

PRUDENCE

of the PARSONAGE

By ETHEL HUESTON

(Bobbs-Merrill, Copyright, 1916)

CHAPTER XII—Continued.

"You are mistaken, father. Jerry is all right, and always was, I am sure. It is nothing like that. I told him to go, and not to come again. That is all."

"But if he should come back now—"

"It would be just the same. Don't worry about it, father. It's all right."

"Prudence," he said, more tenderly, "we have been the closest of friends and companions, you and I, from the very beginning. Always you have come to me with your troubles and worries. Have I ever failed you? Why, then, do you go back on me now, when you really need me?"

Prudence patted his shoulder affectionately, but her eyes did not meet his. "I do not really need you now, father. It is all settled, and I am quite satisfied. Things are all right with me just as they are."

Then he took a serious step, without her knowledge. He went to Des Moines, and had a visit with Jerry. He found him thinner, his face sterner, his eyes darker. When the office boy announced "Mr. Starr," Jerry ran quickly out to greet him.

"Is she all right?" he cried eagerly, almost before he was within hailing distance.

Mr. Starr did not mince matters. "Jerry," he said abruptly, "did you and Prudence have a quarrel? She declines to tell me anything about it, and after the conversations you and I have had, I think I have a right to know what has happened."

"Does she miss me? Does she seem sorry that I am away? Does—" His voice was so hoarse and so eager there was no mistaking his attitude toward Prudence.

"Look here, Jerry, I want to know. Why are you staying away?"

"Won't Prudence tell you?"

"No."

"Then I cannot. She made me promise not to tell you a word. But it is not my fault, Mr. Starr. I can tell you that. It is nothing I have done or said. She sent me away because she thinks it was right for her to do so, and— you know Prudence! It is wrong, I know. I knew it all the time. But I couldn't make her see it. And she made me promise not to tell."

In the end Mr. Starr went back to the parsonage no wiser than he left, save that he now knew that Jerry was really not to blame, and that he held himself ready to return to her on a moment's notice.

The Ladies of the Methodist church were puzzled and exasperated. They went to the parsonage, determined to "find out what's what." But when they sat with Prudence, and looked at the frail, pathetic little figure, with the mournful eyes—they could only sigh with her and go their ways.

The twins continued to play in the great maple, even when the leaves were fallen. "It's a dandy place, I tell you, Prudence," cried Carol. "Jerry didn't have time to put up the rope before Connie pulled him down, but we've fixed it ourselves, and it is simply grand. You can go up and swing any time you like—unless your joints are too stiff! It's a very serious matter getting up there—for stiff joints, of course, I mean. Lark and I get up easy enough."

For a moment Prudence sat silent with quivering lips. Then she burst out with unusual passion, "Don't you ever dare climb that tree again as long as you live, twins! Mind what I say!"

Lark looked thoughtfully out of the window, and Carol swallowed hard. It was she who said gently, "Why, of course, Prue—just as you say."

On the day before Christmas an insured package was delivered at the parsonage for Prudence. A letter was with it, and she read that first.

"My dearest little sweetheart: I chose this gift for you long before I had the right to do it. I was keeping it until the proper moment. But the moment came, and went again. Still I want you to have the gift. Please wear it, for my sake, for I shall be happy knowing it is where it ought to be, even though I myself am banished. I love you, Prudence. Whenever you send for me, I am ready to come. Entirely and always yours, Jerry."

With trembling fingers she opened the little package. It contained a ring, with a brilliant diamond flashing myriad colors before her eyes. And Prudence kissed it passionately, many times.

Two hours later, she went quietly downstairs to where the rest of the family were decorating a Christmas tree. She showed the ring to them gravely.

"Jerry sent it to me," she said. "Do you think it is all right for me to wear it, father?"

A thrill of hopeful expectancy ran through the little group.

"Yes, indeed," declared her father. "How beautiful it is! Is Jerry coming to spend Christmas with us?"

"Why, no, father—he is not coming at all any more. I thought you understood that."

An awkward silence, and Carol came brightly to the rescue. "It certainly is

a beauty! I thought it was very kind of Professor Duckie to send Lark and me a five-pound box of chocolates, but of course this is ever so much nicer. Jerry's a bird, I say."

"A bird!" mocked Fairy. "Such language."

Lark came to her twin's defense.

"Yes, a bird—that's just what he is." Carol smiled. "We saw him use his wings when Connie yanked him out of the big maple, didn't we, Lark?" Then, "Did you send him anything, Prue?"

Prudence hesitated, and answered without the slightest accession of color. "Yes, Carol. I had my picture taken when I was in Burlington, and sent it to him."

"Your picture! Oh, Prudence! Where are they? Aren't you going to give us one?"

"No, Carol. I had only one made—for Jerry. There aren't any more."

"Well," sighed Lark resignedly. "It's a pretty idea for my book, anyhow."

From that day on Prudence always wore the sparkling ring—and the women of the Methodist church nearly had mental paralysis marveling over a man who gave a diamond ring and never came a-wooing! And a girl who accepted and wore his offering, with nothing to say for the man! And it was the consensus of opinion in Mount Mark that modern lovers were mostly crazy, anyhow!

And springtime came again. Now the twins were always original in their amusements. They never followed blindly after the dictates of custom. And when other girls played "catch" with dainty rubber balls, the twins took unto themselves a big and heavy croquet ball—found in the Avery woodshed. To be sure, it stung and

bruised their hands. What matter? At any rate, they continued endangering their lives and beauties by reckless pitching of the ungainly plaything.

One Friday evening after school they were amusing themselves on the parsonage lawn with this huge ball. When their father turned in, they ran up to him with a sporting proposition.

"Bet you a nickel, papa," cried Carol, "that you can't throw this ball as far as the schoolhouse woodshed!"

By the way, will you lend me a nickel, papa?"

He took the ball and weighed it lightly in his hand. "I'm an anti-betting society," he declared, laughing, "but I very strongly believe it will carry to the schoolhouse woodshed. If it does not, I'll give you five cents' worth of candy tomorrow. And if it does, you shall put an extra nickel in the collection next Sunday."

Then he drew back his arm and carefully sighted across the lawn. "I'll send it right between the corner of the house and that little cedar," he said, and then, bending low, it whizzed from his hand.

Lark screamed, and Carol sank faintly to the ground. For an instant Mr. Starr himself stood swaying. Then he rushed across the lawn. For Prudence had opened the front door and stepped quickly out on the walk by the corner of the house. The heavy ball struck her on the forehead and she fell heavily, without a moan.

CHAPTER XIII.

Fate Takes Charge.

For hours Prudence lay unconscious, with two doctors in close attendance. Fairy, alert but calm, was at hand to give them service.

It is a significant thing that in bitter anguish and grief, Christians find comfort and peace in prayer. Outsiders, as well as Christians, pray in times of danger and mental stress, pray, and pray, and pray again, and continue still in the agony and passion of grief and fear. And yet they pray. But Christians pray, and find confidence

and serenity. Sorrow may remain, but anguish is stilled.

Mount Mark considered this a unique parsonage family. Their liveliness, their gaiety, their love of fun, seemed a little inappropriate in the setting of a Methodist parsonage.

"They ain't sanctimonious enough by half," declared old Harvey Reel, the bus driver, "but, by Jings! I tell you they are dandies!"

But as a matter of fact, every one of the family, from Connie up, had a characteristic parsonage heart. When they were worried, or frightened, or grieved, they prayed. Fairy passing up the stairs with hot water for the doctors, whispered to her father as he turned in to his own room, "Keep on praying, father. I can't stop now, because they need me. But I'm praying every minute between errands!"

And Mr. Starr, kneeling beside his bed, did pray—and the stony despair in his eyes died out, and he came from the little room quiet, and confident, and calm.

Connie, seeking a secluded corner to "pray for Prudence," had passed the door of the dungeon, and paused. A fitting place! So she turned in at once, and in the farthest and darkest corner, she knelt on the hard floor and prayed, and sobbed herself to sleep.

Lark remained loyally with Carol until consciousness returned to her. As soon as she was able to walk, the two went silently to the barn, and climbed into the much-loved haymow. There they lay flat on the hay, faces downward, each with an arm across the other's shoulder, praying fervently. After a time they rose and crept into the house where they waited patiently until Fairy came down on one of her numerous errands.

"Is she better?" they whispered. And Fairy answered gently, "I think she is a little better." Then the twins, in no way deceived, went back to the haymow again.

Fairy prepared a hasty supper, and arranged it on the kitchen table. She drank a cup of hot coffee, and went in search of her father. "Go and eat, daddie," she urged. But he shook his head.

"I am not hungry, but send the girls to the table at once."

On their next trip into the house, Fairy stopped the twins. "Get Connie and eat your supper. It's just a cold lunch, and is already on the kitchen table. You must help yourselves—I can't come now."

The twins did not speak, and Fairy went hurriedly up the stairs once more. "I do not think I can eat," said Carol. "We'd better take away about half of this food, and hide it. Then she will think we have already eaten."

This novel plan was acted upon with promptitude and the twins went back to the haymow. When it grew dark they slipped into the kitchen and huddled together on the woodbox beside the stove. And down to them presently came Fairy, smiling, her eyes tear-brightened.

"She is better!" cried Carol, springing to her feet.

"Yes," said Fairy, dropping on her knees and burying her face in Lark's lap, as she still sat on the woodbox. "She's better. She is better." Lark patted the heaving shoulders in a motherly way, and when Fairy lifted her face again it was all serene, though her lashes were wet.

"She is conscious," said Fairy, still on her knees, but with her head thrown back, and smiling. "She regained consciousness a little while ago. There is really nothing serious the matter. It was a hard knock, but it missed the temple. When she became conscious, she looked up at father and smiled. Father looked perfectly awful, twins, so pale, and his lips were trembling. And Prudence said, 'Now, father, on your word of honor, did you knock me down with that ball on purpose?' She spoke very low and weak, but—just like Prudence! Father couldn't say a word; he just nodded, and gulped. She has a little fever, and the doctors say we may need to work with her part of the night. Father said to ask if you would go to bed now, so you can get up early in the morning and help us. I am to stay with Prudence tonight, but you may have to take turns in the morning. And you'll have to get breakfast, too. So father thinks you would better go to bed. Will you do that, twinnies?"

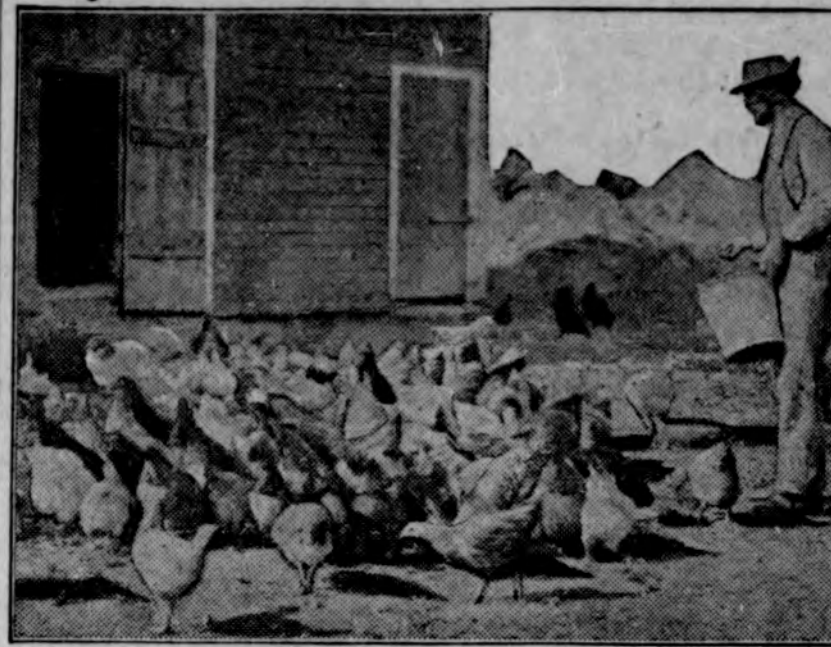
(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Never Out of Date.

We are inclined to smile at the quaint costumes that our grandparents wore, and at their rather stilted, formal manners. We dispense with a great many things which were considered important a hundred years ago. But patient, plodding perseverance, sticking to a thing till you finish it, is held in as high esteem in the twentieth century as it was in the eighteenth. Industry and patience are never out of date.

Rains have delayed the grinding of the Dominican sugar crop from two to three weeks.

SPRING-HATCHED PULLETS LAY IN WINTER



FEEDING CHICKENS ON AVERAGE FARM.

(From the United States Department of Agriculture.)

Poultry owners who wish to obtain a satisfactory production of eggs during the fall and early winter should arrange to hatch pullets in March or April. Birds hatched at this time will be well matured in the fall. Furthermore, a greater proportion of them will go broody early in the spring, thus completing the circle necessary for production in the fall.

Pullets hatched in the spring can be induced to lay more abundantly in the winter if they are properly fed, housed, and handled. On the average general farm, very few eggs are secured at the time when eggs bring the highest prices. It will pay the poultry owner, therefore, to devote a little trouble to providing his birds with the most favorable surroundings for the winter.

The house should be thoroughly cleaned, disinfected, and made tight before the cold weather sets in. If the house has a dirt floor, it is well to remove three or four inches of dirt from the top and to replace this material with dry gravel or sand. On cement or wooden floors four or five inches of fresh straw or litter may be thrown down after the floor has been cleaned.

Ventilation is important.

Ventilation is another important factor to consider. The house should be tight on three sides, but for the fourth muslin curtains may be used for from one-third to one half its extent. In any case, there should be some ventilation in the house, even on the coldest nights. Fowls will stand considerable cold air, provided it is dry, and ventilation will keep the air thoroughly dry in the house. On the other

PROPER SOIL FOR POTATOES

Value of Crop is Generally Greater Than Any Other—Practice of Rotation Favored.

The best soil you have on your farm should be given to the potato, both because it is more exacting in its demands on the soil than any of the other staple crops and also because the value of the crop per acre is generally greater.

The crop that precedes the potato is also important. A clover, alfalfa, peas or cowpeas—any legume—is a first rate preparation for a good crop of spuds. Rye or buckwheat plowed under is good. If you had sod on your farm plant corn first and then potatoes; this is a first rate rotation. Oats, then peas, then potatoes is another.

Another good rotation is fall wheat, in which clover is seeded in the spring; second year, clover, plowed under in the fall or early winter; the third year potatoes. However, if you have plenty of land it is best to grow potatoes only one or two years in succession on any ground; thus you avoid diseases.

PLAN FOR BREAKING A HORSE

Most Successful Method for Preventing Animal From Pulling at Halter is Outlined.

The most successful method of breaking a horse from pulling at the halter is as follows: Secure a new half-inch rope about 15 feet long; make a loop in one end. In tying, throw looped end over animal around the chest or flanks and run other end of rope through the loop, between the fore legs, through a neck strap or the nose piece of the halter and tie securely to a strong manger or other object. When the horse pulls back the rope runs through the loop and tightens up on the body, and after a few trials the animal soon gives up the habit of pulling. Tie in this manner at all times until the animal has been broken thoroughly of the habit. Then use a good strong halter or neck strap that will not break under ordinary strains.

TO INCREASE FLOW OF MILK

Cow With Chapped or Cracked Teats Cannot Do Her Best—Carbolated Vaseline Will Help.

A cow with chapped or cracked teats is not likely to do her best. Very often a little carbolated vaseline, or something that is equally as cheap, will correct these things and increase the milk-flow.

GLASS OF SALTS

CLEANS KIDNEYS

If your Back hurts or Bladder bothers you, drink lots of water.

When your kidneys hurt and your back feels sore, don't get scared and proceed to load your stomach with a lot of drugs that excite the kidneys and irritate the entire urinary tract. Keep your kidneys clean like you keep your bowels clean, by flushing them with a mild, harmless salts which removes the body's urinous waste and stimulates them to their normal activity. The function of the kidneys is to filter the blood. In 24 hours they strain from it 500 grains of acid and waste, so we can readily understand the vital importance of keeping the kidneys active.

Drink lots of water—you can't drink too much; also get from any pharmacist about four ounces of Jad Salts; take a tablespoonful in a glass of water before breakfast each morning for a few days and your kidneys will act fine. This famous salts is made from the acid of grapes and lemon juice, combined with lithia, and has been used for generations to clean and stimulate clogged kidneys; also to neutralize the acids in urine so it no longer is a source of irritation, thus ending bladder weakness.

Jad Salts is inexpensive; cannot injure; makes a delightful effervescent lithia-water drink which everyone should take now and then to keep their kidneys clean and active. Try this, also keep up the water drinking, and no doubt you will wonder what became of your kidney trouble and backache.

Feeding Beef Scrap.

In experiments conducted by the department it was found that for the first four months pullets fed a ration containing beef scrap produced, on an average, 41.5 eggs, while those fed the same ration without the scrap produced only 18.7. The cost of feeding the latter birds was 2.2 cents higher for every dozen eggs produced than in the case of the pullets fed beef scrap.

The birds should have plenty to eat, but they also should always be eager for each meal. If one-third of the scratch grain furnished them is fed in the morning and two-thirds at night, the birds will take more exercise than if they received all the grain they desire in the morning. Good scratch mixtures may be made of equal parts by weight of cracked corn, wheat, and oats, or of two parts of cracked corn and one part each of wheat and oats.

Other directions for the winter care of birds are contained in a new publication of the United States department of agriculture, Circular 71, Office of the Secretary, Winter Egg Production.

DETERMINE ACIDITY OF CORN

Improved Apparatus Developed by Members of Staff of Plant Bureau; Time is Lessened.

The test to determine the acidity of corn, which previously required 16 to 18 hours, can be made in less than one hour by the use of improved apparatus developed by H. J. Besley and G. H. Baston of the office of grain standardization, bureau of plant industry. Under the new method an electric mechanism, similar to those seen on soda fountains, is used to mix finely ground corn and alcohol. Thirty minutes of mixing it is found will extract from the corn an amount of acid-reacting substances comparable to the amount extracted through digestion in 80 per cent alcohol at room temperature for 18 hours.

The methods for making acidity determinations of corn with this apparatus are described in detail in Circular 68, office of the secretary recently published by the United States department of agriculture.

WINTER HINTS OF CHICKENS

Repository Diseases Result From Drafts—Fowls Should Not Be Crowded—Use Straw Litter.

Colds, roup and similar repository diseases largely result from drafts in the poultry house. It will pay the poultry keeper, therefore, to make draft-proof any cracks in the back, side and roof of the houses.

The fowls should not be crowded in the house and from two to five square feet of floor space is needed per bird. The exact ratio depends upon the breed and the extent of the yarding. As a rule, it will be found advisable to allow four square feet and floor space for the lighter breeds such as the Leghorn.

About five or six inches of straw litter should be placed on the floor. Grain which is fed in this will make the birds exercise continually. Clean nesting material is needed in the nest boxes.

MANY SHEEP KILLED YEARLY

Estimated That in Thirty-Six Farm States 100,000 Are Killed Annually by Dogs.

The number of sheep killed annually by dogs cannot be stated exactly, since there are many cases which are not reported at all.

Judging from the figures in these counties and states in which reasonable complete reports are obtainable, however, it may be said that in the 36 farm states more than 100,000 sheep are killed each year by dogs.

GLASS OF SALTS

CLEANS KIDNEYS

If your Back hurts or Bladder bothers you, drink lots of water.

When your kidneys hurt and your back feels sore, don't get scared and proceed to load your stomach with a lot of drugs that excite the kidneys and irritate the entire urinary tract. Keep your kidneys clean like you keep your bowels clean, by flushing them with a mild, harmless salts which removes the body's urinous waste and stimulates them to their normal activity. The function of the kidneys is to filter the blood. In 24 hours they strain from it 500 grains of acid and waste, so we can readily understand the vital importance of keeping the kidneys active.

Drink lots of water—you can't drink too much; also get from any pharmacist about four ounces of Jad Salts; take a tablespoonful in a glass of water before breakfast each morning for a few days and your kidneys will act fine. This famous salts is made from the acid of grapes and lemon juice, combined with lithia, and has been used for generations to clean and stimulate clogged kidneys; also to neutralize the acids in urine so it no longer is a source of irritation, thus ending bladder weakness.

Jad Salts is inexpensive; cannot injure; makes a delightful effervescent lithia-water drink which everyone should take now and then to keep their kidneys clean and active. Try this, also keep up the water drinking, and no doubt you will wonder what became of your kidney trouble and backache.

Trouble Left.

Mistah Trouble came one day, Knockin' at ma do'. On his back he had a sack, Des plumb full ob woe.

Ah called in ma old friend, Smile, Soon that changed the case. Trouble seen him an' des left— Nevah like de place.

—New York Evening World.

SOUR, ACID STOMACHS, GASES OR INDIGESTION

Each "Pape's Diaphepsin" Digests 3000 grains food, ending all stomach misery in five minutes.

Time it! In five minutes all stomach distress will go. No indigestion, heartburn, sourness or belching of gas, acid, or eructations of undigested food, no dizziness, bloating, foul breath or headache.

Pape's Diaphepsin is noted for its speed in regulating upset stomachs. It is the surest, quickest stomach remedy in the whole world and besides it is harmless. Put an end to stomach trouble forever by getting a large fifty-cent case of Pape's Diaphepsin from any drug store. You realize in five minutes how needless it is to suffer from indigestion, dyspepsia or any stomach disorder. It's the quickest, surest and most harmless stomach doctor in the world.

Cutting Down Expenses.

"Grocery butter is so unsatisfactory, dear," said Mrs. Youngbride, "I decided today that we would make our own."

"Oh, did you?" said her husband. "Yes; I bought a churn and ordered butter milk to be left here regularly. Won't it be nice to have really fresh butter?"—Boston Transcript.

The Proof of it.

Customer—Are you sure the pictures will be a positive success? Photographer—The proof of it is here in a good negative.—Baltimore American.

Not Fair.

Loton Horton, a New York milk distributor, was talking to a reporter about milk prices.

"But our adversaries' questions are not fair," Mr. Horton said. "Our adversaries are like the cross-examining lawyer."

"Is it true," this lawyer asked a witness, "that you were the only sober man at the banquet?"

"No, of course not," the witness answered indignantly.

"Who was, then?" said the lawyer.—Washington Star.

TURN HAIR DARK WITH SAGE TEA

If Mixed with Sulphur It Darkens so Naturally Nobody Can Tell.

The old-time mixture of Sage Tea and Sulphur for darkening gray, streaked and faded hair is grandmother's recipe, and folks are again using it to keep their hair a good, even color, which is quite sensible, as we are living in an age when a youthful appearance is of the greatest advantage.

Nowadays, though, we don't have the troublesome task of gathering the sage and the mussy mixing at home. All drug stores sell the ready-to-use product, improved by the addition of other ingredients, called "Wyeth's Sage and Sulphur Compound" for about 50 cents a bottle. It is very popular because nobody can discover it has been applied. Simply moisten your comb or a soft brush with it and draw this through your hair, taking one small strand at a time; by morning the gray hair disappears, but what delights the ladies with Wyeth's Sage and Sulphur Compound, is that, besides beautifully darkening the hair after a few applications, it also produces that soft lustre and appearance of abundance which is so attractive. This ready-to-use preparation is a delightful toilet requisite for those who desire a more youthful appearance. It is not intended for the cure, mitigation or prevention of disease.