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1931

OCTOBER

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VOLUME V

NUMBER ONE

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The Distant Fields

By ARDEN WILCOX

LETITIA MARY arose every morning at five. By six she had breakfasted, washed her dishes and fed the grey cat, Peter. The rest of the morning was spent in devious ways—sometimes gardening, sometimes sewing, for there were no neighbors with whom to while away the hours. Indeed, Letitia Mary's house was quite isolated from the surrounding orchards, standing well back from the road, and although it was but a mile from the small town, weeks went by without anyone lifting the latch on her front gate.

Few people knew Letitia Mary Crandall. Those who spoke to her when she went to town on marketing trips, referred to her as "the strange little lady", and contented themselves with odd remarks as to her sanity and her strange way of living alone since the death of her two sisters, Phoebe and Ann.

"Some say as how John McVeigh once thought a lot of her, him who's the great doctor in the city now," Granny Dougall said to her young son-in-law one night. "Seems she was right fond of him and like's not would have gone along off, being but eighteen, but sisters Phoebe and Ann wouldn't have it. Maybe 'tis so, maybe 'taint, seeing it's some twenty years back now. But leastwise that's the way the tale runs."

"They say we're queer, living off here like this", Letitia Mary remarked one morning to her green parrot. "Sometimes I think it can't be true, that we've been here all these years, without other folks to keep us company. But Phoebe and Ann never cared"

"Verily, verily, it is a time of loneliness", said the green parrot sympathetically, and buried its sleek head in its wing.

Letitia Mary rocked slowly back and forth in her chair. Presently her mouth tightened, and a strange hard look came into the eyes which had once been so bright and trusting.

"Parrot", she said, and there was daring in her voice. "It's been twenty years since John McVeigh asked me to be his wife. All that time I've lived here, tied to an old tradition—afraid to leave this house. 'The Crandall house shall be slept in each night, or death will come and a loathsome plight!' That's what Phoebe and Ann said, parrot bird. And now they've been gone ten years."

"A time of loneliness", repeated the parrot melancholily, and fixed its little beady eyes on Letitia Mary.

Through the open window came the sound of droning bees, laden with honey. High in an old maple a hermit thrush sang in liquid tones. Letitia Mary tapped the floor impatiently.

"We've stood it long enough!" she exclaimed. "We'll be going away to the city, to people, parrot bird, where life moves fast and the

days are never empty!"

"Verily, verily, it is a time of loneliness", puoth the parrot, and preened its glossy plumage.

"We'll go this very day!" exclaimed Letitia Mary excitedly. "You and I and the Petie cat,"

"Amen! Amen! Hallelujah!" screeched the parrot triumphantly, and ruffled its gorgeous plumage in the sunlight.

Letitia Mary laughed like a pleased child and clapped her hands together. So often had she thought of the distant fields, of life among men and women of the town, where the bright lights glowed and pulsing humanity hustled along its way. Often she had gone as far as packing a small old fashioned bag; but always there had stood in the way the inborn fear of superstition: "The Crandall house shall be slept in each night, or death will come and a loathsome plight!" So often the coils of tradition had wound around the fluttering dreams of Letitia Mary that they had bound them into a stifled submission. But this time

She rocked back and forth in happy contemplation. All was restful, the green parrot having subsided into a temporary calm. Outside in the garden shimmering butterflies hovered over the spicy mignonette and in a cloud of pink wisteria, bees murmured sleepily.

All the rest of her life Letitia Mary would remember those few short moments—before the calm was shattered into fragments. For as she sat rocking and humming to herself, the front door bell rang violently.

"Oh, Peter cat!" cried Letitia Mary. "What ever can it be? *What ever can it be?*"

The lovely green-eyed Maltese purred sonorously and rubbed its head against her ankles.

"Purrrrr! Purrrrr!" said the Petie cat. "Purrrrr!"

A passing breeze mingled with daffodil and lilac stirred the leaves of the cherry tree outside the latticed window. Letitia Mary paused a moment and then hastened to the door.

When she returned it was with a slower pace, carrying in her hand her first telegram.

"From him," she said in a strangely calm voice. "Petie cat, it's from him!"

The message was tersely worded. "I am coming Friday," it read, and bore at the bottom the signature, "John."

And Friday was today! The pink in Letitia Mary's cheeks deepened as she read the words over again. After twenty years he was coming home, rich, famous, sought after—coming back to the quiet of the countryside, the meadows, the orchard land, the old, gnarled trees, to her.

"Oh, Petie cat!" said Letitia Mary again. "It's *too* wonderful!"

From where she stood her eyes sought the solitary old-fashioned photograph which stood upon the tidy mantel piece. John had been tall and handsome in the old days—tall, with dark hair and grey eyes,

and a mouth that had been hard and firm against her own tremulous one. Now

"Of course we have both changed", Letitia Mary told herself presently. "It would be strange if we had not."

The Petie cat blinked in the sunlight and cleaned its white paws with its little red tongue. Bees murmured incessantly in the honeysuckle and lilac, and down at the end of the garden a proud white hen raised her voice in triumphant self-applause.

The Petie cat had been fed and the green parrot was sleeping in the afternoon sunlight when Letitia Mary, in a quaint blue dress, heard an automobile stop outside the gate. Peering through her curtains, she could see that it was a very beautiful automobile, long and low and black and shiny. A tall man got out, dressed in gray.

"It can't be John!" Letitia Mary told herself wildly. "It's probably only a traveler looking for the way to Camden Town." But in her heart of hearts she knew it was not yet the season for the summer tourists.

Crunch, crunch. The footsteps drew apace on the gravel path outside. Letitia Mary retired discreetly from the window and waited for the bell to ring. Presently it sounded, loud and sonorous, as though he who rang it was a king among men.

"Purrrrr! Purrrrr!" said the little grey cat affectionately, and followed Letitia Mary to the door.

The afternoon sun streamed in on the carpet as she lifted the latch and let the door swing wide. For a moment the sudden light was dazzling.

"Mary!" cried the tall bronzed man standing on the threshold. "After all these years"

His face was lean and eager, marked by new lines of experience and anxiety. But his eyes were still the eyes of long ago—grey and kind. Letitia Mary would have known those eyes anywhere in the world.

"Oh, John!" she said simply. "Oh, John dear!"

It was pleasant sitting in the little living room, chatting. The air was fresh with the scent of garden flowers, and the murmur of wind in the maple trees gave a sense of peace and security to Letitia Mary.

"You have not changed much," the tall man told her, his lean clever hands lying quietly on the arms of the chair. "Your eyes are still blue and you laugh just as in the dear old days."

Letitia Mary let her little thin fingers smooth the soft fur of the Petie cat who lay curled up in her lap. Her eyes dropped demurely. Long ago she had watched herself in a mirror, had watched and seen the lashes lying thick and dark against a rosy cheek.

"You are such a great man now, John," she said presently, and raised her eyes to his. "So often I have read in the papers of the wonderful things you have done. The little lame children with no rich parents . . ."

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Piano Legs

By MARY NEWMAN

To look at pretty little Carolyn Burke, you would never suspect her of having an extraordinary sensitiveness about her legs. Her salesmanship at the music department in the Kress 5, 10, and 15-cent store indicated certain common-sensed, level-headed capabilities, but failed to point out any unusual characteristics, psychologically speaking. Just seeing her smiling over the same pieces again and again, like *You're Always in My Arms*, for instance, or playing *My Sweeter Than Sweet* on a piano whose soft pedal was hard to push, did attract one's attention, but only because she had such lovely teeth and hair, and hands and eyes. Regardless of this fact, the half dozen people who called themselves her friends never mentioned the subject of legs.

And on this glorious morning, in the four-room apartment in which she and her brother lived, with the April sunshine streaming in through the kitchen window, lighting Carolyn's hair so that it looked like yellow, fluffy gold, all frothy like the top of lemon soda-pop, a little incident happened which annoyed her unreasonably. It concerned her brother, Laddy. He was a tall young man of about twenty-two, who drove a truck for the Original French Laundry, and who had a fairly good baritone voice, untrained. He came tearing in from his bedroom, put on his hat and coat in preparation for leaving for work, arranged the blue handkerchief in his pocket so that the figure in the corner would show, and began to sing:

"Oooooo! My gurl, I luve her soooo!!!

She'll nevur know!!!—

And *is* she a lil? Oh, boy! Them eyes! That nose! Those legs!"

Now this may not appear to the casual reader to be a remark likely to cause any commotion, but it affected pretty little Carolyn Burke as being a very irritating jibe. It was, rather, this constant subject of legs which was beginning to anger her. Legs, legs, legs, and more legs!—did men think of *nothing* but legs?

There had been that time that Carolyn had tried to get a job at Spencer's, and the man at the employment desk had looked at her legs and laughed. Of course, he did like her sleek, black satin dress, her pretty kid-gloved hands, and her chic felt hat; he even considered giving her a place in the ready-to-wear department until he saw her ankles, and then he smiled and said there were no openings. Supposing a girl's ankles were as big as her calves? For five years Carolyn had been rubbing her ankles with cocoa butter oil, (the man at the corner drug store had told her about it), but by this time she knew that she was just born that way. Legs! Oh, what a bother they were!

She frowned up at her brother, but did not say anything. He was

buttoning up his coat when he remarked that he had been to the Little Club again last night.

"Uh-huh," replied Carolyn, in an absent-minded voice, and kept on nibbling her piece of toast. Laddy, picking up his lunch box and humming to himself, went out the back door and down the steps.

It was a glorious April morning. Carolyn, drinking her last swallow of coffee, grabbed up her beret, her sweater and compact, and rushed out pell-mell for her walk of seven blocks down Fifth Avenue to the store.

She wore sweaters and caps and patent-leather oxfords and gingham dresses to work because nobody there would appreciate satin or felts or kid gloves. But Carolyn always looked pretty. Her stiff gingham dresses glistened with starch, and her bows and ties and organdie frills just suited her fastidious tastes. She used gingham because Doris, her friend at the dry-goods counter, gave her really more discount on gingham than rightfully belonged to a co-worker at Kress's. This was because, back in the days when all girls studied cooking, Doris and she had gone to high school together. While Carolyn's social aspirations had died in the process of an ankle complex, Doris had alternately fallen in and out of love, acquiring quite some technique, as Carolyn believed.

At ten minutes to nine Carolyn was fixing on the flap of her grand piano a huge bouquet of Easter lilies which Laddy had grown in her garden and had brought down the day before, during his lunch hour.

"Good morning, Carolyn!" Mrs. Baker, the manager of the floor staff, was leaning over, nose-glasses in hand, smelling the cream and white blossoms. "What lovely flowers, my dear! I've just stopped to tell you that the superintendent is very well pleased with your cash check-ups and with your sales. He's going to give you an Easter gift of a raise to eighteen dollars a week."

A raise? How perfectly lovely! And here she had been afraid to play sheet music. Of course, Laddy had told her that her bass was just about perfect. He was a great kid, all right, even though he did make terrific remarks about her legs. How did girls ever get along without brothers, anyway? Why it was Laddy who had started her playing jazz, (the professor hadn't wanted her to do it, you know),—that is, Laddy and his baritone rendition of *I'm Sorry, Sally*. And it had taken a whole week of his laundry salary to pay for her twelve weeks' jazz course at the Waterman's Piano School at Thearle's. This was just after the man at Spencer's had laughed at her ankles. A raise! She wondered how long it would have taken her in the ready-to-wear to get eighteen dollars a week. Well, anyway, at Kress's she could stand behind the counter and her leg's wouldn't show.

She beamed at the retreating form of the manager of the floor staff. "Oh, thank you, Mrs. Baker!" she said, and her heart sang with the glory of being alive. Mrs. Baker was a dear. The girls all loved her.

This was the first thing that happened on that glorious spring

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Hexapus Invincible

A Zoological Fantasy

By R. D. HARWOOD

THE EARTH lay waste. The last man was dead, starved, and in death besieged by hordes of insects. Even before life quite ceased in the wasted body, they were busy devouring this last bit of human flesh. Beetles, flies, and ants swarmed, especially ants. It seemed as though the world were full of ants, so did they pour forth from every hole and crevice. Only a few hours, and but a small mass of bones and hair remained. These, too, would soon be taken by those highly efficient scavengers.

The destruction of man had not come about in a single year or even in a single century. Probably since his advent upon the earth the insects had unknowingly acknowledged him as their best friend—and inherent foe. In a thousand ways he made conditions favorable for them. He set aside large areas for the exclusive use of a single crop. Thus competition was reduced and conditions made possible for a great and rapid increase in the species. By clearing the land he destroyed the homes of thousands of birds which delighted in a diet of insects. He even cultivated and fertilized the soil so the food supply might be increased. But, alas! Instead of growing those plants which would offer the greatest resistance to the jaws of insects, he grew those which would produce the most food—succulent corn instead of coarse grasses.

When the crops were harvested, they were stored in vast quantities and left undisturbed for considerable periods of time. Many insects found both food and shelter there, and thrived in a goodly way.

It was the same old story with animal products. As soon as man became epicurean and ceased to pick every morsel from his kill, he began serving banquets to another group of insects. Scavengers then multiplied tremendously. The vanity of man and of his mate stimulated an inherent acquisitiveness and they saved the skins and the feathers of their fellow animals. How happy the tiny moths and their ecological cousins must have been!

As man began to use caves and other shelters for his habitation, a number of insects found it to their advantage to move in with him. Some bugs liked his warm blood and came later to be known as lice. These sought shelter on his body. Others lived in the crevices of his caves and fared forth in the darkness to devour his food and suck his blood. Many centuries later it became known that these insects harbored diseases, but it was a long time before they were finally banished from human society.

When houses became the mode, many other insects already present found an abundance of easily obtained food material. Ter-

mites, powder-post beetles, and tiny ambrosias could work from the ground up into the houses. And as the years rolled on man was not even spared his books or his clothing.

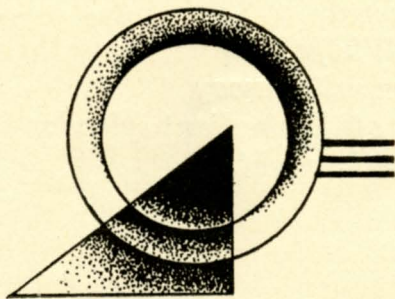
Then he began to make attempts to conquer* these invading insects. How feeble these were, compared to the incredible reproductive capacities and insatiable appetites of the hexapods! Man was too busy fighting his neighbor and preparing for greater human conflicts to combat these tiny enemies adequately, while there was yet an even chance for victory. While billions should have been spent in this conflict and vast trained armies placed in the field, mere thousands were used and the greater sums saved for arms and armaments.

So the insects grew ever stronger and ever more resistant to man's projected control, until one day man awoke to the fact that he was being starved and that his cherished home and other possessions were being destroyed. With grim determination he redoubled his efforts against the six-footed beasts but from the first it was the frantic struggle of one already defeated.

Vegetation was destroyed and with it the animals dependent upon it, since in the ultimate all life must be fed. It was not the stroke of a sudden catastrophe that brought about this crisis, but rather a constant slipping, first in one spot and then in another, for when the animals were gone, man's work lay in scattered ruins.

There were coins of gold, silver, and bronze, but no one to spend them—nothing to eat them. They were reduced to the impotent bits of metal which they had originally been. Great masses of stone and steel, once the elaborate edifices of art and commerce, stood in silence, mute reminders of a vanquished world. Only the insects remained, sweeping over unpeopled continents in a vast, droning hoard.

But they had developed with small intelligence—far insignificant to the master brains of the human race which they had conquered. And as time went on, even they could not endure.



Scene

By AUDREY PETERSON

*The moonlight
Dripped
Upon
The snowy oleander blossoms—
While up, up, up
A magic spell
Was wafted
With the
Sweetened fragrance
Of
Those pure and opaque blooms—
The moon
Aloft
Was stepping rather thoughtfully
Down along
Her diamond ladder
Of the sky.
A moth
Of
Dulled brightness
Hovered
Wistfully—
Then sailed away
Out of that radiant splendor
Into the night.*

To-day

By RUTH MCGUIRE

*I am high on a hill,
The day is at morn,
The sun is a sonnet in gold,
The wind's riding high
Through a limitless sky,
As I stand alone here—and cold.*

*I am stretched in the grass,
The day is at noon.
A cardinal sings in a tree.
And the silvery note
From his quivering throat
Grows warm in the cold heart of me.*

*I am down by a brook,
The day is at dusk,
The valley a lyric in blue,—
For the song that I heard
From that cardinal bird
Was only a token from you.*



This Pleasant Life

By MARY HARRINGTON

To retain our sanity, we librarians must swear. It is the only outlet for the irritation caused by the idiosyncracies of our customers. I see a vision of a busy moment in the college library—thousands, millions of grabbing hands and voices crying for *Wright's Source Book*, *Buell's History*, *Milham's Meteorology*, *Atlases*. All is a confused rushing, shuffling of books, signing of cards, seizing of volumes and running. Then I see a moment when there is a pause—a lull, and it is possible to understand the jumbled mutterings of the customers.

"Is this a two hour book? Well, why isn't it a day book? If it's a two hour book, I don't want it."

A girl comes running to the desk, gnawing on a candy bar.

"Will you see if a *Buell* has come in yet? Why aren't there more of them?"

"Well," I venture, "they have stood on the shelf all semester untouched. Now you are having an exam, I suppose. There's not one in yet."

"Then I'll take an *Atlas*. No, I won't, either. Yes, I guess I will, too! Oh! A girl just dropped a *Buell* down the shute. May I have it, please?"

I get it for her gladly. In far less than two hours she will bring it back.

A few forlorn looking students are waiting.

"Will you get this book?"

"Is it on reserve?"

"Yes—no, I guess it's a week book."

I start out in search of the hidden treasure. Down stairs, through dark aisles of books. 742-745-791-Brohn, Bower, Broron. No—not there. Back upstairs again. I look carefully on all the book troughs. I make certain I haven't overlooked it. Too bad. I hate to tell her it is out. She probably needs it badly. Sometimes I get pangs of sympathy for the great mob of "unreads."

"It's out, I'm afraid. Could you use any other book?"

"Why it couldn't be out! I just put it down the shute a few minutes ago. I want to renew it."

"Well, why didn't you say so?" I ask her, but what's the use—just wasted words. I often think "dumbness" is a contagious state, else so many people could not be inflicted with it.

A good-looking chap comes forward.

"Are there any *Merriams* in?"

"I'll see," I say disagreeably.

I look, but there are none on the shelf.

"No!" I snap.

"Thank you so much," he smiles, and goes off humming.

Mercy! I grasp the counter for support. He must be a visitor.

I stare at him. No, he has on "cords" and carries an armful of books. As he disappears into the reading room, I am satisfied he is either a saint or a transfer from a society school.

While I am musing on him, a moth-eaten, woe-begotten, tired looking woman comes to the counter, and hands me a list of books. I know the subjects without looking—Adolescence, Child Guidance, Mis-directed Youth, How to Teach Effectively. She will read all of them, write a term paper, and then return to her little country school and teach exactly as she has taught for the past twenty years.

A freshman jolts up to the desk.

"Got this?" He hands me the blue slip.

How To Study In College. I can't help smiling. He has studied his own childish way all semester, but now he must pass an exam on freshman habits. He probably has one night in which to cram hard, so that he may be able to tell next morning, on his exam paper, the correct way to study.

An indignant girl comes up and says her name is on the fine list.

"I never keep books overdue," she informs me. "There's some mistake, or else somebody else has been using my card. I just can't under . . ."

"Your name, please?" I look through the fine cards and see that she has kept a book out one day after it was due.

"That is fifty cents," I explain patiently. "If you will sign here for it, please."

"I won't sign it!" she flares. "I didn't keep the book out. Please call the head librarian."

He comes, and she argues with him. He gets the book from the stacks. She examines it.

"Oh, yes, gee, I guess I did after all. I remember now. Gosh! I'd forgotten all about it. That was the time . . ."

The librarian looks at her, opens his mouth, then shuts it again. I know he is swearing inwardly.

My attention is called to a beautiful girl with a blank face. "Will you get this magazine for me?" she asks. I should have been warned then.

November, 1896, of a literary magazine! I go through the piles of them. Only March and June of 1896 have been saved.

I tell her the news, which seems to be quite a shock.

"But that's dreadful! What in the world will I ever do?"

"Perhaps we can find some other reference you can use," I suggest. "What was the article on?"

"It was on Tennyson," she murmurs.

"Tennyson? Why, there are lots of books on Tennyson. What phase of his work did you want?"

"His life, the story of his life," she murmurs and stares blankly at me.

"His life . . . well!" I stare at her blankly, too. . . .

(Continued on Page 39)

The Soldier

By DOROTHY DENT

When you saw him first—a meagre little man wearing a soldier's uniform and carrying a battered suitcase—he was standing on the station platform, the last of a group of several travelers waiting to have their tickets punched before entering the day coach. When you came up, unnecessarily breathless, and rummaging desperately for an elusive ticket, he tipped his hat and stepped aside to let you ahead of him.

There was something about the way in which he did this simple act, a sort of pathetic eagerness, that went to the heart at once. You returned his shy smile with your very best one, and, your ticket having been approved by the over-suspicious conductor, you entered the hot day coach. Green and black brocaded plush seats with high backs and starched white slip covers reaching down a foot from the top. Metal foot rests movable only with difficulty. You select a seat with a full sweep of window, (on the San Diego train you craned around a window upright for five hours), and one of the less recalcitrant foot rests. You look at your watch. The train will not start for twenty minutes.

"Would you mind for an old soldier to sit beside you?" a voice asks faintly.

It is your friend of the platform, with his hat in one hand and his worn suitcase in the other. He is still young, thirty-five at the most, but he trembles a little, continuously, from head to foot, like a man with the palsy. He is slightly bald and slightly stooped. He is as thin as a spectre, and as frail and white as eggshell. At one time he must have been heavily freckled, this though his hair is dark. Even now there are still a number of large, pale, faded-looking freckles about his nose. His eyes are light blue and somewhat protruding. They are indescribably sad, too, sadder even than his thinness and frailty. He wears a little moustache, dark and scant. His khaki uniform is shabby and much too big, as though he had shrunk within it. He smells strongly of cigarettes. Just out of the hospital, obviously.

You make room for him on the seat beside you, as glad as he of someone to talk to.

"Thank you," says the soldier, "it's lonely on a train, riding alone."

You agree. He reaches up to put his suitcase on the rack. It is a small suitcase with an air of not being too tightly packed, but for him to lift it requires the most Herculean of efforts. He drops into the seat with perspiration standing out on his forehead, and his hands flutter violently.

"I hope that don't fall on your head," he says in his slow, drawling speech, indicating the suitcase.

You hope not, too.

Then he begins to talk in good earnest, with all the eager elo-

quence of a lonely man who has found a willing ear and a modicum of sympathy.

He is just returning home to Denver after eighteen months in the government hospital at Sawtelle. He will have twenty days at home, then he must come back to the hospital to get the rest of the shrapnel taken out of his leg. He is just off crutches and limps badly. He will go all the way to Denver and back—three days each trip—in the day coach, with the government paying half his fare. At night he will rent a pillow, and prop up his wounded leg on one of the recalcitrant foot-rests. He has had no steady work since the war, and cannot afford a Pullman even at half-fare.

He has had a finger shot off, too; and a dose of "mustard" in the lungs. Both his finger and leg wounds were received in the Argonne eighteen days before the Armistice.

He shows you his wound button with pride—a little round of silver pinned on his olive-green tie. Also his government permit for half-fare, his American Legion membership card, and an old ticket to a "Whoopee" party given by the latter organization. These things are obviously very dear to him.

He tells you war jokes, trite, primal, and with the air of having been told mank times before. He shows you pictures of all his family and friends, producing them from an ancient billfold reinforced with elastic bands. The pictures are old too, dog-eared, thumbed, and dirty. Some of them, together with the bill-fold, must have gone through the war with him.

There are pictures of his brothers, three sturdy six-foot-or-near-it young adolescents, of his sisters, two little freckled ten and eleven year olds, and of his mother and father, a simple, homely bourgeois couple, both careworn, the woman stout, the man lean.

There are pictures of girls, too, five or six of them, bobbed-haired smiling girls, some of them French, nearly all of them in the short skirts of war-time, all of them looking strangely alike.

The soldier asks if you like poetry.

"Some kinds," you admit cautiously.

Then it appears that he has written some.

You would of course like to read that.

He brings it out shyly from his battered suitcase, the loose, hand-written sheets rattling in his shaking hands.

"It's not any good, really. I just wrote it while I was in the hospital."

He is right. It is not good. Trite, stereotyped phrases in a lamely monotonous rhythm. But there is one feature of the soldier's poetry that is genuine, and that is its feeling. Without exception, it consists of intensely patriotic stanzas to the glorification of the flag, America, and Americans. Neither can there be any doubt of his sincerity. This man's faith in the infallible greatness of his country is abso-

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Meet The Princess

By LEWIS B. LESLEY

DAISY, Princess of Pless! Nowhere is there to be found a more delightful contemporary figure. Born in the seventies of a distinguished and noble English family, she married into the Prussian house of Pless and found herself transposed to an alien land in which she has never felt completely at home. Kings and princesses and dukes and princes, all have been and are her friends. For a span of nearly forty-five years this very fascinating lady has moved in the highest circles of European society, a noted beauty, a charming philanthropist, an earnest student of world affairs. Little wonder then that her new book, "Better Left Unsaid," (E. P. Dutton and Co.), is at present a best seller of two continents.

The Prince of Pless was a typical German nobleman of the old school, slow-moving, loyal, lazy and immensely wealthy. Quite a few years older than Daisy, he left her to her own devices amid the overwhelming pomp and circumstances of a lofty social position, with only one admonition—always to follow the hide-bound traditions of the great Pless family. Everything in her nature rebelled against this stolid, artificial and hypocritical atmosphere, but Princess Daisy played her required part outwardly just as her husband, Hans, wished. Her inward thoughts were, however, a far different matter, as is evidenced by the contents of her diary. Here was a woman who wanted to live a life of reality, but who found herself forced to waste her time and energy upon the trivialities of a purely ornamental existence. The German worship of externals was a constant irritation to the Princess. Her three children and her diary proved to be her salvation in a wilderness of insincerity. And, too, there was her love of nature. As she writes:

"Even now, while sometimes looking regretfully towards the past, I like to propel the little craft of my existence eagerly forward into the unknown. Instinctively I dislike what some of my American friends call the 'band wagon'; all the same, I should hate more than anything to be amongst the 'also rans' in the enthralling steeplechase called life. All my life movement has been to me a vital necessity.—I love to travel on foot, on horseback, by motor, by aeroplane, or airship or, most joyously of all, by sea. Strange scenes, strange peoples, strange experiences, I have always longed for without ever having had the full courage and determination to make them mine. Like many others I have found for this urge some assuagement in books and in the wildest scenes of nature. Nothing brings me closer to the heart of life's content than a great storm at sea. I have also found great happiness in contact with my fellow human beings. Circumstances having now made travel and active social intercourse a trial

rather than a pleasure, (the Princess is confined to her wheel-chair, an invalid), I must find happiness where I can. There is always the sea, my garden, my old friends—.”

When, after the World War, Princess Daisy sought to return to England to see her mother, who was very ill, and the British government, still submerged in all the war hysteria of hatred, did everything it could to keep her out of the sacred isles, she resigned herself patiently to her lot and has no word of bitterness to give in return for her ill-treatment. Her patience was rewarded when her dear friend, Queen Alexandra, came to her aid, with a letter of touching intimacy and charm, a part of which reads:

“Please write and tell me all about yourself and all you have and are going through even now, and where your children and husband are, and about your poor mother and sister, who seems almost deserted now. Oh, what terrible sorrows and trials the world is full of now, everywhere.

Yours affectionately,
Alexandra.”

* * *

The Prince of Pless has two great estates in Germany, Pless and Furstenstein, the latter located in Silesia and noted as one of the finest castles in all of Europe. One gains some idea of the size of Furstenstein from the famous story of the visit of a shy young attaché from the British embassy in Berlin in the late nineties. He arrived with other guests at the little Silesian station and, because of his modesty, permitted the more noted personages to fill all of the semi-state carriages, while he was forced to ride to the castle in a luggage cart. Eventually they reached the outer servants' quarters some place in the very interior of the mountain. From thence he was led through cellars, archways and immense stone halls, handed from one liveried servant to another until after a hike of over a mile he was at last taken to a part of the castle used by some members of the family. As Princess Daisy adds, “the house is said to have five or six hundred rooms; I don't know, as I never counted them.” Such was the place which the Princess was forced to call “home.” One agrees with her as to “what a terrible incubus to freedom such conditions can be.”

To the great Pless estates with their guards and foresters, house marshals and grooms of the chambers, came an endless group of distinguished visitors from all over Europe. Great hunting parties were held. Dinners and balls were predominant during the busy social seasons. To Furstenstein came King Edward VII and his beautiful wife, Queen Alexandria; the Prince and Princess of Wales, who later became King George V and Queen Mary; the Emperor and Empress of Germany; and a host of others. And in the diary of Princess Daisy of Pless we meet these important people as real persons, with likes and dislikes and all sorts of emotions which one, for some reason or another, does not usually associate with them.

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Young Roads and Old

By RACHEL HARRIS CAMPBELL

(Reprinted by permission of "First the Blade," an Anthology
of Californian Collegiate Verse)

*Roads that lead to houses
And a city's pride
Go straight and hard like young men
With sure and eager stride.*

*But roads that lead to mountains
And hidden desert streams
Shuffle along like old men
Happy in their dreams.*



Song

By MARY FABYAN WINDEATT

*And even if I do not live
The twilight shades will fall,
The crocus house the weary bee,
The ivy clasp the wall.*

*Essentially the place will be
What it has always been—
The sweet peas poised for instant flight,
The poplar tree as green.*

*Except that where the roses grow
At eventide I'll walk,
A wistful ghost to spy on you,
Behind the hollyhock;*

*To catch the light in your dear eyes,
To see your golden hair—
Oh, things will be about the same
With both of us still there. . . .*

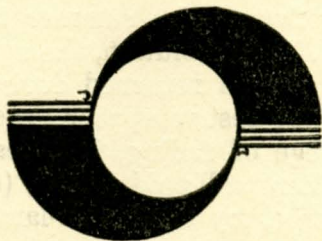
Candace

By CATHERINE MILLER

*She has not gone away.
Just then, upon the stair,
There was a murmur and a fragrance,
A lovely silence caught and hung upon the air.
As if she had but sought to make us smile
By hiding in the dark a little while.*

*She is still with us.
The beauty of a rose within the grass,
The winds that stir and pass
From tree to tree—the splendid tides
That are the ripened fields of grain,
The liquid symphony of rain,
Bid us be sad no more.
How could she be away?
In deep green woods alive with April things
The voice of her still sings when beauty sings.*

*Her steps are in the garden as of old,
Her touch is on the hyacinthine bell,
And where she passed her radiance is told
By cream narcissus and by asphodel.
Her smile is in a baby's grey-blue eyes;
If she had gone . . . how could we be so wise?*



“By Velasquez”

By ARTHUR ANDERSON



ALUD, Señor Richards!—Your health!

No, I thank you; one *tequila* is enough. Is this your first visit to the town of Tequila? Two days? You will not find them over-tedious. . . . Yes, I have business here, and have had many times before.

The town has always been as you see it now: creamy, mud-brown, and rusty-red in its hollow—you know how charming a Mexican village can be in the distance, (and how dirty at close quarters!) . . . As you say: a church spire cleaving a hill, a tree here and there among the tiled roofs. You have a pretty sense of the distance which enchants.

Well, I have had business here before—no, not a *maguey* plantation, though I once had a *tequila* distillery. . . . You are not serious, Señor Richards? Let us not joke about it: my distilling days were not pleasant. They relate to an unhappy incident. But I shall show you, if I may, a certain picture hiding quite openly, (and therefore securely), in the office of what once was my distillery. . . . Indeed, Señor Richards, a famous painting—by Velásquez—of San Buena-ventura triumphing over Beelzebub, with a glory over the saint's head and a cigarette haze of hell under his feet. (May I offer you a cigarette, Señor Richards? No?)

But enough! I must show the picture . . . tomorrow, of course, tomorrow.

In the cathedral it used to hang; now it is in my little dust-trap of an office. In my care, you know, temporarily in my care. The rumor that it was shipped out of the country is completely incorrect. I need not fear that you will tell . . . of course! Nor, incidentally, that it was my finger, (half of a finger, a little less), that I sent as a keepsake to General Guzmán, (that absent-minded, mangy, fat lion), who was to have seized the picture. . . . Here is the stump, Señor Richards—the little finger. I hardly miss the end nowadays, except in winter, when the drizzles of the *acabanuelas* torture my bones.

I had just returned from France that summer. Guzmán, (himself, I am sure), got my finger—the summer the devil, they say, took Guzmán's orderly. . . . The revolution, the agrarians, you know; many of us went abroad. Well, I returned during the Cristero trouble—here, in Tequila. It was best to appear gradually, (like the Cheshire cat), with the privilege of fading, if necessary, into the mountain scenery. My concern here still paid a little, (everyone drinks *tequila*), and Don Agustín Iturbe, my brother-in-law and manager, would receive me, I knew.

So I embraced Don Agustín, and begged for shelter. He was in bed when I entered his room, wrapped in a soiled red blanket, propped on a few hard pillows, and pretty . . . sick. He giggled as I walked in,

wriggled his sparse beard, and looked a little ashamed.

"Eheheheh . . . sit down, sit down . . ." Then he coughed uncomfortably, staring at the foot of his bed. "Those parrots down there"—I saw no parrots: there were no parrots—"are a nuisance. Please excuse them. I can't get rid of them, but aren't they pretty?" Don Agustín whistled through his broken teeth once or twice, then seemed to listen. I sat in rather awkward silence. "I am glad you came," he went on. (I don't think he saw any parrots just then). "My house is yours. . . ." We were silent a while and Don Agustín blinked at the ceiling. Finally—"But there is a *molestia*—something unpleasant (you understand) . . ."

"The doctor has ordered me to bed—with no *tequila*—for a week, maybe two, maybe three. . . ." So he slowly came to the point, and drank some water noisily and disgustedly. "The Archbishop—you know the Archbishop? Of course you do! I promised to get that Velásquez picture he values so highly—the San Buenaventura, you know. I can't: you see that plainly. Will you get it? Are you known in the city?"

"I've probably been forgotten by now. . . . The Archbishop knows me; so does Doña Beatriz . . ."

"Good. You might take Juan and Sebastián . . ."

We made a few arrangements. I made a new will. We talked until Don Agustín was tired, and snored off to sleep in the middle of a sentence. A large man was Don Agustín, Señor Richards; once very fat. But the revolution and, (I suspect), *tequila* had made hollows where once was solidity; and the wrinkles in his face turned the thinned hairs of his white beard all askew. A great Cristero he was; he had impoverished himself and me supporting the religious discontent of that part of the state.

To the city I went with my men. That little path up the highest mountain, (to your left, Señor Richards), led to the road we wanted. . . . You can see it through the arch, under that break in the plaster.

I suppose I departed in some annoyance. "What is this I am doing? Someone else's business?" I asked myself. "What—but no! I am a good friend of the Archbishop—or of my brother-in-law— . . ." So I suppressed my misgivings.

Four days, Señor Richards, we trotted on our mules—there were no horses—before we reached the Archbishop's house. I pass over the torture of heat, the soreness of riding. His Eminence at that time found it easy to divide his time between hiding in the city and working an old forgotten ranch beyond the *Barranca*, (the canyon to the north of the city). We reached the ranch; I made myself known, and then waited, for he was then annoying the city authorities by somehow preventing church-looting, inevitable in the process of their nationalization, in the guise now of Doña Beatriz's chauffeur, now an Italian music teacher, and even, (his enemies said), of Satan himself. . . . Absurd, of course, Señor Richards.

I could only wait for the Archbishop and instructions. Dull days

they were: spent in apprehension for myself (I confess); in observation of the candles wilting, almost dripping warm tallow, in the May heat; or in conversation with my man, Sebastián, or the priest, Padre López.

One hot afternoon three *arrieros* drove wood-laden mules past the ranch house. Idly I noticed one mule-driver detach two mules from the group, and drive them toward an outhouse. I saw him, a dark-faced, dusty-legged, lank figure in dirty white, cursing the animals with considerable energy and dignity, and thought nothing of the episode. But half an hour later I was aroused from a heavy doze to realize the heat—and the presence of His Eminence.

Scarcely taking time to kiss his ring, (I wear it now, as you know, Señor Richards), I babbled stupidly of my surprise, my alarm, my errand—I do not know what else.

"Come, my friend, make up! Some cognac? A bath and a thimbleful of cognac always refresh me after the parching exodus from the city . . . ! Well! So you have come for that San Buenaventura? I have saved you some inconvenience. I brought it with me this afternoon." He lit a cigarette, and drank his cognac.

The picture, Señor Richards—he had it! How he secured it he never would say. Whether he bribed an official for it; whether some friends crept through a certain small, high window, over rough tile roofing and unswept brick floors; whether, as Doña Beatriz always claimed, San Buenaventura himself struck the guards temporarily blind, deaf, and dumb, snatched his portrait from its place, and sent it in care of a dove to the devoutly kneeling Archbishop, he never would tell anyone. But the canvas hid in a neat roll in one load of wood which I had seen him bring, and the four sections of heavy gilt frame lay scattered through the other load.

My trouble saved for me, you say, Señor Richards? So I thought. So I imagined. "All that remains for you to do," said His Eminence, "is to take the pieces to Tequila, and put them together again. I shall tell you when I need them." Meanwhile, here was the masterpiece some thirty kilometres from the city, with two unruly towns between it and the enraged authorities. Here were we in the Archbishop's forgotten ranch, safe among the corn hillocks with the beans growing up the corn stalks, able to enjoy life under his red roof, on his tiled, heavily beamed veranda. *Muy bien*. We were safe, far, in fact, from city officials. I exulted, thinking myself safe even from accident.

Word came on a thundery evening in the last part of May that Guzmán had ambled out of the city with a troop of aged horses and fattened soldiers to investigate a Cristero rising; that he had been repulsed; that the way to Tequila was probably clear.

"Good," said the Archbishop. "Can you leave at once? Take the picture, my friend; keep it until better days. Evil may fall on us here. You and Don Agustín have places to hide it. . . ." I still have it; good days are still far from us.

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Piano Legs

(Continued from Page 9)

morning to make Carolyn happy. But immediately, if not sooner, the second and much more important thing happened, because, just as she turned back from Mrs. Baker, there stood a young man at her music counter, with a sprig of smilax in his button-hole.

"Hello, there," he smiled at Carolyn. "I have three dollars to spend for sheet music. Will you pick out about a dozen of the most popular ones and let me hear them, please?"

"Oh, my goodness!" thought Carolyn, and there is no use denying that she was excited. From the very minute she saw the sprig of smilax in his button-hole, things changed completely. Which were the most popular pieces? *This Is the Mrs.; Fine and Dandy; Dancing in the Dark; I'm Through With Love.* She'd have to be sure to keep her legs under the counter and she'd better not use the pedals when she played the pieces on the piano, either.

"Couldn't you suggest something?" the young man asked. "You see, I don't know very much about jazz. I'm getting these for my kid sister back in St. Paul, for her birthday."

Carolyn hastily drew a piece from its compartment and slid down on the piano bench, a little awkwardly, it's true, but at least without showing her ankles. She began to play, and said:

"Do you like this? They say Norma Shearer is awfully good

in the picture at the Fox this week."

Carolyn could have sold this young man six dollars' worth of music rather than three dollars' worth, so pleasant was she; but, unfortunately, just in the midst of her sale, over trotted Doris, the "man-experienced girl," for her hourly use of Carolyn's compact.

Quite suddenly Carolyn stopped her piano playing, for here was Doris greeting her customer like some long lost friend.

"Well, well, well. If it isn't Al, the milkman. How's the kid?"

This, thought Carolyn, is the end. He'll never look at me now. All he'll be able to see is Doris. Why doesn't she get a compact of her own?

But, somehow or other, Al didn't seem to be paying much attention to Doris. He only said:

"Hello, there, yourself! Say, will you introduce me to this friend of yours?"

Carolyn could scarcely believe her ears. Did he mean her? Yes, he must, for he was looking right at her.

"O. K.," breezed Doris. "Carolyn—Al. Mr. Simonds—Miss Burke. He usta be the milkman on our street, Carolyn, but I guess he's had a promotion." With this the match-maker was off to her gingham counter. She wouldn't spoil Carolyn's fun—some break for Carolyn, all right, to have Al like her.

Carolyn was terribly embarrassed. She'd never had anyone want to meet her before.

But Al wasn't embarrassed. He grinned up at her. "Well, now that we're acquainted, could I take you to see Norma Shearer tonight?"

How very extraordinary, thought Carolyn. He was asking her to go out already. If only he didn't notice her legs! She must try to be more indifferent, a trifle more nonchalant, perhaps.

"Oh! I'd love to!" she said, and presently they were both laughing.

So that was how Carolyn's affair with Al began—Carolyn and her ankle complex and Al, the milkman. He was head shipping clerk at the Pure Milk Dairy. He had a new green Ford sedan, paid for, and he had two thousand in the bank. Carolyn thought it was this last that made Laddy slap him on the back and let him win the solitaire games when Carolyn wasn't quite ready in the evenings. She had gone out with him several times that first week. First on the night of that glorious April morning, to the Fox to see Norma Shearer; on Wednesday night to the Mission Beach Ballroom, to dance at the Pirates' Ball; and on Saturday night to the High School Auditorium to hear Paul Whiteman's orchestra; and not once had Al even said "ain't" or so much as noticed her legs. Al had had a good bringing up.

Carolyn had never been so happy before in all her life. Not even three years before, when Laddy had given her a bull pup for Christmas. She only occasionally thought of legs now, because being with Al somehow

didn't make her self-conscious about her erring members. Besides, the compliments that he gave her about her eyes were enough to make a girl forget anything. But, all of a sudden, something happened to bring it all back—ankles, calves and all.

It was on the Saturday noon that Carolyn met Al at the Pullman Cafeteria for chicken pie, and Al was late. Lateness was Carolyn's pet aversion. She could find nothing to be said in favor of anyone who was late for an appointment, and Al was late. She was already tired—the Saturday rush at the store had been just a little too hectic—and here she had to stand and wait. She was so tired! Her fingers were fairly black and blue from pounding on that old piano. This business of working was terrible, but she had to have money to live on—Laddy could not do it all.

She turned her attention to the settee in front of the cash register, plopped down on it and exploded.

"Doggone! Why doesn't he come?"

She even forgot to hide her legs, she was so agitated. What's more, she crossed them conspicuously and wiggled them up and down on the wicker crosspieces. And then she saw him. She got her face all ready to say, as crossly as possible: "Al, where have you been?" But the inevitable happened. He was noticing her legs.

Carolyn felt rather than saw the look of doubt in his eyes change to pain, but it was gone as quickly as it had come. It

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The Soldier

(Continued from Page 17)

lutely unshaken by the war and his own sufferings. If there were another war, and he were fit to fight in it, you are aware that he would do so without hesitation.

Looking up from the papers, you remark that he is still patriotic.

He looks at you with a kind of quiet surprise in his melancholy eyes.

"Sure. It's the only way to be," he replies, and smiles just a little.

Not a shade of doubt or of hesitation, not a suspicion of bravado. It never occurs to him to play the martyr. He has made the simple, straightforward pronouncement of a man with a faith.

You ask him what he thinks of the current wave of war books. With scorn, he replies that they are a lot of hooley.

You wonder why. Is it because they are not true?

No, he thinks they are true enough, about the things that happen, but soldiers don't feel like that about the war.

You wish to be sure. Does he mean that *he* doesn't feel that way about the war, or that soldiers as a body don't?

He means that soldiers as a body don't.

You begin to feel rather upset. Here is a man with his life ruined by the war, health gone, money gone, prospects gone, who still thinks the war was

quite in order, who is absolutely unshaken by cynicism, who writes pre-war poetry to Old Glory.

This should not be. There is something wrong. The war books have not provided for such a man. But is he an exception, perhaps? No, soldiers as a body don't feel that way, he told you.

Is he stupid, not to realize what the war was all about? No, he does not seem a stupid man.

Is he a philosopher, making the best of a bad situation? No, he does not philosophize, but speaks, instead, as of facts.

Is he right—may he have hit upon the truth in his blind faith? No, surely it cannot be right to accept war so complacently.

Is he the victim of a defense mechanism unconsciously built up for escape from a crushing truth? If we are to believe in the war books, that is the only possibility left. By elimination, it must be true. The soldier is not stupid, he does not philosophize, he cannot be right; he must be diseased.

You are filled with pity for the poor, morbid mind of this soldier. You switch the subject to scenery, and speak eloquently of elderberry blossoms until the conductor calls your town.

The soldier waves a gay good-bye from the train window as you stand upon the station platform. You wave, too, and smile.

Poor fellow!

Meet The Princess

(Continued from Page 19)

King Edward VII and the Princess make a bet on the races. The King loses and Daisy is richer by a dozen hats and a note from His Majesty, which reads in part:

"I have ordered your hats and hope to send them to you very soon and that they will meet with your approval. Pray remember me to your husband and your charming sister who I trust has recovered from her toothache, and

"Believe me,

"Very sincerely yours,

"Albert Edward."

Again, when King George V was the Duke of York, (before the death of his brother, the Prince of Wales), he visited at the Newlands, the estate of Princess Daisy's father. The Duke and Daisy decided to go fishing. All they managed to catch was a wild duck which had dived and swallowed the bait and hook of the Princess. George V has never forgotten the incident, particularly the one shilling sixpence damages which the government sought to collect for the death of the poor duck!

For a considerable period of time the Crown Prince of Germany was in love with the Princess of Pless, a fact which caused her no end of worry and embarrassment. Finally, no less a personage than the Empress herself was appealed to in order that the Crown Prince might have his amorous intentions turned into other channels. However, when

the Crown Prince married, at last, the Crown Princess and Princess Daisy became the greatest of friends.

The Emperor of Germany, William II, has always been fond of the Princess of Pless. He seemed to like her better and to treat her with a greater sincerity and frankness than most of the other women of the court. The Princess gives three possible reasons for this: that she is English, that she is different, and that she has never been afraid of him. Her beauty was of the "pink, white, and gold 'English type' that appealed to him."

"Did he not once," she writes, "by way of a great compliment, compare me to one of those rather dreadful tinted pictures of beautiful women that were so popular as Christmas supplements to the English periodicals and magazines of the late 'nineties of the last century! He often kissed my hand, and once said that he preferred to do so with the glove off; but what sensible person likes kissing a kid glove?—they always smell so horrid!"

The Princess insists that William II does not labor under an inferiority complex, and this in spite of Ludwig's book about the Emperor. In public William did not expose his crippled left arm any more than possible; in private he never bothered about it at all. As far as morbidity and neuroticism are concerned, the Princess maintains that there is not a bit

of either in the Emperor's personality.

"I had to beg the Emperor to 'shake hands nicely,' she writes; 'his right hand was very big and, without realizing it, he had the grasp of a tiger. Of course, his horses were all perfectly broken to suit him; nevertheless, he hated a 'dead' horse, had a perfect seat and could manage a horse very skillfully with his one hand. He had, perhaps not plenty, but enough, nice brown hair, beautiful penetrating brown eyes, and good teeth. I read the other day in one of the fashionable, new, stupid war books that he had false teeth, but that was not so."

In the end the Princess pays the Emperor a lovely compliment, namely, that he knew how to be a friend, "and that," she says, "may well be the finest thing of all." When he married the Princess Schonaich-Carolath, in 1922, William II wrote to Princess Daisy that he had found "peace and happiness again after such terrible years of loss and trials, through the affection of this winning lady, who has consented to become my wife and bring sunlight into this house of darkness, sorrow and mourning."

Princess Daisy attacks the hatreds which engender wars between nations.

"Surely all rules, peoples and persons make mistakes, nurse false hatreds, temporarily embrace false creeds. Yet men can quarrel handsomely like gentle-

men. Silly, hysterical hatred was never a British characteristic.

* * * Nor do I believe the Hymn of Hate was characteristic of the German people. Like much else of the evil of war, it was probably invented by those who stayed at home. I want Germany and England—all nations everywhere—to work together and be friends. Quarrels, rivalries, and jealousies belong to the childhood of the world, and surely, by now, it is time our silly, yet lovely old world had grown up."

In 1923 the Princess divorced her husband, and, late in the autumn of 1924, paid her last visit to Furstenstein. In December of the latter year her eldest son, Hansel, was married, and he and his bride spent their honeymoon at Pless. Now, in the sunset years of her life, Daisy, Princess of Pless, is receiving the homage of countless thousands of people who have grown to know her through her published diaries.

In the introduction to "Better Left Unsaid," Major Desmond Chapman-Huston writes: "There is in the writer's heart a great love for all mankind, and for the whole of nature; her every thought and action exhibits an understanding and sympathetic vision embracing the entire circumference of life; these things, between reader and writer, are a powerful bond."

And it is this bond which enables each one of us to meet and know the Princess, Daisy of Pless.

Piano Legs

(Continued from Page 26)

changed into a great big beam as he rushed up to her joyfully, grabbed both her hands and cried out, "I've got it, Carolyn!" But Carolyn didn't hear him. Her anger was gone. She was calm now.

Pain! That was it. Pain! Her legs hurt him! He didn't know it, but he, too, hated her legs, her ankles. She wasn't good enough for him, her legs were too ugly. She couldn't even wear pointed heels—and Doris got such good ones at the Dollar Store—Doris, who had unconsciously brought to Carolyn's attention for the first time her ugly legs when they stood together so long in front of the Boston Store window and compared the lengths of their dresses.

She let Al fix her tray and lead her to a table, but she didn't say a word to him.

"It's a white gold solitaire and a beautiful stone. Won't Laddy be surprised?"

She must stop him. She could not marry him. It would be all wrong. After a while he'd hate her—hate her and her funny legs. She must get away.

"Al, I've got to go back to the store. Good-bye!"

She picked up her compact and dashed out the turnstile, shouting to the cashier that he'd pay the check. Al was after her, but he was a half-block behind in the Saturday noon crowds. Down the street she pounded, into the store, up the back steps to the room which said "Employees

Only," and into the arms of the gentle Mrs. Baker, just in time for a flood of tears.

"My dear, my dear! Whatever on earth is the trouble?"

"Legs!" sobbed Carolyn. "My legs!"

"Why, what's the matter with your legs?"

"What's the matter with them? They're funny, they're ugly, they're terrible! And Al doesn't love me any more!"

Mrs. Baker stooped to peer unbelievably. But the girl's sobs were real ones.

"Carolyn! Stop being so silly! Do you want me to shake you? Listen: In the six months I've known you I've never even noticed your legs. Your eyes and your hair and your teeth and your hands are too pretty. He'd love you for them alone even if you had varicose veins!" This last was quite emphatic.

"Varicose veins!"

Mrs. Baker went on:

"Of course, you'll marry him, whenever he wants to, Carolyn. Go tell him so, now."

And presently—oh, in about ten minutes—Carolyn went.

As she came around the notion counter and her music racks shifted into view, Al stepped out from behind the piano.

"Al," she began, but he stopped her explanation.

"Carolyn, listen! I couldn't wait any longer to show it to you. Won't you wear it now?"

She looked at him shyly.

"Oh, Al!" she said. "Of course

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The Distant Fields

(Continued from Page 7)

He leaned back in his chair and for a moment a great weariness seemed to settle in his face. But as Letitia Mary continued to regard him in her trusting way, he ceased to sit there silent.

"There is little to say, Letitia Mary," he told her gravely. "I have worked hard and done my best—and made mistakes along the way—which is not different from most people on the earth, is it?"

Letitia Mary looked at him curiously. The years had wrought some imperceptible changes in the face she had once known, but the mouth had lost none of its firmness, though there was a new gentleness, a keenly tempered justice and humor there which made Letitia Mary glad to be there looking across at him. He had grown grey with the years, too, and heavier in build. He must be very powerful, she thought, in spite of his gentleness. One thing she knew, with him at her side she would never need to fear a thing. Not even the Crandall house with its old superstition would ever terrify her again. For would not John be always there to lead her safely onward?

The afternoon wore on and the bright rays of the sun faded into mellow amber, streaking across the braided rugs and old-fashioned spindle legged chairs. For some minutes Letitia Mary had been sitting silently, her hands stroking the glossy fur of the Petie cat, her heart happy

with a strange peace. Never had the little house seemed so kind and warm. Never had the garden flowers seemed more fragrant. As a gentle breeze blew the white curtains gently back and forth, Letitia Mary took the little grey cat in her arms and arose.

"You will have some tea, John," she said.

He took the Petie cat from her and rubbed the soft fur gently. Letitia Mary stopped a moment, her hand resting lightly on the back of his chair. How well they understood each other—how simply their moments of silence fitted into the scheme of things! It was as if their souls communed through their eyes—deeming the spoken word of little consequence.

Letitia Mary retired to her kitchen to light the fire and put the kettle to boil. So soon they would be going home together—to the lighted town with its lifting towers and busy streets—its deeds of heroism and magnitude—its throbbing life and sparkling moods.

"Dear John," she thought as she arranged the thinly cut slices of brown bread and butter. "*Dear, dear John!*"

When the tea was ready she brought it into the living room. Already it had become dusk and John was standing by the open window, the Petie cat asleep on his shoulder. As Letitia Mary entered he turned toward her. Her heart began to beat furi-

ously. Now he was going to ask her. Now he was going to say what she had been dreaming of all these years. Now he had come back, to lay forever the tradition of long ago.

"It is getting dark," she said hurriedly. "Perhaps I'd better bring a candle, John."

"Oh, no," he said quickly. "Just let us stay here like this, for a few moments. The twilight is so pleasant."

Letitia Mary felt the warm color mounting to her cheeks. The evening air was dense with the perfume of the hawthorne. Already an evening star had appeared above the pine grove. Somewhere a whip-poor-will sounded a mournful note, that echoed over the marshes behind the hill.

"Very well," she said, and sat down beside the table. Silently she handed him his tea and then the buttered brown bread. No one spoke. The little gray cat awoke from its drowsiness and arched its back, its long tail erect and quivering. Presently it came over to where Letitia Mary sat, and purred loudly against her feet.

Minutes passed. The clock in the hallway outside struck the half-hour in a thin silvery note. Darkness had descended so completely that they could no longer see each other. Through the open window came the early chirping of tree toads. An errant bumble bee floated past the window, droning with the weight of its honeyed cargo. The man set his cup down leis-

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urely.

"There is nothing sad about love, is there?" he asked gently.

Letitia Mary thrilled with the joy of what was to come.

"Oh, no," she said, and waited breathless. There was another pause. The man turned his head toward the window through which filtered the last thin rays of lavender dusk.

"The only sad thing is when old ideals are shattered," he continued evenly. "After all, death or separation does not really kill a love that has grown within the human heart."

Letitia Mary felt a sudden shiver run through her. Her slender fingers reached down to where the little gray cat sat waiting to be fed. The touch of the warm fur was reassuring.

"No, John," she hastened, but for the first time her voice faltered and lacked conviction. The man fingered a spoon meditatively.

"And don't you think, Letitia Mary, that even when pain and sorrow follow us through life, they are so much more bearable when one has loved a fellow being with all his heart and soul?"

Letitia Mary trembled at the ring in his voice. He was surely about to ask her now. There was just the table between them. He had only to stand up and sweep her into his arms, as he had done in the long ago. She would remain passive for a few moments in his hard, strong arms, her head against his chest; and then they would go out together into the waiting night, toward the

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distant fields, the steeped city, into the lovely world. Even as she thought all this, he arose.

"You haven't answered my question, Letitia Mary," he told her gravely. "I . . . I am waiting."

"Question?" Her eyes regarded him widely in the gathering gloom. Suddenly she remembered.

"Oh, John!" she cried tremulously. "Of course, of course you're right! Love makes everything bearable! Why, I don't know what I'd have done . . ."

Her voice trailed off into an unuttered sob. The man picked up his hat which had been lying on the mantel piece, and came toward her.

"Thank you, Letitia Mary", he said slowly. "I . . . am . . ."

glad to hear you say that!"

Letitia Mary stared at him. Mechanically she extended a small limp hand and felt it glow in his warm strong clasp.

"Good bye", he said kindly. "And may God bless you."

Her lips mumbled something in reply, and as he slowly withdrew his hand and went toward the door, some strange force impelled her to follow him. She felt the cool draft of air as the door opened and he stepped from the threshold out into the night. Stars were plentiful by this time, and a slight mist came curling in from the flats. Once more his words came vaguely to her ears.

"Good bye, Letitia Mary," he was saying, and in a voice that came from miles away, she an-

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swered him. Then blankness, except for the crunch of measured foot falls going down the gravel walk. The creak of the gate as he unhooked the latch—the strange metallic sound as the car door opened and shut.

The Petie cat miewed plaintively for its evening saucer of milk, but Letitia Mary was suddenly drowning in a new and horrible flood of pain. Her heart seemed as though it were being held in a vice, which paralyzed her to every other sensation but that of a knife-like agony which seared her through and through. In a mist of pain, as she went down the steps and out across the walk, there came the sound of a motor starting up, and powerful headlights seared the gathering darkness. For the first time she felt a wild rush of en-

ergy returning to her body.

Her fingers fumbled wildly with the gate latch as the big car, with a backward lurch, rolled off smoothly down the road, filling the quiet of the night with its throbbing. The little red light at the back shone steadily for a moment, then gradually dimming into a mere blur, it passed on through the gloom.

Letitia Mary stopped, dry sobs unuttered in her throat.

"Oh, Petie cat!" she gasped, as the friendly little kitten came following her out into the night. "Oh, Petie cat!"

The tree toads chirped in a strange pagan rhythm, the night mist drifted above the spruce grove. Letitia Mary retraced her steps and went into the house.



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“By Velasquez”

(Continued from Page 24)

We set out, with the Archbishop's blessing, for the wooded country. You did not know I could ride bareback? . . . Well, I wrapped my long legs around the mule, digging my heels into its side to stimulate its bumpy trot. We made good time, except when it rained.

On the third morning, my unshaven face was almost unrecognizable. A beard of an inch, with how many white hairs! Here was a stone: I sat upon it, drying the previous night's rain from my now shapeless clothes. Behind a tree, over there, say, squatted Juan, trying to light a vile cigarette, made of sodden tobacco and damp corn-husks, with wet matches. Some distance

ahead of me Sebastián, who had lit my kerosene lamp with my magnifying lens, was saying a *Credo* and three *Aves* over a boiling egg. . . . Oh, no—not a blessing; he did that to time the egg. . . . All was damp, warm, and peaceful: a moist breeze pushed clouds past the sun, and piled them in a black, savage mass against a mountain to the west. I could see, from my sunny stone, the advancing edge of a patch of shadow . . . ominous shadow—treacherous.

And I sat dreaming of my egg; of its hot jellied yolk (in the American fashion which I had painstakingly taught Sebastián); of a pinch of salt, a dash of pepper, and a slice of toast (which

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was not to be had). I squirmed over the thought of eating it saltless with a soggy *tortilla*—forsooth!

What just then burst upon us I have never fully realized. When I knew what I was doing, I found myself galloping on my terrified mule, hugging closely its back, gripping the picture under my arm. Juan and Sebastián were a little ahead, their scared faces turning to look back.

"*Dios Santo!*" I shouted. "Who are they?"

Neither heard me. A volley of shots chased us, their brittle cracks dry and hard in the damp, soft atmosphere. A few bullets hissed over our heads, spat on the ground, splashed mud on the painting.

I looked back. . . . Guzmán himself, whom I had imagined

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licking his wounds in the city! He ambled after us, with two or three officers, like an absent-minded lion. I do not think he was very interested, but he was fumbling with a pistol. Rather awkwardly—for I had the picture—I shot over my shoulder, and frantically dug my heels into the mule's ribs. . . .

Yes, I killed one of the poor chaps. . . .

The last returning shot knocked the pistol from my hand, numbed it. We rode on, unpursued, until it began to pain. . . . I had to stop—I cannot say where.

* * * * *

The picture, Señor Richards? Only a little mud and some blood. But I had forgotten the frame.

No, I rested a few days at Te-

(Continued on Page 39)

Siege

By CATHERINE MILLER

*Blue and green and scarlet splashed,
I had a peacock feather,
Tinged with flaming orange
And the fall's own gold;
People called me "Precious dear"
And talked about the weather,
Sought to touch my peacock plume,
But I'd not break my hold.*

*Now I have another thing
That's made of joy and sorrow,
Tinged with April woodland
And an ice-blue pain;
People reach to grasp my toy,
But it will be tomorrow
Ere I give my new love up
And lose my dreams again.*

PIANO LEGS

(Continued from Page 30)

I will! Come up to dinner to-night and we'll tell Laddy the grand news."

"You darling!" he exclaimed. "I'll be there at six! And right on the dot this time!"

"O. K.," said Carolyn as she slid down on her piano bench gracefully, not even caring if

her legs did show.

A customer had his hand on two pieces of music.

"Which one?" asked Carolyn, sweetly. *Lay My Head Beneath a Rose?*

"Oh, no. This one, please—*Hallelujah!*"

"By Velasquez"

(Continued from Page 37)

quila, had my finger treated—what remained of it. Then I returned alone, for the frame, my pistol,—and the rest of my finger. I mailed it to Guzmán.

The body of the poor fellow I killed was still there. Sebastián, you know, refused to accompany me, saying that he had seen Satan himself fly off with the dead officer—and Guzmán, too—and that he wished, if possible, to keep out of the way of the devil. But that was not true, of course, Señor Richards. The unfortunate man, already a skeleton, (the vultures, you know), was

still there. . . . I erected a small cross, said a prayer, sprinkled a little earth over the bones. . . .

A pretty custom, as you say . . . (but not Mexican).

Well, enough of those sad days! Tomorrow, Señor Richards, I must show you the picture. You have promised—I shall not forget!

This Pleasant Life

(Continued from Page 15)


"That's a damn shame!"

I couldn't help it, it had to be. Those four words gave me courage to tell her that any reference book or biography would serve the purpose. They also helped me to smile when she said:

"Oh, thanks! I never thought of that!"

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