

PRUDENCE of the PARSONAGE



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CHAPTER X—Continued.

"Must you prepare meat for bread-
ing half an hour before cooking, or
when?" demanded Fairy, from the din-
ing room door.

"What?—Oh!—Fifteen minutes be-
fore. Don't forget to salt and pepper
the crumbs, Fairy."

"Perhaps some time your father will
let you and a couple of the others
come to Des Moines with me in the car.
You would enjoy a few days there, I
know. I live with my aunt, a dear,
motherly little old soul. She will adore
you, Prudence, and you will like her,
too. Would your father let you spend
a week? We can easily drive back
and forth in the car."

"Maybe he will, but who will look
after the parsonage while I am away?"

"Fairy, to be sure. She must be a
good fairy once in a while. We can
take the twins with us, Connie, too,
if you like, and Fairy will only have to
mother your father."

"Prudence, shall we have tea or cof-
fee?" This was Lark from the door-
way. "Fairy wants to know."

"What?—Oh!—Which do you want,
Jerry?"

"Which does your father prefer?"

"He doesn't drink either except for
breakfast."

"I generally drink coffee, but I do
not care much for it, so do not bother."

"Coffee, Lark."

"Did you ever have a lover, Prudence?
A real lover, I mean."

"No, I never did."

"I'm awfully glad of that. I'll—"

"Prudence, do you use half milk and
half water for creamed tomato soup,
or all milk?"

"What?—Oh!—All milk, Connie, and
tell Fairy not to salt it until it is en-
tirely done, or it may curdle."

"What in the world would they ever
do without you, Prudence? You are
the soul of the parsonage, aren't you?"

"No, I am just the cook and the
chambermaid," she answered, laugh-
ing. "But don't you see how hard it
will be for me to go away?"

"But it isn't fair! Vacation is com-
ing now, and Fairy ought to take a
turn. What will they do when you get
married?"

"I have always said I would not get
married."

"But don't you want to get married,
some time?"

"Oh, that isn't it. I just can't be-
cause I must take care of the parson-
age, and raise the girls. I can't."

"But you will," he whispered, and
his hand touched hers for just a sec-
ond. Prudence did not answer. She
lifted her eyes to his face, and caught
in her breath once more.

A little later he said, "Do you mind
if I go upstairs and talk to your father
a few minutes? Maybe I'd better."

"But do not stay very long," she
urged, and she wondered why the
brightness and sunshine vanished from
the room when he went out. "First
door to the right," she called after him.

Mr. Starr arose to greet him, and
welcomed him to his combination study
and bedroom with great friendliness.
But Jerrold went straight to the point.

"Mr. Starr, it's very kind of you to
receive a perfect stranger as you have
me. But I understand that with a girl
like Prudence, you will want to be
careful. I can give you the names of
several prominent men in Des Moines,
Christians, who know me well, and
can tell you all about me."

"It isn't necessary. We are parson-
age people, and are accustomed to re-
ceiving men and women as worthy of
our trust, until we find them different.
We are glad to count you among our
friends."

"Thank you, but—you see, Mr. Starr,
this is a little different. Some day,
Prudence and I will want to be mar-
ried, and you will wish to be sure
about me."

"Does Prudence know about that?"

"No," with a smile, "we haven't got
that far yet. But I am sure she feels
it. She hasn't—well, you know what
I mean. She has been asleep, but I
believe she is waking up now."

"Yes, I think so. Do you mind if I
ask you a few questions?"

"No, indeed. Anything you like."

"Well, first, are you a Christian?"

"Not the kind you are, Mr. Starr. I
go to church, and I believe the Bible,
though I seldom read it. But I'll get
busy now, if you like. I know Prudence
would make me do that." And
he smiled again.

"Do you drink?"

"I did a little, but I promised Prudence
this morning I would quit it. I
smoke, too. Prudence knows it, but
she did not make me promise to quit
that?" His voice was raised, inquir-
ingly.

"Would you have promised, if she
had asked it?"

"I suppose I would." He flushed a
little. "I know I was pretty hard hit,
and it was such a new experience that
I would have promised anything she
asked. But I like smoking."

"Never mind the smoking. I only
asked that question out of curiosity.
Tell me about your relations with
your mother when she was living."

"She has been dead four years,"
Jerrold spoke with some emotion. "We
were great chums, though her health
was always poor. When I was in
school, I spent all my vacations at
home to be with her. And I never
went abroad until after her death be-
cause she did not like the idea of my
going so far from her."

"Jerrold, my boy, I do not want to
seem too severe, but—tell me, has
there been anything in your life, about
women that could come out and hurt
Prudence later on?"

Jerrold hesitated. "Mr. Starr, I have
been young, and headstrong, and im-
pulsive. I have done some things I
wish now I hadn't. But I believe there
is nothing that I could not explain to
Prudence so she would understand."

"All right. If you are the man, God
bless you. And, do you mind if I just
suggest that you go a little slow with
Prudence? Remember that she has
been sound asleep, until this morning.
I do not want her awakened too rudely."

"Neither do I," said Jerrold quickly.
"Shall I go down now? The girls have
invited me to stay for supper, and
Prudence says I am to come back to-
morrow, too. Is that all right? Re-
member, I'll be going home on Mon-
day!"

"It is all right, certainly. Spend as
much time here as you like. You will
either get worse, or get cured, and—
which ever it is, you've got to have a
chance. I like you, Jerrold. Prudence
judges by instinct, but it does
not often fail her."

Prudence heard him running down
the stairs boyishly, and when he came
in, before she could speak, he whis-
pered, "Shut your eyes tight, Prudence.
And do not scold me, for I can't help
it." Then he put his hands over hers,
and kissed her on the lips. They were
both breathless after that. Prudence
at last was aroused from her slumber.

CHAPTER XI.

She Orders Her Life.

That was the beginning of Prudence's golden summer. She was not
given to self-analysis. She hadn't the
time. She took things as they came.



"Do You Drink?"

She could not bear the thought of shar-
ing with the parsonage family even the
least ardent and most prosaic of Jer-
rold's letters. But she never asked
herself the reason. The days when
Jerry came were tremulously happy
ones for her—she was all aquiver when
she heard him swinging briskly up the
ramshackle parsonage walk, and her
breath was suffocatingly hot. But she
took it as a matter of course. She
knew that Jerry's voice was the sweet-
est voice in the world. She knew that
his eyes were the softest and brightest
and the most tender. She knew that
his hands had a thrilling touch quite
different from the touch of ordinary

less dear hands. She knew that his
smile lifted her into a delirium of de-
light. Prudence never thought of that.
She just lived in the sweet ecstatic
dream of the summer, and was well
and richly content.

So the vacation passed and Indian
summer came.

It was Saturday evening. The early
supper at the parsonage was over, the
twins had washed the dishes, and still
the daylight lingered. Prudence and
Jerry sat side by side, and closely, on
the front porch, talking in whispers.
Fairy had gone for a stroll with the
still faithful Babbie, Connie and the
twins had evidently vanished. Ah—
not quite that! Carol and Lark came
swiftly around the corner of the par-
sonage.

"Good evening," said Lark politely,
and Prudence sat up abruptly. The
twins never wasted politeness! They
wanted something.

"Do you mind if we take Jerry
around by the woodshed for a few min-
utes, Prue?"

Prudence sniffed suspiciously. "What
are you going to do to him?" she de-
manded.

"We won't hurt him," grinned Carol
impishly.

"Maybe he's afraid to come," said
Lark, "for there are two of us, and
we are mighty men of valor."

"That's all right," Prudence an-
swered defensively. "I'd sooner face a
tribe of wild Indians any day than you
twins when you are mischief-bent."

"Oh, we just want to use him a few
minutes," said Carol impatiently.

"Upon our honor, as Christian gentle-
men, we promise not to hurt a hair of
his head."

"Oh, come along, and cut out the
comedy," Jerry broke in, laughing.

Then the twins led him to the wood-
shed. Close beside the shed grew a
tall and luxuriant maple.

"Do you see this board?" began
Lark, exhibiting with some pride a
solid board about two feet in length.

"Well, we found this over by the
Avery barn. We've found a perfectly
gorgeous place up in the old tree where
we can make a seat. We thought you
could nail this on to the limbs—there
are two right near each other, evident-
ly put there on purpose for us. See
what dandy big nails we have!"

"From the Avery's woodshed, I sup-
pose," he suggested, smiling.

"Oh, they are quite rusty. We found
them in the scrap heap. We're very
good friends with the Avery's, very
good, indeed," she continued hastily.

"They allow us to rummage around at
will—in the barn."

"And see this rope," cried Carol.
"Isn't it a dandy?"

"Ah! The Avery barn must be inex-
haustible in its resources."

"How suspicious you are, Jerry,"
mourned Lark. "We thought when you
had the board nailed on, you might
rope it to the limbs above. Do you sup-
pose you can do that, Jerry?"

"Well, let's begin. Now, observe! I
loop this end of the rope lightly about
my—er—middle. The other end will
dangle on the ground to be drawn up
at will. I bestow the good but rusty
nails in this pocket, and the hammer
here. Then with the admirable board
beneath my arm, I mount—"

And Jerry smiled as he heard the
faithful twins, with much grunting and

an occasional groan, following in his
wake.

It was a delightful location, as
they had said. The board fitted nicely
on the two limbs, and Jerry fastened
it with the rusty nails. The twins were
jubilant and loud in their praises of
his skill and courage.

"Oh, Jerry!" exclaimed Carol, with
deep satisfaction, "it's such a blessing
to discover something really nice about
you after all these months!"

"Now, we'll just—"

"Hush!" hissed Lark. "Here comes
Connie. Hold your breath, Jerry, and
don't budge."

"Isn't she in on this?" he whispered.
He could hear Connie making weird
noises as she came around the house
from the front. She was learning to
whistle, and the effect was ghastly in
the extreme. Connie's mouth had not
been designed for whistling.

"Sh! She's the band of dark-browed
gypsies trying to steal my lovely wife."

"I'm the lovely wife," interrupted
Carol, complacently.

"But Connie does not know about it.
She is so religious she won't be any
of the villain parts."

Connie came around the corner of
the parsonage, out the back walk be-



Side by Side Talking in Whispers.

neath the maple. Then she gave a
gleeful scream. Right before her lay a
beautiful heavy rope. Connie had been
yearning for a good rope to make a
swing. Here it lay, at her very feet,
plainly a gift of the gods. She did not
wait to see where the other end of the
rope was. She just grabbed what she
saw before her, and started violently
back around the house with it, yelling:
"Prudence! Look at my rope!"

Prudence rushed around the parson-
age. The twins shrieked wildly, as
there was a terrific tug and heave of
the limb beside them, and then—a
crashing of branches and leaves. Jerry
was gone!

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

JOKE SOMEHOW MISSED FIRE

Incident That Illustrates the Danger of
Plagiarism When One's Memory
May Cause False Step.

A party of men were discussing at
the dinner table the relative merits of
their favorite heroes. They were wax-
ing warm over the subject, when one
man appealed to his host to agree with
him in saying Napoleon was the great-
est man of the age.

"Why, yes," was the reply. "Napole-
on was a very great man, but this,"
holding up the nutmeg grater which
he had used in mixing the punch bowl,
"is a grater."

A would-be wit who was one of the
party thought he would like to repro-
duce the joke as his own, so he care-
fully arranged a dinner at which none
of the men present at the former one
should appear. A table napkin was
held by him, under which a grater was
concealed, and the conversation skill-
fully led up to the desired topic. Well-
ington was the hero of the evening,
the host keeping discreetly out of the
discussion. Presently a man observed,
"We have not heard your opinion,
Brown."

The host immediately seized his op-
portunity, and producing the little in-
strument, said gravely, "Wellington
was indeed a great man, but this is a
nutmeg grater."

And then he wondered why nobody
laughed and all looked at him curi-
ously.

Influences the Brain.

Every organ in the body exerts in
some way an influence upon the brain.
Those whose lives are along the sys-
tematic, plodding way—the great
crowd of us—have no excuse for "tem-
peramental fits." If we take care of
our health every organ does its duty,
and brain and nervous system do not
become temporarily poisoned.

ADAMSON LAW IS CONSTITUTIONAL

Washington, D. C.—The eight-hour
standard for railroad wages, provided
in the Adamson law, was held consti-
tutional Monday by the Supreme court.

The Supreme court's decision, hold-
ing the entire Adamson act consti-
tutional, was announced by Chief Justice
White.

In announcing the opinion, the Chief
justice reviewed the negotiations lead-
ing to enactment of the law. He did
not read from a prepared opinion, giv-
ing it apparently from memory. He
told of the President's efforts to avert
the strike last September.

"He suggested arbitration. The
employees accepted and the employees
refused," said the Chief justice. "He
then suggested a basic eight-hour-day
standard. The employers rejected that
and the employees accepted."

How the President went to congress
was then recited.

"Congress passed the law that is be-
fore us and the carriers refused to re-
cognize it," he recited. He said the
agreement to expedite the case was
"very laudable."

In the early course of the opinion the
Chief justice said that the law was
both an eight-hour day act and also a
wage-fixing statute. He said it
"strips the parties of power of con-
tract" as to wages. He said the
eight-hour provision was the param-
ount feature.

As to whether the law fixes the
hours of labor or fixes wages, the Chief
justice said it did both. He said the
right to fix hours of labor by congress
was out of the cases unquestioned.

Wilson Sees Way Clear in Strike

Decision to Urge Arbitration

Washington, D. C.—President Wil-
son, it is learned on good authority
Wednesday, will strongly urge upon
congress, in special session, the en-
actment of a compulsory arbitration
act, basing his demand on the decision
of the Supreme court in the Adamson
case, which foretells that such a law
will be held constitutional.

The President, according to those
who have seen him since the decision,
will be more vigorous in his demand
than in the past two sessions, and will
use the full power of the administra-
tion in favor of a law similar to that
of Canada. One feature which the
President probably will insist upon
will make it unlawful for employes of
interstate railroads to strike pending
the arbitration of differences.

It is also learned from authentic
sources that the leaders of the Ameri-
can Federation of Labor are deeply
alarmed over the ruling of the Su-
preme court as to compulsory arbitra-
tion, and fear that if this principle is
rigidly applied by congress labor uni-
ons will be deprived of an important
and hitherto effective weapon.

Ex-Czar of Russia May Quit

Native Land for Switzerland

Petrograd, via London—The former
Dowager Empress Marie Feodorovna
who was at Kiev, went to meet her
son, former Emperor Nicholas, as he
was returning after his abdication.
She had long resented the influence
over Nicholas wielded by the Empress
Alexandra, Gregory Rasputin, the
mystic monk, and Mademoiselle Gru-
bava, lady-in-waiting to the Empress
and Alexandra's best friend, who had
introduced Rasputin to the Empress.

Marie Feodorovna saw Alexandra
only when court functions required.
Since early in January she had been at
Kiev and had refused to come to the
capital. Her meeting with Nicholas
was said to have been affecting.

The object of her visit to him was
to advise with him as to her future
residence. It is reported that she in-
tends to go to Denmark, her native
country.

It is expected that Nicholas Roman-
off, as the former Emperor is now
known, will eventually go to Switzer-
land or France, his stay in the Crimea
being temporary. Most of the mem-
bers of his suite have acknowledged the
new government.

Four Die From Greens.

Boise, Idaho—Claude Richards, aged
22, member of the Richards family, of
Carey, poisoned last week by eating
canned greens, died Wednesday. He
is the fourth victim to succumb, his
mother and two sisters having died
Sunday and Monday. The father,
Samuel P. Richards, is very low, but
his physician now entertains hope for
his recovery. A hired man, who also
ate some of the poisoned herbs, is con-
siderably improved and will recover.

Slayer of Judge is Killed.

Birmingham, Ala.—David D. Over-
ton, the ex-county court clerk under
death sentence for the murder of
Judge W. T. Lawler, was shot to death
in a Birmingham suburb Wednesday
night by a sheriff's posse sent out to
capture him and six other prisoners
who had escaped from the county jail
early in the day.

Mexico City is 7,415 feet above sea
level. Its death rate has been no-
toriously high.