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Corvallis Lodge, No. 14, A. F. and A. M., meets on Wednesday evening, on or preceding full moon.
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John Alden's Farm.
"You may laugh if you will, Susy, there is something in 'luck;' and luck has always been against the Aldens," said John Alden, despondently to his sister.
"How, John?" Susy turned her round, bright face attentively toward him.
"Look at grandfather, George Alden and his sons! Why, their estate was the richest on the Ohio shore. They lived like Irish kings, I've heard people say, and excepting father they all died penniless."
"Grandfather Alden, I am sorry to say, was too fond of horse-racing and cards to keep money long, and his sons, excepting father, all drank," said Susy, daily. "Living like Irish kings, too, is not the most secure way of keeping a fortune."
"Well, now, look at me," continued John, with the scowl on his face unaltered. "I neither drink nor gamble, nor care for the turf, I'm nineteen, and I've tried honestly to do my duty in every way."
"Well, John?"
"Well"—snappishly—"see the difference between me and George Harvey. At school, study as hard as I would, he carried off all the prizes. I was the dull plodder, he the brilliant scholar, the genius. When visitors came, I heard him pointed out invariably as 'Harvey, sir. A most promising fellow. He'll make his mark in the world.' I was passed by without a word. When we go into society it is the same thing. I take the utmost pains to be polite and attentive to the girls, and Harvey laughs, and quizzes, and is positively rude to them. Yet he is 'splendid' and 'fascinating,' and the nicest girls are proud to have him for a partner, while I am endured on sufferance. There is precisely the same difference in business. In every way he is favored by fortune and I am slighted."
"I do not see that, John," said Susy, gravely. "George has a showy dashy manner which commands attention to whatever he knows. But people soon find out how little that is. Even the girls, in the long run"—
"I hate the 'long run!'" cried John, impatiently.
Susy was silent. She knew very well that this outbreak was all owing to the fact that Laura Faulke had showed some attention to George Harvey the night before. "He always did care too much for Laura Faulke's opinion since they went to the primary school together," thought Susy, indignantly. "And as for business," she said aloud, "I do not see that George has any advantage over you in his position. You both have been left farms, both are independent, both have the means of making a sure though not a large income."
"Now that shows just how little you know about it. Harvey's farm numbers just the same amount of acres that mine does, it is true. But his is on the south side of the creek, in rich alluvial soil, mine on the hillside, where nothing will grow but pine trees and Jimson weeds."
"Hello! What's the matter, Jack?" said Squire Hall, riding up to the porch on his gray mare.
"I was grumbling about my patch here, to tell the truth. It will yield nothing; absolutely nothing."
"Don't be too sure of that, my boy. Come out here a bit," beckoning him mysteriously aside.
They whispered for some time together, and then John came in, his face flushed and his eyes glowing.
"There's great news, Susy! Oil has been discovered in the bottom, and a company from New York have sent on inspectors to test the property on either side the creek; among the rest, Harvey's and mine. If there are any indications of oil being there we can ask our own price for the land."
"O John, I knew all would go well with you!"
The little girl's face was pretty and sparkling, and her brother stopped and kissed it heartily.
"The inspection is to be made tomorrow, and then I'm made or lost for life. If only luck is not against me!"

"God will be for you in any case, John," said Susy gently.
But "luck" to John Alden which came in visible good fortune of dollars and cents, or even praise, was a much more real thing than the unseen power which his sister worshipped so faithfully.
He rose next morning with a haggard face, which showed he slept but little.
"To-day," he said to Susy, "it will be all settled. The inspector from New York will be here by 10 o'clock. In an hour he can tell if there is any oil on the land. He is an expert you understand. If there be any I will sell and build a house like Squire Peters', only larger. And then, Susy—who knows?—I might marry. I am as old as Ben Scott."
"Yes, that is true."
She could not bear to discourage him by a hint of defeat. He watched nervously by the door for the men to appear, and when he saw them coming—the New York expert, one, or two of the proposed stockholders in the new company, and Squire Peters himself—he snatched up his hat and hurried down the road to meet them.
Even Susy's heart throbbed fast. She told herself in vain that it was not a matter of life and death; it seemed to her as though her own fate as well as John's depended upon a few words to be spoken in the coming half hour.
The hour passed. She had seen the groups of men passing from point to point of the farm, until they turned to the right of a big red barn and disappeared in the corn-patch. After that they were lost to sight.
Noon came! One o'clock! The dinner was ready, but she dared not sound the horn. The inspection was no doubt successful, and they were now chaffering for the sale of the farm. Would they give the money in cash?—Hundreds—thousands—a million? Susy's ideas on the subject of the price of oil lands were very unsettled.
Two o'clock came at last, and the dinner, do what she would, was dried to a crisp. Just as the clock struck, Squire Peters and the stranger from New York rode past the door. Susy could not help listening intently for any chance words she might hear.
"The land for the purposes of cultivation," said the squire, "is worthless, perfectly worthless."
"Think so, eh? Now, near New York, a man would make it pay gold to the foot," looking with half shut eyes down at the ground.
"How?"
"Berries. Finest varieties of berries; and with that they passed out of sight."
Still John did not come in. At last Susy put on her sun-bonnet and went through the garden, the truck patch, the woods, in search of him. She found him, after a long search, among the hay-mows, lying on his face, his head covered with his arms.
"O John, what is it?"
He would not answer for a while. Then he raised his head. "It's my luck!" he said savagely with an oath such as never crossed his lips before. "There will be a full yield on George Harvey's farm, and on mine—"
"On yours?"—breathlessly.
"Not a drop. Now let me alone! I want no pity;" and he stalked away into the woods.
But every cup, no matter how bitter, is drained at last. Months passed by, George Harvey received from the company a sum for his land which to his neighbors appeared a princely fortune. Derrieks and mills are built. The oil poured out like water. A branch railroad was built from the city to the "Harvey Mills." Harvey himself bade the village good-bye, and went to one of the Eastern cities to live. Reports soon came back of his lavish extravagance, of Parisian clothes, of diamonds, blooded horses.
"Harvey lives like a prince," people said to John Alden. "He does credit to his native town."
If there was no sarcastic emphasis on the pronoun meant, John fancied it. As for himself, he was in a morbid, sullen despair for about a year. Nobody would buy his land except for oil. It was an elephant on his hands.

At last, being young and hopeful, and with Susy to urge him on, he determined to make use of his elephant.
"What are you going to do, Jack?" queried Squire Peters. "Digging up your sheep-walk?"
"Yes; berries," was Jack's crusty answer.
The squire smiled compassionately and passed on.
Four years later Squire Peters was escorting Mr. Hudson, from the West, about the neighborhood. "Here is the famous 'Harvey Mill,'" he said, "which ran out in three years, or but little more. Company broke up—terrible smash. The young fellow to whom the land belonged, too—that was a worse wreck than one of mere capital. Very promising lad; a little frothy, superficial, to be sure. But he shared the fate of many to whom the oil fever brought sudden fortune. Unexpected success seemed to go to his brain and made him heady. He took to extravagant dressing first, then dancing, card playing, and at last the bottle. You may see him hanging round the tavern-door now, a poor, penniless sot."
They passed down the road still talking of the lamentable effects of the oil-speculation on the slow-going, steady farmers, when the stranger stopped suddenly.
"Aha! This looks like enterprise! Whose work is this?"
"Now, that," said the squire, stroking his chin complacently, "is a specimen of what a different class of young men from poor George Harvey can do. A miserable story, but luck to belong to a young fellow like Alden. He had the idea of raising fine fruit; bought the finest variety of berries, spared no expense in manuring his ground or advertising his crops. Now, sir, he has doubled his land, and commands the market in the Western cities. Some men are born to an inheritance of luck."
"Or of common sense. Married?"
"No. Lives with his sister, as nice a little girl as the country side would yield. But should not wonder if the young fellow would marry some of these days. There's a certain young lady in the next town that any man might be proud to marry; but no matter about that. This piece of work before you is not the result of luck—as you see—but of downright labor and skill. And the whole town is benefited by the young man's enterprise and success."
Be Polite
A sailor, roughly dressed, was strolling through the streets of New Orleans then in rather a damp condition from recent rain, and rise of tide. Turning the corner of a much-frequented and narrow alley, he observed a young lady standing in perplexity, evidently measuring the depth of the muddy water between her and the opposite side-walk, with no very satisfied countenance.
The sailor paused, for he was a great admirer of beauty, and the fair face that peeped from under the little chip hat might tempt an admiring glance. Perplexed, the lady put forth one little foot when the gallant sailor, with impulsiveness, exclaimed:—"That pretty little foot, lady, should not be soiled with the filth of the lane. Wait a moment, only, and I will make a path for you."
So, springing past her into a carpenter shop opposite, he bargained for a plank board that stood in the doorway, and, coming back to the smiling girl, who was just coquettish enough to except the service of a handsome young sailor, he bridged the narrow, black stream, and she tripped across with a merry "Thank you," and a roguish smile.
Alas! Our young sailor was perfectly charmed. What else would make him catch and shoulder the plank, and follow the little witch through the streets to her home.
She twice performed the ceremony of walking the plank, each time thanking him with one of her pretty smiles.
Presently our young hero saw the lady trip up the marble steps of a palace of a house and disappear within the rose-wood entrance. For full

a minute he stood looking at the big door, and then, with a big sigh, turn-away, disposed of his drawbridge and went back to his ship.
The next day he received notice of promotion from the captain. Poor Jack was speechless with amazement. He had not dreamed of being exalted to the dignity of a second mate's office on board one of the most splendid ships that ever sailed out of the port of New Orleans. He knew it was complete; for, instead of spending his money for amusements, visiting theatres and bowling alleys, on his return from sea, he purchased books, and had become quite a student, but he expected years would intervene before his ambitious hopes would be realized.
His superior officers favored him, and I gave him opportunities to gather nautical knowledge, and in a year the gentlemanly young mate had acquired unusual favor in the eyes of the portly commander, Capt. Hume, who had taken the smart black-eyed fellow as a cabin boy.
One night the young man, with all the other officers, was invited to an entertainment at the Captain's house. He went, and to his astonishment, mounted the same steps that two years before the young lady had passed over—a vision he had never forgotten. Thump, thump, went his brave heart as he was ushered into the parlor, and like a sledge hammer it beat again, when Capt. Hume brought forward his daughter, and with a pleasant smile, said:—"This young lady was once indebted to your kindness for a safe and sound voyage home."
"My daughter?"
"Yes, my daughter. She is as fine a specimen of a sailor's daughter as I have ever seen. She is not handsome as some of the gallant sailors and the 'pretty ladies' of the city."
It was only a year from that time that the second mate took the quarter-deck second only in command and part owner with the Captain; not only in his vessel, but in the affections of his daughter, who had always cherished a respect for the handsome sailor. This very homely, but earnest act of politeness toward his child had pleased the Captain, and, though the youth knew it not was the cause of his first promotion. The honest sailor is now one of the richest men in the Crescent City, and his own, in part, his prosperity to his politeness.
One has opportunities to be courteous, however, every day, and nothing is ever lost by it.
Starting a Young Man.
It is related of a wealthy Philadelphian who has been dead these many years that a young man came to him one day and asked for help to start in business.
"Do you drink?" inquired the millionaire.
"Occasionally."
"Stop it! Stop it for a year, and then come and see me."
The young man broke off the habit at once and at the end of a year again presented himself.
"Do you smoke?" again asked the great man.
"Yes; now and then."
"Stop it! Stop it for a year, and then come and see me."
The young man went away, and quit loose from the habit, and after worrying through another twelve months once more faced the philanthropist.
"Do you chew?"
"Yes, Sir."
"Stop it! Stop it for a year, and then come and see me."
But the young man never called again. When some one asked why he didn't make one more effort, he replied:
"Didn't I know what he was driving at. He'd have told me that as I had stopped chewing, drinking and smoking I must have saved enough to start myself."
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