

# Nehemiah Nuggins' Charity

Nehemiah Nuggins cast his watery eyes over his store, preparatory to shutting up, going home and sneaking into his bachelor quarters. It was a fine array that he surveyed. Codfish, kegs of nails of various assortment, boots and shoes of every size and style, hanks of flax, old as the pines that sobbed and sighed along the hillside back of the store; violins without bridges, needles in boxes mixed with thimbles, sealing wax, envelopes and babies' sucking bottles, old hats, caps, bonnets with plumes and without, face-powders, plows, harrows, rakes, shaving-soap, razors, fruit-cans, coils of rubber hose, cycle tires, monkey wrenches, gum rubbers, fish-poles, hooks, lines, postage stamps, jars of peppermint candy, and many other things too numerous to mention.

"Ten per cent. less than cost! No wonder I have to pinch, and scrimp, and half starve."

But he did not figure that all this was his, his to own, to sell, to give away. His—and it never cost him a cent for the whole entire outfit of the store.

To-day he sold a harrow. Boys grown up to manhood had carved their names upon the handles. Daily, year after year—in season, of course, that harrow had been dragged out upon the low porch. It had been beaten by the rains of years, and was dusty with the touch of time; it had been nibbled by the mice, gnawed by the rats and abused in general. To-day he sold it.

How his tender, susceptible heart quivered as he saw the old, familiar thing tossed into a farmer's wagon! Ah! and how quickly he hurried back into his little den, yanked down his slab-desk from the wall, reached for a certain book and examined it closely. It had been all well and faithfully kept, the old stock by his father, who had slept for twenty years under the pine-needles of summer and the crystalline crusts of winter.

And Nehemiah sighed as he laid his lean, yellow finger upon a line. He shivered from head to foot, and a tear oozed from his watery eye.

"Sold for fifteen per cent. less than cost! No wonder times are bad, men are poor—and I have to save, pinch, starve and look out to make both ends meet."

Carefully replacing the old book in its place, he next lifts his poor desk to its place on the wall, fastens it there with a button, and, rising, he leaves the den.

The store will be closed in two minutes; all is well within. The codfish will not nibble at the hooks, the fly-sucked sticks of licorice will not mix with the Paris green, the fine-cut chewing will not absorb the fulminating gun caps, the razors will not shave the whiskers off the moth-eaten yarn mittens, the needles in the show-case will not prick the toy gas balloons, the monkey wrenches will not chew the lumps of gum—so all is well for Nehemiah Nuggins to close up, go home and to his bed.

But he didn't close up and he didn't go.

"Nehemiah!" He started as he stood there with his hand upon the latch. He started, not because of fright, for he had lived too long among the ghosts of old things to be frightened. No; it was not fright that startled him.

It was because the voice was a familiar one; because it was the voice of one long since dead and gone, and laid away under the pines in the burial-ground upon the hillside back of the store.

Down the narrow stairs clambered a figure; he could not see it, but he could hear it. It came in sight. Yes; the same old face with the sharp lines about the eyes, and the pucker of the lips. The spare, bent figure walked to the end of the counter, with that same limp of twenty years ago. It leaned one arm upon the show-case, filled with the countless odds and ends of a store's stock of notions; the hand drummed upon the glass as nervously as of old, and the sound of rattling of the finger nails came to Nehemiah's ears as plainly as of yesterday, though he had not heard it for years and years. The other hand fumbled with the stiff stock encircling the long, lean neck, with its little line of flabby skin reaching from chin to Adam's apple. How familiar the old chap looked! not a speck more of dust upon his shiny coat, not a hair more gray in the fringe about the high, narrow forehead; the eyes were as bright and keen as ever, and when the thin lips opened the voice was just the same, sharp, clear, distinct:

"Nehemiah, son, are you glad to see me back again after my long journey?"

A shudder passed over the other; perhaps no man in all the world had ever been asked such a question before. Was he glad to see his father come back, who had been sleeping in the graveyard for twenty years? Curiosity was stronger than fear, and the son answered:

"I am glad to see you, though I never expected to meet you again."

"Yes, that's it, son; we are never expected to come back; but we do come back, sometimes, though we do not always reveal ourselves. Many a good bargain you have made, son, simply because I, your father, was at your elbow to prompt you. Of course, you never heard my whispers; that

would spoil our plans. You never dreamed, son, did you, that spirits had plans, eh?"

"No; can't say that I ever gave such a thought."

"Well, we do plan things; we do not have any work to do, you know; you poor, earth-bound creatures, clogged with the weight of mortality, do the work; but we plan just the same. We gather about tombstones in the time of night to arrange our plans; some have plans concerning war, peace, business, love, ambition, and some, I am sorry to say, have criminal plans, just the same as when they were on earth and alive. Nehemiah, I have come back after staying away from you for twenty years, to tell you of a great weakness that exists in your nature."

"Well, advice from such a judicious man as you were once—"

"And now remember, son, I am possessed of the same strong points that had such telling effect when I had this establishment in charge."

"I await your advice," uttered Nehemiah, as he drew nearer. And then he saw what he had failed to observe at a distance; at a distance, the figure of his father possessed the density of mortality; now, as he draws nearer, he sees that the face, form, limbs, hands are semi-transparent, and that objects back, and beyond, and beneath, show through the person of his father like things through a veil of thin smoke. And it seems very strange, startling and grotesque to note a rat-trap hanging from a peg right through the spirit's face; and it seems as strange, uncanny and bewildering to see fishhooks, fiddle-bridges and other notions appearing through his father's hands spread on the show-case. But ghosts will be ghosts, so why bother about it or question it? What he wants to know is, what is this particular weakness made mention of by his father?

"Nehemiah, did you ever give away anything in all your life?"

"He, he, he!" cackled the son, as the ridiculous idea came to him. "No! Why should I? This is all mine; paid for, and to sell again. I give away anything? Surely, I'd not be my father's own son if I should give away anything."

"Ah!" sighed the spirit—and a nickel-plated watch shown through his very mouth as he opened his lips. "That was my weakness, Nehemiah, my weakness. I was close-fisted, grinding, tight, cruel, mean, sordid. I was called a clever man at making a bargain; I never cheated a single human being out of a penny; yes, a very successful business man was I. But I never gave anything away. I never added one cent to help the poor store of charity; no loaves and fishes were dispensed by these hands to relieve the hunger and still the appeals of distress. I owned what I had; all was paid for; all was for sale and to be turned into money. I cannot rest now, my son; I did not think I was doing a wise thing when I stood at your elbow and prompted you to drive good and close bargains—always in your favor. I have changed my mind. Nehemiah, son, prosperous man that you are, I want you to help me out of my troubles. I want you to show some degree of charity toward humanity. Turn not a deaf ear toward the pleading of want; look not with cold, cruel, pitiless unconcern upon you; be ready to give some of your wealth to the poor and needy. Remember!"

Nehemiah had closed his eyes when his father began; it was a habit of his for with closed eyes he was better able to comprehend, draw conclusions, solve knotty points, and thus make things clear.

"Well, are you through, father?"

No answer greeted him. He opened his eyes. The figure had disappeared, but out of the gloom beyond came the one word:

"Remember!"

He shook himself together, pulled his hat over his brow, locked the door and passed on down the moonlighted street toward his bachelor quarters. What his dreams were it does not matter, only that they were not unpleasant, for before retiring he resolved to turn over a page in his life-book, wipe off the old slate and begin with a clean score in the morning.

Early the next morning Nehemiah almost startled a little girl out of her wits when he handed her an orange and said, kindly:

"Oranges are very good for little girls; here is your tea and change, and here is a box of cough-drops for your grandma."

And the child ran home with her treasures as rapidly as her little legs could take her.

All day long Nehemiah astonished the good people by giving things away; and in the evening he dropped in at the church parlor, where the parson's donation was held, and he deposited a check for fifty dollars, to help on the good cause; and the following day he loaded a wagon with provisions and sent a man to distribute it among the poor people of the place. And so he continued to give things away and do good; and the old stock in the store began to assume a new look, and trade became so large that he hired clerks, and was obliged to build a big block.

So Nehemiah Nuggins, once so close and grinding, became a man of charity, a man of high respect and honor in the community.

And the spirit of his father never came back again to remind him of a weakness.—H. S. KELLER.

"The trouble with a lot of long-haired geniuses," Mr. Taukaway says, "is that the insides of their heads never produce as well as the outsides do."

## THE MERE MAN'S VIEWPOINT

### A MAN'S MEMORY

By BYRON WILLIAMS



NO MEMORY.

MICHIGAN woman refuses to erect a monument to her husband's memory on the ground that he hadn't any. When she gave him a letter to mail he invariably forgot it. He left the back door unlocked and the water faucet open. He forgot to put out the cat and wind the clock. He failed not only to match a piece of dress goods, but he lost the sample, and many a time, she says, he stoutly denied ever promising to bring home the meat for dinner or telephoning the laundryman to call around and get the soiled linen.

In fact, the woman insists, this man had no more memory than professional borrowers of small sums for dire necessities at the club. His forgetter was as marked as a horse fly on the cranium of a baldheaded man, and his obstinacy when confronted with the bare facts in the case was most irritating.

Because of all this no monument marks the grave of this benedict who has passed on—no headpiece against which in spring one might lay fragrant bunches of violets; no footpiece upon which to set the tomato can vase filled with forgetmenots of the wildwood.

You, Mr. Man, with that letter in your pocket, take notice of this. Go through your clothes and make an investigation among the papers and envelopes. Possibly there is an epistle worn through at the edges, a letter to Aunt Katie asking her to come out and spend a month. If there is and you don't like down to the postoffice with it there may be no shaft to mark your last resting place in the quiet corner of the country churchyard.

It is queer how forgetful and trying men are at times. I know a man who forgot to register his wife at the hotel. It was on his honeymoon, and to turn it off as a joke he took the pen and wrote, "Me and my wife," paying in advance for a room and leaving the place at once.

I know another man who took his wife to the theater, went out to see a man between the acts, went home sober and forgot every blessed word about his better half ignominiously left behind until he found the house deserted.

The trouble with a man is that he never does as he is told. If he would obey wife when she says, "Now, don't you put that letter in your pocket; just hold it in your hand all the way to town!" he might not forget, unless he did like another friend of mine who boarded the electric car for the city, holding the letter at arm's length and looking at it much like the man of the cartoon who has a dotted line running from his eye to the object in question. I smiled when he muttered something about being sure to mail that letter for Lucille, and then we got to talking about the sewer. We are building one out in our town, or hope to, and this friend is very anxious to see the work completed.

When Brown got on and began to complain about taxes and improvements and talk graft and corruption in general my friend became excited. His excitement terminated in a lengthy and vigorous dissertation about tight-wads and reputation wreckers, in the perturbation of which he twisted and tore that letter into a half dozen pieces, dropping the remains a bent mendedly into the spittoon.

It was such a joke I kept my counsel, but the truth finally leaked out, and I ascertained from his wife that when he came home at night the following conversation took place:

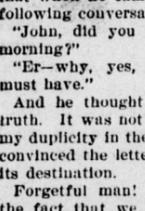
"John, did you mail my letter this morning?"

"Er—why, yes, Lucille. I—why, I must have."

And he thought he was telling the truth. It was not until I owned up to my duplicity in the matter that he was convinced the letter never had gone to its destination.

Forgetful man! If it were not for the fact that we know his life often is filled with worries and strenuously we should feel like forgetting to prepare his dinner now and then just to school him, but we know what he has to contend with, and we try to be merciful—that is, you, the ladies, do—and get along the best way we can without pouting or cross words.

HOLDING LETTER AT ARM'S LENGTH.



## REBELS CAPTURE TIA JUANA

Take Town in Lower California After a Long Fight.

Tia Juana, Lower California, near the California line, was captured by the insurgents after a fight which lasted a day and a night.

Many are dead and wounded on both sides. It is impossible to learn definitely how many have been killed, as the United States troops at the line refuse to allow any one to cross into the Mexican town.

The attack was a complete surprise to the federal forces. Confident that the flanking party of forty men sent out of Tia Juana had forced the rebels to retire, the defenders were resting in supposed security when the assault came. All but one or two of the federal flanking party are thought to have been killed or wounded. The federal force pressed on and was drawn into a trap and practically exterminated.

### Wealthy Man's Son Has Leprosy.

During a period of four years a sufferer from leprosy, yet in daily attendance at a public school during all of that time, Harry Sheridan, the fifteen-year-old Pawtucket, R. I., schoolboy, whose examination by experts at the Massachusetts General hospital revealed the true nature of his dread disease, faces the fate of his kind.

Virtually a prisoner in the home of his wealthy parents, about which policemen detailed from the Pawtucket force stand guard, the fact of his having been allowed to return to that

city at all has aroused the ire of Dr. Byron Uris Richards, Pawtucket's city physician, who is at a loss what to do.

As a matter of fact the boy was taken home by his father, Edward P. Sheridan, superintendent of the Lumb knitting mills and a man of considerable prominence in that city.

Either Penikese, the island of the living dead in Buzzards bay, on which Massachusetts maintains a camp for leper eviles, or Manila, where the government camp is, will be the boy's future home. At present he is with his parents and his brothers, unwitting of that utter desolation from his kind which fate holds in store for him.

### York Girls Want Western Husbands.

From information received in York, Pa., from the matrimonial editor of an Oklahoma paper, four pretty young girls of that city, ranging in age from eighteen to twenty-two years, have asked that the editor provide them with husbands in the far west. The young girls prefer wealthy farmers.

Their names are Mary Horner, Martha Walker, Mamie Riddick and Rebecca Doyle. Miss Horner is nineteen and says she is considered pretty. Miss Walker is eighteen and says she is affectionate and pretty. Mamie Riddick says she is nineteen, has brown hair, is pretty and weighs 122 pounds. She says "I am considered pretty."

Rebecca Doyle, the last of the quartet, is eighteen, weighs 125 pounds and is five feet tall. The girls are all young and apparently anxious. They seem to have taken a novel method in getting away from York.

### Danced Herself to Death.

Mrs. Bertha Gordon danced all the evening at a house party given by Lewis Rose, at Furman Lane, Patchogue, L. I.

Then she complained of exhaustion and sat down to rest. Her friends noticed that she looked white and was breathing hard. Suddenly she fell to the floor, apparently in a faint. Friends tried in vain to revive her and finally sent for Drs. W. Bennett and Charles Willis. They found the woman dead. They said she had succumbed to heart failure, the result of physical exhaustion; that she had literally danced herself to death.

### Lightning Scares Woman to Death.

Mrs. Wilmot Moulthrop, of Kenosha Lake, near Monticello, N. Y., was scared to death by a sudden flash of lightning. About two years ago her home was struck by lightning and destroyed, and since then she had been extremely nervous during any electrical storm. She was talking with a neighbor, when there was a flash and she sank back in a chair, dead.

### Pays \$25,500 For Luther Letter.

At an autograph sale in Leipzig, Saxony, a letter written by Martin Luther to Emperor Charles V. was bought by a Florence dealer for \$25,500.

The purchase is said to have been made for J. P. Morgan. The letter was written in 1521 during the reformer's return journey from the Diet of Worms, and, describing the proceedings, defended his attitude.

### Frightened by Ghost of Baby.

The sixteen prisoners confined in the county jail at Fairmont, Va., are in a state of terror owing to their belief that the place is haunted.

For several nights, they say, they have been unable to sleep owing to the mysterious cries of a baby. The source of the noise has not been ascertained.

### Five Children Burned to Death.

Five of the six children of Sanford Davis, a farmer of near Free Union, Albemarle county, Va., were burned to death when fire destroyed the Davis home. Davis and his wife and an infant escaped. The dead children ranged in age from three to fifteen years.

### Elopers Arrested.

Frances Vanderworx, an eighteen-year-old girl from Cedar Grove, near Montclair, N. J., and Edward Earle, an electrician, of Orange, N. J., were arrested in Danbury, Conn., as elopers. Earle is accused of abduction.

### Telephone Blunders.

"Have you any spare ribs?" was the question asked a Portland business man recently, when he took down the telephone receiver to answer a call. For a moment the business man thought he was the subject of some joke, but the sweet voice that asked the question reassured him, and he realized that there was some mistake, so he hastily answered:

"No, madam, I am not Adam, and I am not willing to give up one of my ribs for any purpose."

"Oh, I beg your pardon," was the prompt reply. "I thought I had Blank's meat market."

This incident brought forth a story about the chief of police of Oakland, Cal. Some years ago, when asked over the telephone if he had any brains, he grew furious and said some very impolite things to the lady who asked the question before he discovered that she wanted a butcher shop and not the chief of police.—Portland Oregonian.

### A Man Who Knew Everything.

Thiers, the French statesman, was a victim of many whimsies. None had stronger hold on him, says Mgr. Gabriel Hanotaux in "Contemporary France," than his desire to get everybody to recognize his universal competency.

Of an applicant for the post of director at the Sevres manufactory Thiers said:

"He is no more made for that part than I for"—and then he stopped.

"Ah, oh! M. Thiers," said his interlocutor, "you find it hard to say what you could not do."

"That's the truth! That's the truth!" cried the statesman gleefully.

One day Thiers said, speaking of a man who had been raised to a high function:

"He is no more suited for that office than I am to be a druggist. And yet," he added, catching himself up, "I do know chemistry!"

### Champion Egg Layers.

Many insects are extremely prolific. All of the order Hymenoptera, the bees and ants, lay large numbers, but they are easily exceeded by the order Plecoptera, the stone flies, one female of which deposits from 5,000 to 6,000 eggs. But the champion egg layers are the insects embraced in the order Isoptera, the white ants. Dr. Howard states that these insects are called white ants because they are not ants and because they are not white, but he further goes on to tell us that the females of some of the African species grow to an enormous size, and their abdomen, swollen with eggs, becomes as big as a large potato. The rate at which the eggs are laid is extraordinary, being about sixty a minute, or 80,000 and upward a day.

### Office of the Footman.

"I don't believe there is anything in that talk about Harlow being hard up," said Little Blake. "Why, he's just blossomed forth with a footman on his motor."

"Footman!" echoed Jinkinson derisively. "Footman is good! That isn't a footman. It's a deputy sheriff in charge of the car."—Harper's Weekly.

### Ancient Rome's Libraries.

The libraries of ancient Rome were immense and splendid. Lucullus, whose name is associated with table luxuries, expended much of his wealth on books. His library, says Plutarch, had "walks, galleries and cabinets open to all visitors." Julius Caesar proposed to open this library definitely to the public.

How were these vast libraries, in addition to the book shops, filled? With his trained staff of readers and transcribers, a publisher could turn out an edition of any work at very cheap rates, and almost at a moment's notice. There was no initial expense of typesetting before a single copy could be produced, no ruinous extras in the shape of printers' corrections. The manuscript came from the author; the publisher handed it over to his slaves, and if a book of modest dimensions, the complete edition could be ready, if necessary, within twenty-four hours. Actually, then, books were produced and sold more easily and quickly in ancient Rome than they are in modern London.—T. P.'s London Weekly.

### Girl Swallows Safety Pin.

Adeline Stevenson, the thirteen-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Stevenson, of Chester, Pa., swallowed an open safety pin while dressing. An X-ray examination failed to reveal the whereabouts of the pin.

### House Passes Free List Bill.

At the conclusion of a ten-hour session the house passed the Democratic free list bill by a vote of 230 to 169. Twenty-four Republicans and Representatives Berger, the Socialist, voted for the measure.

### Taft's Silver Wedding.

Fifty members of the Cincinnati Commercial club are going to Washington to help the President and Mrs. Taft celebrate their silver wedding anniversary on June 20. They will entertain the president at luncheon.

### GENERAL MARKETS

PHILADELPHIA — FLOUR weak; winter clear, \$3.25@3.50; city mills, fancy, 5.25@5.75.  
RYE FLOUR firm, at \$4.40@4.50 per barrel.  
WHEAT firm; No. 2 red, new, 92 @ 93c.  
CORN quiet; No. 2 yellow, 61½ @ 62c.  
OATS steady; No. 2 white, 39c.; lower grades, 37½c.  
POULTRY: Live firm; hens, 15 @ 15½c.; old roosters, 10 @ 11c. Dressed steady; choice fowls, 15c.; old roosters, 11c.  
BUTTER steady; extra creamery, 23½c. per lb.  
EGGS firm; selected, 19 @ 21c.; near-by, 18c.; western, 18c.  
POTATOES firm; per bush, 65 @ 70c.

### Live Stock Markets.

PITTSBURG (Union Stock Yards)—CATTLE higher; choice, \$6.15 @ 6.35; prime, \$5.90 @ 6.15.  
SHEEP higher; prime wethers, \$1.10 @ 1.25; culls and common, \$2 @ 2.50; spring lambs, \$6 @ 10; veal calves, \$6.50 @ 6.75.  
HOGS higher; prime heavies, \$6.20 @ 6.25; mediums, \$6.60 @ 6.65; heavy Yorkers, \$6.60 @ 6.65; light Yorkers, \$6.65 @ 6.70; pigs, \$6.65 @ 6.70; roughs, \$5 @ 5.40.

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