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A Blue Mark here will answer an inquiry, when entered upon our calendar, giving the date of the paper as the date at which your current subscription expires.

Bits of Byplay

By Luke McLuke

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Train.
All black and blue is Peter Land.
He's suffering great pain.
He walked across a ballroom and
stepped on a moving train.

Paw Knows Everything.
Willie—Paw, what does the wireless
signal "S O S" mean?
Paw—Sinking out of sight, my son.
Maw—Willie, if you don't quit asking
your paw questions you will grow up
to be as big a fool as he is.

Giddap!
This good advice I'll give to you.
And it may save you strife:
A penknife may turn out to
be an expensive wife.

Huh!
"The grouch is a blunt man, isn't
he?" asked the old fogey.
"Yes," agreed the wise guy. "He al-
ways comes right to the point."

Fact.
We do her bidding, one and all.
And answer to her beck and call.
For any little woman's whim
Prevail against a big man's aim.

Wuf!
"In our country," remarked the man
from Chile, "we put bark on the west
side of our sausages."
"That's nothing," replied the Ameri-
can. "Up here we put the bark inside
the sausages."

Quah!
A puffed up post is Ezra Blaws.
He sure is one colossal gook.
He cackles night and day because
He laid a cornerstone last week.

Is That So!
Jose Willard hasn't been heard from
for so long that we did not for the well
known lack of bad habits, we should
fear he had gone on an old fashioned
Luke McLuke "fishing trip."—Arkansas
Democrat.

My!
The billboard man, I will agree,
Is a concealed pun.
For while his sign is posted he
Need not be so stuck up.
—Cincinnati Enquirer.

On that same billboard man we think
Much sympathy is wanted.
For though he never beats his boards
Quite often they are posted.
—Memphis Commercial Appeal.

Gentlemen, Be Seated!
"Mr. Interlocutor, can you tell me
which are the strongest days of the
month?"
"No, Mr. Bones, I cannot. Will you
tell us which are the strongest days
of the month?"
"Sundays are. The rest of the days
are week days."

"After the dead have been removed
Mr. Y. Elper will render that beautiful
song, 'Come Home Again, Dear Mother,
Father Has Changed His Collar!'"
—Duke.

Woop!
Two mice are mice, one mouse is a mouse
Two dice are dice. Is one a mouse?
—Bits of Byplay.

My, isn't She Stuck Up!
Mrs. Vane Pate returned to Louisville
Sunday.—Breckinridge (Ky.) News.

They Get a Medal of Honor.
Dear Luke—I am inclosing a circular
proving that Lide & Cheatham run a
drug store here. They are successors
to Slaughter & Besore. Do they get
into the club?—G. C. F. Meridian,
Miss.

Things to Worry About.
An alligator is not full grown until
it is 100 years old.

Our Daily Special.
Nothing that is done for effect is
ever effective.

Luke McLuke Says:
Lots of men who wouldn't cry over
spilled milk would do a lot of bawling
if it happened to be beer.

A gentleman is a person who will
pretend that he is enjoying the infor-
mation when other men are telling him
things that he already knows.

The diver habit is the limit. It has
got so a woman can't start the baby's
goat until she absentmindedly goes
around in front of it and tries to
crank it.

Two men who have been chums for
ten years never know as much about
each other as do two women who have
been acquainted with each other for
ten minutes.

Cheer up. Even if you are poor and
your salary is small you have the con-
solation of knowing that you can write
a letter to a girl and it won't cost you
\$10,000 to get it back again.

You can't make a princess believe it.
But lots of girls named Maria and
Mary Ann manage to get through life
without making their names "Maria"
and "Mary Ann."

Any time a woman asks for your
candid opinion as to her appearance,
she means that she wants you to be
like a good fellow.

The woman who calls in a veterinary
surgeon when Fido is sick always won-
ders why a neighbor woman has to
send for a doctor just because one of
the children is ailing.

A honeymooning couple always re-
minds an old married man of a couple
of prizefighters who are shaking hands
before they start in to slam the stuff
out of each other.

Aunt Alvina's Castle

A Good Natured Splinter
Helped Lovers on Their Way.

By CLARISSA MACKIE

Nelson Blair read Ray Marvin's letter
through to the end, and then his
lips set in a grim, straight line that
boded ill for the cruel father of the
girl he loved.

"Dearest Nelson," the letter read, "fa-
ther has absolutely refused to consider
our engagement as anything save an
amusing comedy—he says I positively
must marry Mr. Wickland, 'love or no
love'—those are his very words! It
seems they have mutual business in-
terests, and my marriage to Mr. Wick-
land will be the means of consolidating
their affairs—whatever that means. To
me it appears to be nothing less than
barter. And, oh, Nelson, save me if
you can! He is sending me down to
Aunt Alvina's lonely old house, and
you know she will watch me like a
cat."

Nelson swore under his breath as he
thought of the beautiful girl who loved
him so tenderly and whom he had prom-
ised to make his wife, although he pos-
sessed neither social position nor much
money. Old Simon Marvin was ambi-
tious—may be was more than that—he
was avaricious and unscrupulous.

For a long time Nelson Blair stood
at his window looking out at the wind
clouds heaving up in the northwest
and at the birds flying before the ap-
proaching storm.

Suddenly a smile curled his lips, and
he chuckled to himself.

"The very thing!" he muttered, going
to the telephone.

An instant later he received connec-
tion with Simon Marvin's house, and a
servant was answering his questions.
"Miss Marvin?" she hesitated for a
moment, sir, I couldn't say, sir. Per-
haps Mr. Marvin could inform you."

Nelson turned away from the instru-
ment with a smile.
"Well, it's lucky that I remember
where Aunt Alvina's lonesome castle is
situated," he muttered as he closed the
door and went out.

Miss Alvina Ford's big stone house,
copied after a medieval castle she had
seen in England many years before,
was set in the midst of a beautiful
park, with gardens that sloped down
to a rippling river.

A stone wall twelve feet high sur-
rounded the estate, and here Miss
Ford lived from one year's end to the
other with her pet cats and dogs and
her staff of well trained servants. She
was never lonely; for she read exten-
sively and she was fond of her gar-
den and she made frequent trips to the
city in quest of amusement.

But the castle, as it was locally
known, was situated in an isolated
spot, and when one was immersed there
against one's wish and the tall iron



RAY CARRIED THE NOTE TO HER ROOM
AND READ IT OVER AND OVER AGAIN.

gates were closely guarded against es-
cape—well, under such circumstances
even a castle may become a prison.

So it proved to be in the case of Ray
Marvin after her father had hurried
her down to Aunt Alvina's and placed
her in that splinter's care.

"Go anywhere you wish inside the
grounds," said Aunt Alvina. "You may
drive for ten miles without passing
through the gates, you know, and your
father says that you cannot go out of
those gates unless he has your prom-
ise to marry Mr. Wickland. Anything
you desire to make you happy or com-
fortable I will provide. Beyond that I
can do nothing."

"But, Aunt Alvina, you cannot be-
lieve that father is right in not permit-
ting me to marry the man I love," pro-
tested poor motherless Ray.

Miss Ford permitted a smile to crin-
kle the corners of her well cut lips.

"My dear, romance is dead in these
days," she said scornfully. "If your
young man had an ounce of ginger in
his makeup he wouldn't permit you to
be married off to that old scrawny of a
Wickland!"

"I don't think Mr. Wickland a scraw-
ny exactly," said Ray, "but he's too
old for me, and I don't love him. Now,
Nelson—but you know Nelson Blair,
Aunt Alvina—is young and ambitious,
and he is making heaps of money in
demonstrating those new flying ma-
chines. Even father calls him a bril-
liant aviator, and Nelson has promised
not to fly much after we're married."

"I've seen him fly," said Alvina kind-
ly. "I don't understand your father,
my dear, but I've given him my prom-
ise not to let you go through the gates

until I have his permission, and I
heard you promise the same thing. So
the only thing to do is to make the
best of a bad situation and trust to
time to soften your father's heart. I've
sent to town for a box of new books,
and Rudolf will motor to the station
for them this afternoon."

Miss Ford sauntered into the house,
leaving Ray on the terrace, where the
peacocks strutted up and down in the
sunshine.

Ray suddenly smiled.

"No romance in these days," she
said softly. "Why, it's rather romantic
to be shut up within castle walls. But
I do wish Nelson were near. At least
we could talk to each other over the
wire, and I could tell him a rose now
and then to let him know that my
heart is quite unchanged."

Ray sat down to read the morning
newspaper, and her heart thrilled as
she read that Nelson Blair had won



"READY, DARLING!" HE ASKED QUICKLY.

new laurels in the great aviation meet
of the day before. So she sat there
dreaming of her lover and inventing
many ways of escaping from the castle
her head.

The afternoon waned, and in the
golden glow of the sunset Ray went
to dinner, her eyes still soft with
the thoughts of Nelson Blair. After
the meal was over she slipped a shawl
over her shoulders and went to walk
in the garden, where the roses held
great fragrant faces up to the moon.

The garden was flooded with moon-
light, and there were the chairs of the
whispering willows in the oak wood.
Miss Ford was playing crashing chords
on the piano in the drawing room, and
while Ray listened another sound was
added to the notes of the night.

A low throbbing overhead increased
to a humming sound. Startled, Ray
looked up and saw something large
and black and shadowy flying above
her head.

In an instant it was gone, hidden by
the trees, but something came hurtling
down through the air to fall almost
at her feet.

She picked it up—a weighted box
containing a little note from Nelson
Blair.

And Aunt Alvina had said that ro-
mance was dead!

Ray carried the precious note to her
room and read it over and over again.
A few words Nelson proposed to
carry her away from the castle. His
new machine was intended for two
passengers, and if Ray would trust
him and if she would have a few
clothes packed into a light bundle, and
if she would be waiting for him on
that large sloping meadow behind the
castle barn, why, he would make a
landing and, taking her aboard the
aeroplane, fly with her to the rectory
of a certain church that he knew,
where they could be united in mar-
riage. Then would they defy Simon
Marvin, Mr. Wickland and even Aunt
Alvina herself.

If Ray would consent to these things
she must walk in the garden the fol-
lowing evening, when Nelson would fly
over the castle. He would recognize
her by her white gown. Then the
night after receiving his answer, he
would be there in the meadow.

Ray laughed and cried over the let-
ter. First she declared she couldn't
possibly get into an aeroplane, and then
she admitted that she wouldn't be
afraid of anything as long as Nelson
was there.

So, all day long, Aunt Alvina watch-
ed her covertly and smiled secretly to
herself when Ray, gowned all in white,
went out to the garden after dinner.
Tonight Miss Ford did not open the
piano to interpret Wagnerian master-
pieces. She stood at a window in one
of the towers of the castle, and she
smiled and clasped her hands when
she heard the throbbing of a motor and
the big bulk of the aeroplane darkened
the air before the castle.

Nelson flew back and forth and cir-
cled several times about the head of
his lady love, as if to satisfy himself
that there was no mistake in the an-
swer she had given him. Then Miss
Ford saw something small and shadowy
drop from the flying machine as it
darted away, and she saw Ray run
forward and search the ground for the
object. Afterward, when Ray came
into the house breathless and pink,
with a great American Beauty rose
pinned on her breast, Miss Ford asked,
with a twinkle in her eyes:

"Did you find that rose in my gar-
den, Ray?"

"Yes, Aunt Alvina," said Ray de-
murely.

The next day Ray was very tender
with Miss Ford, and she felt guilty
indeed when she packed a little bundle
and hid it under the pillows of her
sofa. Once when Ray was absent
from the house Aunt Alvina stole up
to Ray's room and searched swiftly
until she found the hidden package.
Then she opened it and pinned a let-
ter to some of the garments and care-
fully replaced it as she found it.

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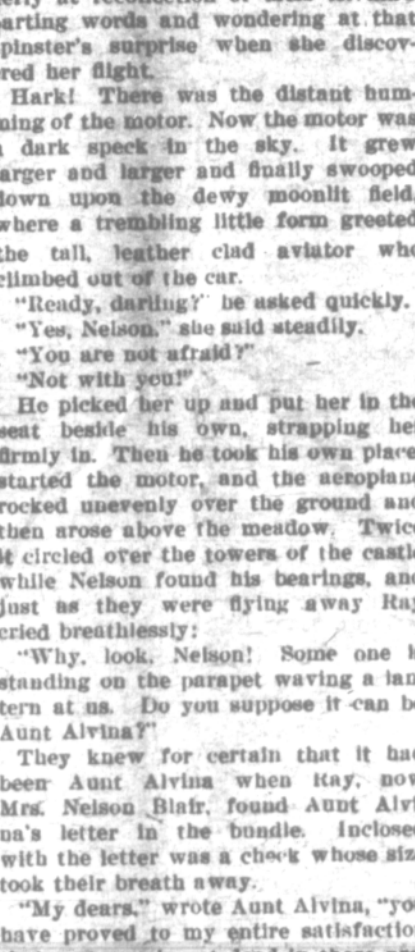
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Loaves And Ladies

A Victory For the
Wives

By CLARISSA MACKIE

Alonso Dibble's store on the main
street of Roseville and in the same
room with the postoffice was the forum
in which the male citizens of the vil-
lage got together to discuss every new
departure from the beaten track of the
world's ongoing.

Alonso Dibble, being peculiarly
interested in the sale of twenty-five
cent packages of smoking tobacco and
cigars at prices all the way up from
one cent a stick to five cent perfectos,
took care that the meetings should not
want for a topic and that the debate
should not end when it struck a rut.

While the men of Roseville had been
discussing these problems the women
had started the suffrage society. The
men had not yet entered upon this
topic and might not have done so had
not Amos Gwynne squelched the war
in Mexico by his unpatriotic remark:

"There had been no sales of groceries for
some time, and no one had called for
beer. The shopkeeper, fearing that
the meeting would break up with-
out any more purchases, placed the
palm of his hand on the counter and
furnished his other arm dramatically.

"I say," he shouted, "there's more
honor for a woman to bake a perfect
loaf of bread than it is to vote nine
times for a president of the United
States!"

There was an instant's silence among
the men gathered around the glowing
stove; then Hen Lariday broke the
stillness.

"There ain't much honor for any
one, man, woman or child, to vote nine
times for president—not on the same
day, no, sir!"

After the laughter had died away the
storekeeper resumed his exhortation.

"It's all right to make fun of it, Hen,
but you ain't got no wife, and your
ma is one of the God-fearin', old-fash-
ioned kind who don't want no votes,
but the vote of her mother and she's
the best mother and the best cook in
the world. But what I do mean is this:
Ever since the women of Roseville
started this here Ladies' Suffrage so-
ciety they've stopped being such good
housekeepers. Look at the business in
homemade baking that Mrs. Dell Smith
has built up. Why, I'll bet I've sold
more flour to Mrs. Smith than to any
one else in town. See 'em come in here
day after day and buy Mrs. Smith's
bread and take it home to their fam-
ilies. I'll bet there's more men in this
here store this minute who said to his
wife at supper tonight, 'What good
bread Mrs. Dell Smith makes!' When
a man says that, well, his wife ain't
got anything to be proud of!"

"You're right, Alonso," agreed James
Gray. "But what we going to do
about it?"

Alonso was distinctly cross eyed.
Now, one of his orbs was fixed on
James Gray and the other wandered
over to the door where a woman's form
stood motionless by a barrel of brooms.

"Yes, what we going to do about it?"
hawned Hen Lariday.

"Can't do anything," said Alonso
slowly. "But I don't blame any man
for getting tired of a woman who bakes
all day about running the govtment
when she can't even bake a decent loaf
of bread! Some day the women will
wake up and find they've got the vote
—and nothing else, by gosh!"

The door closed gently.
The woman by the barrel of brooms
had slipped out.

"Who was that?" asked Hen Lariday.
"Sue Pinkham."

"Great heck! Do you suppose she
heard what you said, Alonso?"

"I hope so," said the storekeeper
grimly.

"If she did," went on Hen impres-
sively, "the news is running like wild-
fire through the hull village. Sue
Pinkham's the worst gossip in Rose-
ville."

"And the best is Hen Lariday!" joked
Alonso.

James Gray walked slowly up the
street toward home. He was turning
in his mind all that Alonso had said
about bread and women, and he had
reason to agree with the storekeeper
on more than one point of his argu-
ment.

Mrs. James Gray was the president
of the Ladies' Suffrage society, and she
it was who was urging the fair mem-
bers to affiliate themselves with the
state organization. It was Mrs. Gray
who had suggested to Dell Smith's wife
that home baking would be a profitable
enterprise, and from that moment the
idea had taken possession of Roseville
wives.

Husbands found delicious homemade
bread on the table, but Mrs. Smith had
baked it; likewise crisp cookies, and
loaf cake and pies. The members of
the society to a woman turned their
weekly baking over to the industrious
little woman who was not even a
member of their club.

"Oh, I haven't got any time," Mrs.
Smith had good naturedly said in ex-
cuse. "I'm helping Dell pay off the
mortgage. When that's done I'll think
about it."

Medicine she baked and baked, and
the women of the society met and de-
bated and tried to better conditions in
the village.

James Gray was thinking about
these things. He did not marvel at
Alonso's outburst of wrath. Alonso's
wife was secretary of the society, and
instead of keeping his books as she
had heretofore she had pleaded too
much other work in hand, so Alonso
had hired a bookkeeper.

The supper table was set when James
Gray entered the house. His wife was
perusing a pamphlet and smiled a
greeting over the top of it, but she
went back to her reading without mak-
ing any remark.

The table looked very inviting. There
were an immaculate cloth, the white
waifs, a shining silver, a platter of pink
baked

ham from the store, a dish of store
pickles, another dish of dried baked
beans, a glass dish of canned peaches
from the store, some of Mrs. Smith's
delicious graham bread and a plate of
cake that was undeniably Mrs. Smith's
production.

James washed his face and hands
and brushed his hair; then he sat
glumly down to supper. Mrs. Gray
had put away the pamphlet and was
sitting behind the teapot when he en-
tered.

"There were only two of them, for
their daughter, Annabel, was married
and lived across the way with her
husband, Oscar Wren.

"Good bread!" muttered James dark-
ly, as he helped himself to a second
slice.

"Isn't it?" asked his wife eagerly.
"Lizzie Smith can make the best bread
in town."

"She can hold the championship so
long as none of the other women com-
pete with her," hinted James mor-
rosely.

Mrs. Gray regarded her husband with
calm surprise.

"I suppose you were in the store
when Alonso expressed his opinion of
the Ladies' Suffrage society?" she asked
curiously.

"Sue Pinkham been here?" he com-
tered.

"Why?"

"Oh, I recognize the signs. Please
pass me one of Mrs. Smith's cakes,"
he said pleasantly.

Mrs. Gray frowned and was silent
during the remainder of the meal.

After supper James put on his coat
and went to the lodge meeting. Mrs.
James put on her hat and went to a
special meeting of her society.

Three weeks later Alonso Dibble
entered his store one evening and
found his plump little wife in pos-
session of the bookkeeper's desk.

"Where's Ida Jones?" asked Alonso.

"I sent her home—paid her off and
discharged her," responded his wife,
making an entry in the daybook and
carefully blotting it. "I've got plenty
of time to do this work."

"What? You give up that fool so-
ciety?" demanded Alonso.

"No. I can do both if you don't both-
er by talking too much," she smiled
at him.

"Oh, I ain't got any time to talk," he
said hastily. "You know I've got my
hands full looking after this store. You
can't do more'n one thing at a time,"
he added as he moved away.

Mrs. Dibble looked at the three clerks
simply waiting on customers. She
glanced at the stableman standing by
the barn door. She thought of herself
in the bookkeeper's cage, and a little
smile curled her lip.

"Alonso certainly has plenty of help,"
she mused, dipping her pen in the ink.

For a number of weeks Alonso Dib-
ble was silent on the question of wo-
men's votes. He noticed that Mrs.
Smith omitted her usual order for
flour, and he told his clerks that she
was probably buying from his com-
petitor.

On the tables of the members of the
suffrage society continued to appear
delicious home baked bread, toothsome
pies and cakes, and the town rang
with the praises accorded Mrs. Dell
Smith as a model wife and mother and
gave credit to the fact that she was
not a member of the society.