

THE RETURN OF THE PRODIGAL

BY GEORGE BARTLEY

A TALL, thin man, deeply bronzed, tiny crowsfeet showing athwart the tan at the corners of his eyes, his forehead white when he pushed back his soft felt hat, leaned over the rail of a small "pleasure" steamer that made short trips between Bar Harbor and Jonesport twice and thrice a week.

The man seemed somehow out of place among the storekeepers and small tradesmen, who had brought babies, bottles, and biscuits, and were having an outing.

The little steamer kept close in shore after leaving the harbor, and the man looked up at the giant red cliffs, their summit crowned with crisp salt grass, as if every landmark was familiar.

His hand was brown and sinewy, like himself, and the cigar he held he dropped overboard as the tiny craft came in sight of Sidbridge.

There is no pier there; the leviathan craft only stops there when ordered. To get ashore the boat gently noses the shingle and passengers ignominiously "walk the plank."

The man, looking shorewards, took out a fresh cigar, and, as it would not light, he held it in his hand, looking still shorewards, and his hand—essentially the hand of a worker—trembled.

A rent in the cliff cuts Sidbridge in half.

Looking up from the sea one sees houses on either side of the fissure; a square towered stone church crowns all. As has been said, there is no pier or landing stage, and bare legged little fellows were rolling about on amber colored nets spread out to dry.

"Good God"—and there seemed no savor of irreverence as the man spoke the words, and his keen gray eyes were moist—"not a speck of change—not a speck! No railway apparently, no pier, no anything, after 20 years! And I've come 12,000 miles to see you and I find you just as I left you!"

"Eh—eh? It's my body that has grown old, not my heart."

"Do you get off here, sir?"

"Yes, purser, and look out for me on your way back. What a quaint old place this seems to be!"

The purser laughed.

"They say of Sidbridge that no one ever dies there and no change has taken place for 50 years or more."

"Ah, it's different on my side! I'm from the other side of the world."

Herbert Seaton walked the plank, the only passenger to alight, leaving buns and babies behind him, and, carrying his grip, he went up the main street, looking keenly from hand to hand.

The names on the few stores were familiar to him. He nodded and gave "Good day!" to an old lady sunning herself upon the doorstep, who returned his greeting with no sign of recognition.

"The old order changeth, giving place to the new.

And God fulfill himself in many ways," he quoted and walked on, grip in hand, his eyes glancing hither and thither.

Behind the coast guard's cottage is a small square. You enter it from the main street by a narrow passage that looks like a cul de sac, but it opens out into a tiny quadrangle, where the sound of the sea scarcely penetrates.

The houses—all of one pattern—are lime washed and tiled, with green shutters, and the rust from the hinges has stained them almost red in patches.

And the man made his way towards one with feet that lagged. The green shutters, the hall mark of respectability, hung awry, and their hinges were rusted. He turned to the next house and knocked at the door.

At the house of his quest the front door swung to and fro.

"Can you tell me where Mrs. Haygarth has moved to?"

"I have never heard the name, sir."

"Did not Mrs. Haygarth—her name was Radford before her marriage—come here to live on her wedding day?"

"Radford is a common name here, sir. There are three Margaret Radfords in the parish now."

"But the Margaret I mean married the New York broker 20 years ago."

"That is long before my time, sir. But the broker, I have heard, was killed on his wedding day."

"Give me the address of these Margaret Radfords. I've been 'clean away' for many years."

The Yankee speech slipped back to the man's tongue, and the young woman laughed, for at first the man spoke with the twang of a foreigner.

hedges 20 feet high, up the steep red path he made his way, and at the end stood the schoolhouse, facing the sea. He stood outside for some minutes brushing perspiration from his forehead.

It was a tiny climb, after all is said and done, but he panted painfully and drank in the air from the sea.

Then he peered between the serried ranks of fuchsia and myrtle that stood on the broad window sill, and he saw a beautiful woman, of nearly his own age, who had blue, gentle eyes, and a gentle face, and an aureole of fair hair, that in beams of sunlight looked to him like a halo.

A small man and woman kind were round her knees, from tiny tots to girls of 13, and she was talking and teaching as only an angel upon earth—or a good woman, which is the same thing—can talk and teach from the book of books that lay upon her lap.

And the Australian wanted to go in, too, and kiss a pair of lips that erstwhile were his to kiss, but he stopped and listened, and the lump in his throat choked him, for he was listening to the old—new story of the prodigal son, and the narration seemed to move the sweet saint, and the children, who had heard it hundreds of times before, always found some fresh questions to ask.

"Sweet," was the informal address of one dark eyed boy, who seemed a favorite, "what would you do if your son came back to you like this prodigal son who ate husks?"

"Sweet never had a son. Sweet has never been married," came from an elder girl.

And the heart of the man bounded within him.

"I should welcome my prodigal dearly, of course." And the sweet mouth had grown wistful, but her eyes seemed as if they had visions of something far away.

"Would you kiss him, I wonder?" Schoolma'am blushed and laughed like a young girl.

"Yes, I think I should kiss him," she said gently.

"Well, let's pretend I'm the prodigal."



and you be the man who owned the fattened calves."

Seaton chuckled to himself, feeling a boy again.

Then he went for a walk, returning an hour later, to find school dismissed.

Margaret Radford felt strangely lonely when her little flock had run off shouting down the hill, and the sad little look came again into her face.

And then a shadow fell across the floor, and she looked up. For a moment she did not speak; her eyes grew round, and her breath came and went in deep gasps between her parted lips.

"The prodigal son has returned, Margaret. Lord knows I have eaten husks enough down under!"

"You are a thousand thousand times welcome, Herbert Seaton!" And she began to sob.

He had not yet even touched her hand, but had drawn nearer.

"What did you tell little Bob Carey you would do when the prodigal returned?"

He spoke in a tone of banter to hide the deep feeling that moved him, but he held out his arms, and his love flew into them, and he rained kisses upon lip, cheek and brow.

"My love—my love!" was all he could stammer out, after a silence of 20 years.

And she, too, lay silent in his strong arms, thinking many thoughts, that shaped themselves into a prayer of thankfulness.

"Why did you ever leave me, dear one?" she asked.

"Your father told me that you were engaged to Haygarth, and he was richer than I. He even showed me the house you were to live in when you married."

"And you believed him—you, Herbert, my lost love? How could you—how could you? To go away without a word!"

ROAD AND FARM IMPROVEMENT

FOR THE SMALL GARDEN.

Outdoor Hotbed Which May Be Established with Little Trouble.

A very practical hotbed may be constructed for use in a small garden. The bed should be placed in the south or southeast side of fence or building where it will be protected from north winds and receive the full direct rays of the sun. Dig a trench 18 inches deep and as wide and long as the size of the bed desired; 4x6 feet is usually sufficient. Make a frame of boards that will set in the north side, leaving one foot above the surface of the ground, and south side but six inches above ground, as shown in accompanying cut. This will allow sufficient slope to the east to insure its being rainproof.

Cover the top with a sash (c), made with 8x10 glass. Fill the bed with one foot of coarse horse manure (a), which has been cured under shelter and forked over a number of times to insure its being of the same fineness throughout. Tramp down solidly on bottom of bed, and putting on sash allow it to remain



SOIL POSITION OF HOTBED.

about four days until it heats, and again cools to 90 degrees. Then put in six inches of rich soil (b). Sandy loam is best, but if that is not available use a clay soil with sand added and mixed. Do not pack the soil firmly, but allow it to remain in a loose, open layer. Again cover bed and allow it to remain a day or two until the soil is thoroughly warmed and the temperature evenly established. Plant the seed in rows four to six inches apart. Cover lightly and water thoroughly.

Considerable care is necessary in attending a bed of this kind, says the Orange Judd Farmer. Give it all the sun possible, and when the sun falls directly upon the sash raise one edge a few inches to allow the air to change. Avoid allowing the cold air to blow directly upon the plants. Water heavily rather than frequently, soaking the ground at least once a week, or as frequently as the surface becomes dry. Stir the surface soil frequently, and do not allow it to bake into a hard cake. Be sure that it is loose enough for the tender plants to push through the surface. Some plants require more heat than others, and the bed must be kept more closely covered. Lettuce, radishes and cucumbers require cooler beds, about 65 to 85 degrees, while tomatoes, melons, etc., should be kept at a higher temperature. When the plants are sufficiently matured, they may be transplanted in the bed or removed to open ground and grown to maturity.

PICKUPS.

Have you oiled those harnesses? Good time now.

Crimp a hog ring around rope ends. It saves the annoyance of a large knot and frayed end.

Don't get so tied to your work and your farm that you cannot go to breeders' meetings, sales, fairs, shows and farmers' institutes.

Remember the cellar and give it a thorough ventilation occasionally in mild winter weather. If the cellar is a cold one, keep the fruit and vegetables covered. A good kerosene stove will help keep out the frost.

Don't pack the wood in the shed until the surface is well dried, or it will mold and ferment and the wood become punky. In an open shed with lattice upon all sides, it may be packed up as soon as cut if not piled too deeply.—Farm and Home.

Old coleus plants saved from last summer may be started at any time now to supply next summer's needs. By propagation from the earliest cuttings made a fine supply of stocky plants will be ready to set out when the weather becomes warm. The old stocks will then be useless.

Steel Roadways.

The broad steel tracks for vehicles laid several years ago in Murray street, New York city, have been removed, and the street is to be paved with wooden blocks. The steel tracks were not regarded as a success, principally because of the crowded condition of the street, which prevented their regular use. The Scientific American contends that this test was not conclusive, and that such tracks should be tried on long country hills and in districts where smooth, hard roadbeds cannot readily be maintained.

Prizes for Best Farms.

The Massachusetts Society for Promoting Agriculture, whose object is "to help farmers to know how much money they make during the year and what crops are most profitable, and to promote and encourage clean, up-to-date and progressive farming," announces a contest in which prizes will be awarded for the four best all-round farms, not special crop farms, worked by their owners as their only business and means of support.

Milk Test.

In a recent address Prof. Pearson told of examining four lots of milk that had been held at temperatures of 45, 50, 55 and 60 degrees for 24 hours. They contained the following numbers of bacteria at the end of that time: 445, 3,100, 67,000 and 134,000, the quantities of milk being the same. The bacterial content at the beginning of the 24 hours was the same.

WONDERS OF SINGLE ACRE

What May Be Produced on a Bit of Land Containing 150 Square Rods.

You who think that it must be 50 acres or nothing, will be surprised to know that unless you are farming for the markets and need pasture and stables and grass land, you can almost live on the crop that an acre will yield you, writes Charles M. Skinner in Good Housekeeping. It will require work and care and knowledge, for you cannot spend your time at tennis and expect the weeds to stay out of your lettuce, or the smut to affect your neighbor's corn and not yours, or the caterpillars to keep off from your pea vines, or things to stay green after a month of drouth. Now here, on this common acre—for it is ordinary, being near the sea and hummocked with rock, the ledges cropping into sight just outside the fence—the farmer raises no end of beans, peas, onions and like matters, and strawberries to eat, to give away and to sell. He has patriarchal apple trees that yield bushels of fruit. His tomatoes supply his own family, various friends rejoice in them no less, while a few pecks of them go to town. His wife puts up so many fruits and vegetables in jars that she has to give them to relatives, and she seldom visits her son in the city without carrying a basket of fruit to him. There are bits of lawn and beds of posies and curtains of vine and—what do you suppose? After the acre has been worked to this degree, there is room for chickens at least a hundred of them, with their runway extending the length of the place.

GOOD ROADS.

They Need Not Necessarily Be Constructed of Stone—A Present Danger.

While good roads are of the utmost importance to the farmers themselves, good roads do not necessarily spell hard roads, as many hard roads advocates seem to imagine, says the Prairie Farmer. A movement to better our highways does not necessarily mean that they are all to be surfaced with stone, but there are indications that a strict watch will be necessary to prevent legislative bodies from putting such a construction on the movement when enacting laws in regard thereto.

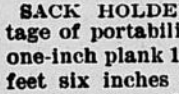
Many of our roads can be greatly improved over their present condition by underdrainage and better grading. These are the first essentials where a hard surface is finally to be provided. Proper underdrainage is of the most vital importance during a rainy season. No road can remain good at such times without it. In many cases the work of grading up that is done during the summer is very largely, and sometimes entirely, annulled during the following spring months because of a lack of underdrainage. Roads often become impassable during the spring months that would remain in fairly good condition if proper drainage were provided.

We can see no objection to federal aid for road improvement along these lines, or why it is not just as proper and important in rendering an impassable road passable and in rendering an already fairly good road superfine.

A GOOD SACK HOLDER.

How a Bit of Lumber and a Few Nails May Be Made to Provide a Great Convenience.

At threshing time and when cleaning the grain for seeding there is often much trouble in not having a handy sack holder convenient for use and an extra boy or man is required to hold them instead, says the Farm and Home. A good sack holder that has the advantage of portability can be made from one-inch plank 15 inches wide and three feet six inches long and one piece 15 inches wide and two feet long. Nail these together at right angles and securely brace as shown in the cut. Build a hopper with hooks around bottom to hold sack. Place wedge-shaped piece on top of long plank and firmly screw on the hopper. This will be found very convenient for use anywhere.



Injury by Mice and Rabbits. Valuable suggestions for treatment of trees which have been girdled by mice or rabbits are made by the Iowa experiment station. The growing layer which lies just beneath the bark will grow over if it is kept moist by banking up with soil two or three inches above the girdled portion. The soil should be firmly tamped about the stem and not allowed to dry and crack open. Another, but more expensive method, is to wrap the wound with a broad strip of cloth coated with grafting wax. Such wounds should not be allowed to dry out, and where not too severe the tree may be saved.—Farm and Home.

Fertilizer for Plants.

Ammonia is an excellent fertilizer. Add one tablespoonful to about three quarts of water and thoroughly water the plants with this once a week for a period of about six weeks. You will notice a marked change in growth and color as well as in the bloom.

The time for starting the hotbed will soon be here. The market gardener has his mind on it now. Every home garden should have a hotbed and a cold frame, or some other means for starting early plants, unless they can be purchased near at hand.

Many Persons Have Catarrh of Kidneys, Or Catarrh of Bladder and Don't Know It.

President Newhof and War Correspondent Richards Were Promptly Cured By Pe-ru-na.

Mr. C. B. Newhof, 10 Delamare street, Albany, N. Y., President Montefiore Club, writes:

"Since my advanced age I find that I have been frequently troubled with urinary ailments. The bladder seemed irritated, and my physician said that it was catarrh caused by a protracted cold which would be difficult to overcome on account of my advanced years. I took Pe-ru-na, hardly daring to believe that I would be helped, but I found to my relief that I soon began to mend. The irritation gradually subsided and the urinary difficulties passed away. I have enjoyed excellent health now for the past seven months. I enjoy my meals, sleep soundly, and am as well as I was twenty years ago. I give all praise to Pe-ru-na."—C. B. Newhof.

Suffered From Catarrh of Kidneys; Threatened With Nervous Collapse, Cured by Pe-ru-na.

Mr. F. B. Richards, 609 E Street, N. W., Washington, D. C., War Correspondent, writes: "Exactly six years ago I was ordered to Cuba as staff correspondent of the New York Sun. I was in charge of a Sun Dispatch boat through the Spanish American War. The effect of the tropical climate and the nervous strain showed plainly on my return to the states. Lassitude, depression to the verge of melancholia, and incessant kidney trouble made me practically an invalid. This undesirable condition continued, despite the best of treatment.

Finally a brother newspaper man, who like myself had served in the war, induced me to give a faithful trial to Pe-ru-na. I did so. In a short time the lassitude left me, my kidneys resumed a healthy condition, and a complete cure was effected. I cannot too strongly recommend Pe-ru-na to those suffering with kidney trouble. To-day I am able to work as hard as at any time in my life, and the examiner for a leading insurance company pronounced me an "A" risk."

In Poor Health Over Four Years. Pe-ru-na Only Remedy of Real Benefit.

Mr. John Nimmo, 215 Lippincott St., Toronto, Can., a prominent merchant of that city and also a member of the Masonic order, writes:

"I have been in poor health generally for over four years. When I caught a bad cold last winter it settled in the bladder and kidneys, causing serious trouble. I took two greatly advertised

Hand-Me-Downs. The Wife—Those trousers of yours look as if they were on their last legs.

The Husband—Well, they're not! Johnnie will have to wear 'em after I get through with them!—Yonkers Statesman.

To the Manner Born. "We think baby will make a great politician."

"Why?"

"Well, he crawls out of everything so easily."—Puck.

The Brine Mine. Knicker—I see they have a scheme for extracting gold from the sea.

Bocker—That's nothing; look at the money a woman gets by crying.—N. Y. Sun.

DERANGED NERVES

DISTRESSING TROUBLES LEFT BY ST. VITUS AND GRIP.

Woman Afflicted for Years by Strange Spells of Numbness and Weakness Recovers Perfect Health.

When she was fourteen years old, Mrs. Ida L. Brown had St. Vitus' dance. She finally got over the most noticeable features of the strange ailment, but was still troubled by very uncomfortable sensations, which she recently described as follows:

"One hand, half of my face, and half of my tongue would get cold and numb. These feelings would come on, last for about ten minutes, and then go away, several times a day. Besides I would have palpitation of the heart, and my strength would get so low that I could hardly breathe. As time went on these spells kept coming oftener and growing worse. The numbness would sometimes extend over half my body."

"How did you get rid of them?"

"It seemed for a long time as if I never could get rid of them. It was not until about six years ago that I found a remedy that had virtue enough in it to reach my case. That was Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People, and they have since fully cured me."

"Did it take long to effect a cure?"

"No! I hadn't taken the whole of the first box before I saw a great improvement. So I kept on using them, growing better all the time, until I had taken eight boxes and then I was perfectly well, and I have remained in good health ever since with one exception."

"What was that?"

"Oh! that was when I had the grip. I was in bed, under the doctor's care, for two weeks. When I got up I had dreadful attacks of dizziness. I had to grasp hold of something or I would fall right down. I was just miserable, and when I saw the doctor was not helping me, I began to take Dr. Williams' Pink Pills again. In a short time they cured me of that trouble too, and I have never had any dizzy spells since."

Mrs. Brown lives at No. 1705 De Witt street, Mattoon, Illinois. Dr. Williams' Pink Pills are without an equal for the rapid and thorough cure of nervous prostration. They expel the poison left in the system by such diseases as grip and are the best of tonics in all cases of weakness. They are sold by every druggist.



PRES. C. B. NEWHOF, Suffered From Catarrh of Bladder.

kidney remedies without getting the desired results. Pe-ru-na is the only remedy which was really of any benefit to me. I have not had a trace of kidney trouble nor a cold in my system."

Pe-ru-na Contains No Narcotics.

One reason why Pe-ru-na has found permanent use in so many homes is that it contains no narcotic of any kind. Pe-ru-na is perfectly harmless. It can be used any length of time without acquiring a drug habit. Pe-ru-na does not produce temporary results. It is permanent in its effect.

It has no bad effect upon the system, and gradually eliminates catarrh by removing the cause of catarrh. There are a multitude of homes where Pe-ru-na has been used off and on for twenty years. Such a thing could not be possible if Pe-ru-na contained any drugs of a narcotic nature.

SICK HEADACHE

Positively cured by these Little Pills. They also relieve Distress from Dyspepsia, Indigestion and Too Heavy Eating. A perfect remedy for Dizziness, Nausea, Drowsiness, Bad Taste in the Mouth, Coated Tongue, Pain in the Side, TORPID LIVER. They regulate the Bowels. Purely Vegetable.

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Best By Test

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Parties with small capital, seeking an opportunity to purchase a farm home; farmers who would prefer to rent for a couple of years before purchasing; and day laborers in fields or factories should address a postal card to Mr. J. F. Merry, Asst. General Passenger Agent, Dubuque, Iowa, who will promptly mail printed matter concerning the territory above described, and give specific replies to all inquiries.

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