BUYING A PLACE

The Price Went Very High, Then Dropped

By LUCY K. WYNKOOP

A young man pulling a boat on a New England lake rested on his oars before a plank landing, on which stood a young woman evidently waiting for something.

"Beg pardon," he said to her, "is there a road behind those houses up there leading down to the railroad station at Parkville?"

"Yes, there is," was the reply.

The young man gaped about him as though interested in the lay of the land. He was really interested in the girl, who was quite comely. He was trying to think of some other question to ask her in order to keep up a conversation.

"Can you tell me who occupies that white house up on that crest?" he asked.

"Dr. Egerton."

There was another pause. The replies were so exactly to the point that they did not invite any further questioning. However, the young man was not to be dropped.

"I'm looking for a place like that on this lake," he said. "I wonder if it could be bought."

"I suppose there's hardly a piece of property in the world that cannot be bought if the purchaser is willing to give a large enough price."

"I've looked over all these New England lakes with a view to buying a summer residence, and I like this bit of water better than any of them. My mother and sister won't go to hotels, and I don't like them myself. We wish a place where we can go as soon as spring opens and stay till late in the autumn."

The young lady evinced no interest in the young man's family plans and made no reply.

"That place up there would suit us exactly," he continued. "I would like to spend all the rest of my summers there. The view must be fine."

"There would be no harm in your trying to buy it," said the girl. "You might write a note to the owner asking if any sum you would be prepared to pay would be accepted."

"Thank you very much for the suggestion."

At that moment there were sounds of motorboat engine explosions, and a launch was seen making for the landing. It soon pulled up there under care of a single boatman. The young lady got aboard and, without so much as a look at the oarsman, was carried away.

"Mighty fine looking girl," he said to himself—"well but plainly dressed and with an air of 'being somebody.' I wonder who she is."

Jack Aborn was an enormously wealthy young man, having inherited the bulk of his father's property, and was accustomed to having anything money could buy that he desired. There was something unique in the Egerton place that struck his fancy. He couldn't very well build such a place. To begin with, he couldn't get the site; then it would require half a century to grow the trees. Besides, there was an old fashioned look about the whole place that could not be imitated. As the young lady had said, there would be no harm in trying to buy it, and he resolved to drop the owner a note asking if he would consider an offer.

He did so and received a reply written in a woman's hand as follows:

Dr. Egerton desires me to acknowledge the receipt of your note asking if an offer for this place will be considered and to say that it has been in the Egerton family so many years that there is at present no intention on the part of the owner to sell it. However, the doctor would like to know what it would bring. Yours truly. SARAH H. M'CARTHY, Secretary.

Aborn was sufficiently versed in business methods to waste no further time in correspondence; he called upon Dr. Egerton for a conference. He was received by Miss McCarthy, a middle aged lady, who told him that the doctor had gone to the city, but that she (the secretary) had charge of such business matters as required attention in the doctor's absence and had power to act. Aborn asked what the property would bring if offered openly for sale, and Miss McCarthy said she thought it would easily sell for $30,000. Whereupon Aborn made an offer of $40,000 for it. The secretary said that she would transmit the offer to her principal and would write him.

In due time a note came to Aborn stating briefly that his offer would not be accepted. He was quite ready to raise it, but did not like dealing through a third party. He called again on the doctor, but was again disappointed at not seeing him. The doctor was at home, but very busy. Aborn left word with the secretary that he would raise his bid to $50,000.

A reply to this came to him that astonished him. It was this:

Dr. Egerton desires me to inform Mr. Aborn that, inquiries having been made as to his financial standing and his ability to pay for any purchase he might make, the responses are perfectly satisfactory. But the doctor has also been informed that Mr. Aborn is one of those young men who, having inherited large means, think they can acquire anything they fancy. Surely there is no property without a price, but the price on the Egerton place is in proportion to Mr Aborn's enormous fortune. It is enormously high. Yours truly, SARAH H. M'CARTHY.

Aborn was not only astonished at this reply; he was mad. At first he determined to drop the matter in contemptuous silence, but he was too irritated to do this. Besides, he was curious to discover what sort of man this doctor was who would go so far out of his way to insult a man whose only fault was a desire to possess the Egerton homestead. He determined to make one more effort to see him. He called, but again was obliged to be content with seeing the secretary, the doctor having again gone to the city on important business.

"Is this doctor," he asked in an irritated tone, "a regularly educated physician or a quack?"

"Dr. Egerton is something higher than even a regularly educated physician. The doctor's title is doctor of philosophy."

"What, then, does he do for a living?"

"The doctor is a sociologist."

"Oh, I see; has something to do with the running of the town charities."

"City charities principally."

"I know a man who has such a position, but he doesn't get much of a salary."

To this there was no response.

"Well," continued Aborn, "I wish you would tell this sociologist that he'd better cut out his degree till he has learned to treat his fellow men with proper civility. I had a perfect right to inquire whether he would sell his place and was led to believe that an offer would be acceptable even if not accepted. Then I receive an"—

"You have not yet offered enough. The doctor holds the property far above its intrinsic worth on account of its having been so long in the family."

Aborn, being angry, thought how nice it would be to offer a price this insulting sociologist could not afford to decline.

"Very well," he said, "tell him I'll give him $100,000 for it. When will he be at home?"

"Tomorrow."

"I'll call for the reply."

Aborn looked over the premises as he went away and determined to give double the price offered if necessary, buy adjoining tracts and make the place a paradise. Though he did not know it, all this fever to possess the place was born of his desire to have his own way in everything and to take revenge for having been told the truth.

The next morning Aborn was rowing on the lake when he met the girl he had seen on the landing. She was in a canoe.

"Beg pardon," he said, "but"—

The girl stopped paddling and waited.

"Perhaps you will remember suggesting that I write the owner of the white house up there asking if he would like to sell the place?"

"Well?"

"What kind of a man is he anyway?"

"Dr. Egerton is a very level headed person. Anything the doctor tells you has weight to it."

"H'm! He's no gentleman."

"The doctor's very plain spoken."

"I should think he is."

"I hope my suggestion hasn't led to anything disagreeable."

"Oh, the suggestion was very sensible as well as very kind."

"Is the place for sale?"

"I suppose it is. But for a man who gets probably $75 a month for running the post he's mighty independent."

The girl made no reply to this. Indeed, she indicated that the dialogue didn't interest her by putting her paddle in the water. Aborn dipped his oars, and they pulled apart.

During the afternoon Aborn called at Dr. Egerton's to learn if $100,000 would buy a place worth not over a third of that amount. He had given up any expectation of seeing the doctor. Indeed, he rather thought it better he should not. He feared he would be tempted to punch the man's head. He was standing in the drawing room looking out through a window on the lake when, hearing a rustle of woman's clothing behind him, he turned, expecting to see the secretary. What was his amazement to see the girl he had met first on the landing and the same morning in a canoe. Her eyes were bubbling with mischief.

"W-w-what does this mean?" he stammered.

"You called to see Dr. Egerton, did you not?"

"Yes."

"I am Dr. Egerton."

"You?"

"Yes. I am Cornelia Egerton, Ph. D."

"I see."

It was scarcely necessary for him to add anything to these two simple words, for it was evident that his eyes had been opened.

"Very stupid of me, wasn't it?"

"Be seated. I owe you an apology. The temptation was too strong for me."

"How about that information you got about me?"

"Made out of whole cloth."

"Your secretary?"

"My aunt."

"She said something about your running a city charity bureau."

"Heaven has blessed me with great wealth. I consider myself simply as its dispenser. In order to dispense it intelligently I studied sociology."

"Heaven has also given me great wealth, but it hasn't occurred to me to give it away till after my death, when I shall have no use for it."

"Better adopt my plan."

"Do you really own this house?"

"Yes, but I own another I like better. You may have this one for what I consider it worth—$50,000."

"Done!"

A year after the doctor went with the house.

HILL EXECUTES LARGE MORTGAGE

A move that is strongly suggestive of railroad operations on the scale of the Northern Securities Company was announced by J. J. Hill, chairman of the Great Northern Railway Company, when in a statement he announced the execution of a $600,000,000 first and refunding mortgage to secure bonds for the Great Northern and Chicasgo, Burlington and Quincy Railroads.

"The Great Northern Railroad Company, as of date May 1, 1911, has executed its first and refunding mortgage, securing a total authorized issue of $600,000,000 bonds.

"The size of the mortage is explained by the fact that the outstanding obligations of the company, which are to be refunded, amount approximately to $330,000,000. Included, however, in the figures last named is the direct and contigent obligations of the company on the Burlington joint is maturing in 1912 and aggregating $222,400,000.

"Covering a fucure of 50 years, approximately $270,000,000 in bonds therefore will be available for general corporate purposes, double-tracking and additional mileage. Since its beginning 32 years ago the Great Northern has expended between $350,000,000 and $400,000,000 out of capital and earnings.

"The provision made for the future, in consideration of the rapidly growing territory which Great Northern lines serve, would seem intelligently conservative.

"The railroad company evidently has made ample financial provision to enable it to keep its facilities and extensions equal to all demands that a rapidly growing country may make on it and and at the same time to maintain the highest and most efficient standard of service. Future issunace of bonds against property acquired is safeguarded by the restriction usually found in mortgages of this kind."

Received Appointment

Fred Eugene Prenot of Corvallis, a graduate of the electrical engineering course in the class of 1910, has just received the distinction of an appointment as the John W. Mackay Junior Fellow in Electrical Engineering at the University of California for next year. He will go to Berkeley in September to take up special advanced research work in electricity.

John Darwin Carnegie of Albany and Henry J. Pfandhoefer of Falls City, Polk county, have also received noteworthy appointments for the coming year. Both will enter the works of the General Electric Company at Schenectady, N. Y., in September, for two years' work in electrical testing. Three other will probably go from the college this summer to the Westinghouse Electrical company, Wilkesbarre, Pa.

There are more positions open to graduates of the electrical engineering course than there are men to fill them this year—a fact which speaks well for the thoroughness of the instruction given the student in this subject at the college.

A Joke on the King.

Sir Ernest Cassel was persona grata with King Edward VII. As a matter of fact there was a curious and striking resemblance between the back view of the late king and that of Sir Ernest. It was so pronounced that the great financier was known among his friends as "Windsor Castle."

There is a good story and a true one told in connection with this. It happened at a garden party at Windsor castle. A well known peer of the realm was strolling about when, as he thought, he spotted Sir Ernest sitting in a chair. Going toward him on tiptoe, he gave him a resounding smack on the shoulder.

"Hello, old Windsor Castle!" he cried. "How are you?"

The occupant of the chair, startled, turned around. It was King Edward, who, unaware of Sir Ernest's nickname, was for a time exceedingly vexed at this undue liberty. However, when the circumstances were explained to him he enjoyed the joke hugely.—London M. A. P.

The Bull Snake.

The bull snake, a species of pine snake, inhabits the shady pine woods along the Atlantic coast from New Jersey to Florida, but other species are found almost everywhere except in New England. The bull snake is quite harmless, but is a powerful constrictor. It lays eggs and feeds upon birds, rodents and eggs. It swallows an egg whole, and after the egg has passed a few inches down the throat—where it forms a large swelling—the serpent lifts its head, elevates its back and exerts a downward pressure until the shell breaks. Owing to a curious constriction of its epiglottis its hiss is so loud and so well sustained as to resemble the sound of redhot iron being plunged in water. The maximum length of these snakes is seven and a half feet. Their color is white, with the exception of the head and back, the former being spotted black and the latter brown.—Wide World Magazine.

CRUISER BOSTON NOW AT PORTLAND

In charge of the Oregon Naval Militia, with Capain Jacob Speiler in command, the United States cruiser Boston will be brought from Bremerton Navyyard in to Portland harbor, and henceforth will be the proud possession of the state, provided the War Department is satisfied with the use made of the famous fighting machine.

Shortly after she reaches port the Boston will sail on a 10 days' cruise the annual marine trip of the Naval Militia, carrying practically all members of the organization. From here she will proceed to Marshfield, where two divisions of the militia will be picked up. After steaming about on the Pacific for several days the Marshfield divisions will be returned to that port and the vessel brought to Portland.

Forty or more members of the naval militia will leave Portland for the sound and the Boston probably will be turned over to them as soon as they arrive at the navyyard. On the trip back the navigation of the boat will be turned in charge of Lieutenant-Commander J. J. Reynolds, navagation officer of the militia. Among the other officers on board will be Lieutenant-Commander William D. Edwards, chief engineer; Lieutenant G. H. Blombery, acting executive officer; Lieutenant Fred W. L. Humphreys, and Lieutenant Staron, junior grade

The Boston was secured for the Oregon Naval Militia from the War Department through the kind offices of Admiral Cottman and Captain Ellicott. She fired the first shot at the Battle of Manila Bay, and was the cruiser chosen to come out from Manila to greet the United States tranpsorts carrying troops to that port during the Spanish War. The Oregon militia were aboard the transports. She is the largest war vessel turned over to the naval militia of any state by the War Department, her length being 277 feet at the load water line, her extreme beam 42 feet and her displacement 3000 tons. She has 4300 indicated horsepower and a speed of 15.6 knots. The Boston was built by John Roasch & Sons at Chester, Pa., in 1883.

Shearing Plants

The sheep shearing corralls and dipping vats at Camas Prairie are now in first class order. During the shearing season the corralls will be in charge of the sheepmen. ROSA McDANIEL.

My corralls on the West Side are now ready for the sheep shearing season, and I have a dipping plant in connection. Will have a good crew and superintend the work myself.

JOE AMBROSE.

Many out-of-town tradesmen, having heard through some source or other of the High School and Catholic Church buildings, now under construction, are beginning to arrive here in search of work. Both jobs are working as many men as they can conveniently handle at present and applicants are being turned down each day.

Plans are now under way for the commencement of an evening business school here, Miss Julia Gloster, of the First National Bank, and Miss Clara Thruston, who is employed by C. O. Misener. The location of the new school has not yet been decided upon, but if agreeable to the members the Board of Trade rooms may be rented for the purpose. A school of this kind has long been needed here an will undoubtedly be a paying proposition.

The Electric Fan.

Back in the early eighties Dr. S. S. Wheeler, an electrical engineer of New York, was experimenting with a small electric motor. In the course of his experiments the doctor conceived the idea that steamboats might be run with electricity if the propellers could be directly connected to high speed electric motors, doing away with all the gears then in use in steam propulsion. With this idea in mind he had a small screw propeller constructed and fastened it to the armature shaft of his small motor. To his surprise the experiment resulted in a fine breeze of cooling air which more than delighted the experimenter, for the day was decidedly hot. It is needless to add that the experiments with screw propellers ended right there, and the engineer took up the study of the electric fan, with the result that he soon perfected the device until it was a commercial success.

The Origin of Pyrography.

About a century ago an artist named Cranch was standing one day in front of a fire in his home at Axminster. Over the fireplace was an oaken mantelpiece, and it occurred to Cranch that this expanse of wood might be improved by a little ornamentation. He picked up the poker, heated it red hot and began to sketch in a bold design. The result pleased him so much that he elaborated his work and began to attempt other fire pictures on panels of wood. These met with a ready sale, and Cranch soon gave all his time to his new art. This was the beginning of what is now known as pyrography.