

AUTUMN SUNSET.

Across the wheatfields o'er the western hill. The blood-red sun is sinking crimson bright. Along the valley floods the sunset light, And then reflected from below, until The whole wide sky the sunset colors fill— And on old woodlands far along the right Steals down the deeper glades the approaching night, And down the vale where glides the glimmering rill. Along the west the fields of ripening grain Stretch over dale and upland, hill and plain, And, tossing plumed heads of golden green, Drink the rich pure nectar drops that run From the upturned goblet of the sun, And mix their golden with its crimson sheen. —James T. Shotwell, in Toronto Week.

Closer Than a Brother.

BY BURT JOHNSON.

PERCIVAL WARELEY seemed to exist only to enjoy life and to make life enjoyable to others, and by all who knew him it was admitted that he succeeded wonderfully in his chosen duties. He never was seen without a cheerful expression on his face, and although he was not at all brilliant, his conversation was so thoroughly in keeping with his countenance that almost any one was glad to exchange a few words with him. Some young men, when they heard Percival's praises sounded by young women, insisted that they could be quite as agreeable and light-hearted as the popular youth had they nothing to do but enjoy life and spend the money that a busy father had saved for an only son. Probably they were mistaken, for Percival was not the only young man in New York who had plenty of money and no business occupation, yet some of the others looked quite as dull and unhappy as the poorest people they met on the street.

Nothing, though, in this imperfect world seems quite as it should be, so there was a drawback to the entire enjoyment of any one who sought Percival Wareley's society, and who were willing to help him spend his money. It was the young man's closest friend, Mr. Henry Drock. This person was at least fifteen years the senior of young Wareley, who was only twenty-four, and he took all the pleasures of the rich so calmly that people wondered if he enjoyed them at all.

Yet Percival seemed fonder of him than of any other man and took him wherever he went, introducing him into society and proposing him at clubs as if there was no doubt that others would enjoy Mr. Drock's society quite as much as Percival himself. People will stand a great deal from young men who are rich as well as agreeable, so Drock was endured politely, some middle-aged people remarking that there was 100 times as much to him as to Percival himself, for the fellow seemed entirely sensible, and could talk fairly well upon the affairs of the day, whereas Percival's interest in anything which did not produce amusement in large quantities were limited.

Meanwhile, that Drock reciprocated his young friend's regard could not be doubted for an instant. No matter how uninteresting anything might seem to the older man, his eye never rested upon Percival without displaying an active and honest fondness. Some people were mean enough to suggest that Drock's regard was that of a well-kept dog, and for the same reason; but Percival had insisted at one time, when conversation chanced to be about his friend, that Drock was one of the hardest men in the world to do a favor to, for his tastes were few and his means ample.

Young women of the class that says anything that comes to mind had expended much curiosity and some questions upon the couple, but all they learned was that Drock had known his young friend from early boyhood, and always liked him; he had first met his father had found a wife, and where the family spent a month or two of every year. He said he never had met a better-natured, more open-hearted young man, and such qualities being scarce, he liked and respected them accordingly. It did him (Drock) a lot of good to see a young person enjoy life so heartily and persistently, instead of turning against it on being satiated with pleasure, and he thought it did men good, anyway, to be sometimes in the society of men younger than themselves.

Drock evidently meant all he said, but his fondness for Percival did not meet the approval of some men and women who wanted Percival to become fond of them. Young and impressionable men who are rich in their own right and scarce in any society, so there were handsome women some years older and a hundred times smarter than Percival Wareley who would gladly have married the young man for his money.

Likewise there were scores of men, young and old, who would have given their very souls to coax the youth and his money into business with them, even if their highest ideal of business was to get ahead of the bookmakers at the race tracks, or to try some "system" on the proprietors of other gambling establishments. But Drock was always in the way; he never talked business himself and seemed to have no business training.

To see Percival without Drock was next to impossible, for the two men kept bachelor's hall together, and no amount of contriving sufficed to get Drock out of the way while Percival should be "let into" some grand money-making scheme "on the ground floor."

Ladies fared rather better, for Percival's bosom friend was not an eavesdropper, yet the women who were headed had no faith in ever resuming their blameworthy just where they had dropped them at the end of a chat, for they felt sure that Percival unbosomed himself to his friend, and that Drock's counsel would go a long way with a young man so impressionable and so entirely destitute of obstinacy.

Desperate cases require desperate remedies, so a couple of experienced and businesslike belles one day formed an alliance for the purpose of securing Percival and his money; one of them was to marry Drock, who himself, according to the younger man, was well off, and then to bring her bosom friend and her husband's together at her own house. It was a well laid plan, and neither woman doubted that it would succeed for each, just for fun, had brought dozens of men to her feet; it failed, however, through Drock's utter inability to perceive that a handsome woman was making love to him—he was so stupid about it as to spare her the mortification of thinking herself deliberately rejected.

It was a great disappointment, aside from the financial loss, for the belle had been in society long enough to have learned that a matter-of-fact fellow without any views was the most satisfactory material from which to make a model husband, especially if he had the virtue of constancy to the degree which Drock manifested in his regard for Percival.

A month or two later all the men raged, for Drock and his young friend went into business together as partners. The theory that Drock intended himself to get all of Percival's money was spoiled by the new firm securing as confidential office manager a man who occupied a similar position for many years with Percival's father.

The partners in the new firm took business cares lightly, but while at the office or on the street they still were almost inseparable, going downtown together and lurching together. Then society and every one else who wanted anything from Percival would have given up had not the young man still spent his money freely; he gave yachting parties and coaching parties in good style, and seemed to delight in seeing people enjoy themselves; but one condition of the enjoyment remained, that Drock should be one of the party. Still, this slowly became less a penalty than a pleasure to people who regarded the younger partner as anything but a gold mine to be worked by any one who could get at it, for Drock slowly but surely took to city ways and manners, until he became quite as good company as most of the men of leisure who helped women to kill time.

Suddenly, however, the fateful day that awaits any young man was reached by Percival Wareley, the fate taking the form of a young woman whom Percival thought far prettier and sweeter than any other. So quickly did the affair take shape that society did not have an inkling of it until the engagement was announced, for the lady, although well born and well-to-do, was of a retiring disposition and out of the rather lively set into which the accident of birth and of a gayety loving mother had placed Percival.

The society that had known and enjoyed Percival did not intend to be robbed of him, for if the young man had done so much entertaining while a bachelor, what could he not do when he had an establishment of his own? Mrs. Wareley was suddenly loaded with attentions and overwhelmed with calls from ladies who knew her yet had rather ignored her in earlier days as being dreadfully uninteresting and spiritless.

Sad to relate—but the truth must be told—several determined efforts were made to break the match on the principle that a young man who has broken with one girl is easier than any other to snap up. Then, however, Drock, who had become rather an old story, resumed his original prominence, and some spiteful maidens wondered whether he was present during all the formalities and delights of courting.

There was one place where he could not be, women thanked their stars, and that was at the house of the young man's intended during the hours in which women exchanged calls; all of the fair sex, therefore, who owed him grudges did their best, in their own skillful manner, to excite curiosity and suspicion in the mind of the young lady who had secured the great catch of the season, and they succeeded far enough to prompt her to make many inquiries which seemed to annoy Percival, whose general answer was only that when he liked any one he liked with all his might, and never changed, as the bride would find out to her own satisfaction. He also said that Drock had long been known and trusted by the elder Wareley, and a son ought to be allowed to be fond of a man whom his father had liked, no matter how strangers might object.

"But," said Percival's fiancée one evening, in a tone which sounded as if there was a flood of tears impending, "some of the girls insist that you won't be able to live without him, even after we're married. I don't want any other man beside my husband in the house all the while."

"The girls don't know anything about it, my dear," the young man replied assuringly. "You shall be ruler of the house and no one shall come into it, not even my dearest friend, except when you like. Drock thinks too much of me to offend any one whom I love. Besides, he's very hav-

my sake, that I'm going to marry such a love of a girl, and I've heard such say, over and over again, that the happiest husbands and wives are generally those who see least of other people.

"But how is he going to get accustomed to the change, after having been closer than a brother to you for several years?"

"I'm sure I don't know. Perhaps he'll follow my example and take a wife. To tell the truth, I—well, I'll tell you some other time."

"Oh Percival! A secret! You're keeping something from me."

"Only for a little while, and I assure you there's nothing dreadful about it—it will make you laugh when you hear it, I'm sure."

"When will you tell me?"

"Just as soon as we're married my dear; husbands and wives mustn't have any secrets from each other—so Drock himself says, and I'm sure he knows."

The young woman would no more have repeated this conversation to any one than she would have drowned herself before trying on her wedding dress, but somehow the impression was passed from one to another that there really was some secret behind the inseparable companionship of Drock and Percival.

So male gossips tried at once to extract from Drock himself, but that honest fellow met all the insinuations by the assertion that Percival was a real good fellow—the cleanest hearted young man he knew—and that no one was gladder than Drock that he was about to get a sweet and trustworthy wife, and to be as happy as he deserved.

Drock kept close to the young man right up to the wedding day, which was also the twenty-fifth anniversary of Percival's birth. He even acted as "best man" at the ceremony, during which he looked as happy as if he were not giving away a friend. When the young couple were at last securely bound together for life and had escaped from the church to the seclusion of their carriage, Percival's attempt to kiss the bride again was frustrated by a small but determined hand, as the young woman said:

"Not until you've told me the secret about Drock."

"Oh, I don't want you to laugh at me so soon after marrying me. Do let me wait a few days."

"No—not even a few minutes. You promised to tell me as soon as we were married."

"Very well, then; I'll keep my word, although there's really nothing to it. You see, when I came of age my father declared that I hadn't sense enough to go in when it rained. Wasn't that funny?"

"No; I think 'twas real horrid."

"Well, dear, perhaps he was right. You see, he was a very matter-of-fact man, while mother, although as good as gold, was a gay, thoughtless, careless creature, and every one said I was her right over again. She had died a year or two before I came of age, and father failed rapidly a year or two after, and had lots of money, and I was the only child, and he was afraid I'd go to the bad. He had no relations to leave me to, but he remembered Drock as a man who had always seemed very fond of me when I was a boy up in the country, where mother came from.

"One day he sent for Drock and had a long talk with him, and then he told me he had turned as much as possible to Drock to give me when I reached my twenty-fifth year, if I'd previously acted according to his advice, and formed no habits of friendship of which Drock did not approve. I was to be allowed to spend all the money I liked in any decent way, but not a cent on any sort of vice or dissipation."

"Drock has really been your keeper then," said the bride, instead of your friend, as every one has supposed?"

"Really, my dear, he has been a big-hearted, sweet-tempered friend, in spite of his position, and, as I look back, I suspect that I tried his patience awfully at times. To tell the truth, as I got some sense, little by little, my patience was tried, too—not by anything he did or said, but because I really seemed unfit to go about without a keeper. But Drock did his best by me, and I—"

"And you turned out so well," said the bride, suddenly volunteering a little shower of kisses, "that I think all rich young men should be treated just like you, and not be allowed to run at large without some sensible person to take care of them."—Once a Week.

How the Apple Tarts Went. Meyer, the confectioner, stood behind his counter and gazed sadly at the huge pile of apple tarts which were beginning to grow stale, for during the last few days business had been unaccountably slack. Suddenly he be-thought himself of a plan. Sitting down to his desk he wrote out the following advertisement and sent it to the newspaper office:

REV. DR. TALMAGE'S SERMON ONLY ONE LIFEBOAT

That Will Safely Carry Your Soul From This World's Wreck.

TEXT: "From the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat and let her fall off."—Acts xxvii, 32.

While your faces are yet somewhat bronzed by attendance on the international boat coast to the different seas, and instead of your leaving this life you may become a prima donna, or a robin, or a gazelle, or a sot, or a prize fighter, or a Herod, or a Jezabel, and so be enabled to have great variety of experience, rotating through the universe, now rising, now falling, now shot out in a straight line and now describing a parabola, and on and on, and up and up, and down and down, and round and round. Don't you see? Now, that theosophic lifeboat has been launched, it proposes to take you by the neck of your neck, and to ever-lastingly quietude. How do you like the lifeboat? My opinion is you had better imitate the mariners of my text and cut off the ropes of the boat and let her fall off.

Another lifeboat tempting us to enter is made of many planks of good works. It is really a beautiful boat—amusing, practical, and sympathetic for human suffering, righteous words and righteous deeds. I must admit I like the looks of the plank, and of the rowlocks and of the paddles, and so be enabled to have great variety of experience, rotating through the universe, now rising, now falling, now shot out in a straight line and now describing a parabola, and on and on, and up and up, and down and down, and round and round. Don't you see? Now, that theosophic lifeboat has been launched, it proposes to take you by the neck of your neck, and to ever-lastingly quietude. How do you like the lifeboat? My opinion is you had better imitate the mariners of my text and cut off the ropes of the boat and let her fall off.

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by one of these mysterious beings from central Asia. The gentleman knew it from the fact that the mysterious being left his pocket handkerchief embroidered with his name and Asiatic residence. The most wonderful achievement of the theosophists is that they keep out of the insane asylum. They prove the truth of the statement that no religiously ever announced was so absurd but it gained disciples.

Societies in the United States and England and other lands have been established for the promulgation of theosophy. Instead of needing the revelation of a Bible you can have these spirits from a cave in central Asia take you by the neck of your neck, and to ever-lastingly quietude. How do you like the lifeboat? My opinion is you had better imitate the mariners of my text and cut off the ropes of the boat and let her fall off.

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shipwrecked crawled up on the beach to die unless some one happened to walk along of some fishermen's hut might be near. But after one ship Arcturion was wrecked at Squan Beach, and the Powhattan left her 896 dead strewn along our coast, and another vessel went on the rocks, 493 lives perished. The United States government woke up and made an appropriation of \$200,000 for life stations, and life lines from fak-

linx box are shot over the wild sea. The government has stationed a lifeboat on shore and what with Lyle's gun and six oared surfboat, with cork at the sides to make it unsinkable, and patrolmen all night long walking the beach until they meet each other and exchange metal tickets, so as to show the entire beach has been traversed, and the Coast Light flashes hope from shore to sufferer, and earnestly in Merri-man life saving dress, and life car rolling on the ropes, there are many probabilities of rescue for the unfortunate of the sea. But the government of the united heavens has made better provision for the rescue of our souls. So close by that this moment we can put our hand on its top edge, and it is this gospel lifeboat. It will not take you more than a second to get into it.

But while in my text we stand watching the mariners with their cutlasses prepared to sever the ropes of the lifeboat and let her fall off, notice the poor equipment. Only one lifeboat. Two hundred and seventy-six passengers. But he counted them, and only one lifeboat. My text uses the singular and the plural, "Cut off the ropes of the boat." I do not suppose it would have held more than thirty people, though loaded to the water's edge.

I think by marine law all our modern vessels have enough lifeboats to hold all the crew and all the passengers, and in fact they do, but the marines of my text were standing by the only boat, and that a small boat, and yet 276 passengers. But what thrills me through and through is that the marines were wrecked by sin and trouble and there is only one lifeboat, that boat is large enough to hold all who are willing to get into it. The gospel hymn expresses it, "In that lifeboat, my dear, whoever will."

This Man receives poor sinners still. I must haul in that statement a little. Room for all in that lifeboat. With just one exception. Not you—I do not mean you, there is one exception. There have been cases where ships were in trouble, and the captain got all the passengers and crew into the lifeboats, but there was not room for the captain. He, through the sea trumpet, shouted, "Shove off now and pull for the beach. Good-by." And then the captain, with pathetic and sublime self-sacrifice, went down with the ship. So the Captain of our salvation, Christ the Lord, launches the gospel lifeboat and tells us all to get in, but He perishes.

"It behooved Christ to suffer." Was it not so, ye who witnessed His agonizing expiration? Simon of Cyrene, was it not so? Cavalry troops, was it not so? The nails at the crucifixion, was it not so? Ye Marys who swooned away with the sun of the midday heavens, was it not so? By His stripes we are healed. By His death we live. By His sinking in the deep sea of suffering we get off in a safe lifeboat. Yes, we must put into this story a little of our personality. We have a right in that very lifeboat from fonder craft to solid shore.

Once on the rescue sea I rowed. The ocean yawned and ragedly blew! The wind in gusts and in gusts blew! But I got into the gospel lifeboat and I got shore. No religious speculation for me. These higher criticism fellows do not bother me a bit. You may ask me fifty questions about the gospel lifeboat, but I cannot answer, but one thing I know, I am ashore, and I am going to stay ashore, if the Lord by His grace will help me. I feel of the lifeboat, and I feel that I try it with my right foot, and try it with my left foot, and then I try it with both feet, and it is so solid that I think it must be what the old folks used to call the Rock of Ages.

And my remaining days on earth many or few I am going to spend my time in remembering the lifeboat, and in swinging the cutlasses to sever the ropes of any unsafe lifeboat and let her fall off. My hearer, without a religious speculation, get into the gospel lifeboat. Room! and yet there is room! The biggest boat on earth is the gospel lifeboat. You must remember the proportion of things. The sea is a place of wrecked craft is the whole earth, and the lifeboat must be in proportion.

You talk about your Campanias, and your Lucanias, and your Majestic, and your New York, and all of them put together are smaller than an Indian's canoe on Schron Lake compared with this gospel lifeboat, that is large enough to take in all the people that are ever on earth for all. Get in! "How? How?" you ask.

Well, I know how you feel, for summer before last, on the sea of Finland, in the same experience. The ship in which we sailed could not venture nearer than a mile from shore, where stood the Russian palace of Peteroff, and we had to get into the lifeboat. The sea was rough, and as we went down the ladder at the side of the ship we held firmly on to the railing, but in order to get into the boat we had to let go of the railing.

How did I know that the boat was good and that the oarsmen were sufficient? How did I know that the Finland Sea would not swallow me up with its crystal jaws? We had to trust, and we did trust, and our trust was well rewarded. In the same way you get into this gospel lifeboat. You are smaller than an Indian's canoe on Schron Lake compared with this gospel lifeboat, that is large enough to take in all the people that are ever on earth for all. Get in! "How? How?" you ask.

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