

LEFT IN CHARGE

By Phil Bryce

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"Now, Sadie," said Aunt Deborah Warner to her niece, who had come down from Chicago to pass a month at the old farmhouse, "you've got to drive to town this afternoon to sign some law papers. You'll be left all alone in charge for three or four hours. Do you think you'll be scared?"

"What will there be to scare me?" asked the girl of twenty, who was swinging in a hammock.

"Why, nothing at all. If a tin peddler comes along, you want to shake your head before he has time to get down from his wagon. If a tramp stops and opens the gate you must look as fierce as you can and motion him to pass on. If you see a mad dog you will run into the house of course, and if a robber tries to enter you just stand right up to him and tell him you've got a loaded gun in the house and know how to shoot."

"But is there a loaded gun?" asked Sadie as she slightly shivered at the thought.

"I guess that old gun behind the closet door in my bedroom has been loaded for the last ten years. Uncle Elisha kept it loaded for ovals before he died. Don't shoot a robber unless he comes to rob and can't be persuaded otherwise, and then shoot at his legs and give him a chance to lie and reform."

"But I must shoot if he refuses to go away?"

"You must. You must point the gun in his direction and shut your eyes, and don't faint away when you hear the report."

Half an hour after Aunt Deborah's departure a tin peddler drove up to the gate, but before he had hardly halted his rig Miss Sadie was shaking her head at the rate of forty shakes a minute. He called out that he had added mouse traps and washboards.

"ARE YOU A ROBBER OR ONLY A COMMON MAN?" INQUIRED THE GIRL.

to his regular stock, but forty more shakes discouraged him into passing on.

Twenty minutes later she heard the latch of the gate suddenly click, and she dumped herself out of the hammock to find a first class specimen of the Weary Willie advancing up the path. She motioned as Aunt Deborah had told her to. She motioned with both hands at once, but the tramp paid no attention. He was within five feet of her when she cried out:

"Stop where you are!"

"That's better," he said as he came to a halt. "I took it from your flinging your arms about that you had St. Vitus dance. Any cold witties which would suit?"

"St. Vitus?" commanded Sadie as she drew herself up. "I want you to understand that I have a gun!"

"Just so, little one."

"And it's loaded."

"Perfectly. A gun is as harmless as a rag doll when it isn't loaded. I'd like to change places with the gun for an hour or two."

"If you do not at once go away," continued Sadie in trembling tones, "I shall be under the painful necessity of shooting you."

"By ginger, but what a heroine!" laughed the tramp.

He understood the situation. He knew that she was alone and ready to be scared into a fit, but was making a brave bluff against her womanly weakness. There was a strain of chivalry in his composition. Stepping back and lifting his greasy old cap off his tousled hair he bowed and said:

"Fair miss, please observe that I gracefully retire and give you the victory."

When he had disappeared down the road Miss Sadie congratulated herself on her nerve and sat down on the steps of the veranda to look for a mad dog. Aunt Deborah had said a mad dog would come next. There was a nip somewhere, however, for it was a robber that showed up about forty minutes after the tramp's broad back had become only a dot against the sky line. The robber came from the west, walking in the middle of the highway. As he reached the barn, a few rods below the house, he turned in and was quickly lost to sight. Sadie waited with beating heart for ten minutes to see if he intended to advance upon the house from the barn and take her by surprise, but as time went on she made up her mind that he had come to steal hay or straw instead of household effects. He must be driven away just the same, and she was the only one to drive him. Aunt Deborah depended upon her.

It was another ten minutes before the girl could work up courage enough to go in after the old shotgun and drag it forth by its muzzle. But once armed she felt braver and made her way down the path to the barn, whose doors stood wide open to the summer wind and sunshine. She approached the stranger with a beating heart, and he was in ambush and ready to spring forth. But as she finally stood and looked into the barn she was considerably relieved to find the man lying at full length on a scant bed of hay. Robbers do not generally take a daylight nap before robbing, and though the man looked wayward and somewhat disreputable, his face as far as she could see was not evil looking. Perhaps he was not a robber.

"Are you a robber or only a common man?" inquired the girl at last as she looked at the man.

The man sat up and smiled in a slyly way and looked around with a bewildered air, and it was a minute before he vaguely replied:

TEAS THAT ARE WORTH FORTUNES

By Martha McCulloch-Williams

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Jess was churning down at the spring house and slugging like a lark the while. Her pink calico frock was turned up high in front, so high her feet were plainly visible—pretty feet, in spite of the scuffed shoes, smallish, well arched and light stepping, to say nothing of the slender ankles. The ankles matched the slender, taper wrists, but gave no hint of the dimple swelling arms revealed by sleeves rolled halfway to the shoulder.

Big, soft, new leafage hung down variable shadows on her bare head. She kept the dasher moving nimbly, now and again putting down her feet, as if to say, "I'm not tired, I'm not tired." The fact that China has not been a large exhibitor at world's fairs gives her great exhibit here a prominence quite exceptional. It is a wonderland of ingenious productions. We know China best by reason of her extensive exports of teas, which have found a vast market in the United States and throughout the world. Her commercial interests therefore prompted her to make a display of teas that we should not forget.

In sealed glass jars China displays in the Liberal Arts Palace some 1,200 kinds of tea. Young Hysan and Old Hysan have a string of tea relations longer than the genealogical chain of a Plymouth Rock. They are neatly selected "chops," in the language of the tea farmer, and these classes do not embrace medicinal teas, which are quite another lot in the rather modest number of 400.

The teas exhibited vary in price from a few cents a pound to some rare and exclusive kinds that are worth their weight in gold, the tea in the latter cases being placed on one side of the scales and pure gold on the other—that is to say, the tea of this expensive kind is worth about \$20 gold an ounce. Only a very small quantity of this exclusive leaf is exhibited, and it is grown in carefully guarded tea plantations or gardens right under the shadow of the great wall of China. Its cultivation is prohibited for any use save for the imperial family of China and a few of the favored high officials.

Mention has been made of the word "chop" in connection with tea, and it may be interesting to the everyday reader to know what the word actually signifies. The tea leaf is grown in various districts of the Chinese empire on

Improving a Cigar by Putting it Out.

Lighting a new Havana, a downtown professional man, after taking a few whiffs, blew into his cigar and forced a lot of smoke out of the fiery end. Then he laid it aside and permitted the spark to die out.

When asked for an explanation he said: "Well, I learned that habit some years ago, and find that a cigar which has been lit and then allowed to go out makes a much better smoke. I take several vigorous draws in order to bring the heat well through the weed. If a cigar becomes cold while it is saturated with smoke it has a musty odor; consequently it is necessary to blow steadily and quite hard before extinguishing the spark in order to clear out all the smoke that has been drawn in between the layers of tobacco. After permitting the cigar to lie ten or fifteen minutes or even a half hour I find on relighting it that the flavor has greatly improved. The why and wherefore I am not philosophical enough to explain, but I know it makes a better cigar. It also improves a toby. Try it and you'll agree with me."—Pittsburg Dispatch.

Pessimists on Man.

In his first novel, "Vivian Grey," written almost in boyhood, Disraeli writes: "The disappointment of manhood succeeds to the delusion of youth. Let us hope that the heritage of old age is not despair." While he writes thus in youth, with all the world before him, in his maturity he says in his finest novel, "Coningsby," "Youth is a blunder, manhood a struggle, old age a regret."

What has been called the most exquisite expression of pessimism is that of Sir William Temple, "When all is done human life is at the greatest and the best, but like a froward child that must be played with and humored a little to keep it quiet, it falls asleep, and then the cure is death."

Leopard, the Italian essayist, says, "Our divildest pleasures spring from illusions; hence it is that, while children find everything in nothing, men find nothing in everything."

The Air We Breathe.

In the novel, "The Great Gatsby," a broad beam of sunshine pours through the window of your sleeping apartment you see countless tiny particles floating along the path of the sunlight, but the air of the remainder of the room seems entirely clear and pure. Is it? Not at all. There is just as much dust in the air outside that stream of light as there is in it, but it is not visible. So the dust in the air is not visible, but it is there, and it is floating about us often when we are unconscious of their presence. Our vitality may be strong enough to render them innocuous or it may not. If it is, we retain our health; if it is not, we are attacked with typhoid or diphtheria or some other malarial communicated in this way.—Rochester Democrat and Chronicle.

Doctor and Dying Patient.

In an address before the American Medical Association an eminent physician, speaking on the question, "Shall I Physically Tell a Patient He is Going to Die?"

"The truth is not always so alarming to the patient, painful as it often is to the physician. In fact, it seems to me this is one part of our duties that does not become less trying with increasing experience. To the sick man whose thoughts have been turned toward the end and longer than others suspect, intimation of a fatal end often brings no shock, but rather relief from the ending of a painful uncertainty. According to the rulers of the Roman Catholic church a timely announcement should always be given, and those who have witnessed the last days of members of this faith can attest the statement that good often follows, speaking merely from a medical standpoint, and rarely harm, while the same thing is true of many other faiths or of no faith. Even where we have to give a fatal prognosis there are certain mollifying influences that can be introduced, aside from those that spring from a tender heart. A hope can be expressed based on the fallibility of human knowledge in general and medical knowledge in particular."

The Important Comma.

A Philadelphia business man thinks he has an exceedingly bright office boy, and nothing pleases him better, says the Philadelphia Telegraph, than to tell how he acquired the youngster's services. A short time ago he posted in his shop window a notice which read as follows: "Barn wanted, which would be good follow follows, speaking merely from a medical standpoint, and rarely harm, while the same thing is true of many other faiths or of no faith. Even where we have to give a fatal prognosis there are certain mollifying influences that can be introduced, aside from those that spring from a tender heart. A hope can be expressed based on the fallibility of human knowledge in general and medical knowledge in particular."

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And push the rock down stream," she commanded. "The current will help you if it is slow here in the pool. Now! All together! There! It's over. You can come out or stay in, as you choose. Be careful, though, if you stand on this side to fish—the bluff is all honey-combed with water veins since last winter. The next landslide may be heavy enough to bury you."

"There will be no next landslide with me around!" Beckley said, scrambling out. "I ought to have known better. Be careful, though, if you stand on this side to fish—the bluff is all honey-combed with water veins since last winter. The next landslide may be heavy enough to bury you."

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