

THE AWAKENING OF PETER HALSEY

By PEARL HOWELL CAMPBELL

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THE mellow light of a Wisconsin September lay over Rock valley. In the orchards the apples were ripening and dropping one by one to heaped beneath the trees. The stubble lands, the low lying hills, dotted with clumps of trees, and the pastures had yet the rich greenness of the summer. But the subtle change that marks the coming of autumn was already beginning to manifest itself in the cornfields. The summer had been backward and cold; crops that should have been abundant were almost a failure.

Peter Halsey, sitting on the top rail of the dilapidated fence between the pasture and the cornfield, viewed the straggling stalks and the poor, undeveloped ears with a disgust which he made no effort to conceal. The crop, as usual, was a failure, but scattered thickly through the field were mammoth golden pumpkins that seemed to hold all the garnered rays of many a sunny day.

For Peter, dreamer and believer in scientific farming though he was, had followed the footsteps of his shiftless ancestors and planted his corn and pumpkins together. His more practical neighbors had long ceased to do this, claiming, what was quite true, that the pumpkins interfered with the thorough cultivation of the corn and that neither did as well. However, all theories fail in a bad season, and this year Peter's crop was abundant, while his neighbors had neither corn nor pumpkins.

Peter looked at them with a satisfied smile on his face.

"My, but there's a pile of punkins out there!" he mused. "Ain't they whoppers? Bet they ain't a punkin in the whole state of Wisconsin that can beat that biggest one of mine. And the ples—won't they be great, though?"

He smacked his lips in anticipation of the coming treat. Just then the Wescott children on their way to school began to sing as they passed the house:

"Peter, Peter, punkin eater,
Had a wife and couldn't keep her!"

"Drat them young uns!" Peter muttered savagely. "If I could catch 'em I'd give 'em a trouncing they'd remember for one while!"

The sight of Peter sitting on the fence of the pumpkin field suggested the last couplet, and they called mockingly:

"Better put her in a punkin shell,
Then you'll keep her very well!"

Touched to the quick, he climbed wearily down from the fence and went to his work. The smile that softened his rugged features and made them almost beautiful was gone, and in its place was a look of heartrending woe, of a bitter grief that knew no respite. In his momentary pride in his pumpkins he had forgotten the shadow that lay over his household.

The nonsensical nursery rhyme was true. Martha Halsey, who married him against the will of her parents, who prophesied that no good would ever come to a Halsey, and who had loved and believed in him for seven years, had suddenly decided to leave him and go back to her father's.

"It ain't any use, Peter," she had said. "I'm tired of working in doors and out trying to make a living, while you fool away your time on experiments. In all the seven years I've been married I ain't never had nothing new but the calico dresses I bought with the egg money. And I'm sick of it!"

"I want a decent house, and I want to live like other folks, go to meeting and have a sewing society to tea. I didn't believe so when he said you was shiftless. I thought it was because you didn't have nobody to spruce you up and help you save. And I kept on hoping that things would be different after awhile, but they ain't. Not but what you've been kind to me, for you have."

Martha wiped away a tear and went on. "You've helped in the house and done everything except make a decent living. So I'm going home, and I shan't come back until you do something to support me."

He listened silently. It was all so true he could say nothing in reply. Martha hoped he would. If he had answered her sharply and made her angry it would not be half so hard to leave him. He watched her with a look of hopeless misery on his face as he tried to grasp the fact that she really meant to go away and not come back. In all the seven years of their married life she had never been away from home longer than two weeks, and he still looked back to it as the longest, loneliest fortnight he ever spent. How he could ever manage to drag out the dreary, hopeless years that lay before him he did not know.

He was so stunned by the blow that he made no effort to dissuade her from her purpose in the days that followed. He only said:

"You will wait until after the pumpkins are sold, won't you, Marty?"

And she answered with a flash of the

old spirit that made her again the Martha of his courtship days:

"No, Peter Halsey; I shan't. I'm going as soon as I get the house cleaned up."

At the close of a long hard day's work he came home to a silent house. There was no fire in the kitchen stove, but a tempting supper was arranged on the table. He tried to cheat himself into thinking that she was tired and had lain down to rest, so he went through the deserted rooms, calling softly:

"Oh, Marty, you ain't really gone, are you?"

She had taken nothing save the remnants of her wedding finery and the poor clothes she had bought with her own hard earned money. A little work basket he had given her on their first anniversary lay on the table and beside it a curl of golden hair clipped from the head of their only child and a worn little shoe, showing yet the creases made by the baby feet that long ago found out the pathway to the homeland.

Martha had kept these treasures with sacred care; but, knowing that she could give Peter no better proof of her lasting love, she had divided with him. He took them in his big rough hands and touched them with tender fingers. Then he sat down in her empty chair and sobbed aloud.

"O Lord," he whispered brokenly, "I thought it was hard enough when baby died, but now Martha's gone it seems like I just can't live without her."

That night and the day that followed were like a wretched nightmare to him. On the next his mind, made clear by suffering and loss of sleep, aroused from the torpor of grief and began to reassert itself. He surveyed the farm with the critical eyes of a stranger, realizing for the first time how badly everything about the place needed repairing. He noted the rickety fences, the tumbling outbuildings and the ruinous condition of the house and admitted the truth of Martha's accusations.

"I have been shiftless," he said to himself. "Days when I ought to have been at work in the fields I've fooled away my time reading or trying to hatch up some scheme to make money out of nothing."

"It's good land, too," he went on, after a pause. "It ought to make a decent living for us two and give Martha all the fixings she wants, but this year it ain't raised nothing but punkins and experiments."

His eyes twinkled, and in spite of the gravity of the situation he laughed as he counted up all the will-o'-the-wisps he had followed for seven years. There were the orchard, where he ruined the apple trees by grafting them with varieties which were not adapted to the climate, and the row of hardy peach trees that never even leaved out. Beyond them was the garden plot where he had tried to grow ever bearing strawberries, with a tangled thicket of wineberries flourishing in one corner.

"Darn things!" Peter muttered. "I paid \$10 for them bushes, and I hain't never et a berry from 'em yet. And there's them white blackberries of mine and the orange flavored rhubarb. I wish I could get aht of the pesky stuff."

Last of all were the pumpkins. All the other experiments were wretched failures, but these had amply rewarded him for the time he had spent in cultivating them. He well remembered the sultry afternoon in July that he devoted to cross fertilizing the blossoms of the two varieties. The result was the new strain, larger, sweeter and firmer of flesh than either of its parents.

"I ought to make something out of those punkins," he said thoughtfully. "And if I don't I'll quit fooling with experiments and tend to farming. I will anyway and show Martha I mean business."

He watched the pumpkins with jealous care, turning them to get all the sun and guarding them so vigilantly that the neighbors began to think his trouble had turned his head. He found time to do a great deal of cleaning up about the farm. He mended the fences and burned up the unsightly piles of rubbish until the place began to look tidy and well kept. It is true that there were days when he relapsed into his old bad habits, but for the most part he worked with tireless energy, longing eagerly for the time when he could bring Martha home again.

One day in the early fall he gathered his pumpkins, selecting the most perfect ones for exhibition at the county fair. The largest one of all was a rich golden yellow and so immense that it might easily have served for Cinderella's carriage.

"Bet this Jumbo of mine will weigh close to 200 pounds," he said as he lifted it carefully on to the scales.

"Must be I don't see straight," he added, "or, great Caesar, he weighs 250!"

A week later he loaded Jumbo, who proudly bore the inscription

JUMBO
KING OF PUMPKINS
WEIGHED 250

CIRCUMFERENCE 6 FEET
GROWN BY PETER HALSEY

Into the wagon with several others nearly as large and drove to the fair grounds. All day throngs of admiring spectators crowded into the agricultural building to see it. Beside the mammoth pumpkin the wonders of the hairless calf and the winged horse of the side shows faded into insignificance.

Housewives tapped its yellow rind as they speculated on its flavor and wondered how many pies it would make. At night it proudly wore two ribbons, the blue of the first premium and a yellow one denoting that it had been awarded the special prize of \$10 offered for the largest vegetable on exhibition.

Yet Peter was not satisfied, although he had been offered \$50 for it by the envious side show man. Just before



"I've come to take you home again,"

the close of the fair a stranger entered the building and, passing by the displays of fruit and vegetables, paused before Jumbo. He drew a tape-line from his pocket and carefully verified the measurements. Then he inspected the others of the group and tested the flavor and grain of the samples. And at last, well satisfied, he turned away.

"Are you the grower of the prize pumpkin?" he asked Peter some hours later.

"I reckon I am," Peter answered proudly. "That punkin was grown right there in the cornfield."

"I understand, of course," said the stranger slowly. "That the pumpkins on exhibition are the largest you have. Would you mind showing me the smallest you raised?"

Peter lit the lantern and led the way to the barn where they were stored.

"May I ask how you obtained the variety?"

"By cross fertilizing the blossoms," Peter replied. "It's the only one of my experiments that's been anything of a success."

"Yes," said the stranger, "it is a success, a very decided success. Indeed, I am authorized by the Imperial Seed company to offer you \$5,000 for the seeds."

The lantern swayed in Peter's trembling hands, and a mist gathered in his eyes. Even in his wildest dreams he had never hoped for any such sum as this. Five thousand dollars—why, that was more than the farm was worth. He could fix up the house and have Martha home for Thanksgiving. He turned away his face that the stranger might not see his joy as he answered:

"You may have the punkins on them terms."

The news that Peter had sold his pumpkins for \$5,000 spread like wildfire over the country. Those who had seen Jumbo boasted of its size and beauty and began to refer to Peter, whom they had always called Shiftless Peter, as "Halsey, the Pumpkin King."

The neighbors watched the improvements he made with envious eyes and whispered that sooner or later the money would all be squandered on foolish experiments.

But it wasn't, and one glad October day Peter drove through the russet fields to Martha's old home. She was sitting on the steps of her father's home eagerly watching the passersby. When she saw Peter she sprang to her feet with a little low cry of joy and ran to meet him.

He took her in his strong arms and crushed her to him. For awhile neither cared for other speech than that of clasped hands and long, long kisses, but at last Peter said tenderly:

"I've come to take you home again, Marty. I can't live without you now, but I've turned over a new leaf, and I'm going to do different than I have. Will you come and give your Shiftless Peter another chance?"

"Yes," she answered, and her face was as radiant with happiness as that of the girl he had wedded seven years before. "But, oh, I thought you would never come!"

If a married woman is fairly good-looking, loves her husband and is sensible, that is about all anyone could reasonably expect.

PORTLAND MARKETS

Latest Quotations in the Portland Markets.

Complete Market Reports Corrected Each Day Giving the Wholesale Prices of Commodities, Farm Produce and Vegetables.

PORTLAND, March 31.—Receipts of dressed calves have been so heavy the past few days that the price is considered weak, in spite of the fact that other fresh cuts are scarce and high. "It is not what we want for these calves that regulates the price," one commission man said, "but it is what the retail butchers are willing to pay."

Even cabbage, of which the supply has been fair all winter, is conspicuous by its absence, and there is no telling when stocks may be replenished, according to dealers. Supplies are due from points adjacent to San Francisco Bay, but wet weather there has retarded picking. The same conditions prevail regarding cauliflower.

Oranges are the only available green fruit to speak of, and the price has gone up to \$3.25 to \$3.50 a box, with indications of a further advance as the season progresses.

Grain, Produce, Feed.

Wheat—Walla Walla, 60½c Valley, 73c; bluestem, 6½c; red, 65c.
Oats—White, 82½c; 82c.
Barley—Brewing, \$23.50@24; feed, \$23.25; rolled, \$24@25.
Hay—Valley timothy, \$10@11; Eastern Oregon, \$13.50@14; clover, \$8.50@9; cheat, \$7.50@8; alfalfa, \$10.

Millstuffs—Middlings, \$25@26; chop, \$19; bran, \$18@19; shorts, \$20@21.
Flour—Hard wheat patent, \$3.85; straight, \$3.40; graham, \$3.25; rye, \$5.00; whole wheat flour, \$3.50; Valley, \$3.30@3.45; Dakota, \$6.50@7.25; Eastern rye, \$5.40; Pillsbury, \$6.20@7.15; Corvallis, \$3.70.

Corn—Whole, \$24; crocked, \$25 per ton.

Rye—\$1.50 per cwt.
Buckwheat—\$35 per ton.

Produce.

Butter—Fancy creamery, 27½@30c lb.; city creamery, 30@32½c; dairy, 16½@17c; store, 14½@15c; Eastern creamery, 27½@30c; butterfat, 27½@28½c.
Cheese—Young American, 16c; Oregon full cream, 15c.

Eggs—Fresh Oregon ranch, 16½c.
Poultry—Old roosters, 8@9c; hens, 12½@13c; Spring, 14@15c; broilers, 15@16c; dressed chickens, 13@13½c; geese, live, 9½@9c; dressed, 11@11½c; turkeys, live, 14@15c; dressed, 16@17c; ducks, old, 12@13c; Spring ducks, 15@16c; pigeons, per dozen, \$1.00@1.25; squabs, \$2.50@3.00.

Honey—Dark, 10½@11c; amber 12@13c; fancy white, 14@15c.

Fruits and Vegetables.

Apples—Green, 75@82.5c.
Pears—\$1@1.50 box.

Grape fruit—Crate, \$3@3.50.
Cranberries—\$14 per barrel.

Tropical fruits—Lemons, fancy, \$3.50; choice, \$3.00 per box; oranges, \$2.75@3.00; bananas, 5c per lb.; pineapples, \$4.50@5.00 per dozen.

Potatoes—Per sack, 60@75c for fancy, 30@50c for inferior stock, in country; jobbers' prices, 50@80c per 100 pounds; turnips, 75@90c sack; cabbage, per 100 lbs., \$1.75@2.00; celery, dozen, 75@90c; onions, 75c@1.00 in country; bobbers' prices, \$1.00@1.25; beets, \$1 per sack;

carrots, 75c per sack; garlic, 10c; sweet potatoes, \$2.25@2.50; red peppers, dry, 20c; hot-house lettuce, \$1.50 box. California vegetables—Green peas, 8@9c; sprouts, 8c; radishes, 25c doz. bunches; Chile peppers, 20c pound; head lettuce, 25c dozen; artichokes, \$2.25@2.50 doz.; cauliflower, 90c@1.00 per dozen; rhubarb, 7@7½c.

Groceries, Provisions, Etc.

Sugar, sack basis—Golden C, \$5.05; extra C, \$5.20; powdered, \$5.80; patent cube, \$5.95; cane, D. C., \$5.70; fruit sugar, \$5.70; beet sugar, \$4.60; barrels, cwt., 10c; kgs, cwt., 25c; boxes, cwt., 50c advance over sack basis (less 1-4c lb. if paid for in 15 days).

Salt—Bales of 75-4c, bale, \$1.00; bales of 60-3c, bale, \$1.60; bales of 40-4s, bale, \$1.60; bales of 10-10c, bale, \$1.60; bags, 50s. fine, ton, \$11; bags, 50 lbs., genuine Liverpool, ton, \$17; bags, 50 lbs., 1-2 ground, 100s, ton, \$7; R. S. V. P., 20 5-lb. cartons, \$2.25; R. S. V. P., 24 3-lb. cartons, \$1.75; Liverpool lump, ton, \$18.50.

Rice—Imperial Japan, No. 1, \$5.95; Southern, Japan, 53-4c; broken, 43c; head, fancy, 6½c; head, choice, 6-1-4c.

Coffee—Mocha, 24@25c; Java, fancy, 26@32c; Java, good, 20@24c; Java, ordinary, 17@20c; Costa Rica, fancy, 18@20c; Costa Rica, good, 12@18c; Arabica, 16c per lb.; Lion, 16c per lb.; Columbia coffee, 13-3-4c; Salvador, 11½@15c.

Provisions—Hams, to size, 13c; hams, picnic, 9c; bacon, regular, 11½c; bacon, breakfast, 13-1-4@19c; dry salt sides, 11c; backs, dry salt, 11c.

Nuts—Walnuts, No. 1, soft shell, 15-1-4c; No. 1, hard shell, 15c; Chile, 13c; almonds, 16c; filberts, 14@15c; Brazils, 14c; pecans, 13½@15c; hickory, 8c; Virginia peanuts, 7@7½c; Jumbo Virginia peanuts, 9c; Japanese peanuts, 5½@6c; chestnuts, Italian, 14c; coconuts, dozen, 75@80c; new almonds, 15@16c.

Dates—Golden, 60-lb. boxes, 6@6½c; 1-lb. packages, 8c; Fard., 15-lb. boxes, \$1.40 box.

Beans—Small white, 4c; large white, 3½c; pink, 2-7-8c; bayou, 4-3-4c; Limas, 5-7-8c; Mexican reds, 5½c.

Figs—White, lb., 5½@6c; black, 6@7c.

Pickled goods—Pickled pigs' feet, 1 barrel, \$5; 1-4 barrels, \$2.75; 15-lb. kits, \$1.25; pickled tripe, 1 barrel, \$5; 1-4 barrels, \$2.75; 15-lb. kits, \$1.25; pickled pigs' tongues, 1 barrel, \$6.00; 1-4 barrels, \$3; 15-lb. kits, \$1.50; pickled lamb's tongues, 1 barrel, \$9; 1-4 barrels, \$5.50; 15-lb. kits, \$2.75.

Lard—Kettle-rendered, tierces, 10½c; tubs, 10-5-8c; 50s, 10-5-8c; 20s, 10-3-4c; 10s, 11c; 5s, 9-5-8c. Standard pure, tierces, 9-1-4c; tubs, 9-7-8c; 50s, 9-7-8c; 20s, 9-5-8c; 10s, 10-1-4c; 5s, 10-1-8c. Compounds, tierces, 6½c; tubs, 6-3-4c. Compounds, tierces, 6½c; tubs, 6-3-4c; 50s, 6-3-4c; 5s, 7-3-8c.

Sausage—Portland ham, 14½c per lb.; mined ham, 10c; Summer, choice dry, 17c; bologna, long, 5½c; wienerwurst, 8c; liver, 5c; pork, 9c; blood, 5c; headcheese, 12c; bologna sausage, link, 4½c.

Raisins—Loose Muscates, 3-crown, 7½c; 2-crown, 7c; bleached seedless Sultan, 7@12c; unbleached seedless Sultan, 7c; London layers, 3-crown, whole boxes of 20 pounds, \$2.10; 2-crown, 2c.

Dried fruit—Apples, evaporated, 12c per pound; sundried, sacks or boxes, none; apricots, 11@12c; peaches, 10@11c; pears, none; prunes, Italian, 5½@6c; French, 3c; figs, California blacks, 5-3-4c; do white, none; Smyrna, 20c; plums, fitted, 6c.

Cereal feeds—Rolled oats, cream, 90-lb. sacks, \$6.75; lower grade, \$5.25@6.25; oatmeal, steel cut, 50-lb. sacks, \$8 bale; 10-lb. sacks, \$4.25 per crate; oatmeal (ground), 50-lb. sacks, \$7.50 per bale; 10-lb. sacks, \$4 per bale; split peas, \$4.50 per 100-lb. sack; 25-lb. boxes, \$1.15; pearl barley, \$4.75 per 100 lbs.; 25-lb. boxes, \$1.25 per box; pastry flour, 10-lb. sacks, \$2.50 per bale.

Canned salmon—Columbia River, 1-lb. talls, \$1.85; 2-lb. talls, \$2.50; fancy, 1-

lb. flats, \$2.00; 1-lb. fancy flats, \$1.25; fancy 1-lb. ovals, \$2.75; Alaska talls, ping, 90c; red, \$1.45; nominal, 2s, tall, \$2.00.

Livestock Market.

Cattle—Best steers, \$3.75@4; cows, \$3.00@3.25; calves, \$3.00@4.75.
Sheep—\$5.75@6.00; lambs, \$5@5.50.
Hogs—\$5.75@6.00; light hogs, \$5@5.25.

Wild Game.

Jack rabbits, \$2@2.50 dozen.
Sugar, sack basis—Golden C., \$5.05;

Fresh Meats and Fish.

Fresh meats—Veal, small, 7½@8c; large, 4½@5c; pork, 7½@8c; beef, bulls, 2½@3c; cows, 3½@4c; steers, 4½@5c; mutton, 8@8½c; lambs 9@9½c.

Clams—Hardshell, per box, \$2.00; razor clams, \$2.00 per box.

Oysters—Shoalwater Bay, per gallon, \$2.25; Olympia, per sack, \$3.25; Eastern transplanted, \$1.00 per 100.

Fish—Crabs, per dozen, \$1.50; Shoalwater Bay oysters, per sack, \$4.00; oysters, gallon, \$2.25; halibut, 7c; black cod, 7c; bass, per lb., 18c; herring, 5c; flounders, 5c; catfish, 8c; lobsters, per lb., 12c; silver smelt, 6c; shrimp, 10c; perch, 5c; sturgeon, 8c; sea trout, 12½c; black bas, 25c; Columbia River steelheads, 9c; Columbia River smelt, 3c; Chinook salmon, 9c.

Hops, Wool, Hides, Etc.

Grain bags—Calcutta and domestic, 7c.

Wool—Valley, 26@27 1-2c; Eastern Oregon, 18@20c.

Tallow—Prime, per lb., 3@3 3-4c; No. 2 and grease, 2@2 1-2c.

Hops—Choice, 10@11c; prime, 9@9½c.

Wool—Valley, 26@27½c; Eastern Oregon, 18@20c; nominal.

Tallow—Prime, per lb., 3@3½c; No. 2 and grease, 2@2½c.

Hides—Dry hides, No. 1, 16 lbs. and up, 15 lbs., 13½@16c per lb.; dry calf, No. 1 16@17c per lb.; dry kip, No. 1, 5 to under 5 lbs., 17@18c; dry salted, bulls and stags, one third less than dry flat (culls, moth-eaten, badly cut, scored, murrain, hair-slipped, weather-beaten or grubby, 2@3c per lb. less); salted hides, steers, sound, 60 lbs. and over, 9@10c per lb.; 50 to 60 lbs., 8 1-2@9c per lb.; under 50 lbs. and cows, 8@9c per lb.; salted stags and bulls, sound, 6c per lb.; salted kip, sound, 1b to 30 lbs., 9c per lb.; salted veal, sound, 10 to 14 lbs., 9c per lb.; salted calf, sound, under 10 lbs., 10c per lb. (green, unsalted, 1c per lb. less; culls, 1c per lb. less). Sheep skins: Shearlings, No. 1 butchers' stock, 25@30c each; short wool, No. 1 butchers' stock, 40@50c each; medium wool, No. 1 butchers' stock, 60@80c; long wool, No. 1 butchers' stock, \$1.00@1.50 each. Murrain pelts, from 10 to 20 per cent less, or 12@14c per lb.; horse hides, salted, each, according to size, \$1.50@2.00; dry, each, according to size, \$1.50; colts' hides, 25@50c each; goat skins, common, 10@15c each; Angora, with wool on, 25c@1.50 each.

Mohair—Choice, 30@35c.

Feathers—Geese, white, 35@40c; geese gray or mixed, 25@30c; duck, white, 15@20c; duck, mixed, 12@15c.

Oil and Lead.

Coal oil—Pearl and astral oil, cases, 20c per gallon; water white oil, iron barrels, 15c; wood barrels, 17c; extra star cases, 25c; headlight oil, 17c degrees, cases, 23c; iron barrels, 17c. (Washington State test burning oils, except headlight, 1c per gallon higher.)

Benzine—Sixty-three degrees, cases, 22c; iron barrels, 17c.

Turpentine—In cases, 89c; in wood barrels, 86c; in iron barrels, 33c; in 10-case lots, 88c.

Linseed oil—Raw, 5-barrel lots, 56c; 1-barrel lots, 57c; in cases, 62c; boiled, barrel lots, 58c; 1-barrel lots, 59c; in cases, 64c.

Gasoline—Stove gasoline, cases, 24c; iron barrels, 18c; 88 degrees gasoline, cases, 22c; iron barrels or drums, 26c.

Rope—Pure Manila, 14c; standard, 13c; Sisal, 11c; Isle brand Sisal, 9c.

Wire Nails—Present bare at \$2.70.