



POLLY EVANS' STORY PAGE for Boys and Girls

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ENCHANTED RESTAURANT

UPON the ground Rodney flung himself with a snort of impatience. "I don't see why that hammock should have been hung here where a fellow would catch the sun half the time," grumbled he.

As he spitefully plucked a blade of grass he continued: "People do so very few things that are new these days that I should think they'd learn to do the old, humdrum things right. Oh, I'm tired of it all!"

Everything was stale and commonplace. Thus reflected Rodney, even as he turned his eyes to the vine-draped wall in front of him. What he saw made him bounce to his feet in astonishment.

"Surely the dog was never there before," he cried.

But just as certain was he that now a heavy mail-studded door was set into the garden wall. To prove that he had not been deceived, he leaped to the door and gave it a sturdy push.

What happened caused him much surprise.



TROUBLE WITH THE STOOL

prise. For the door, swung wide open, revealed a narrow, crooked street, paved with cobblestones and lined on both sides with little houses which seemed to belong more properly to Mother Goose's time. Rodney exclaimed in joy, "An adventure at last!"

Along the street he gaily tripped, looking with delight upon quaintly garbed folk, who stared unconcernedly at him. Presently the sight of a cozy eating house reminded him of hunger.

"Wonder if they'll accept modern money," said he, when he had satisfied himself that some pocket money remained. Resolving to test the purchasing value of the coins, he entered the restaurant, seized himself before a tiny round table and ordered a glass of milk and a bun from the neatly aproned boy in attendance.

While he was thoroughly enjoying his experience, Rodney, after his usual custom, could not help finding fault.

"This stool is entirely too low," muttered he. Whereupon the stool jerkily raised itself several feet higher. At first Rodney was too greatly astonished for words. But then he argued that strange things must necessarily come to pass in a strange country, and he grumpily added:

"A high stool isn't of much use when the table is extremely low."

Immediately the legs of the table lengthened to an extent that brought the table edge up to his chin, rapping it smartly. There was need for much coaxing before Rodney finally induced the stool and the table to take their proper levels.

By this time the waiter had returned with the food. Rodney commenced to drink the milk, but only a few mouthfuls did he have before the rest of the fluid vanished and quickly disappeared. Purposing to eat the bun before it, too, could vanish, Rodney bit off a large piece and swallowed it. Then he wished he had been more cautious, because he felt the fragment of the bun swelling within him. Bigger and bigger it grew, until Rodney feared he would burst.

From the enchanted restaurant he fled, yelling in horror. "My only hope is to see the doctor at home, or I shall die!" moaned he. And he complained:

"If this old lane were only straight instead of crooked, and ran down hill instead of up hill!"

Instantly the lane was tearing down a steep grade, upon a straight lane. Truly, the lane had straightened itself, but it now ran so steeply down hill that Rodney flew along at thrilling speed. He couldn't



THE TABLE RAISES ITSELF

stop himself, though now the wall, with its gate, was plainly in view. The door was closed also. Rodney was sure he would be killed. He gasped in agony. But still he must keep the breakfast pace. On he sped, right into the door.

Strangely enough, the boy was unhurt. He had crashed through the door as through paper. Back in the garden he found himself, and the gateway to the country he had recently explored was no longer visible.

There are people who profess to believe that Rodney went upon no such adventure; that he ate too greedily at luncheon and in slumber afterward dreamed it all.

Rodney, however, knows that an elf led him into the quaint land, to show him the evil of fault-finding. Therefore, he has set about correcting this habit. He has made no other journey through the gate, probably because he no longer is in need of a lesson of this kind.

SYNOPSIS OF FIRST CHAPTER.

CONRAD BURGESS is a member of the Court of the Mystic Circle of Those Who Dare a boy's secret society, which meets every week and decides upon a task for one of the circle. Should the member refuse or fail in the undertaking he is expelled from the society and branded as a coward. The circle play a joke on Conrad, decreeing that he journey to San Francisco and return within six months. The lad takes the sentence seriously, steals from home at midnight and sleeps in a grove of trees. Next morning he is awakened by a tramp, who invites himself to share the food. Conrad bears in a knotted handkerchief.

(CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK.)

CHAPTER II

LEARNING NEW "ROSES"

"P'ETTY decent sort o' lunch, bo," observed the tramp, as he ceremoniously helped himself to the last sandwich. Conrad was sure of the tramp's appreciation, inasmuch as that worthy had eaten at least three-quarters of the contents of the handkerchief. However, the tramp proved such a good fellow that the boy did not regret having given away all his supplies.

The fellow had introduced himself briefly, saying that he was named "Bugs," because of his skill in fighting mosquitoes. But the boy, reflecting upon the unpleasantness of his companion, was of the opinion that the nickname was also merited on account of a probable fondness of insects for the tramp's person.

Conrad explained the nature of his trip, and the tramp listened to the recital with perfect gravity. When the lad had finished, however, Bugs drawled, good-naturedly:

"Now I don't wanta go buttin' in. I s'pose you know yer own business, bo. But if I was you I'd hike back to home an' mamma quicker'n lightning."

"Oh, very well; I said yuh know yer own business best," the tramp responded, with an indulgent chuckle; "an' if yeh hitch up to me for a while mebbe I kin show yuh a few things worth knowin'."

Of course, the boy accepted this kind invitation with heartiest thanks. They trudged along the river for some distance. When noon arrived, and the lad was feeling hungry again, Bugs paused by the bank. "I think it'd be a good idea to cross over to Pennsylvania, Accordin' to my reckoning, not far from here on t'other side there lives a farmer who ain't what yuh'd call stingy."

This suggestion impressed Conrad favorably, especially as there was a likelihood of obtaining food. But he couldn't understand how they were to get across. Bugs was equal to the emergency, however. He found several bits of timber, which he bound with a strong cord produced from somewhere about him.

It wasn't a very safe craft; therefore Conrad deemed it wise to remove all his clothing, with the exception of his shirt, and to pack the loose clothes upon his back. Strange to say, Bugs did likewise, although Conrad could not understand how a wetting would do the tramp's garments any harm.

Very dexterously the hobo poled the unwieldy raft from shore. It was slow work. Every now and then the pole

would stick in the mud and in jerking it out the raft would sway so uncertainly that it was difficult for the two voyagers to maintain their balance. Nevertheless, they got along as well as could have been expected, until Conrad suddenly exclaimed:

"Jee-rusalem! There's a boat filled with men an' ladies comin' round the bend behind us!"

Inasmuch as their costume wasn't exactly modest, the raftsmen made valiant efforts to reach the shore as quickly as possible. Bugs handled the pole with remarkable energy. His efforts were successful. The raft came close to the opposite bank before the boat gained a great deal upon them. Seeking to make the quickest landing, Conrad leaped for the bank. Unfortunately, he fell short and sank to his knees into a black ooze, from which he was dragged forth only through Bugs' assistance. They fled toward the shelter of trees, affording much amusement to the party, who meanwhile had rapidly approached.

"Confounded campers always turnin' u' where yuh don't expect 'em!" growled Bugs, ruefully surveying the bedraggled garments which had suffered from mud and water in the hasty landing.

It took some little time to dry the clothes, which had been hung upon bushes. When this was accomplished, the two dressed and walked through the trees to where Bugs said there was a road. When the highway was attained, the journey was continued for almost five miles. Conrad was sure he could hold out no longer, when a farmhouse came into view. But he was disappointed in his expectations; for his comrades, after a moment's survey, remarked:

"No, this ain't the place; and there's a red shepherd dog over yonder. The red kind is awful bad for yer health, though you can coax most other kinds o' shepherd dogs. Perk up, sonny! Our place, I guess, is next."

Sure enough, they presently came to another neat-looking farmhouse. The tramp unhesitatingly made his way to the back door, followed closely by Conrad. It probably was the forlorn look of the boy that touched the heart of the farmer's wife and caused her to set a meal that Bugs called "scrumptious" before the hungry wayfarers. Afterward she whispered to her husband, who

gave them permission to sleep in the barn during the night, provided they delivered any matches they had over to him for safe keeping.

"That's so we won't light a match for pipes or cigarettes, an' mebbe set his barn on fire," said Bugs while they trudged toward the barn.

Never before had Conrad spent the night in a hayloft; but so tired was he that he dropped off to sleep immediately. The tramp roused him early next morning with the words:

"Come, let's try for somethin' in the way of grub an' then light out 'fore they put us to work."

The farmer's wife gave them a breakfast willingly enough, to the boy's astonishment. "Usually they want to put a feller to work for 'is grub," muttered he, in an aside to Conrad.

And when the two were departing Bugs carefully drew on the gatepost a circle and placed therein a cross. "That means 'Food 'n' lodgin'," explained he, in reply to the boy's look of wonderment. "We fellows on the road have a reg'lar language of signs that we make ev'rywhere to help one another. Them folks we just left are bully."



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THE EMPRESS'S WASHDAY

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One day in the course of his travels he stayed for dinner at a little country inn. Now it was washday at the inn, and the landlady, owing to being so busy washing the clothes, could not make as good a dinner as she could have done if the emperor had only come on some other day.

The emperor did not make any complaint about the dinner at all, however, and I dare say he enjoyed it very much, but the landlady thought she ought to explain the matter to him.

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SOME day I'm goin' to make pies

An' cakes all big'n' fine,

An' take 'em from the bakin' pans

An' stand 'em in a line.

Oh, it will be a splendid sight—

But 'fore I can do that,

I must take lessons in mudpies

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"But, say, little pardner," added he, "we ain't makin' much time. Let's cut over to a freight an' I'll teach yuh another lesson."

(CONTINUED NEXT WEEK.)

Couldn't Whistle

IT IS not nice to have toothache, and I think the best thing to do, when you have such a pain, is to run as fast as you can to Mr. Dentist. I once knew a boy who was taken to the dentist to have a tooth which ached ever so much pulled out. Now, the boy thought the dentist would hurt him, and when he was taken into the room where the dentist pulled out the teeth of the people who came he began to cry very, very loudly.

Mr. Dentist was a very kind and clever man, however, and he patted the boy on the head and said: "I say, my little man, are you a good whistler?"

The boy looked at him, and then said, "Yes."

Mr. Dentist gave him another pat and said, "Then let me hear you whistle."

The boy now forgot all about his aching tooth, and he put his lips together and whistled.

Mr. Dentist was pleased, and said: "My little man, this is how we'll do. As soon as it begins to hurt, you whistle at once and I'll stop."

The boy thought this was a very good way, so he opened his mouth, and in a jiffy Mr. Dentist had pulled out the tooth that ached.

But the boy cried just a little, and said, "You hurted me." Mr. Dentist laughed, and said, "My little man, why didn't you whistle?"

Now, why didn't that little boy whistle, as he promised to do? Can you tell me that?

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THE LION SERMON

EVERY year, on a certain day, there is a sermon, which is called the "Lion Sermon," preached in an old church in London. That sermon has been preached for years and years, and I suppose it will be preached as long as ever that church stands.

Would you like to know why such a sermon is preached? Well, I'll tell you! A very long time ago there used to live in London a merchant man called Sir John Gayer.

One year he thought he would travel to see the many curious things which can be seen abroad, so he sailed away and traveled through many foreign countries and saw many people and things.

At last, when he was traveling, he happened one day to meet a savage lion face to face. Poor Sir John Gayer was quite alone just then, and he had no gun or other weapon with him to fight the lion with, and when the savage beast roared and roared and came nearer and nearer to him he was very frightened indeed.

But Sir John was a good man, so he went to his knees and began to pray aloud. And this is what he said, "Oh, Lord, send this lion away and save the life of Thy servant."

Then he opened his eyes, and he was happy to see that God had heard his prayer, for the savage lion turned round and walked right away.

Sir John thought this was really wonderful, and when he got back to London he gave some money so that a sermon could be preached about his wonderful adventure. And that is just why the "Lion Sermon" is preached every year in London.

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No Need to Hurry



RESCUED BY KING

"H AVE you finished hemming the handkerchiefs, Natalie?" asked the little girl's mother.

"No, mother," replied Natalie, "but I've done half of them."

"Why, you've been busy at the task all the morning. How is it so little has been done?" questioned her mother, gently.

Then slowly came the familiar response: "I didn't know there was any need to hurry, mother."

Natalie never hurried. She wasn't lazy, you must understand. The little girl always was ready for work, yet couldn't be trusted to complete anything within a short space of time. Wherever she went she loitered. Although she would start for school with many minutes to spare, she usually was late. Never could she be depended upon to keep an engagement at the right hour.

When the sewing had been done—very