

GINGER ELLA

by Ethel Hueston

Illustrations by Irwin Myers

Copyright, by Bobba Merrill Co. WNU Service

CHAPTER VII—Continued

They did not try to plan for the future, they simply contented themselves with the knowledge that whatever came to them must be good. They did not look ahead to the winter—without a church, without a parsonage, with a meager twenty-five dollars a month to provide food and clothes and a roof over their heads. They merely accepted the present that was given them, and smiled at each other, and strove in every way possible to impress upon themselves the sublimity of their faith, the boundlessness of their possibilities in divine love.

As they went out to the car answering the call of Eddy Jackson's siren, they met the postman coming in.

Ginger ran ahead of the others, and took the mail from his hand. "Three for father, one for Marjory—mine, mine—the rest is for me."

Ginger's watchfulness over Marjory and Hiram Buckworth increased. She intercepted every glance, endured the soft smiles with a glowering grimace, answered every light sally as though it were intended for her ears alone.

One evening, soon after dinner, Hiram Buckworth decided that he must withdraw to his room to prepare his sermon for the following Sunday, and Marjory thought she would go upstairs and manicure her nails. But Ginger was not to be distracted by mere plans for the future. She saw them both upstairs, saw the door of her father's room closed behind Hiram Buckworth's right back, saw Miriam ensconced on the foot of her bed with files, orangewood sticks and buffers. Then she went to the studio with a sigh of relief. There she settled down to a complete balancing of her accounts. She counted the dimes in the doll's trunk. She made careful entries in her huge ledger.

Her waste basket she found full to overflowing of discarded letters, little white angels, which had accompanied the contributions to the home. Ginger was systematic and orderly. These angels were to be burned. So with waste basket in one hand, lantern in the other, she made her way carefully over the narrow beams, and down the wobbly ladder.

She noted, comfortably, that the two doors remained closed as she had left them, and a pleasantly soothing stillness pervaded the house. Softly, happily, with waste basket and lantern, she slipped around the curve of the circular staircase and stopped. She stopped aghast, electrified, spell-bound. For beneath her, before her very eyes, there lay revealed a scene whose unutterable disgustiveness was beyond her power of description.

The wide living room was lighted, dimly lighted, by one small corner reading lamp, and to the shadowy, semi-darkness, Ginger saw two figures—her sister, Marjory, and Hiram Buckworth—whom she had left behind their separate closed doors not twenty minutes previous. By what strange intuitiveness each had discovered, behind those barring doors, that the other was descending to the common meeting ground of the living room below, Ginger never knew—nor even which had made the initial move. But one fact was evident—there they were.

One of Hiram's arms was about her sister's shoulders, and his free hand was fondling very gently, very caressingly, the soft gold of her hair. Marjory herself, plainly not to be out-distanced in madness, was raising her soft white fingers to his cheek, his lips, his eyes. Ginger's irrefragable gasp startled them. They looked up at her, gravely. They did not move.

"Excuse me," Ginger's voice was cold and subdued, very small. "I thought you were in different places—doing other things."

She turned short around upon the stairs, and went up to the attic. In the studio she sat herself down, heavily, and fell to deep consideration. She saw clearly that the situation was critical. Marjory was hopeless. She had ogled the grocery clerk. She had almost held hands with Tub Andrews and the uncle. She even practiced her blandishments on Eddy Jackson, who had the fortitude to withstand her wiles. And now she was flagrantly seeking the young minister. Ginger writhed in helpless fury. The minister! Even a grocery clerk may aspire to ownership, a bank janitor may progress slowly upward. But once a preacher, always a preacher.

evident. But Hiram Buckworth, now—he was a minister, he must have some right principle within—an appeal to him, perhaps—Ginger regretted that she could not entirely abandon Marjory to her own misguided ways. The home for the blind was on its way to firm establishment, it was true, but alas, so many dimes went into the purchase of a load of coal, a month's groceries, a delicate operation for the eyes. An appeal, then, to Hiram Buckworth.

The next morning before breakfast, Ginger, alert and watchful, saw him walking down the flagstone path between the rows of flowers, inhaling great breaths of the fresh morning air, his entire manner and countenance reflecting a smug and satisfied contentment with the world at large. She hurried down, and joined him.

"Mr. Buckworth," she began firmly, "excuse me for butting in—and it really isn't a thing against Marjory, you know, for she is just as nice as she seems to be—"

"I should say she is!" "But I've known her a long time, and really, she is a terrible flirt, though at heart she doesn't mean a thing by it. I don't know whether she has told you—I mean—You see, it is already arranged—"

"Ellen! You don't mean that Marjory—that she is engaged—"

The use of the word relieved her. She was finding it unaccountably hard to express herself in a way that would gain the desired result, without committing herself to falsehood.

"Well, yes, in a way. Not exactly engaged, you understand, but it is all understood, if you know what I mean."

"Yes, I do know what you mean." The bright ruddiness went suddenly



She Stopped Aghast, Electrified, Spell-bound.

out of Hiram Buckworth's face. "I understand entirely too well. You are a good sport for tipping me off. I see."

And then he went quickly indoors, and said nothing else. The appeal to Hiram Buckworth had indeed reaped results after a fashion, but Ginger did not feel very well pleased. Hiram Buckworth, although anything but a romantic figure, was a nice chap. And the shocked look on his face, the strange, hurt, stricken look, had touched her heart. He had looked sorry. Ginger did not enjoy seeing people look sorry, not even disgusting pretenders who pawed and held hands.

Breakfast, usually such a gay and cheery meal, proved an awkward occasion. Hiram Buckworth seemed every inch a minister, unsmiling, grave, and stiffly formal. He talked exclusively to Miss Jenkins, and not very entertainingly. He did not look at Marjory, who had come in a little late with her usual bright morning radiance. But her radiance was of short duration, paling swiftly to startled, wide-eyed wondering. She had no appetite, toyed idly with her fork, and kept her eyes upon his face, curiously, as though her eyes were seeking something, asking questions. But always they found nothing, received no answer. Immediately after breakfast he excused himself, and went quickly out of the room.

Ginger was very uncomfortable indeed. She tried to tell herself that she was merely imagining that these things were so—that it was a mere chance that Hiram had not looked at Marjory, that Marjory could not eat her breakfast. But she was uncomfortable. Not even a trip to the studio, and a painstaking count of her doll's trunk of dimes sufficed to put her in a cheerful frame of mind. Not

even the coming of the postman, with sixteen letters for E. Tolliver, made her really happy.

He fished two small packages from his bag and handed them to her. "I see you're getting some more of those samples," he added cheerfully.

"Those are for the twins," she answered, flushing. "Personally, I am not interested in beauty preparations."

The day passed dully, a busy day, as Saturdays always are in parsonages where arrangements are always leading up to the climatic Sabbath. Hiram Buckworth remained down town for luncheon. Marjory, a still, white Marjory, busied herself in a studied way about the work of the house. And dinner in the evening was an increasingly painful repetition of the morning meal.

When the dishes were done, Ginger repaired to the veranda. Miss Jenkins sat there, alone, solemnly rocking.

"Where's Margie?" "She went to bed. She has a headache."

"Oh, I see." Ginger went upstairs, and knocked gently at her sister's door.

"I'm in bed," called a muffled voice in answer.

Ginger opened the door, and went in. "I just wanted to see if I could do anything for your headache." She gave her sister a sharp look. "You've been crying."

"I think I'm getting hay fever," said Marjory. "My eyes sting. I'm going to sleep now." Ginger, at this dismissal, turned toward the door. "And Ginger, don't you go and talk about it to—Miss Jenkins—or anybody. If I have a headache and hay fever it's nobody's business but my own. Not that anybody would care anyhow."

"I won't talk about it. Go to sleep now, Margie. I'll be very quiet not to disturb you."

And Ginger closed the door softly behind her.

CHAPTER VIII

Sunday, ordinarily such a pleasantly hurried day in the parsonage, was no less than a dreary ordeal. Marjory appeared very late for her breakfast. She need not have appeared at all, for she ate nothing.

"Headache all gone?" inquired Ginger.

"M'm."

Hiram, instead of walking companionably to church with the girls, excused himself and went on in advance, explaining that he wished to see somebody about something. Marjory dreamed absent-mindedly during the service, while Ginger, on the contrary, listened attentively to every word, reporting confidentially to her sister, later on, that she didn't think so much of the sermon.

In the afternoon, Eddy Jackson came in the car to take them to Pay Dirt and although Hiram tried to be excused from the party there was no evading Eddy's friendly insistence.

But while there was great gaiety at Pay Dirt, the arrival of the car from the parsonage brought a sudden slump in their high spirits. Alexander Murdock was there, and Ginger's wrath, long slumbering, vented itself upon his unoffending head. Why should he spend all of his spare time at Pay Dirt? What had a mere can grocer to do with the conduct of agriculture? And why, if mere friendship for Eddy attracted him thither, did he so openly ignore his friend in his ardent attentiveness to Miriam? And why, for that matter, should the so-sensitive Miriam, be suddenly thus gay and shining?

"What's the matter with everybody anyhow?" demanded Eddy crossly. "That's some grouch of a preacher, if you ask me. Margie's clear at the bottom of the dumps, worst thing in the world for her complexion. And even you, Ginger, you're as cheerier than a broken crutch."

"Well, I have a lot of trouble," said Ginger dully.

The one bright moment in the afternoon for Ginger was when Alexander announced that he was leaving the next day for the farther West.

"Walking?" she inquired coldly. "Oh, no. Business has been quite good. I shall be able to ride quite a little distance before I connect up with another Orange and Black."

"Sort of a can tour."

"Something of the sort, yes."

But if the parsonage group had little to contribute to the day's enjoyment, it was more than compensated by the glad hilarity of the others. Mr. Tolliver laughed like a boy at the bald and ribald jokes of the can grocer. Miss Jenkins and Mrs. Jackson exchanged giggling reminiscences of their own untrammelled youth. Miriam and Alexander were ringleaders in the day's recreation, doing all sorts of absurd young things.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Cultivate Serenity to Fight Mental Fatigue

Mental fatigue cuts down efficiency and spoils happiness. American life with its high-power speed for both work and play produces an unusual amount of mental fatigue. To aid in the cultivation of more serene habits, Dr. Lauren H. Smith, writing in Hygeia Magazine, makes the following suggestions:

1. When we work, let us keep our interest in it and make it pleasurable.
2. When we play, let us enter into it for all it is worth without regard for anything else.
3. When we rest and sleep, let us turn the mind and body loose to themselves and let them do what they will.

Learn to rest the mind by leaving the mind alone.

4. When we think, let us make a decision and carry it out. If we decide incorrectly it can be reconsidered later.

5. When we are very tired, let us not permit a temporary or extreme emotional reaction to drive us into an act that will have permanent results.

Dogs' Jumping Powers

Dogs can usually clear a fence 4½ feet high. However, when they jump up to 7 or 8 feet they usually catch at the top of the fence and pull themselves over.



The New Year and Evolution

By W. D. Pennypacker

IT WAS more than a quarter century ago that John, a young man then, saw the present century ushered in. As a man of mature years now, he looks back to that epochal midnight with interest.

It seems strange that that New Year's eve appeared different from any other in his life. And yet, the reason is not far to seek. There could be no other such midnight in all his life.

No other century would be ringing for him with such clamorous din of bells and whistles.

As he draws his chair close to the cheerful wood fire, the smoke from which has given the room an aroma of resinous incense, he cannot but become reminiscent. Before him are mental pictures imprinted upon his mind twenty-nine years ago—pictures which the coming and going of many winters and the joys of as many summers can never efface.

For more than a decade prior to 1900, John, his parents, and groups of younger and older folk in a small town met for a social evening and remained to welcome in the New Year. It was in those old-fashioned times when young folks and their elders frequently spent social evenings together.

As John peers into the ruddy embers he wonders if such things could be possible now. He knows that parents and children are rarely if ever seen together now at social functions and that they are seldom seen at theaters or in church in the same groups.

"But we did it, anyway," he murmurs in a tone of somewhat suppressed wonder that it could ever have been possible!

And this is as he recalls it:

"The evening was cool and crisp; the sky bright and cloudless, the ground covered with snow, heavily crusted.

Consciously, he was not aware that this was different from any other night. Yet subconsciously he realized something was unusual. He might see many more New Year's eves—as, indeed, he has been privileged to do—but he would never again see the passing of an old century, with its great epochal struggles and momentous achievements, and the arrival of a new one with a clean slate upon which humanity must transcribe its record of accomplishment—what would the next one be?

White, and unmarked, the page of an unwritten book—the year—spread before him. He was to be one of the world's billions of people to have part in transcribing a new record.

The thought was impressive.

A broad grin sweeps his face, unnoticed by others in the room. The dim light and the crackling warmth of the fireside made all drowsy. Late

hours and wild festivities are no part of the present life of one who had reached adult life when the bells changed and whistles tooted, and horns blew, as 1900 was ushered in.

Children, and in some cases grandchildren are out in the wild jazziness of the night. Every one is doing it, he thinks, but himself. A world pleasure-mad is seeing a new year's arrival amidst a gale of and thoughtless frivolity that is astounding. It is all in the way we are brought up, he admits, to himself, and is broad-minded enough to recognize that with the turning of the wheel of time a gradual but none the less effective evolution has taken place. He is conscious that the young man and young woman of today—those of the flapper age he calls it—are as different in their thoughts and mental reactions as are our present highly bred domestic animals and their prehistoric ancestors of the Stone Age.

As he takes another long pull on his friendly pipe there is a glow, followed by a dense cloud of smoke. The curling rings ascending in the half light of a lessening fire give the appearance of, and, in reality, cause the full effect of dreaminess. His mind flies backward and he is again in the happy events and great accomplishments of the past.

How long John sleeps in the quiet room, while younger members of his family are out to welcome a New Year, we could not say. In the oppressive silence, the tick of the mantel clock can be heard distinctly. Its regularity would not suggest that the year is dying, nor would it suggest the joy of the coming of a New Year and the possibility of 1930 being one of earth's happiest New Years.

Save for the clock, all is silent. Then there is the outbreak of whistles, the din of tin horns and bells. For a moment, protracted into ten minutes or more the darkness of the night is rent with distracting noises.

John rouses with a start. His pipe has fallen to the floor, and the fire is out. He is still alone.

As he had dozed away John had, in fancy, been back in the old days. He had returned to his young manhood, and the big reception every one gave to the coming in of the new century. It is only another New Year now. Mileposts seem much closer than they did then. He has seen many of them—so many, in fact, that they mean little except to suggest in its widest sense, a common brotherhood of all mankind.

When Alice and Jack returned home in the wee hours the color was just coming into the eastern sky. They wished Dad a happy New Year—and they meant it sincerely—though, both were conscious that he belonged to a different epoch.

The breaking day, with an auspicious opening, was a happy one for the entire Ross family, and all were conscious that it marked more than a New Year—they sensed that it marked the beginning of another cycle in the evolution of the race.

(© 1929, Western Newspaper Union.)

After New Year's

After New Year's the country can settle back to a long run of hard work, with no disturbing influence until the appearance of the vacation literature.

Entitled to Cover Charge

The farmer, having provided the vands for a dinner on New Year's eve, insists on inquiring why he cannot claim a share in the cover charge.

Paul Bunton's New Year

By James Lewis Hays

"H, IF you could on'y crack a whole row of nuts at once!" "That's too much efficiency, Bub," said Uncle Charlie opening another pecan. "I ought to tell you about Paul Bunton's New Year's resolve."

Bob and Jim and Bub shouted. Anything about the giant wood cutter! "Well, it was on New Year's day, like this, the winter of the blue snow. He resolved he wouldn't waste a speck of time or a single motion in the year to come. And off he hiked, a mile at a step, to fetch his big blue ox and get busy."

"Was that the time he plowed the Grand Canyon?"

"No, Jim, he had to log off North Dakota that year. He harnessed the



ox to his big tree shaver and made a new blade for it by breaking off the top of iron mountain and hammering it out with his fist. Away they went, mowing trees.

"Paul noticed whenever the blue ox rested it stood swinging its tail. So he strapped a great ax to the ox's tail and stopped him, after that, by a tall tree.

"Back and forth went the tail, and whack, whack the great trees fell with a mighty swish. And they went on cutting trees and not wasting a motion.

"But the trees the ox cut down with his tail fanned him until he began to sneeze. Paul didn't think it would hurt the blue ox, but he didn't want such violent sneezes to waste. So one of his axmen carved a gigantic wooden windmill and set it in front of the ox every time they stopped.

"Kerchoo! Kerchoo! the blue ox would sneeze and 'whiz!' would go the windmill. Every time it whizzed it would make Paul Bunton's sawmill cut a hundred logs."

"How could it?" Bob asked.

"Oh, easy! Paul fastened it to the sawmill by radio."

"Sure!" scorned Jim.

"But," continued Uncle Charlie reaching for another handful of nuts



"the sneeze got worse and the blue ox had to be put to bed. Paul lost a week's work fetching hot water bottles and porous plasters an acre square, before the ox was well. So he made his New Year's resolve over."

"He whittled a tall pine into a penholder, put in a fresh point, and wrote in letters ten feet high, in a book bigger than this house: 'I resolve to leave well enough alone and not try to do everything at once.'"

(© 1929, Western Newspaper Union.)

A Timely Hint

New Year suggestion: Make one good resolution and stay with it.