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KEEP YOUR BLOOD CLEAN

By the... Skate's Click

By WILFRED CLARKE

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Between the strike and the train robberies Bascom, superintendent of the L. and W. road, was having his hands full. Secretly he believed the latter to be the result of the former. He had made a clean sweep of the malcontents at Solent, and the strikers had been stranded high and dry financially. There had been ugly rumors and threats, too, but Bascom had gone quietly on his way. Sympathy in the small interior city ran with the strikers, and what he thought the superintendent wisely kept to himself.

When he had ordered the posters offering a reward of \$500 for information leading to the apprehension of the train robbers, he had felt that it was money wasted. The average inhabitant of Solent was not looking for trouble.

And now on a crisp morning in December two young people stood before one of those same posters, gazing as if fascinated at the "\$500" in startling crimson capitals.

"If we had that, we'd get married tomorrow," murmured Harry Bronson.

Pretty Bessie Millar sighed profoundly and looked no longer at the printed characters, but into her lover's eyes. They were honest gray eyes, and she wondered how her father could be so heartless. He had said she should not marry Bronson until the latter had at least \$500 to his credit in the Solent Savings bank, and how was a shipping clerk at the freight depot to save up \$500 on a salary of \$40 a month?

"Time's up, Bess!" he exclaimed as a distant whistle proclaimed the approach of the northbound freight. "I've just a minute to help you into the sleigh. How's the ice up your way?"

"Splendid," she answered as he tucked the robes snugly about her. "I tried it this morning, and it's as smooth as glass."

"Well, be at the willows tonight at 8, and we'll have a skate. The two mile spin will just limber me up."

She nodded, and then Pete, the Swedish man of all work at the Millar farm, snapped the whip, and away they flew. The Millar home was two miles below Solent, on the river, and midway



THEN BRONSON'S COAT LITERALLY WENT UP IN SMOKE

a huge bridge spanned the stream where the L. and W. crossed to the town. Below this the road ran several miles toward Digby. At 7 o'clock Bronson strapped on the long bladed racing skates and with the wind at his back shot past the railroad track toward the bridge. Just as he reached this point a snap sounded and he fell. The strap holding the heel of the right skate had rotted during the summer's inactivity.

He sat down on the stone pier of a span and adjusted an extra strap. A ring on the ice caught his attention. Two men approached, and, drawing the slide over his skating lamp, he crouched, listening. Quickly he recognized the voices as those of Harry and Stevens, two yardmen who had been dismissed by Bascom. They were grumbling because switchmen had been stationed at either end of the bridge and they were obliged to climb one of the piers.

"We'll fix him good this time!" growled Harry. "He's due at Solent in his special at 8:20."

"I don't see why you have to pick out a climb like this," snarled Stevens. "We could drop down the road and pull out a rail easier than this job."

"Bah! What's a climb to dumping the supe in the river? The plunge will send the train through the ice, with water twenty feet deep. Put out the old men, will he? Well, the last one's gone by his orders."

As soon as the ruffians were safe on the bridge Harry skated noiselessly to

the Solent side of the river, where the shadows were deepest. As he reached the shore something heavy shot through the air and struck the ice with a crash. It was the rail. Later came the sound of saws. They were cutting the timber guard rails.

Rapidly the horrified young fellow reviewed the chances. To return to Solent would be too slow a process. No telegram could now reach the special. He must warn the superintendent, for to inform the switchmen

at either end of the bridge might precipitate a fight. Harry and Stevens were desperate. Down the river he sped to meet the train, lifting his feet so the blade would not click as it left the ice. He had won the racing championship the year before, but never had he attained the present speed. As he shot by the willows jutting out from the Millar farm he saw a slender figure marching resolutely back and forth on the bank. A faint "Hello!" reached his ears, but he could only wave his hand in response. Three miles beyond he heard the faint whistle of the special, sounded for a grade crossing. It must be at Holt's, two miles below.

He swung in shore and clambered up the steep bank, not stopping even to remove his skates. Reaching the track, he hastily jerked off his coat, saturated it with oil from his skating lamp, then with matchbox in hand awaited the appearance of the special around the bend. A sharp whistle and a flash of light, then Bronson's coat literally went up in smoke. The warning was so sudden that the train rolled past him before the engineer could bring it to a stop.

With Bascom came the president of the road, Mr. Harding, and the two officials listened in amazement to Bronson's tale. The president spoke decisively:

"There must be no mistake this time. We must get those two men. We'll run up as far as the bridge and then send on to town."

Harry glanced up quickly.

"Excuse my making the suggestion, but if you'll give me a note to the sheriff I think we can land them all right. You hold the train here, so their suspicious will not be roused, and they'll probably wait in town till the wrecking train starts out."

President Harding gave the young clerk a shrewd glance.

"You're right. Here, Bascom, give the boy your coat. There's an extra one in the car. If not, he needs it more than you do. He has a goodish spin before him yet. And I'll write the note."

The next morning Bessie Millar, waiting for the mail at the postoffice, again stood reading the L. and W. poster. Some one walked to her side, and she turned her head laughingly.

"Oh, good morning, Mr. Bronson!" Harry led her to the deserted corner near the money order department and opened his batteries.

"Now, see here, Bessie," he said; "there's no use getting luffy. I admit I owe you an apology for not stopping last night, but—"

"You prefer Jennie Holt for a skating partner. I saw you shoot round the bend toward their place."

"Yes, but I didn't stop. I guess you haven't heard the news. I was on the trail of train robbers and wreckers and 'sich.'" There was a sparkle of mischief in his eyes as Bessie turned round slowly and looked at him. "You know I said only yesterday morning that if we had the \$500 we'd get married at once, and as you didn't say nay I hold you to the agreement."

"I don't understand," murmured Bessie, but her eyes were fairly shining. "Where were you going? What were you doing then—when I saw you?"

And when Bronson had explained his mission he added, with a sigh of absolute satisfaction:

"I not only got the \$500, but when we're married I'm to have a position in the Denver offices with the president—his private secretary. He liked my suggestions last night. The salary is to be \$2,500 a year, Bess. Now will you be good?"

Bessie smiled up at him.

"I think we could both be good, very good, on \$2,500 a year," she said demurely.

Up to Date Coop.

Coops like the one shown in the illustration we used for growing stock on the poultry farm of T. W. C. Almy.



A CONVENIENT COOP.

Tiverton Four Corners, R. I. Mr. Almy likes this style of coop and is gradually replacing his old ones with them. The photograph was taken by a representative of Farm Poultry.

HATCHING DUCK EGGS.

Some Valuable Information on How to Run Your Incubators.

One of our correspondents wishes to know if duck eggs are treated in the same manner in the incubator as hen eggs. He writes: "I have four Prairie State special duck machines which I operated a portion of last season with varying success. I have thought that perhaps I did not handle the machines right, as I found a good many dead in the shell in some of the hatches. I ran the machine the same as for hen eggs."

On most of the large duck farms the eggs are incubated very similarly to hen eggs, though the temperature is often run from one-half to one degree less, but some successful operators contend that duck eggs differ materially from those of other fowls and require different treatment. Some years ago the writer visited a large duck ranch at Riverton, Va., and the manager, who was very successful hatching duck eggs, explained in part his methods, which at the time we noted very carefully, as we were then hatching quite a number of ducks, and afterward followed his methods as closely as possible and are free to assert that the result was far better than our old method, which was practically the same as for hen's eggs. We cannot say that we operated our machines in exactly the same manner, or even remembered all we heard there, but this is the rule we adopted after our visit:

Slowly heat the machine to 100 degrees with the thermometer resting on the trays with the bulb free and hold it steadily for twenty-four hours, when it is ready for the eggs. After placing the eggs in the machine place the thermometer on the eggs, the top of the bulb just even with the top of the eggs, and then turn up the lamp so as to bring them to the desired 102 degrees as quickly as possible without unduly overheating the egg chamber. When the heat has reached 102, adjust the regulator so that the damper valve is slightly raised and then turn down the flame so as to just balance the lever. If the incubators are in a room where the temperature is liable to fall suddenly, turn the flame so the valve is slightly raised. The regulator will then do the rest. Do not disturb the eggs for the next forty-eight hours, but after that turn them twice a day, cooling as little as possible. Before the animal heat has developed in the eggs adjust the tray by raising or lowering so the thermometer on the different trays will read alike and then do not again change their position no matter how much the temperature seems to vary, but shift the trays each day so as to equalize or average the variation in temperature.

Test the eggs on the fifth day, placing all live germs at the back of the tray, leaving the unfilled rows next to the door. In the last of these (the one farther from the door) place the thermometers, which should then read 89 degrees when resting on the bottom of the tray, with the bulb free. Test again on the fifteenth day, when, if development has properly advanced, the egg will be nearly opaque, the allantois having almost or entirely encircled the embryo. Handle the eggs very carefully when testing and turning, so as not to jar them.

After the twelfth day the creative forces will have done their work. This will be noticed by a rise in temperature, and with the adjustment you have it will require less heat from the lamp, and the regulator will doubtless have to be altered somewhat. If the machine is full of live germs, it will need watching very closely or it may run up to 105 degrees or more, especially during the third week, which would cause many to die. They may not die immediately, but they will before the end of the hatch. Cool the eggs daily during the third week, so that a thermometer resting on the eggs will register 90 degrees, but do not cool any during the fourth week. During the fourth week the danger of overheating is not so great, as the animal heat declines or remains about stationary until pipping, when it increases and a temperature of 105 or 106 is desirable at the time the ducklings are breaking the shell, and under no circumstances should it then be allowed to fall below 103 degrees. When the last duckling is well dried off, open one of the doors about an inch and secure it in this position, so as to accustom them to a slightly lower temperature before being removed to the brooder, but if the nursery under the tray is not too full let them remain in the incubator for twenty-four hours.

There is not so much necessity for ventilation with duck as with hen eggs, and all currents of air should be avoided. This was the principal point we learned on our visit to the Virginia duck farm.—National Poultry Journal.

Prices for the Fancy.
Who says the poultry fancy is on the down grade when we can read of the trading that was done at Kendall, one of the best of the northern shows across the water? In ungrated Rocks Mr. Slater's dairy purchase that cost him \$200 had to go to second place. The other two hundred dollar purchase, a pullet, held her place, and to add to the excitement the second prize pullet was

claimed in her catalogue price of \$250. The stir kept up in Game Bantams, where there were specials worth \$125 each to win. A two hundred and fifty dollar purchase in Brown Reds won one of these, and a bird that cost \$175 took another. Mr. Stretch won first in Piles with a wonderful cockerel, which was then claimed by Mr. Tomlinson for \$250. A Pekin bantam was claimed for \$80, and so it went on. There is more life in the game every year.—Poultry Monthly.

RESULTS IN EARLY WINTER

A Breeder Who Hasn't Found a Valuable Secret—Prepotency.

I have not been successful in getting early winter eggs. During November and December I average only two or three eggs per month per hen. I try to give just as good care then as at any time of year, although it is not always feasible to have a full supply of green food. My method of feeding is the customary one—a mash of bran and middlings with fish scraps or animal meal in the morning, mixed with hot water in cold weather. For a month past wheat has made a large part of the grain ration simply because it is cheap. I have got no better results than from feeding cracked corn. Whole corn is now being fed at night.

Have good tight houses, yet I have not found the secret of a large supply of eggs in the early winter. I am inclined to think that to a certain extent the fowl is governed by its original nature to lay little at this period while molting or finishing feather growth. Something might be accomplished in the way of getting more eggs at this season by proper selection of breeding fowls.

In breeding I do not make it a point to mate birds not near akin. I intend to select the best birds, regardless of relationship. I do not think it desirable to regularly procure fresh blood. It is desirable, however, to get fresh blood if the animal secured is better than the best one has in his own flock. It would be better if the "new blood" could come from the same strain as the one on to which it is to be bred.

Does any one know of any thoroughly successful breeder who has established a high reputation for his stock who regularly introduces "new blood" into his flock? Of far more importance than the introduction of "new blood" would it be to discover in one's flock an animal of superior merit that possesses the power of transmitting its good qualities and then hold on to that bird as long as it is capable of breeding. Look at the pedigrees of the phenomenal trotting horses as one after another they "break the record." Nearly every one of these great trotters has in it some of the blood of the old race horse Messenger, transmitted through his great-grandson, Hambletonian. There are few more remarkable examples of prepotency on record.

In poultry breeding we need to breed more from individuals and less from flocks. The trap nest and a careful following up of the hatches from eggs of different individuals will help us. I prefer a system of somewhat close breeding when the stock bred from possesses extra good qualities, because by this method, combined, of course, with careful selection, we can intensify the good qualities of our stock.

My most serious mistake was in breeding from some badly colored females one year when I was a very young beginner, thereby putting me back a couple of years or so in the continuous improvement of my stock.

One of the best moves I know is that of keeping an accurate account in connection with my poultry keeping, so that when I get blue at temporary bad returns I can see that, on the whole, I am coming out right, and when I am doing well I can try to do better.—W. H. Bishop in Farm Poultry.

A Clever Wrinkle.

Cocoanut for cakes, pies, candy, etc., is usually grated. This is not easily accomplished and takes a long time. Try it in the meat chopper. Pare off the dark rind and proceed as with the apples. A few turns of the crank and the work is done. There are no small pieces left over, no grated fingers, no trouble at all. And the flaky, snowy mass is just right for the making of all sorts of good things.

The Only Way.

"Ah, Reginald, dearest," she sighed, "but how can I be sure that you will not grow weary of me after we have been married a little while?"

"I don't know," he answered, "unless we get married and see."—Chicago Herald.

She Hadn't Thought of That.

"You should never take anything that doesn't agree with you," said the doctor.

"If I'd always followed that rule, Marie," said the patient, turning to his wife, "where would you be?"—Stray Stories.

Not an Objection.

The Proprietor—But we haven't enough work to keep another man busy.

The Applicant—Oh, I don't mind that! What I want is a steady job.—Indianapolis News.

HOTELS.

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