

# PRUDENCE of the PARSONAGE



(Copyright, by the Bobbs-Merrill Company.)

Miss Fairy has her first beau. She flouts the twins and they prepare to even the score in a ruthless and unforgettable manner.

Mr. Starr, a widower Methodist minister, comes to Mount Mark, Ia., to take charge of the congregation. He has five daughters, Prudence, the eldest, keeps house and mothers Fairy, Carol and Lark, the twins, and Constance, the "baby." The newcomers stir the curiosity of all Mount Mark, and the Ladies' Aid society loses no time in getting acquainted, asking myriad questions and offering advice that isn't wanted. Prudence, who is nineteen, has her hands full with the mischievous twins and Connie. They have just engineered a raid on a neighboring apple orchard. As the actual culprit, Connie is taking punishment without telling on the twins.

## CHAPTER IV.—Continued.

That was the end of supper. No one attempted to eat another bite. After the older girls had gone into the sitting room, Carol and Lark went about their work with stricken faces. They asked if they might speak to Constance, but Prudence went in with them to say good night to her. The twins broke down and cried as they saw the pitiful little figure with the wan and tear-stained face. They threw their arms around her passionately and kissed her many times. But they went to bed without saying anything. It was a sorry night for the twins. The next morning they set off to school, with no chance for anything but a brief good morning with Connie—given in the presence of Prudence. Half-way down the parsonage walk, Carol said:

"Oh, wait a minute, Lark. I left my notebook on the table." And Lark walked slowly while Carol went rushing back. She found Prudence in the kitchen, and whispered:

"Here—here's a note, Prudence. Don't read it until after I've gone to school—at ten o'clock you may read it. Will you promise?"

Prudence laughed a little, but she promised, and laid the note carefully away to wait the appointed hour for its perusal. As the clock struck ten she went to the mantle and took it down. This is what Carol had written:

Oh, Prudence, do please forgive me, and don't punish Connie any more. You can punish me any way you like, and I'll be glad of it. It was all my fault. I made her go and get the apples for me, and I ate them. Connie didn't eat one of them. She said stolen apples would not taste very good. It was all my fault, and I'm so sorry.

As Prudence read this her face grew very stern. Carol's fault! At that moment Prudence heard someone running through the hall, and thrust the note hastily into her dress. It was Lark, and she flung herself wildly upon Prudence, sobbing bitterly.

"What is the matter, Lark?" she cried, really frightened. "Are you sick?"

"Heartsick, that's all," wailed Lark. "I told the teacher I was sick so I could come home, but I'm not. Oh, Prudence, I know you'll despise and abominate me all the rest of your life, and everybody will, and I deserve it. For I stole those apples myself."

Prudence was surprised and puzzled. She drew the note from her pocket and gave it to Lark. "Carol gave me that before she went to school," she explained. "Read it, and tell me what you are driving at. I think you are both crazy. Or maybe you are just trying to shield poor Connie."

Lark read Carol's note, and gasped, and—burst out laughing! The shame,

the bitter weeping, and nervousness, had rendered her hysterical, and now she laughed and cried until Prudence was alarmed again.

In time, however, Lark was able to explain. "We both did it," she gasped, "the Skull and Crossbones. And we both told the truth about it."

Prudence laughed. But when she thought of loyal little Connie, sobbing all through the long night, the tears came to her eyes again. She went quickly to the telephone and called up the school building next door to the parsonage.

"May I speak to Constance Starr, Mr. Innes?" she asked. "It is very important. This is Prudence, her sister." And when Connie came to the telephone, she cried: "Oh, you blessed little child, why didn't you tell me? Will you forgive me, Connie? You're a dear, sweet, good little darling, that's what you are."

"Oh, Prudence!" That was all Connie said, but something in her voice made Prudence hang up the receiver quickly, and cry bitterly!

That noon Prudence pronounced judgment on the sinners, but her eyes twinkled, for Carol and Lark had scolded each other roundly for giving things away!

"Connie should have refused to obey you," she said gently, holding Connie in her arms. "But she has been punished more than enough. But you twins! In the first place, I right now abolish the Skull and Crossbones forever and ever. And you cannot play in the barn again for a month. And you must go over to the Averys this afternoon and tell them about it, and pay for the apples. And you must send all of your spending money for the next month to that woman who is gathering up things for the bad little children in the reform school—that will help you remember what happens to boys and girls who get in the habit of taking things on the spur of the moment!"

The twins accepted all of this graciously, except that which referred to confessing their sin to their neighbors. That did hurt! The twins were so superior, and admirable! They couldn't bear to ruin their reputations. But Prudence stood firm, in spite of their weeping and wailing. And that afternoon two shame-faced sorry girls crept meekly in at the Avery's door to make their peace.

"But about the Skull and Crossbones, it's mostly punishment for me, Prue," said Connie regretfully, "for the twins have been in it ever since we came to Mount Mark, and I never got in at all! And I wanted them to call me Lady Magdalena Featheringale." And Connie sighed.

## CHAPTER V.

### Lessons in Etiquette.

Connie was lying flat on her back near the register. The twins were sitting on the floor near her, hearing each other conjugate Latin verbs. And Prudence, with her darning basket, was earnestly trying to get three pairs of wearable stockings out of eleven hosiery remnants. So Fairy found them as she came in, radiant and glowing.

"Glorious day," she said, glancing impartially at her sisters. "Just glorious! Connie, you should be out of doors this minute, by all means. Twins, aren't you grown up enough to sit on chairs, or won't your footies reach the floor?—Babbie, Eugene Babler, you know—is coming to spend the evening, Prudence."

The whole family came to attention at this.

"Oh, goody!" cried Connie. "Let's make taffy."

"Yes," agreed Carol with enthusiasm—Carol was always enthusiastic on the subject of something to eat. "Yes, and what else shall we have?"

"You will likely have pleasant dreams, Carol," was the cool retort. "You twins and Connie will not put in appearance at all. Prue will serve the refreshments, and will eat with us. Babbie and I shall spend the evening in the front room."

"The front room?" echoed Prudence. "This room is much cheerier, and more homelike."

"Well, Babbie isn't a member of the family, you know," said Fairy. "You are doing your best," sniffed Carol.

"Now you girls must understand right off that things are different here from what they were at Exminster. The proper thing is to receive callers privately, without the family en masse sitting by and superintending. That's etiquette, you know. And one must always serve refreshments. More etiquette. Men are such greedy animals, they do not care to go places where the eats aren't forthcoming."

"Men! Are you referring to this Babbling creature now?" interposed Carol.

"Ouch!" said Lark. "But won't it be rather—poky—just sitting in the front room by yourselves all evening?" asked Prudence doubtfully, ignoring the offended twins.

"Oh, I dare say it will. But it's the proper thing to do," said Fairy complacently. "Wouldn't it be more fun to have the girls in for a little while?" persisted Prudence.

"Oh, it might—but it wouldn't be the proper thing at all. College men do not care to be entertained by babies." "No," snapped Lark, "the wisdom of babies is too deep for these—these—these men in embryo."

This was so exhaustively said that Lark was quite restored to amiability by it. "In embryo" had been added to her vocabulary that very day in the biology class. And Carol said "Ouch!" with such whole-souled admiration that Lark's spirit soared among the clouds. She had scored!

"And what shall we serve them?" urged Prudence. "I suppose it would hardly do to—pop corn, would it?"

"No, indeed! This is the first time, and we must do something extra. Babbie is all the rage at school, and the girls are frantic with jealousy because I have cut everybody else out."

"Do you like him, Fairy? Don't you think he's firesome? He talks so much, it seems to me."

"To be sure I like him. He's great fun. He's always joking and never



"A Nickel's Worth of Pepper."

has a sensible thought, and hates study. The only reason he came here instead of going to a big college in the East is because his father is a trustee."

"Well, we'll serve oyster stew then. Now, will you twins run downtown for the oysters?" asked Prudence briskly.

"Who? Us?" demanded Lark, indignantly and ungrammatically. "Do you think we can carry home oysters for this Babbling young prince? Not so! Let Fairy go after the oysters!"

"Oh, yes, twinies, I think you'll go, all right. Run along, and be quick." For a few seconds the twins gazed at each other studiously. Neither spoke. Without a word, they went upstairs to prepare for their errand.

## WHY WOULD-BE DINERS LEFT

Waitress' Orders Given to Cook Had the Appearance of Reflection on the Newcomers.

A correspondent who wishes to be known as Hick has traveled as far as Chicago, of late, and he tells us of an incident that occurred in a South Clark street restaurant. We understand that South Clark street is one of the well-known thoroughfares of that town.

In the restaurant referred to a few nights ago, these two lines appeared in juxtaposition on the bill of fare: "Bankers' Special Steak Dinner, 35c."

"Special Chicken Dinner, 40c." And these two dinners seemed very popular on the evening in question. A well-dressed middle-aged gentleman entered the dining room escorting a lovely young lady of twenty summers and no visible winters. Just as the handsome couple stepped onto the floor the sweet-voiced waitress sang out an order to the cook:

"One banker and one chicken!" The young lady and her escort refused to be seated, but left in a high dudgeon and a taxicab.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

!deal Conditions. "Is this a strictly modern hotel?" "I'm told it's the last word."

"Yes?" "If you want an evening suit, it's provided. If you need extra pajamas, they're provided."

"That's real service." "Indeed it is. Furthermore, if you are in a hilarious mood and want to drink the leader of the orchestra drunk on champagne, there is always an assistant ready to take his place."

Abundant Home Supply. "Is Bliggins susceptible to flattery?" "No. There's no chance for framing up a complaint that his own self-esteem will not have anticipated."

They whispered softly going through the upper hall. "Twins! You must hurry!" This was Prudence at the bottom of the stairs. And the twins set off quite hurriedly. Their first call was at the meat market.

"A pint of oysters," said Lark briefly. When he brought them to her, she smelled them suspiciously. Then Carol smelled.

"Have you got any rotten ones?" she demanded. "No," he answered, laughing. "We don't keep that kind."

The twins sighed and hurried next door to the grocer's. "A nickel's worth of pepper—the strongest you have."

This was quickly settled—and the grave-faced twins betook themselves to the corner drug store.

"We—we want something with a perfectly awful smell," Lark explained soberly. "What kind of a smell?"

"We don't care what kind, but it must be like something rotten or dead, if you have it."

"What do you want it for?" "We want to put it in a room to give it a horrible smell for an hour or so," Lark winked at him solemnly. "It's a joke," she further elucidated. "I see." His eyes twinkled. "I think I can fix you up." A moment later he handed her a small bottle. "Just sprinkle this over the carpet. It won't do any harm, and it smells like thunder. It costs a quarter."

Carol frowned. "I suppose we'll have to take it," she said, "but it's pretty expensive. I hate to have druggists get such a lot of money."

He laughed aloud. "I hate to have you get a good licking tomorrow, too—but you'll get it just the same, or I miss my guess."

When the twins arrived home Fairy was just cutting the candy she had made. "It's delicious," she said to Prudence. "Here's a nice dishful for you and the girls. Pitch in, twins, and help yourselves. It's very nice."

The twins waved her haughtily away. "No, thank you," they said. "We couldn't eat that candy with relish. We are unworthy."

Then they went upstairs, but not to their own room at once. Instead they slipped noiselessly into the front bedroom, and a little later Carol came out into the hall and stood listening at the head of the stairs, as though on guard.

"Be sure and leave quite a few stitches in, Lark," she whispered once. "We want it to hang together until Babbie gets here."

That was all. Presently Lark emerged, and their own door closed behind them.

"It's a good thing father has to go to the trustees' meeting tonight, isn't it?" asked Carol. And Lark agreed, absently. She was thinking of the oysters.

Do you think that Fairy, knowing the twins, will thwart their plan to embarrass her?

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Moss for Wounds. All Americans and other tourists who have visited Scotland and the north of England have waxed enthusiastic over the beautiful coloring of the moors and mountains which present to the eye a riot of tints—pink, crimson, yellow, green and russet. This is furnished by sphagnum moss with which, literally, the countryside is carpeted, for it is as luxuriously soft to the feet as it is a delight to the vision.

From an appeal issued by the Aberdeen Sphagnum moss joint committee it appears that this moss is being furnished in great quantities for surgical dressings by this organization to the hospitals in Britain, France, Macedonia, Egypt, Italy, Mesopotamia and elsewhere. A department for substituting these dressings has been established and the committee is considering a plan to compress the moss by machinery into flat sheets, in which form it is light and portable and eminently suitable for dressing stations, field ambulances, etc., and for transport overseas to distant hospitals where surgical dressings are sorely needed.

High Honor Deserved. The father of the lifeboat in America was James Francis, who was born in Boston in 1801. He died in Washington in 1893. Three years before his death congress voted him a medal of pure gold, said to be the largest and finest ever given by this government to any individual. It was presented to him with appropriate ceremonies at the White House by President Harrison and is now on exhibition at the National museum in Washington.

You'll Know Him. Sometimes Trouble masquerades as Joy, but we recognize him before he plays one tune on the fiddle, for the fiddle strings snap, and the dancers fall down, and darkness drowns the lights.

# AN OLD RECIPE TO DARKEN HAIR

Sage Tea and Sulphur Turns Gray, Faded Hair Dark and Glossy.

Almost everyone knows that Sage Tea and Sulphur, properly compounded, brings back the natural color and lustre to the hair when faded, streaked or gray. Years ago the only way to get this mixture was to make it at home, which is messy and troublesome.

Nowadays we simply ask at any drug store for "Wyeth's Sage and Sulphur Compound." You will get a large bottle of this old-time recipe improved by the addition of other ingredients for about 50 cents. Everybody uses this preparation now, because no one can possibly tell that you darkened your hair, as it does it so naturally and evenly. You dampen a sponge or soft brush with it and draw this through your hair, taking one small strand at a time; by morning the gray hair disappears, and after another application or two, your hair becomes beautifully dark, thick and glossy and you look years younger. Wyeth's Sage and Sulphur Compound is a delightful toilet requisite. It is not intended for the cure, mitigation or prevention of disease.

Unprofitable. Lott—One never loses anything by keeping an engagement punctually. Scott—Except half an hour's time waiting for the other fellow.

# Laugh When People Step On Your Feet

Try this yourself then pass it along to others. It works!

Ouch ! ! ! ! ! This kind of rough talk will be heard less here in town if people troubled with corns will follow the simple advice of this Cincinnati authority, who claims that a few drops of a drug called freezone when applied to a tender, aching corn or hardened callous stops soreness at once, and soon the corn or callous dries up and lifts right off without pain.

He says freezone dries immediately and never inflames or even irritates the surrounding skin. A small bottle of freezone will cost very little at any drug store, but will positively remove every hard or soft corn or callous from one's feet. Millions of American women will welcome this announcement since the inauguration of the high heels. If your druggist doesn't have freezone tell him to order a small bottle for you.

"Vanessa says she will wear no man's collar." "I commend her decision. This fluffy stuff is more becoming to her style of beauty."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

To stop dandruff and loss of hair

Use Resinol Soap and Resinol Ointment—full directions with each package. Sold by all druggists and toilet departments.

Naturally. "He showed his grit when he was hurled out on the road from his machine." "No wonder when he had to bite the dust."—Baltimore American.

# Assistance THAT IS Dependable

is often needed in cases of POOR APPETITE HEARTBURN INDIGESTION BILIOUSNESS OR MALARIA

and you will make no mistake in trying

# HOSTETTER'S Stomach Bitters

It is an excellent tonic and appetizer. Get the genuine

P. N. U. NO. 6, 1917