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H. T. Miller.

REPORTS

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HER HUMBLE LOVER

"First, a bunch of wild rose, that means 'beauty;' then some ox-eyed daisies—I don't know what that means then some bluebells—they mean 'happiness' and then——"

"Oh, here's papa!" breaks in Archie, as the rector comes round the corner, looking very hot in his long, clerical coat and black, billy cock hat.

Signa starts, but Hector Warren looks up calmly enough, and goes on with the bouquet composedly.

"And then the primrose—that means 'purity;' yes, it will be a pretty posy——"

"Signa!" exclaims the rector, who has reached the group, and stands staring at the coatless figure of Hector Warren with bewildered amazement and disapproval.

"Good-morning, Mr. Podswell," says Hector Warren, just glancing up from his occupation.

"Good—er—morning," responds the rector, taken aback by the cool, impressive tone, and staring at Hector Warren's shirt sleeves.

"What a lovely morning, isn't it?" says that gentleman. "Archie and I are concocting a bouquet of wild flowers, simply, as you see— for Miss Grenville."

And he climbed that big tree to get some leaves," says Archie, solemnly pointing to the pine.

"Good gracious!" ejaculates the rector, staring open-mouthed. "Er—Signa I came to look for you. It is time you got ready."

"One moment," says Hector Warren, calmly; "the bouquet will be finished directly. Warm, is it not?" and his dark eyes lift themselves from his work for a moment.

"Yes—yes," assents the rector. "But—er—Signa, your aunt will be waiting," he says, still unable to drag his eyes from the shirt-sleeves.

"Another minute will complete it," says Hector Warren, quietly. "I hope Mrs. Podswell is none the worse for last night's festivities."

"No—no," says the rector, staring at him. "Come, Signa."

"There," says Hector Warren, handing her the bouquet and looking up at the rector's disturbed countenance with a smile. There is Archie's offering, Miss Grenville, with all its meaning."

Signa takes it, and her face crimsons, for there is a significance in his voice which does not reach the rector.

"Thank you," she says, hurriedly, "but I am still sorry that you should have had so much trouble——"

He waves her regret away.

"It was nothing," he says, and he reaches for his coat and slips it on, "A mere nothing. Are you going——"

"Miss Grenville is going to Sir Frederic Blyte's," says the rector, stiffly.

Hector Warren nods.

"I hope she will enjoy herself. Good-morning," and he takes up his weather-beaten deerstalker.

The rector doffs his billy-cock stiffly, but Signa holds out her hand, and the white fingers that, white as they are, helped the owner to climb the biggest pine in Northwell, close over her hand.

"Good-bye," he says, in his soft, grave voice, "and a pleasant day," and patting Archie on the head, he strides away toward the Grange.

Signa fingers her bouquet as only a woman can touch flowers, and the rector stands staring after the tall, graceful figure disappearing in the distance.

"What an er—extraordinary man!" he exclaims at last. "Did he really climb that tree, Signa?"

"Yes, he did," says Signa, examining her bouquet.

"And without his coat," says the rector, in tone of mild horror.

"Without his coat," says Signa, smiling.

"Extraordinary," says the rector. "Really, I cannot make this Mr. Hector Warren out; one would think a friend of Lord Delamere's would be—er—more civilized. Archie, run on and play. Most extraordinary, Signa."

"Yes," says Signa, so calmly and quietly, that the rector begins to feel embarrassed.

"I—er"—he says—"I think that you had better avoid this Mr. Warren's acquaintance. We don't know anything about h im, excepting Lord Delamere's letter says, and a man who—er—climbs trees in his shirt sleeves can't be a man worth knowing. We must be careful, Signa. We owe a duty to society."

Signa's face flushes slowly, and there comes a light into the dark eyes that ought to warn the rector he is treading on dangerous ground.

"Is there any sin against society in a gentleman's obtaining a spray of pine, although he has to climb a tree" —and she looks up at it—"to get it, and in his shirt-sleeves?" with a smile.

The rector rubs his chin.

"Er—well, not exactly, if you put it that way; a gentleman may do eccentric things—"

"Do you mean to infer that Mr. Warren is not a gentleman?" she asks, with mild surprise and amazement.

The rector reddens—even he cannot go as far as that; if ever a man bore the outward and visible sign of the patrician order, this stranger who calls himself Hector Warren does.

"I—er—can't say that," he says; "but there are gentlemen and gentlemen. For instance, Sir Frederic Blyte, now; there is one we should call a gentleman—a baronet, a man of position and wealth, of—er—vast influence. There can be no doubt about his position."

"I am sure Sir Frederic feels none," says Signa, with a smile about the corners of her lips.

"Certainly not," admits therector, who is slow to recognize irony—"certainly not. But this Mr. Warren, he is a well-mannered—er—person, extremely distinguished-looking, no doubt; but it is not a question of manners. Er—as a rule, I believe adventurers have the best of manners."

"If Mr. Warren is an adventurer they certainly have," says Signa, quietly.

"Just so," resumes the rector, as if she had fulyl agreed with him. "But who is he? We know nothing of him. He is a friend of Lord Delamere's, but Lord Delamere is—ahem—I do not like to allude to such a subject, but you heard the story Lady Rookwell told us last night?"

"Which may be true or false."

"If it was false why didn't Mr. Warren, his lordship's friend, contradict it?"

Signa is silent, and the rector, a little triumphant, goes on.

"At any rate, Lord Delamere is—er—eccentric, and not very particular whom he chooses for his acquaintances; he is just the sort of man to make friends of some fellow traveler, caring nothing whether he is an adventurer or not. This Mr. Warren may be a—er—an opera singer, or something disreputable of that sort; Lord Delamere wouldn't care! He would, if all they say of him be true, fraternize with a traveling tinker. Ah, even give him such a letter as this Mr. Warren brought me. You see how much his lordship cares about his ancestral home," pointing to the deserted Granbe—"he would have no scruple in placing it at the disposal of the first chance acquaintance."

It was a long speech for the rector—he reads his sermons—and he feels rather proud of it.

"What do you wish me to do then?" asks Signa, turning over the flowers in her bouquet, and lingering on the sprays of pine with a wistful thoughtfulness.

The rector coughs.

"Er—er—" he says, hesitatingly. "Don't be too friendly with this stranger," he says. "He will be gone in a day or two, perhaps"— Signa's head sinks lower—"and it will be all right. Come, my dear child," and the rector puts on a bland, paternal smile, "consider my advice. You are young and—er—inexperienced. You are in my and your aunt's charge, and —er—your future happiness is a serious responsibility"—"since last night" he ought to have adedd. "Come, you will do as we wish, my dear?"

"I cannot 'cut' Mr. Warren," says Signa, her gray eyes lifted to the rector's commonplace face with a troubled gaze.

"Certainly not—certainly not!" says the rector, with a mild horror. "That would be—er—unchristianlike — to hsay nothing of running the risk of offending Lord Delamere!" Signa smiles. "What I mean is, don't encourage him."

"Encourage him!" says Signa, her eyes wide open with maidenly indignation.

"Dear me—er—there is no occasion to snap my nose off!" says the rector, nervously, for there is something in these gray eyes that make his small soul shrink. "I—er—mean don't be too familiar."

"Ihave promised to go with him to the bay—down there," says Signa, in her quiet, straightforward fashion, "with Archie," she adds.

The rector rubs his chin.

"Make some excuse and don't go," he says, promptly.

Signa's eyes flash with a fine scorn.

"If there was one lesson my father taught me more earnestly than another, it was not to break a promise," she says, in a low voice. "He said it was the beginning of dishonor and the refuge of a coward."

The rector ruddens.

"Well, well," he says, shamefacedly. "If you have promised, I suppose—er—you must go, but I don't know what your aunt will say, I'm sure. Perhaps" —coloring and looking down nervously—"perhaps we'd better not say anything about it to her."

Signa smiles.

"That is as you wish," she says, simply.

The rector nods timidly.

"Yes, better not, perhaps. Ah! here's the carriage. Run and get your hat, my dear."

CHAPTER IX.

"You have come, then?"

It is Hector Warren who speaks, and he stands at the end of the lane opening on to the beach, looking up at the two figures running down toward him—for pedestrian exercise generall ymeans runnng with Archie; walking, he says, is waste of time.

"Yes, we have come," says Signa, her face flushed with the run, her gray eyes violet and beaming brightly, so brightly that Hector Warren's catch their reflection, as it seems. "Oh, yes, we have come, but are we not late? I had to hold a skein of wool for Mrs. Podswell—a long skein, wasn't it, Archie? Never mind—that is, if you don't?"

"I should not mind waiting any time," he says, quietly, and giving her his hand to help her over the rocks.

"I want you to come round the head here. It is from that point you can see the view. Shall I carry you, Archie?"

"Certainly not," says Archie, gratefully. "You had better carry Signa, perhaps; girls always slip."

"Thanks, Archie," says Signa, with a smile, "but I can trust to my feet quite as well as you can. Oh, how beautiful!" she exclaims, as, turning the corner, they come full upon the open sea, where the river runs into it, and the white-tipped waves are rushing in over the bar. "Oh, beautiful!" and she shades here eyes, and drinks it in with a long, steady gaze.

"I thought you would say so," he responds, just glancing at the view, then letting his eyes rest on her face with an unrestrained admiration. "Yes, beautiful!" he murmurs, absently.

"And how fresh and bright the sea looks this morning," says Signa, a little wistfully. "Look at those boats sailing up the river. Ah! I have not seen anything like this since I left Geneva."

He is silent for a moment, then he points to a boulder at her feet.

"Will you wait here for a moment or two?" he says. "I want to speak to the man at the house there."

Signa nods and looks around. There is a house, built of some portion of a ship, perched high upon the shore, with the ribs of an unfinished vessel rising behind it, like the skeleton of a whale one sees at museums.

Hector Warren climbs the bank, threading his way between huge banks of timber, and has some talk with the ship-builder, a bronze-faced man with a beard, who stands at the door of his strange-looking house, leaning upon his axe; and after a few moments Hector Warren comes back to her.

"Would you like a sail?" he says.

Signa looks up quickly, but Archie spares her the trouble of replying.

"Of course she would, Mr. Warren," he says. "Didn't you see her looking at the boats?" and he dances about eagerly.

"I did," replies Hector Warren, smiling. "Will you come? We will not go far; the water is quite smooth."

"Oh, I am not afraid!" says Signa, eagerly. "I am a good sailor, but——"

"Don't be afraid of me," says Archie, proudly. "I'm never ill. I used to go out with Whitefield's boy—that's Whitefield, with the axe—oh, in awfully rough weather! I shan't be ill."

"I was thinking," hesitates Signa, "whether——"

"Whether Mrs. Podswell will be alarmed?" he says.

Signa laughs faintly at the idea of that lady being alarmed by any person's safety except her own.

"I think we can go," she says.

"Of course," exclaims Archie, confidently. "I'll help you get the boat, Mr. Warren," and he clutches his hand eagerly.

Signa watches the two men and the boy drag and push the boat into the water; notices, half absently, the skill and strength with which the tall, stalwart figure does his part of the work; then she gets up and goes down to them. Whitefield touches his cap as she approaches.

"I'll get a cushion for the young lady, sir," he says, "and here's an oilskin, if she'll take 'un; there may be a shower," and he looks up at the sky with a knowing eye.

Hector Warren arranges the cushion in the stern of the boat; Archie climbs in, scorning to accept any assistance, and Signa, not so proud, follows and takes her place.

"Quite sure you can manage 'un, sir?" inquires Whitfield, as Hector Warren climbs in as the boat glides off.

"Quite, thanks," he answers, quietly. "You are not afraid to trust yourself to my seamanship?" he asks, with a smile.

Signa, watching him handle the sails, laughs, confidently, though she knows no more about the management of a boat than the general run of her sex; but there is something in Hector Warren's quiet air of self-command that inspires confidence; and if he had asked her if she would trust herself to him in a balloon or in a diving-bell under the sea, she would answer "Yes" just as readily.

"That is all right," he says; "now, then, you shall be captain. Take the tiller in your hand—so," and his hand closes over hers. "That's it! and when I say right or left—I should say 'port' or 'luff,' if you knew what I meant—move it in the direction I tell you. Now, Archie, come out of the way of the sheet, and coil your small body just there," and as Archie, laughing with infinite glee, obeys, Hector drops down at Signa's feet with the sheet in his hand.

A turn at the helm and the sails take the wind, and, like a bird skimming through the azure heavens, the boat glides over the sunny waters. The delight of it my poor pen cannot picture, and will not attempt it; suffice it that it brings the color to Signa's cheeks, the light to her eyes, and makes her feel as if she must sing, or laugh, or both; while Archie, with his chin perched on his fingers, stares with admiring awe at the quiet figure prone at Signa's feet, with all that broad expanse of sail at his command, and answering to his touch.

"This," says Signa, emphatically, "is simply the perfection of locomotion. I had no idea sailing was like this. One reads of it in books, where no doubt the poor author tries to describe it, but one never realizes it—never. It is like riding on the back of a great white bird—only that one has the sea instead of the air. How sweetly it smells, and—oh, I cannot describe it; but one feels as if one had left all the world and its troubles behind, and were happy, happy at last!"

"Perhaps you would get tired of this——"

"Oh, no!"

"In time. But I am glad you enjoy it; and how did you enjoy yourself yesterday?" And he looks up at her. "Press a little to the right, please—that's it. Was Blyte Park as fine as you expected?"

Signa laughs. This morning she feels so happy and light hearted, so—alas! for her promise to the rector!—so familiar with this stranger, that she answers as openly as if she had known him all her life.

"Oh, yes; it was a grand place," she says, pushing her hat from her face, and unconscious that every thoughtless gesture of hers meets with a responsive thrill in his heart; he sits so calm and quiet, how should she guess?

"Oh, yes, very grand, and in the most perfect order. I felt as if we were committing a breach of the proprieties when I saw the marks our carriage wheels had made on the drive. It was like—like polished granite—not a stone out of place."

"Not like the Grange" with a faint smile.

"Ah, the poor Grange!" she says, with a little sigh. "No, not a weed, not so much as a speck of grass. And the house was the same; so were the stables—everything sparklingly clean; the stable tools were polished like silver. Sir Frederic said that he walked through the stables every morning, and that if he saw anything dirty he just threw it out into the yard, and if he had to do it twice, he discharged the man whose duty it was to keep the article clean. I don't think"—musingly—"that I should like to take service under Sir Frederic Blyte."

(To be continued.)

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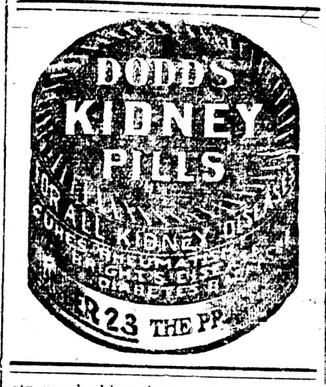

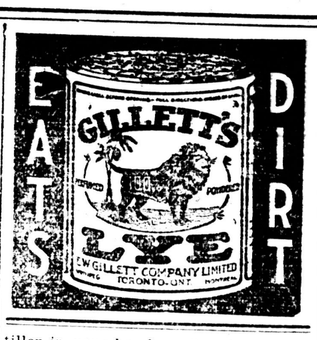

Rubber Supply Steady While Leather Gets Scarcer

This Explains Low Price of Rubber Footwear in Spite of Increase in Cost of Chemicals, Fabrics and Labor.

The war is using up enormous quantities, both of leather and rubber. At the same time it is seriously restricting the output of the former, much of which came from Russia—while rubber production keeps pace with the demand. From the great plantations now reaching maturity in Britain's tropical Dominions will come this year 150,000 tons of raw rubber—75% of the world's production, and an increase of over 40,000 tons over last year.

Thus, thanks to the British Government's foresight in encouraging these plantations, the Allied armies have been abundantly supplied with all the rubber products they need—Germany and her allies have been cut off—and the price to the world at large has actually been reduced. Meanwhile leather has been getting scarcer and more expensive—80% higher than in 1914—and the end is not yet.

At normal prices a pair of good shoes cost about four times as much as a pair of rubbers—and would last twice as long if rubbers or overshoes were worn to protect them. Or a pair of heavy rubbers for the farm cost much less than heavy shoes, and would stand much more wear in bad weather. So even before the war rubbers were a mighty good investment, to say nothing of their prevention of wet feet, colds and doctors' bills.

Now, when leather costs so much more in proportion, the saving from wearing rubber footwear is so outstanding that no one who believes in thrift will think of doing without rubbers, overshoes, rubber boots, or whatever kind of rubber footwear best suits his needs. Nor will he who is anxious to help win the war, for by wearing rubber he conserves the leather that is so scarce, yet so absolutely necessary to the soldiers.

Wear Rubbers and Save Leather for our Fighting Men!

17

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An Unsolved Puzzle of Biology.

It is one of the innumerable puzzles of biology that the number of eggs a bird lays seems to have such small influence on the abundance of the species. A royal tern lays one egg, rarely two; a gull three, a skimmer four to six. The gull eats the eggs of the other two, especially of the tern; as far as we know all have the same foes, yet the abundance of the birds is in inverse ratio to the number of their eggs. Of course, there is an explanation, but we cannot even guess at it as yet. With this, as with so many other scientfic questions, al; we can say is, with Huxley, that we are not afraid to announce that we do not know.—Theodore Roosevelt in Scribner's Magazine.

WILLIE'S AGE.

(Puck)

Visitor—And just how old are you, Willie?

Willie—Mother says I'm too young to eat the things I like, and too old to cry when I don't get them.

THE CLU BCOLORS.

(Judge)

Ethel—Why does papa come home sometimes with such a red face?

Mamma—That, my dear, is what is known as a club flush.

It's a mighty comforting thought that there are people in the world worse than we are.

A SUCCESSFUL SOLUTION

The railway unions of North Bay have solved the high cost of living. Some time ago a special committee was appointed to purchase food and fuel supplies as required by their members. The committee has handled within the past week two carloads of potatoes, two cars of wood, forty head of cattle, two tons of honey, eight carloads of coal, and fifty carloads of hardwood. In a few days it expects a carload of groceries and two of apples. The committee is composed of twenty five members, representing different crafts, and has saved 30 per cent. on its purchases to date.

Corns Drop Out

INSTANT RELIEF

Paint on Putnam's Corn Extractor to-night, and corns feel better in the morning. Magical, the way "Putnam's" eases the pain, destroys the roots, kills a corn for all time. No pain. Cure guaranteed. Get a 25c bottle of "Putnam's" Extractor to-day.

White-Washed Kerbstones.

Since the exigencies of war have made it necessary largely to eliminate street lighting in British cities, it has been found advisable in certain instances to whitewash the kerbs on either side of public thoroughfares so as to make it easier to discern the roadways at night.

At Norwich a pneumatic painting-machine carried on a steam wagon has been successfully employed for doing this work. The lime solution is forced through a hose under air-pressure and directed at the kerb. A nozzle especially designed so as to prevent the spreading of the wash beyond certain limits is used. With this equipment the work can be done at a rate of about three miles an hour.

THE LOST TIME.

(Washington Star)

"It only takes me twenty minutes to get to my office," said Mr. Gangjina.

"But you didn't arrive until an hour after you telephoned that you were leaving home."

"Yes. It took the other forty minutes to get the car started."

DIFFERENT.

(Boston Transcript)

"That house of yours interferes."

"Was he an interferer with you, is he?"

PILES CURED at HOME By New Absorption Method

If you suffer from bleeding, itching, blind or protruding Piles, send me your address, and I will tell you how to cure yourself at home by the new absorption treatment; and will also send some of this home treatment free for trial, with references from your own locality if requested. Immediate relief and permanent cure assured. Send no money, but tell others of this offer. Write to-day to Mrs. M. Summers, Box P. 8, Windsor, Ont.

Limbs.

Limbs come on trees and people. They are seen on trees, in court rooms, on the stage and at the seashore. They may be covered with bark, plasters or silk, as the case may be.

Limbs are useful in many ways. Pelicans, who are very economical and therefore never get into deep water, use only one at a time. Soldiers use them for various purposes, sometimes standing upon them and sometimes running away.

Limbs are made of cork, wood or bone. Cork limbs are useful as life preservers. Wooden limbs can be taken off and used for purposes of defence. Bone limbs often enable one to get on one's feet.

Rough On the Surgeon.

In the ancient life of Mesopotamia the surgeon failed to occupy the exalted position accorded him in the present age, and to discourage him from making rash operations severe penalties were fixed in case of unsuccessful ones. If the patient died the surgeon's hands were cut off. In the case of a slave he had to replace him with one of equal value. If the slave's eye was lost he had to pay half the value of the slave. If a veterinary surgeon were successful he received one-sixth of a shekel, but if the animal died he had to pay one-sixth of its value.

"Nerviline" Cures Cramps Ends Misery Instantly

NO REMEDY SO SPEEDY OR EFFICIENT.

A real cramp cure?

Yes, a real one—in a twinkling the cramp is a dead one, and the last squirm is over, once you get a stiff dose of Nerviline on the inside.

This isn't mere talk—it's a solid, truthful fact. No other remedy—not a single one—will cure cramps so quickly and harmlessly as Nerviline. It hits the spot in a jiffy and saves a heap of misery.

"Last Saturday night my stomach felt like an infernal machine," writes T. P. Granger, from Hartford. "I was awakened from a sound sleep and found myself suffering the worst kind of torture. I was so doubled up I could hardly cross my room. I had used Nerviline before for the same thing, and took a real good dose. Once I felt the warm, soothing sensation of Nerviline in my stomach I knew I was all right. It finished the cramps—just one single dose."

Sickness at night is rendered a nightmare of the past if Nerviline is handy. It may be earache, toothache or cramps. Nerviline in every case will cure at once and save calling the doctor. Nerviline is a family physician in itself. The large 50c family size bottle, of course, is most economical. Small trial size costs a quarter. All dealers sell Nerviline.