

# Willie and the Whumps.

By W. F. BRYAN.

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"What are whumps?" demanded William, his infant soul thirsting for information.

"Whumps," replied Tim Mason, "are beings like men, but they are all clock-work inside."

"That winds up?" interrupted Willie.

"Winds up with a key?"

"With a big key," assented Mason with inspiration. "They steal little boys and make the little boys wind them up every half hour day and night. When the little boys are so tired that they can't wind any more they eat them and then steal some more little boys."

"Clocks don't eat," scoffed the infant scientist.

"You have to oil them, don't you?" demanded Tim. "That's it," he went on as Willie nodded assent. "They only eat very fat little boys."

Willie glanced at his own plump person and then looked up in alarm. "Can they run fast—faster'n me?" he demanded.

"How fast can you run?" demanded Tim, with a glance at the oval path around the lawn. Accepting the hint, Willie traversed the oval as rapidly as his pudgy feet could carry him.

"They can run three times as fast as that," declared Tim. "Come to think it over, some of the whumps can run three and a half times faster."

"Then I won't run away into the woods again," promised Willie, and he trotted solemnly around the corner of the house to play in the sand heap in the back yard.

Bess Farley dimpled deliciously as he disappeared.

"It was all I could do to keep my face straight," she said, with a laugh. "I don't think we will lose Willie again as long as we stay in camp. It was an inspiration, Tim, but what would the president say?"

"I'd go to join the nature fakirs," was the laughing reply; "but, at any rate, I shall not have to waste afternoons hunting for Willie that might be far more pleasantly spent on the porch with his sister. Getting lost in the woods eight times in two weeks betokens that the wanderlust is becoming a habit with the youthful William."

"A habit to be checked only by the whumps," assented Bess. "Let's walk as far as the spring and see if we can see any of the curious beasts. I suppose I need fear no danger?"

She glanced complacently at her slender outlines, and Mason smiled. "You wouldn't grease one pinion of one wheel of a whump," he said. "So let us pursue the whumps to their lair."

Together they left the camp and pushed into the woods—those woods which so irresistibly attracted Bess Farley's small brother. It was Willie's first session in camp, and his voyage of exploration invariably resulted in lost bearings and a rescue party. Confident that the fabulous whumps would keep the youngsters at home, Tim and Bess made their way to the spring with no thought of Willie. But his sand toys soon patled upon the boy, and his active mind sought fresh employment. He wandered over to the edge of the inviting woods and gazed lovingly into the cool green pastures.

In the trees the squirrels chatted, and he could hear the frogs croaking solemnly in the marsh just beyond the road. Perhaps if he was very cautious he might evade the dreaded whumps. He was such a little fellow, he might be able to hide if they chanced his way.

There was a lovely big green bullfrog in the marsh. Perhaps even now he was sitting on a tuft of grass fairly begging a small boy to throw stones at him. With the delightful feeling of adventure Willie cast discretion to the wind and slipped into the shady spaces.

But no big frog was amiably waiting to become a target. Willie could hear them croaking, but not even a baby frog offered itself to his aim, and the boy wandered on. He found a new charm in the woods, since at any moment he might be called upon to flee from a whump, and he pressed onward.

Suddenly his heart stood still for one awful instant. From the bushes just beyond came a sound of voices suddenly raised in hue and cry. Willie dodged behind the bush, scarcely daring to breathe lest his respirations bring about his discovery, but the sounds died away in the distance, and, growing bolder, Willie crept forward and beheld the lair of the whumps.

It was a rather inviting spot, not at all what one would expect in the clock-work beasts. Three white tents were pitched in a little glade opening to the lake. On the shore were boats and canoes, while about the tents were easy chairs of rustic manufacture.

The only fearful object was a kettle swinging from a tripod over the fire. This probably contained the last victim of the whumps' cannibalistic tendencies, and Willie shuddered as he thought how narrowly he had escaped a similar fate. He was still congratulating himself upon his safety when without warning some of the whumps burst in to the open, and Willie's blood chilled as he saw that they bore as captives Bess and Tim. The latter were brave. They were both laughing and joking and trying to pretend that they did not care, but that was all make-believe, Willie knew.

One of the whumps forced Bess into a chair and another forced upon her a reddish drink that they drew from a

bottle submerged in the spring. That must be poison that they gave their victims to render them unconscious. One dreadful little moment Willie hesitated, then he burst into the open.

"Please, Mr. Whump!" he called, precipitating himself upon the man who was trying to make his sister drink. "Please don't kill Bess! Let her go and take me. I'll wind you up. Honest I will. You don't want her. She is such a skinny thing."

A roar of laughter greeted his appearance, and Bess blushed redly at his personal allusion. The campers were puzzled, but in French Mason explained the bugbear that had been created to keep Willie out of the woods.

"It's a shame to tease him," cried Bess, touched by the boy's willingness to sacrifice himself for her. "These are not whumps, Willie."

"Yes, they are," he insisted. "I can hear the clockwork ticking." He was clinging to the leg of Bess' captor, Jim Brace, and after one quick glance the biggest of the whumps caught the situation. "He hears Bess' dollar watch," he explained as he rolled in the grass in his glee and his fellows howled with delight. That dollar watch had been a standing joke ever since they had come in camp.

Brace smiled as a sudden thought struck him. "I am a whump," he admitted. "I am the chief, or mug whump. There is but one means of escape from my awful power. It is well known that whumps never eat persons who are married or engaged to be married. I must ask this lady if she is a bride or a bride to be."

"Neither," said Bess firmly, with a defiant glance at Tim. She knew that the boat club boys had guessed Tim's admiration for her. Indeed, it was an open secret to all. When the boat club boys had caught sight of the pair making their way to the spring and had laughingly captured them and carried them off to camp she had been rather glad of the interruption, for Tim for the hundredth time had been pleading his cause. She liked him—to herself she confessed that she loved him—but she was unwilling to assent to an engagement. This seemed painfully like a forced issue.

But Willie was determined to save her life. "You can be engaged," he insisted, with a glance at Tim. "Please, Bess, for my sake. And mine, too," pleaded Tim, leaning against the chair. "Please, dear," Bess looked at Brace. "I am engaged," she said to the mug whump.

When the cheering had subsided and every one had shaken hands with Tim, Brace turned to Willie.

"In consideration of the great service you have rendered one of our members," he said solemnly, "I as mug whump tender you the freedom of the forest. You will not even have to wind my watch, which is an all day job for a grown man."

"I'm so glad," said Willie beamingly, and Bess and Tim silently echoed the sentiment.

# The Blue Pennant.

By PHILIP KEAN.

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Helen Marshall was always dressed with a demureness that made an effective foil for the bronze brightness of her hair, the warm ivory of her skin, the red of her lips. Today she wore blue—a trim tailored gown of deep colored cloth, a little cocky felt hat and a great bunch of violets that outshone all the other blues except that of the pennant which she carried at the end of a slender cane.

"You beauty!" Holden said under his breath as he took his seat beside her on the grand stand.

She turned quickly.

"Oh, Irwin," her face was brilliant with color. "It's worth everything to see you again! Aunt Sue," she said to the lady beside her, "this is Irwin Holden, the famous halfback of two years ago."

"The king is dead! Long live the king!" Irwin quoted solemnly. "There have been so many famous halfbacks, Helen, that it isn't any wonder that Mrs. McDonald doesn't remember me."

"But I do remember," Mrs. McDonald assured him. "Helen has talked of you so much—and," she hesitated, "of your accident."

"I haven't been able to walk well on two feet since," Holden said grimly, "and this is the first game I have dared let myself see. It makes me wild."

"To think that you can't play!" Helen's tone was sympathetic.

"To know I can't ever do things that make a man worth while!" bitterly.

"But you have done so many things that are worth while, and they tell me that you are writing a book."

"Oh, a book!" His tone was scornful.

"You might have let me know what you were doing!" she complained. "I think our old friendship deserved that."

He glanced down at her.

"Ah, our friendship," he said. "I had two good feet when we cemented that, Helen. I wasn't a dummy on crutches."

"Irwin," she flashed out reproachfully, "as if that made any difference!"

"But it does make a difference," he said as he bent over her. "You know you worship strength in a man, don't you?"

"Yes," she agreed quietly, "but not always mere physical strength."

"The one isn't much without the other. Look at those fellows now."

Down the field came the teams. The bands of the opposing sides crashed out the good old tunes, college yell succeeded college yell, and the banks of spectators stretching up and on, the seats in solid masses of blue and crimson were agitated to uproariousness.

"Isn't it fine? Isn't it fine?" Helen said breathlessly, having cheered the blue team to the echo.

Holden nodded.

"They are bound to win," he said. "They are made of the right stuff."

"I only know one of them personally," Helen told him—"Van Dorn."

"He's the strongest man in the lot. He's an ideal halfback."

"He is ideal in more ways than one," she agreed.

He flashed a quick glance at her.

"I have heard you thought so."

"Who told you?"

"Some of the fellows."

She turned her back on him squarely.

"I didn't suppose that you talked me over with the fellows," she said over her shoulder.

"I don't," uncomfortably, "but one couldn't help hearing that Van Dorn is awfully daffy over you."

"So were you—two years ago."

She said it daintily, giving him a glimpse of flaming cheeks and indignant eyes, and then once more he was forced to contemplate the knot of bronze hair under the cocky hat.

His face went white, but he said quietly, "We are missing the best of the game," and turned his attention to the field.

All about them people were absorbed by the play. Aunt Sue, unlearned and unlettered in football lore, was oblivious to everything else. These two alone thought of other things.

It was at Van Dorn's touchdown that the place went wild.

"Oh, he's great, great, great!" Helen enthused as she waved her pennant frantically. "I haven't seen anything like it since the last game you played, Irwin. Oh, do you remember the little blue pennant that I made you pin to your sweater for luck—and it didn't bring you luck."

"No," he said dully. "It didn't bring me luck. I lost the game. I lost the strength I gloried in—I lost you, Helen."

"No, no," she protested; "you knew you always had my friendship, Irwin."

"But I didn't want friendship, and you knew it and I knew it. And I hadn't the right to ask for anything else, and so I kept away from you. But after two years of separation the temptation to see you was too great, so I sent you the tickets and asked you to come to the game."

"The whole world was changed when I read your letter," she said simply. "I have missed you so, dear boy."

Then for a moment he let himself go. "Oh, Helen, Helen!" he said brokenly.

But the game was over, and a tumultuous throng poured out of the seats.

"Irwin wants us to go to dinner with him, Aunt Sue," Helen said as they went down the steps.

In their walk across the green they

attracted more than usual attention, the younger boys admiring Helen's beauty, the older ones recognizing in the man with the crutch the famous halfback of two years ago, who had then been reported engaged to the girl by his side.

Van Dorn, flushed with victory, came up to their table at the college inn.

"I've won your pennant, Miss Marshall," he said, looking like a young god, with his great strong figure, his fair hair tossed back from his forehead.

"Did I promise it?" Helen asked uncertainly.

"Indeed you did," he stated securely, "and I shall wear it like a knight for his lady."

With her eyes avoiding Holden's, Helen untied the blue trophy slowly from the cane. In the sight of the whole room Van Dorn pinned it to his sleeve. He did it triumphantly, bending over her with an air of possession that made Holden set his lips sternly and turn to a tense study of the menu.

"May I come back and go home with you?" he asked, but Helen shook her head.

"Irwin will take us," she said, "but I wish if you have a minute you'd show Aunt Sue the trophy room. She has never seen it."

As they went away she faced Holden.

"Oh, he took things so for granted," she told him. "I promised as I might to any of the college fellows. But what will people think?"

"What I think," Holden said slowly, "that you are going to marry Van Dorn."

Her steady glance met his.

"I am not going to marry him."

"Why not?" he probed.

"Because of this—"

About her neck at the end of a long chain she wore a locket of dark blue enamel marked with a "Y" in seed pearls.

"You remember it?" she asked as she opened it. "You gave it to me on the evening before that last game."

"Yes," he said, "I remember," and then as he saw what it contained he stopped.

Within was a wisp of bright blue silk stained and torn and crushed into that small space.

"It is all that was left of the little silk pennant that I gave you for luck," she told him. "After you were hurt I made them let me have it. I have kept it ever since."

His hand closed over it eagerly.

"Dear," he said, and his voice broke, "you know how I love you."

"I have never doubted it—even when you stayed away."

"How could I come? How could I ask you to marry me?"

"How does any man ask?" blushing.

"But other men are not cripples."

"Oh, what difference does it make?" she flung out. "Haven't you the same mind and heart and soul as before?"

The light that illumined his face transfigured it.

"Marry me," he cried, "and mind and heart and soul shall go to the making of your happiness!"

Van Dorn came back presently, making triumphant progress, with Aunt Sue in tow. On his arm was the blue pennant for all the world to gaze, but Holden's eyes rested on it serenely, for above his heart, hidden from the profane glances of the multitude, was the little stained wisp of sapphire silk, the token of his dear lady's favor.

# Ben Franklin

who used to run a newspaper down East years ago, also edited an almanac which contained some wise sayings. Here is one of them:

"The way to wealth, if you desire it, is as plain as the way to market. It depends chiefly on two words—industry and frugality. He that gets all he can honestly and saves all he gets (necessary expenses excepted) will certainly become rich."

What Ben said was not only true at that time, but it still holds good at the present day. There is no better way to save than to have a bank account. We will be glad to have you start an account at this bank.—you are not tempted to spend it.

# The Bank of Oregon City

## ROCK CREEK AND SUNNYSIDE.

There was quite a crowd of relatives met at Grandpa Johnson's at Sunnyside on December 15 in honor of his 75th birthday, and took dinner with him. Although he is not able to talk he enjoyed the day very much. There were 28 present.

We hear that Mrs. Kate Sumner is intending to take a trip East with her brother, who has been visiting her. We hope she may have a pleasant time.

A surprise party visited Adolph Stoll's on Saturday evening and spent the evening in playing games. A lunch was furnished by the crowd and all report a nice time.

Mr. and Mrs. Sutton, of Ohio, have been visiting Mr. and Mrs. George Dearford for several days. They left on Friday for California. They are traveling for his health.

We hear of several family reunions to be enjoyed on Christmas and hope they may all have a fine time. Colds have been quite prevalent lately. George Johnson's boys have all taken a turn at it last week.

### Denver Begins to Pay.

Denver, Colo., Dec. 23.—The first installment (\$25,000) of the \$100,000 fund pledged to the Democratic National Committee by the Denver Convention League, was forwarded today to Chairman Thomas Taggart at French Lick, Ind. The remainder will be paid in equal installments on January 22, February 22 and March 22.

### Correct Interpretation Essential.

Many of the most beautiful pieces of poetry in literature would seem uninteresting and flat if read by a bad reciter. In the same way a good reciter will make attractive a poem whose beauties are not so apparent. A true painter will light up each little beauty in his pictures until the smallest detail is attractive and strikes the eye. It is only the mediocrity whose work is characterized by sameness and lack of interest.—Strand Magazine.

### Logical Supposition.

Little Lloyd—Papa, was George Washington married to England? Papa—Of course not, my son. Why do you ask such a silly question? Little Lloyd—This book says England is our mother country, and as George Washington was the father of his country I supposed they were married.—Chicago News.

### He Was Incurable.

Underdone—My husband is complaining again of your cooking, Mary. Mary (reassuringly)—Oh, mum, I don't take any notice of him, for 'tis the nature of him to find fault. Ain't he forever complainin' of you, mum?—Illustrated Bits.

### Of Practical Use.

"Well, Jack, what are you studying in economics?"

"Graft, father."

"Now, of what earthly use will that ever be to you?"

"Oh, I dunno. Say, dad, for twenty plunks I won't let mother know why you were late to dinner last night, and I'll fix it so you can go to the club this evening."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

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