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A PRACTICAL JOKE

Perpetrated on Halloween

By ESTHER VANDEVEER

Clarence Rudd as a boy was full of fun. He loved pictures, music, story. He was a voracious reader, his favorites being the "Arabian Nights" Entertainments and "The Wonder Book."

One day in autumn, when Clarence was about sixteen years old, he heard his sisters talking about Halloween. He asked them what it was, and it was explained to him. Bess told him that she was intending when she went to bed to look into a mirror and expected to see there the face of the man she would marry looking over her shoulder. There is something attractive in the idea, especially to a very young person. It seized upon Clarence's wonder loving disposition and would not let go. There was one feature about it that he could not understand—if a girl might see the image of her future husband looking over her shoulder in a mirror, why might not a boy see his future wife?



CLARENCE SAW ALICE'S REFLECTION IN THE MIRROR.

There is no reason why a sensitive boy should not be a manly boy, and Clarence was both. He would not for

in bed, Bess was in Clarence's room with him. She had gone there to make herself useful in carrying out the plan. She knew of Kate and Alice's arrival and had timed her visit accordingly. The door of the room was open. She had continued to get her brother with his back to it and his face toward the mirror of his dresser. In this position he remained while chatting with her.

"Tread softly," said Kate to Alice as they went upstairs. "The children are asleep." Kate led the way to a corridor leading past Clarence's room and, pausing, said:

"You will find your room at the end of this hall. The door is ajar, and the light is turned low. I am going for some toilet articles that I had forgotten. I will be with you in a few minutes."

Alice proceeded as directed. Passing the room in which Bess and Clarence were she naturally gave it a quick glance. That Clarence saw Alice's reflection in the mirror was evident to Bess from the expression on his face, but she paid no attention to it, chatting on as if she had seen nothing. What she was saying her brother did not heed. He was thinking of the girl's figure he had seen in the mirror before him.

"Some one—a stranger—just passed the door. Did you see anything?"

"See anything? What do you mean?"

Now, Halloween was in Clarence's mind, and for a moment the idea that he had seen his future wife dominated him. But fear of being rallied for such a fancy deterred him from following the matter further.

Bess proceeded with what she had been saying and knew that Kate's scheme had been successful. Soon after this she went to Kate's room, where she found both Kate and their mother, and the conspirators, especially Kate. Listened eagerly to what she had to report concerning Clarence and the reflection and what he had said about it.

"So far so good," exclaimed Kate after listening to what her sister said.

"Now what?"

"There is nothing more to be done," said the mother. "Clarence will meet your friend at breakfast and—"

"And what?"

"It won't be easy to explain the matter, will it?" Mrs. Rudd finished thoughtfully.

"Indeed it won't," Bess remarked. "I'm afraid, mother, we've got into a tangle in consenting to aid Kate."

"I'll keep Alice in her room in the morning," said Kate. "That will give us time to make up a story or some thing."

"We'll simply make a joke of it, as was intended," said Mrs. Rudd. "Come, girls; go to bed."

Clarence Rudd was as sure that he had seen a girl's face in the mirror on Halloween as he was of his existence. But why had not Bess, who was sitting with her face to the open door, seen the dash and blood as he had seen the image? He was puzzled, but his mind clung to the correct solution that the girl had been in the house. Would she be there tomorrow? He expected to see her at breakfast.

But when morning came and the stranger did not appear at the breakfast table, no member of the family making any reference to her, Clarence was staggered. He studied the face of each of the older members of the family, but gained no satisfaction. After breakfast he went out, and after a conference of the conspirators, at which it was decided that the guest must be informed of the prank that had been played, Kate carried a breakfast to Alice and while it was being eaten told the whole story.

If there was any fear that Alice would be displeased it was allayed at once.

"There's but one way to carry out your scheme to its proper end, Kate," she said. "I must see away from here without your brother seeing me."

"And then?"

"And then—let me see—it would be a good plan for you to visit me and arrange that he should come, too, while you are with me."

Mrs. Rudd endeavored to get the girls to bring the matter to an end, but without success. Alice was running any more risk, but Alice was obstinate and insisted on having her way.

"You put me into it," she said, "without consulting me. There's lots of fun in it, and I don't wish to see it spoiled. I think you should permit me to handle it from now on."

It was decided to let her have her way. She left at once, and it was arranged that Kate should visit her in a few weeks.

Clarence's natural reticence prevented his saying anything about the face he had seen on Halloween, and the secret of the conspiracy was kept from him. In time Kate went to visit Alice and when about to return wrote her brother that she had "picked out" her friend for him, at the same time suggesting that he come for his sister and escort her home.

Alice Arche and Kate Budd agreed that when Clarence appeared they would keep up their game. But when his sister introduced him to the girl whose image he had seen in his mirror his expression was too much for them. Neither girl succeeded in keeping a straight face. Kate burst out laughing, and Alice, seeing that the end had come, followed suit.

"I knew there was a prank being played on me!" exclaimed Clarence, re-arranging for he knew nothing of the kind. "Come, out with it. I must have an explanation at once."

The explanation was made, and Miss Arche treated the affair as the joke it was, but it had made an impression on the impressionable Clarence. He had for weeks been dreaming of the face he had seen on Halloween, and it was not destined to fade. Years after his sister had played her prank upon him he married Alice Arche.

BAD ROADS CAUSE HEAVY EXPENSE

Farmers and Merchants Are Equally the Losers.

RESULT OF INVESTIGATION.

Figures Obtained by Minneapolis Commission Show How Thousands of Dollars Could Be Saved Annually by Improving the Highways of a State. Farmer Loses \$170 For Each Acre.

The farmer and the business man as well as at last come to realize the loss he suffers from bad roads, and the magnitude of the movement for better conditions is little appreciated by those whose interests have not brought them in contact with it. The cost of bad roads has long been known in a vague way, but recent scientific investigations have brought the matter home in tangible form to those who suffer from them, says the Review of Reviews.

One of the most thorough investigations of the subject ever conducted, the results of which are used as a text wherever the doctrine of good roads is preached, was made by the Minneapolis Civic and Commerce Association.

While the conditions investigated were those of territory tributary to Minneapolis, they are undoubtedly typical to a greater or less degree of those existing elsewhere.

A committee of the association selected for investigation the farming district, 750 square miles in area, the trade of which is tributary to Minneapolis. From a thorough canvass of the conditions existing there it was found that the 4,000 farmers in the district hauled 500,000 tons of farm produce to market in 1911 and sold it for \$6,955,580. To do this they had to make 305,000 trips, the time spent in hauling equaling 800 years of eight hour days and the distance covered eighty-eight times the circumference of the world.

Bad road conditions caused losses in time, partly due to slow progress, partly to the necessity of taking less direct routes and partly because smaller loads had to be carried. Detailed investigations showed that the losses in time were as follows: Due to not taking the shortest route, \$62,000; due to slower progress, \$75,000; due to extra trips necessary by smaller loads, \$150,000, a total loss of \$287,000. Losses from inability to reach the best market, from the spoiling of produce and from injury to horses and wagons were found to aggregate \$221,000; from restricted ability to haul manure, \$91,000. The total loss caused by bad roads was placed at \$608,728.

The committee made the following deductions: On account of bad roads each farmer lost for the year \$170 for every acre that he farmed; 13 cents every time he carried a ton of farm produce over one mile of bad road; 9 per cent of his total crop. He paid as much for bad roads as for labor, more than for feed for his stock, twenty-five times as much as for fertilizer.

The total loss to the farmers in this district for the year from this cause would have brought all the corn produced in it, or all the wheat, or the oat crop twice over, or all but 10 per cent of the potatoes, or all the barley, rye, flaxseed, timothy seed, hay and forage combined. The losses would replace the farm implements or the cattle every three years, the horses every four years, and would pay off all the mortgages in the district in three years.

It would be \$100,000 to spare.

The farmers, moreover, were not the only losers from bad roads. The committee found that the worst sections of the roads they had to travel between their farms and market were within the city limits; that there were approximately 3,000 business houses in Minneapolis, employing 5,000 wagons, whose loss from bad roads was \$800,000 for the year.

The combined loss of the farmers, merchants and manufacturers for one year was \$1,518,600. As there are about 3,000 miles of roads in the district, which would have been kept in good condition for \$3,000 a year, if properly constructed, in order to ascertain what amount could profitably be deducted this amount from the total loss, leaving \$1,200,000. Capitalized at 4 1/2 per cent, or 5 per cent, which is more than bonds would cost, the principal is \$22,000,000. If this amount were invested in good highways at \$7,000 a mile the district would still break even on the investment.

FARMER BUILDS MODEL ROAD.

Sand and Stable Mulch Produce Excellent Highway.

A. M. Mitchell, a farmer near Hecla, in Brown county, S. D., is a good roads enthusiast who puts his enthusiasm to practical use. Mr. Mitchell has built a road in front of his farm which is pronounced excellent by automobilists and good roads experts.

First he placed sand to a depth of several inches over the roadway. Then he spread stable mulch over the sand to a depth of three inches. On top of this he placed gravel to a considerable depth. The mulch acted as a binder for the sand and gravel, with the result that the half mile of road is as hard as a pavement.

Mr. Mitchell grades a mile of road in his township annually.

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A Directory of each City, Town and Village, giving descriptive sketch of each place, location, population, telephone, shipping and banking points; also Classified Directory, compiled by business and professional.

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Bear Baiting in Olden Days.

So popular was bear baiting in olden days in England that riots followed the attempt to suppress it in the large towns. Bear baiting was more popular still. If that could be in various places, Liverpool, especially, it made part of the festivities at the election of the mayor, being held before his worship started for church. Ladies commonly attended in great numbers. There was a famous bear at Liverpool which showed such grand sport in 1782 that certain fair admirers presented it with a garland, decked it with ribbons and carried it to the theater, where a special entertainment had been "commanded," which bears set out in the front of their box. But of gossip about bull and bear baiting there is no end. Enthusiastic lovers of Shakespeare read with interest the petition of the royal bear warden, addressed to Queen Elizabeth in 1565, complaining that his licensed performers had been neglected of late because every one went to the theater.

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