

# In the Days of Poor Richard

By IRVING BACHELLER

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## DOCTOR FRANKLIN

**SYNOPSIS.**—Solomon Binkus, veteran scout and interpreter, and his young companion, Jack Irons, passing through Horse Valley, New York, in September, 1768, to warn settlers of an Indian uprising, rescue from a band of redskins the wife and daughter of Colonel Hare of England. Jack distinguishes himself in the fight and later rescues Margaret Hare from the river. Jack and Margaret fall in love. On reaching Fort Stanwix, Colonel Hare says both are too young to marry. The Hare family sail for England, and the Irons family move to Albany. The next grows in the colonies because of the oppressive measures of the English government. Solomon and Jack visit Boston. In November, 1776, Jack goes to Philadelphia and works in Benjamin Franklin's printing plant. Nearly three years later Margaret writes him from London, reminding him that her youth is passing and saying she has appealed to Doctor Franklin. Binkus has received a letter from Washington to be carried across the ocean, and Jack sails with him. Arriving in England, Binkus is arrested, but Jack has the letter and proceeds to London.

## CHAPTER V

### London and the Philosopher.

The stir and prodigious reach of London had appalled the young man. The thought thrilled him that somewhere in the great crowd, of which he was now a part, were the two human beings he had come so far to see. He put on his best clothes and with the letter which had been carefully treasured—under his pillow at night and pinned to his pocket lining through the day—set out in a cab for the lodgings of Doctor Franklin. Through a maze of streets where people were "thick as the brush in the forests of Tryon county" he proceeded until after a journey of some thirty minutes the cab stopped at the home of the famous American on Bloomsbury square. Doctor Franklin was in and would see him presently, so the liveried servant informed the young man after his card had been taken to the doctor's office. He was shown into a reception room and asked to wait, where others were waiting. An hour passed and the day was growing dusk when all the callers save Jack had been disposed of. Then Franklin entered. Jack remembered the strong, well-knit frame and kindly gray eyes of the philosopher. His thick hair, hanging below his collar, was now white. He was very grand in a suit of black Manchester velvet with white silk stockings and bright silver buckles on his shoes. There was a gentle dignity in his face when he took the boy's hand and said with a smile:

"You are so big, Jack. You have built a six foot two inch man of that small lad I knew in Albany, and well finished, too—great thighs, heavy shoulders, a mustache, a noble brow, and shall I say the eye of Mars? It's a wonder what time and meat and bread and potatoes and air can accomplish. But perhaps industry and good reading have done some work on the job."

Jack blushed and answered: "It would be hard to fix the blame."

Franklin put his hand on the young man's shoulder and said:

"She is a lovely girl, Jack. You have excellent good taste. I congratulate you. Her piety and her background of good character and she is alive with the spirit of the New World. I have given her no chance to forget you if that had been possible. Since I became the agent in England of yourself and sundry American provinces, I have seen her often, but never without longing for the gift of youth. How is my family?"

"They are well. I bring you letters."

"Come up to my office and we'll give an hour to the news."

When they were seated before the grate fire in the large, pleasant room above stairs whose windows looked out upon the square, the young man said:

"First I shall give you, sir, a letter from Major Washington. It was entrusted to a friend of mine who came on the same ship with me. He was arrested at Deal, but, fortunately, the letter was in my pocket."

"Arrested? Why?"

"I think, sir, the charge was that he had helped to tar and feather a British subject."

"Feathers and tar are poor arguments," the Doctor remarked as he broke the seal of the letter.

It was a long letter and Franklin sat for near half an hour thoughtfully reading and rereading it. By and by he folded and put it into his pocket, saying as he did so: "An angry man cannot even trust himself. I sent some letters to America on condition that they should be read by a committee of good men and treated in absolute confidence and returned to me. Certain members of that committee had so much gunpowder in their hearts it took fire and their prudence and my reputation have been seriously damaged, I fear. The contents of those letters are now probably known to you."

"Are they the Hutchinson, Rogers and Oliver letters?"

"The same."

"I think they are known to every one in America that reads. We are indignant that these men born and raised among us should have sold that a colony ought not to enjoy all the liberties of a parent state and that we should be subjected to coercive measures. They had expressed no such opinion save in these private letters. It looked like a base effort to curry favor with the English government."

"Yes, they were overworking the curry comb," said Franklin. "I had been protesting against an armed force in Boston. The government declared that our own best people were in favor of it. I, knowing better, denied the statement. To prove their claim, a distinguished baronet put the letters in my hands. He gave me leave to send them to America on condition that they should not be published. Of course, they proved nothing but the treachery of Hutchinson, Rogers and Oliver. Now I seem to be tarred by the same stick."

Jack told him of his prospects and especially of the generosity of his friend Solomon Binkus and of the plight the latter was in.

"He must be a remarkable man," said Franklin. "With Preston's help he will be coming on to London in a day or so. If necessary you and I will go down there. We shall not neglect him. Have you any dinner clothes? They will be important to you."

"I thought, sir, that I should best wait until I had arrived here."

"You thought wisely. I shall introduce you to a good cloth merchant. Go to him at once and get one suit for dinner and perhaps two for the street. It costs money to be a gentleman here. It's a fine art. While you are in London you'll have to get the uniform and fall in line and go through the evolutions or you will be a 'North American savage.' You shall meet the Hares in my house as soon as your clothes are ready. Ask the tailor to hurry up. They must be finished by Wednesday noon. You had better have lodgings near me. I will attend to that for you."

The Doctor sat down and wrote on a number of cards. "These will provide for cloth, linen, leather and hats,"



he said. "Let the bills be sent to me. Then you'll not be cheated. Come in tomorrow at half after two."

Jack bade the Doctor good night and drove to The Spread Eagle where, before he went to bed, he wrote to his parents and a long letter to the Pennsylvania Gazette, describing his voyage and his arrival subsequently as the facts are here recorded. Next morning he ordered every detail in his "uniforms" for morning and evening wear and returning again to the inn found Solomon waiting in the lobby. "Here I be," said the scout and trapper.

"What happened to you?"

"S'ar-hed an' shoved me into a dark hole in the wall. Ye know, Jack, with you an' me, it allus 'pears to be workin'."

"Good luck. Cur'us thing the papers was on you 'stid of me—ayes, sir, 'twas. Did ye hand 'em over safe?"

"Last night I put 'em in Franklin's hands."

"Hunkidory! I'm ready fer to go hum."

"Doctor Franklin wants to see you," said Jack. "Put on your Sunday clothes an' we'll go over to his house. I think I can lead you there. If we get lost we'll jump into a cab."

When they set out Solomon was dressed in fine shoes and brown wool stockings and drab trousers, a buttoned jacket and blue coat, and a big, black three-cornered hat. His slouching gait and large body and weathered face and the variety of colors in his costume began at once to attract the attention of the crowd. A half-drunk harridan surveyed him, from top to toe, and made a profound bow as

he passed. A number of small boys scurried along with them, curiously staring into the face of Solomon.

"Ain't this like comin' into a savage tribe that ain't seen no civilized human bein' fer years?"

"'Wot is it?' a voice shouted.

"E's a blarsted bush w'acker from North America, 'e is," another answered.

Jack stopped a cab and they got into it.

"Show us some of the great buildings and land us in an hour at 10 Bloomsbury square, East," he said.

With a sense of relief they were whisked away in the stream of traffic.

"They passed the king's palace and the great town houses of the duke of Bedford and Lord Balcarras, each of which was pointed out by the driver. Suddenly every vehicle near them stopped, while their male occupants sat with bared heads. Jack observed a curious procession on the sidewalk passing between two lines of halted people.

"Hit's their majesties!" the driver whispered under his breath.

The king—a stout, red-nosed, blue-jawed man, with big, gray, staring eyes—was in a sedan chair surmounted by a crown. He was dressed in light cloth with silver buttons. Queen Charlotte, also in a chair, was dressed in lemon colored silk ornamented with brocaded flowers. The two were smiling and bowing as they passed. In a moment the procession entered a great gate. Then there was a crack of whips and the traffic resumed its hurried pace.

When they had been conducted to the presence of Doctor Franklin he took Solomon's hand and said:

"Mr. Binkus, I am glad to bid you welcome."

He looked down at the sinewy, big-boned, right hand of the scout, still holding it.

"Will you step over to the window a moment and give me a look at your hands?" he asked.

They went to the window and the Doctor put on his spectacles and examined them closely.

"I have never seen such an able Samsonian fist," he went on. "I think the look of those hands would let you into Paradise. What a record of human service is writ upon them! Hands like that have laid the foundations of America. They have been generous hands. They tell me all I need to know of your spirit, your lungs, your heart and your stomach."

"They're purty heavy—that's why I generally carry 'em in my pockets when I ain't busy," said Solomon.

"I saw Sir Jeffrey Amherst this morning and told him you were in London. He is fond of you and paid you many compliments and made me promise to bring you to his home."

"I'd like to smoke a pipe with ol' Jeff," Solomon answered. "They ain't no nonsense 'bout him. I learnt him how to talk Injun an' read rapids an' build a fire with tinder an' elbow grease. He knows me plenty. He staked his life on me a dozen times in the Injun war."

"How is Major Washington?" the Doctor asked.

"Stout as a pot o' ginger," Solomon answered. "I riddled with him one evenin' down in Virginia an' I'll never tackle him ag'in, you hear to me. His right flipper is as big as mine an' when it takes hold ye'd think it were goin' to strip the shuck off yer soul."

"He's in every way a big man," said the Doctor. "On the whole, he's about our biggest man. An officer who came out of the ambuscade at Fort Duquesne with thirty living men out of three companies and four shot holes in his coat must have an engagement with Destiny. Evidently his work was not finished. You have traveled about some. What is the feeling over there toward England?"

"They're like a billin' pot every-where. England has got to step careful now."

"Tell Sir Jeffrey that, if you see him, just that. Don't mince matters. Jack, I'll send my man with you and Mr. Binkus to show you the new lodgings. We found them this mornin'."

"I kissed her lips and she kissed mine, and for a few moments—"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## His Excuse

A newsboy took a handful of peanuts from a peanut stand and was arrested for it.

"Well, what are you here for?" the magistrate demanded.

"I don't know, your honor," the culprit replied, "unless it's 'impersonating an officer.'"

## Truthful

"You've been out with worse-looking fellows than I am, haven't you?" (No answer.)

"I say, you've been out with worse-looking fellows than I, haven't you?" "I heard you the first time. I was just trying to think."

## Sky Problems I hat Are Puzzle to Scientists

Scientists have weighed the planets, the sun, and the moon; we know the distance of stars whose light takes centuries to reach us, and we can even measure accurately the minute amount of heat given by distant stars. For all that, the sky is still full of puzzles which astronomers are attempting to solve.

Take, for instance, the problem of dark stars. Possibly it has never occurred to you that there are such bodies, yet for every bright star you can see on a clear night there must be thousands which have gone cold and are therefore invisible. Yet, dead as they are, they are still plunging through space at appalling speed.

On February 2, 1901, there blazed out in the constellation of Perseus a star of amazing brilliance. It was not, of course, a new star. What had really happened was that one of these dark stars had either hit another, or, perhaps, struck one of the big gas clouds which hang in space. The result was an explosion on a scale we cannot even imagine.

These dark stars and gas clouds are among the greatest of sky puzzles. It is only three years ago that a Dutch scientist discovered a mystery cloud 140,000,000,000 miles in length and twice that distance from the solar system. It may be gas, it may be dust. We do not know and probably we never shall.

## Odd Harvest Customs Observed in England

In speaking of harvest, it must be remembered that "wheat" is called "corn" in England. Sometimes the prettiest girl of the village was allowed to cut the final handful of corn. This was then tied up and trimmed to represent a doll, and was called the "Corn-Baby." It was brought home in triumph, and often kept in the farmer's parlor for the rest of the year. In other parts of the country the doll was supposed to be a representation of Ceres, the goddess of fertility. In Hertfordshire the final handful was called a "Mare," and the reapers would throw their sickles at it, crying: "I have her, I have her!" "What have you?" the others would say. "A mare!" a mare! was the answer. This custom, called "Crying the Mare," refers to the time when the corn, being grown in open spaces, was often trampled down and spoiled by wild mares. In Devonshire the last handful was called the Nock, and the "crying" consisted of the one word "Nack." This was supposed to signify "our nag," and hence owes its origin to the same idea as "Crying the Mare."

## Norse Gave Name to Ship

The word "smack" in fishing smack is of Norse origin. The Danes and Norwegians called their vessels "shenka" or shaka. These were long, lean galleys, and the resemblance was further suggested by the dragon's or snake's head which often formed their figure-head. Later on in history, when the Dutch became the great seafaring people, the word passed into their language, slightly altered (to suit their tongue) to "smak." The Dutch boat was of different build, being fat and broad-beamed. We in turn took the word from the Dutch, and turned it into our own smack, using it at first for the small sailing cutter which used to act as a sort of passenger tender for sea-going ships. Now, when steam is almost universal, we confine the word almost entirely to the fair-sized open sea fishing boat which works by sail.

## Curiosity and Fire

If you were to get a letter in the mail with one corner of the envelope burned off, wouldn't it arouse your curiosity? One day not long ago about 4,000 people in a certain community all got letters which came in envelopes that bore marks of fire. The lower left-hand corner on each had been burned away. This unusual little thing attracted much attention. A merchant about to send out circular letters to the 4,000 people on his mailing list wanted to be sure of getting people to notice the letter. Scorching the envelopes did the trick.

"It is our belief that on all the circulars we have ever mailed we have never had anywhere near so large a percentage of them read," states the dealer in discussing the outcome of the experiment.—Good Hardware.

## Another Receiver

The woman who stood before the window in the bank was beginning to get a little restless. She had been standing in front of the receiving teller for a quarter of an hour and he seemed to be quite unaware of her presence—at any rate he took no notice at all of her.

At last she became too irritated to keep quiet another moment.

"Why don't you pay attention to me?"

"I'm sorry, ma'am, we don't pay anything here," was the short but polite reply. "Next window please."

## Your Ration of Oxygen

Nitrogen does not support life, but oxygen is the greatest life-supporting power on earth. It is the breath of life, but nitrogen dilutes the oxygen and makes normal and comfortable life possible. With every breath we take in oxygen and give out carbonic acid. Man and animals exist on oxygen. Trees and plants live on carbonic acid and give out oxygen. A grown man consumes 400 gallons of oxygen daily.



## MR. FOX'S SNOWBALL

WHEN Mr. Fox opened the door to his home one morning the snow came tumbling all over him. It had snowed so hard in the night that his house was almost covered up.

Mr. Fox's house stood on the side of a hill and when at last he did make a place big enough for him to get out and look around he found that everything as far as he could see was covered with snow.

The fences between his home and the farm where the plump poultry lived were not to be seen at all.

"If I try to get down to the farm," said Mr. Fox, "I'll sink into the snow and freeze. Now, if I had a sled or even a plank I might slide right over fences and land right up against the barnyard fence."

"Those hens and chickens will be sure to come out some time today. And Mr. Dog won't go far from his warm



Reached the Fence and Peeked Through the Cracks.

place behind the kitchen stove today if I know him, and I think I do.

"Talk about a dog's life being a hard one! I never knew of a dog that did not have an easy time of it excepting when they try to catch me." And here Mr. Fox had to stop and laugh before he went on with his planning.

"Now, I have no board or sled," said he, thinking about his breakfast again. "I could roll down the hill, I suppose, but I might strike the top of a wall or something—"

Mr. Fox went in the house and put on his cap, which he pulled down all around his head. Then he put on some old gloves and over them his mittens and some long woolen stockings on his feet.

He then came out and sat down in the snow, packing it all around his feet. Then he began to roll about.

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## The Why of Superstitions

By H. IRVING KING

### THE DOG'S TAIL

IF YOUR dog contracts a bad habit of running away, cut off the tip of his tail and bury it under the steps of the house. After that the dog will never care to wander from his own fireside. At least that is the cure for wandering dogs they recommend in some sections of this country and Canada.

This superstition is an excellent illustration of the persistence of the primitive in civilized man. It shows how a primitive idea will outlast empires and systems of philosophy; will remain unshattered amid airplanes and wireless telegraphy and, perhaps, exist long after these modern inventions have been relegated to the category of "Discoveries of the Ancients."

It is based upon the belief of primitive man and of those whom we now call the ancients that a part of a living creature severed from the said creature still remains a vital part of the creature from which it was severed. We have seen in other superstitions how the hair and nails, even the clothing and the name of a man, so intimately partook of the man's personality that magic worked upon them reacted upon their rightful owner. This persistent sympathy pertained to other animals besides man. The severed tip of the dog's tail, buried beneath the steps, is still a part of the dog, sympathetically attached to him and as it is prevented from roaming, so, by sympathetic magic, is the dog prevented.

The natives of the Bismark Archipelago have a very similar custom. The cats there go about with stumpy tails. The reason is that cats by these primitive people are much esteemed for food and each family keeps a number, as we keep hens. In order that a neighbor shall not be tempted to steal his cats the native cuts off pussy's tail and buries it in a secret place. Then if a cat disappears all the owner has to do is to dig up the severed tail and "make black magic" over it. This affects the tail and by sympathy the cat which has been devoured by his thieving neighbor, so that the culprit is exceedingly ill. The Bismark Archipelago or elsewhere—the idea is the same; the magic works equally well.

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## "What's in a Name?"

By MILDRED MARSHALL

Facts about your name; its history; meaning; whence it was derived; significance; your lucky day, lucky jewel

### EDITH

EDITH has a charming augury. Her name means happiness in the Anglo-Saxon, as it is believed to be derived from the "eod." Writal, it is a perplexing name to follow in its various interpretations. It has the same root as Edward, Edwin and Edgar and curiously enough, Edith appears early in its history as the contraction of Eadgitha, which seems to have been the earliest authentic name.

If we accept Eadgitha as being the forerunner of Edith then its interpretation is somewhat different, as the emphasis is placed upon the "githa," which is thought to be a phonetic variation of gift or gift, meaning gift. In that case, Edith means rich gift.

Gyda was a popular feminine name among the Norse, and Gytha was the daughter of Swend, king of Denmark. Gyda was a Norse goddess and became the old, exalted conception of womanhood.

The first Eadgyth was the daughter of Earl Godwin of whom Ingulf said: "Sicut spina rosam, genuit Godwinus Egitnam." But in the roll of her lands in "Domesday," she is called Edeeva. Eddid and Edeeva were much used by the Normans, but the queen of Henry I, who bore the name, was not permitted anything so Saxon and she became Edith.

The pope's mother was one illustrious Edith; it was also the name of Southey's wife. Scott gave it to the Maid of Lorn and made it likewise the name of the heroine of old Mortality. It is now a reigning favorite in England and America.

The jewel assigned to Edith is the agate, which promises popularity and persuasiveness for its wearer. Its prophecy is best revealed in some very ancient poet's rhyme to the wearer of the agate:

Adorned with this, thou woman's heart shall attain, And by persuasion thy desire attain. And if of men thou aught demands shall come With all thy wish fulfilled, rejoicing home.

This obliging stone further promises courage and a bold heart in times of danger; to dream of it signifies a journey. Edith's flower is the wild rose. Her lucky day is Friday and 4 is said to be her talismanic number.

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