live in a comfortable house on his big farm.

And all of this Peter says he owes to the daisy fairies, for though it may all have been a dream—the night he feasted and danced with the fairies—he still believes that because of his fondness for the pretty daisy the fairies brought all of his good luck by sending the white cow to his door

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Have You This Habit?

By Margaret Morison

ROBBER OF INITIATIVE

TURTLE LAKE was the haven of all young married people for the first five years. Of the little settlement, Mrs. Strong alone had children in their teens. Certain frivolous citizens intimated that Mrs. Strong had so long been saying that Turtle Lake was a garden spot in a tone of voice that defied gainsaying, that she could not openly go away.

During the June of Althea Gay's arrival at Turtle Lake, Mrs. Strong gave a garden party in her honor. When Althea was about to take her leave, Mrs. Strong asked: "Have you seen my onions?" Althea said "No." "You can't go home without seeing my onions," was the reply. "Oh, your husband will understand—you must see my onions. No, tomorrow is uncertain; you can't miss my onions." And as Althea followed her vociferous hostess, her ears seemed to ring with "Onions! Onions! Onions!"

The next day at the local grocers she caught the accents of an easily recognized voice. "You won't forget to send my order? You'll remember that I want my order before lunch? I must have my order without fail—you'll see to it yourself, won't you?" Then Mrs. Strong turned away and Althea heard one clerk tell another, "Oh, she always goes on like that."

One rainy morning that summer Althea was at the Strong house when Mrs. Strong was getting her family off to their several destinations. Her husband was on his way to a town meet-

ing, and Althea knew that if the village missed having a community incinerator that year it would not be Mrs. Strong's fault. The children were warned ten times to put on their rubbers and take their umbrellas. There was simply no chance for independent incompetency on their part.

Three years later Mrs. Strong's joy and pride, her only son, was sent away to school. Of all the human beings upon whom she had expended her force of character, this was the one whom she had most closely followed up, whom she had most talked to and and over. Althea Gay was present when he went off amid a perfect broadside of adoration. And several months later Althea Gay was calling on Mrs. Strong when the tragic blow to her pride fell. Her son had been dropped. He had no vices, no evil ways—if so, his masters wrote, there would have been more hope for him; he was simply weak, he had no force, no character, there was no place for him in the school. His mother's habit of overemphasis had pounded all the spring from his makeup and left him flabby.

HAVE YOU THIS HABIT? (© by Metropolitan Newspaper Service.)

"What's in a Name?"

By MILDRED MARSHALL

Facts about your name; its history; meanings; whence it was derived; significance; your lucky day, lucky jewel

LETTY

ONE of the "glad" names is Letitia. It comes from the Latin adjective laetus, meaning glad, from which the substantive, "laetitia," was formed. Whether ancient Rome underwent a "glad" period, etymologists do not record, but the fact remains that Letitia as a proper name was adopted by the fashionable maids and matrons of that bygone empire.

Laetitia first made her appearance as Letizia, a name favored by the Italians during the fashion for extreme novelty that prevailed in the Cinque cento. Spain adopted Letizia.

In Ireland Lettice was extremely popular. One famous bearer of the name was Lettice Knollys, the wife of the Earl of Essex. Lettice was evolved in Ireland, and is still a favorite with Irish lassies, though Letty, the diminutive, is by far the most popular form.

Letitia and Letty are both in vogue in this country. The touch of propriety which has become associated with Letitia has somewhat lessened her vogue, but Letty flourishes after the manner of all contractions in America.

The turquoise is Letitia's talismanic stone. If set in gold, it will protect her from all danger, especially when traveling. According to an old legend, the stone will break at the approach of evil. The best possible good luck is promised Letty if she can see the new moon reflected in her turquoise. Saturday is her lucky day.

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