

FRAN

BY
JOHN BRECKENRIDGE ELLIS

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SYNOPSIS

Fran arrives at Hamilton Gregory's home in Littleburg, but finds him absent conducting the choir at a camp meeting. The repairs, which in search for him, laughs during the service and is asked to leave. Abbott Ashton, superintendent of schools, escorts Fran from the tent. He tells her Gregory is a wealthy man, deeply interested in charity work, and a pillar of the church. Ashton becomes greatly interested in Fran and while taking leave of her, holds her hand and is kissed by her. She tells Ashton of her marriage with Gregory's private secretary, takes a violent dislike to Fran and advises her to go away with once. Fran hints at a twenty-year-old secret, and Gregory in agitation asks Grace to leave the room. Fran relates the story of how Gregory married a young girl at Springfield while attending college. She present was three years before the death of Fran's mother. Fran takes a liking to Mrs. Gregory. Gregory explains that Fran is the daughter of a very dear friend who is dead. Fran agrees to the story. Mrs. Gregory insists on her making her home with them and takes her to her room. Fran declares the secretary must go. Grace begins making tactics in an effort to drive Fran from the Gregory home. Abbott, while taking a walk alone at midnight, finds Fran on a bridge telling her fortune by cards. She tells Abbott that she is the famous lion tamer, Fran Nonpareil. She tired of circus life and sought a home. Fran tells of seeing Fran come home after midnight with a man she thought was her father and surprises the rest from Abbott. She decides to ask Bob Clinton to go to Springfield and investigate Fran's story. Fran enlists Abbott in her battle against Grace. Fran offers her services to Gregory as secretary during the temporary absence of Grace. The latter, hearing of Fran's purpose, returns and interrupts a touching scene between Fran and her daughter. Fran goes to the city with Mrs. Gregory's trunk. Abbott, whose resignation as superintendent, is decided that day, finds her sitting alone in a buggy.

CHAPTER XV.—Continued

"She slipped her hand into his. 'Didn't I have a mother? Oh, those mothers! And who can make mother-wishes come true? Well! And you just studied with all your might; and you'll keep on and on, till you're out of my reach, of course. Which would have suited your mother, too.' She withdrew her hand.

"My mother would have loved you," he declared, for he did not understand, so well as Fran, about mothers' liking for strange young ladies who train lions.

"Mine would you," Fran asserted, with more reason.

Abbott, conscious of a dreadful emptiness, took Fran's hand again. "I'll never be out of your reach, Fran."

She did not seek to draw away, but said, with dark meaning, "Remember the bridge at midnight."

"I remember how you looked, with the moonlight silencing your face—you were just beautiful that night, little Nonpareil."

"My chin is so sharp," she murmured.

"Yes," he said, softly feeling the warm little fingers, one by one, as if to make sure all were there. "That's the way I like it—sharp."

"And I'm so ridiculously thin—"

"You're nothing like so thin as when you first came to Littleburg," he declared. "I've noticed how you are—have been—I mean—"

"Filling out?" cried Fran gleefully.

"Oh, yes, and I'm so glad you know, because since I've been wearing long dresses, I've been afraid you'd never find it out, and would always be thinking of me as you saw me at the beginning. But I am—yes—filling out."

"And your little feet, Fran?"

"Yes, I always had a small foot. But let's get off of this subject."

"Not until I say something about your smile—oh, Fran, that smile!"

"The subject now," remarked Fran, "naturally returns to Grace Noir."

"Please, Fran!"

"I'll tell you why you hurt my feelings, Abbott. You're disappointed me twice. Oh, if I were a man, I'd show you monk-faced little hypocrite if she could prize secrets out of me. Just because it wears dresses and long hair, you think it an angel."

"Meaning Miss Grace, I presume?" remarked Abbott dryly. "But what is the secret, this time?"

"Didn't I trust you with the secret that I meant to apply for the position of secretary as soon as Grace Noir was out of the way? And I was just about to win the fight when here she came—hadn't been to the city at all, because you told her what I meant to do—handed her the secret, like a child giving up something it doesn't want."

"You are very unjust. I did not tell her your plan. I don't know how she found it out."



"From you; nobody else knew it." "She did not learn it from me." "—And that's what gets me!—you tell her everything, and don't even know you tell. Just hypnotized! Answer my questions: the morning after I told you what I meant to do—standing there at the fence by the gate—confiding in you, telling you everything—I say the next morning, didn't you tell Grace Noir all about it?"

"Certainly not."

Abbott tried to remember, then said casually, "I believe we did meet on the street that morning."

"Yes," said Fran ironically, "I believe you did meet somewhere. Of course she engaged you in her peculiar style of inquisitorial conversation?"

"We went down the street together."

"Now, prisoner at the bar, relate all that was said while going down the street together."

"Most charming, but unjust judge, not a word that I can remember, so it couldn't have been of any interest. I did tell her that since she—yes, I remember now—since she was to be out of town all day, I would wait until tomorrow to bring her a book she wanted to borrow."

"Oh! And she wanted to know who told you she would be out of town all day, didn't she?"

Abbott reflected deeply, then said with triumph, "Yes, she did. She asked me how I knew she was going to the city with Bob Clinton. And I merely said that it was the understanding they were to select the church music. Not another word was said on the subject."

"That was enough. Mighty neat. As soon as she saw you were trying to avoid a direct answer, she knew I'd told you. That gave her a clew to my leaving the choir practice before the rest of them. She guessed something important was up. Well, Abbott, you are certainly an infant in her hands, but I guess you can't help it."

"Self-pride was touched, and he related: 'Fran, I hate to think of your being willing to take her position behind her back.'"

She crimsoned.

"You'd know how I feel about it," he went on, "if you understood her better. I know her duty drives her to act in opposition to you, and I'm sorry for it. But her religious ideas—"

"Abbott, be honest and answer—is there anything in it—this talk of doing God's will? Can people love God and hate one another? I just hate shams," she went on, becoming more excited. "I don't care what fine names you give them—whether it's marriage, or education, or culture, or religion, if there's no heart in it, it's a sham, and I hate it. I hate a lie. But a thousand times more, do I hate a life that is a lie."

"Fran, you don't know what you are saying."

"Yes, I do know what I'm saying. Is religion going to church? That's all I can see in it. I want to believe there's something else. I've honestly searched, for I wanted to be comforted, I tell you, I need it. But I can't find any comfort in mortar and stained-glass windows. I want something that makes a man true to his wife, and makes a family live together in blessed harmony, something that's good on the streets and in the stores, something that makes people even treat a show-girl well. If there's anything in it, why doesn't father—"

She snatched away her hand that she might cover her face, for she had burst into passionate weeping. "Why doesn't a father, who's always talking about religion, and singing about it, and praying about it—why doesn't that father draw his daughter to his breast—close, close to his heart—that's the only home she asks for—that's the home she has a right to, yes a right, I don't care how far she wandered—"

"Fran!" cried Abbott, in great distress. "Don't cry, little one! He had no intelligent word, but his arm was full of meaning as it slipped about her. "Who has been unkind to you, Nonpareil?" She let her head sink upon his shoulder, as she sobbed without restraint. "What shams have pierced your pure heart? Am I the cause of any of these tears? Am I?"

"Yes," Fran answered, between her

tears, "you're the cause of all my happy tears." She nestled there with a movement of perfect trust; he drew her closer, and stroked her hair tenderly, trusting himself.

Presently she pulled herself to rights, lifted his arm from about her, and rested it on the back of the seat—a friendly compromise. Then she shook back her hair and raised her eyes and a faint smile came into the rosy face. "I'm so funny," she declared. "Sometimes I seem so strange that I need an introduction to myself." She looked into Abbott's eyes fleetingly, and drew in the corners of her mouth. "I guess, after all, there's something in religion!"

Abbott was so warmed by returning sunshine that his eyes shone. "Dear Fran!" he said—it was very hard to keep his arm where she had put it. She tried to look at him steadily, but somehow the light hurt her eyes. She could feel its warmth burning her cheeks.

"Oh, Fran," cried Abbott impulsively, "the bridge in the moonlight was nothing to the way you look now—so beautiful—and so much more than just beautiful."

"This won't do," Fran exclaimed, hiding her face. "We must get back to Grace Noir immediately."

"Oh, Fran, oh, no, please!"

"I won't please. While we're in Sure-Enough Country, I mean to tell you the whole truth about Grace Noir." The name seemed to settle the atmosphere—she could look at him, now.

"I want you to understand that something is going to happen—must happen, just from the nature of things, and the nature of wives and husbands and the other woman. Oh, you needn't frown at me, I've seen you look that other way at me, so I know you, Abbott Ashton."

"Fran! Then you know that I—"

"No, you must listen. You've nothing important to tell me that I don't know. I've found out the whole Gregory history from old Mrs. Jefferson, without her knowing that she was telling anything—she's a sort of Professor Ashton in my hands—and I mean to tell you that history. You know



daughter won't. It's you and I, Abbott, against Grace and Mr. Gregory." He murmured, looking away, "You take me for granted, Fran."

"Yes," Fran's reply was almost a whisper. A sudden terror of what he might think of her, smote her heart. But she repeated bravely, "Yes!"

He turned, and she saw in his eyes, a confiding trust that seemed to hedge her soul about. "And you can always take me for granted, Fran; and always is a long time."

"Not too long for you and me," said Fran, looking at him breathlessly.

"I may have felt," he said, "for some time, in a vague way, what you have told me. Of course it is evident that he prefers Miss Noir's society. But I have always thought—or hoped—or wanted to feel, that it was only the common tie of religion—"

"It was not the truth that you cling to, Abbott, but appearances. As for me, let truth kill rather than live as a sham. If Grace Noir stays, the worst is going to happen. She may not know how far she's going. He may not suspect her he's doing wrong. People can make anything they want seem right in their own eyes. But I've found out that wickedness isn't stationary, it's got a sort of perpetual motion. If we don't drive Grace away, the crash will come."

"Fran—how you must love Mrs. Gregory!"

"She breaks my heart."

"Dear faithful Fran! What can we do?—I say we, Fran, observe." "Oh, you Abbott Ashton . . . just what I thought you. No, no, you mustn't interrupt. I'll manage Grace Noir. If you'll manage Bob Clinton."

"Where does Bob Clinton come in?"

"Grace is trying to open a door so he can come in. I mean a secret in Mr. Gregory's past. She suspects that there's a secret in his past, and she intends to send Bob to Springfield where Mr. Gregory left that secret. Bob will bring it to Littleburg. He'll hand it over to Grace, and then she'll have Mr. Gregory in her power—there'll be no getting her hands off him, after that."

"Surely you don't mean that Mr. Gregory did wrong when he was young, and that Miss Noir suspects it?"

"Bob will bring home the secret—and it will kill Mrs. Gregory, Abbott—and Grace will go off with him—I know how it'll end."

"What is this secret?"

"You are never to know, Abbott."

"Very well so be it. But I don't believe Mr. Gregory ever did very wrong—he is too good a man."

"Isn't he daily breaking his wife's heart?" retorted Fran with a curl of the lip. "I call that murder."

"But still!—But I can't think he realizes it."

"Then," said Fran satirically, "we'll just call it manslaughter. When I think of his wife's meek patient face—don't you recall that look in her eyes of the wounded deer—and the thousands of times you've seen those two together, at church, on the street, in the library—everywhere—seeing only each other, leaning closer, smiling deeper—as if doing good meant getting close—Oh, Abbott, you know what I mean—don't you, don't you?"

"Yes!" cried Abbott sharply. "Fran, you are right. I have been—all of us have been—clinging to appearances. Yes, I know what you mean."

"You'll keep Bob Clinton from telling that secret, won't you? He's to go tonight, on the long journey—tonight, after the board meeting. It'll take him three or four days. Then he'll come back."

"But he'll never tell the secret," Abbott declared. His mouth closed as by a spring.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

rest in all his schemes to help folks—folks at a distance, you understand. She just devoured that religious magazine he edits—yes, I'll admit, his religion shows up beautifully in print; the pictures of it are good, too. Old Mrs. Jefferson took pride in being wheeled to church where she could see her son-in-law leading the music, and when she'd watch every gesture of the minister and catch the sound of his voice at the high places, where he cried and, or, nevertheless. Sometimes Mrs. Jefferson could get a dozen ands and but out of one discourse. Then comes your Grace Noir."

Abbott listened with absorbed attention. It was impossible not to be influenced by the voice that had grown to mean so much to him.

"Grace Noir is a person that's superlatively good, but she's not happy in her goodness; it hurts her, all the time, because other folks are not as good as she. You can't live in the house with her without wishing she'd make a mistake to show herself human, but she never does, she's always right. She's so fixed on being a martyr, that if nobody crosses her, she just makes herself a martyr out of the shortcomings of others."

"As for instances—"

"As for instance, she suffered martyrdom every time Mrs. Gregory nestled in an arm-chair beside the cozy hearth, when a Ladies' Aid, or a Rally was beating its way through show-drifts to the Walnut Street church. Mr. Gregory was like everybody else about Grace—he took her at her own value, and that gave the equation: to him, religion meant Walnut Street church plus Grace Noir. For a while, Mrs. Gregory clung to church-going with grim determination, but it wasn't any use. The Sunday-school would have button contests, or the Ladies' Aid would give chicken pie dinners downtown, and Mrs. Gregory would be a red button or a blue button, and she would have her pie; but she was always third—in her home, or at church, she was the third. It was her husband and his secretary that understood the Lord. Somehow she seemed to disturb conditions, merely by being present."

"Fran, you don't realize that your words—they intimate—"

"She disturbed conditions, Abbott. She was like a turned-up light at a séance. Mr. Gregory was appalled because his wife quit attending church. Grace sympathized in his sorrow. It made him feel toward Grace Noir—'but I'm up against a stone wall, Abbott, I haven't the word to describe his feeling, maybe there isn't any.'"

"Fran Nonpareil! Such wisdom terrifies me—such suspicions!"

In this moment of hesitancy between conviction and rejection, Abbott felt oddly out of harmony with his little friend. She realized the effect she must necessarily be producing, yet she must continue; she had counted the cost and the danger. If she did not convince him, his thought of her could never be the same.

"Abbott, you may think I am talking from jealousy, and that I tried to get rid of Grace Noir so I could better my condition at her expense. I don't know how to make you see that my story is true. It tells itself. Oughtn't that to prove it? Mrs. Gregory has the dove's nature; she'd let the enemy have the spoils rather than come to blows. She lets him take his choice—here is she, yonder's the secretary. He isn't worthy of her if he chooses Grace—but his hesitation has proved him unworthy, anyhow. The old lady—her mother was a fighter; she'd have driven out the secretary long ago. But Mrs. Gregory's idea seems to be—'If he can't want her, after I've given him myself, I'll not make a movement to interfere.'"

Abbott played delicately with the mere husk of this astounding revelation: "Have you talked with old Mrs. Jefferson about—about it?"

"She's too proud—wouldn't admit it. But I've shyly hinted—however, it's not the sort of story you could pump through the funnel of an ear-trumpet without getting wheat mixed with chaff. She'd misunderstand—the neighbors would get it first—anyway she wouldn't make a move because her

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that, for about three years, Mrs. Gregory hasn't gone to church—"

"You must admit that it doesn't appear well."

"Admit it? Yes, of course I must. And the world cares for appearances, and not for the truth. That's why it condemns Mrs. Gregory—and me—and that's why I'm afraid the school-board will condemn you. Just on account of appearances. For these past three years, the church has meant to Mrs. Gregory a building plus Grace Noir. I don't mean that Mrs. Gregory got jealous of Grace Noir—I don't know how to explain—you can't handle crowds without marring them." She paused.

"Jealous of Miss Grace!" exclaimed Abbott reprovingly.

"Let's go back, and take a running jump right into the thick of it. When Mr. Gregory came to Littleburg, a complete stranger—and when he married her—she was a devoted church-member—always went, and took great in-



fluenced to abandon the world and the flesh, and he, to become an enthusiastic supporter of the good work. Peter, however, held aloof from the meetings. None of the invitations of neighbors or brothers seemed to have any effect. Finally the clergyman called and made a personal appeal. Peter was rough and ignorant and a little inclined to profanity, but honest and frank in speech if not in act. He finally clinched his negative arguments with the clergyman when in reply to a question he said: 'John has become a Christian and Paul has become a Christian and if I join your church who the— excuse me, parson, will weigh the coal?'

Correction.

The Cinnamon Scimitar will say tomorrow:

"We much regret that, in our recent article entitled, 'Ages of Celebrities,' we wrongly gave the age of the famous actor, John Draws. As Mr. Draws has pointed out to us, a transcription of figures made us say that he was thirty-six years old, whereas he is, of course, sixty-three."

MARRIAGE LAW IN ITALY

Ceremony is Only Legal When Performed by Mayor of Place Where Couple Reside.

In Italy marriage by law is a civil contract, only legal when performed by the mayor of the place in which the couple who desire to be married reside, or his assessor, and it must be performed in the city chamber.

Some hotels and not a few pensions in Rome are the constant resort of needy adventurers with titles real or spurious to their names. Duke This and Prince That, who are always on the lookout for money, says the Christian Herald. Aided it may be, by some one in the hotel or pension, they get acquainted with a rich American family with marriageable daughters. To one of these love is made and marriage is arranged.

Such have no difficulty in finding a priest to perform their ceremony. It is done. Then the adventurer deserts the girl, and she has no remedy. Some few years ago a young girl was so treated. Her pseudo husband, having

secured her money, left her and married civilly and legally an Italian woman with whom he was in love. The victimized girl shot dead her betrayer and his wife. Recognizing the provocation she had received, she was left unpunished. Another girl similarly betrayed committed suicide.

Legal Opinion.

"A cat sits on my back fence every night and he yowls and yowls and yowls. Now, I don't want to have any trouble with neighbor Jones, but this thing has gone far enough, and I want you to tell me what to do."

The young lawyer looked as solemn as an old sick owl, and said not a word.

"I have a right to shoot the cat, haven't I?"

"I would hardly say that," replied young Coke Blackstone. "The cat does not belong to you, as I understand it."

"No, but the fence does."

"Then," concluded the light of law, "I think it safe to say you have a perfect right to tear down the fence."—New York Press.

QUEER WHIMS FOR FUNERALS

Englishman's Coffin Made of 4,000 Matchboxes—Unusual Burial at Sea.

An enormous crowd gathered at Chester a few months ago to witness the funeral of an electrical engineer, who was carried to the cemetery in a coffin that had been laboriously constructed by himself out of 4,000 matchboxes. These, with their tops visible and advertising their respective makers, were varnished over and strengthened inside with wood. On the coffin was placed an electric battery, says London Tit-Bits.

Some years ago a maiden lady died at Calcutta-sur-Lys, in France, who was reported to have been a champion snuff taker. She enjoyed singularly good health, retained all her mental faculties and died at a ripe old age. Her funeral was most extraordinary. Her wish was that her coffin should be filled with tobacco, the floor of the mortuary chamber carpeted with it and the heir to the property charged to scatter tobacco

before the hearse on the way to the cemetery.

A lady who left Liverpool some time ago by the Lucania crossed the Atlantic on a unique mission. A prominent New York business man, who died recently, directed in his will that his remains should be cremated and the ashes scattered on the waters of the Atlantic from a Cunard steamer. The Lucania, being the special favorite of the deceased gentleman, was selected, and the lady in question, at a time fixed, so that simultaneously she and the family could attend a memorial service in New York, cast the ashes from an urn into the ocean. A certificate was given by the captain of the Lucania stating the latitude and longitude in which the ashes were committed to the deep.

One Black Sheep Needed.

A revival of religion was in progress in a town where Peter, Paul and John were coal dealers. John was the first to come under the influence of very eloquent preaching. He was honest and sincere about it and joined the church. A week later Paul was

WAR REMINISCENCES

LITTLE FIGHT "ON THE SIDE"

American Soldiers in Trenches Before Santiago Stop Firing to Witness Most Amusing Scrap.

A "scrap" between an Irishman and a Teuton in the American trenches before Santiago, while the battle was on, was so funny that the soldiers stopped firing at the Spaniards to watch the disension in their own ranks, says a volunteer in an exchange.

Private Cassidy of company E, Sixteenth U. S. Infantry, Private Mueller and Corporal Mulroney were facing the foe side by side when Cassidy was hit by a Spanish don's bullet and sent to that "bourne whence no traveler returns." Mulroney was so busy pumping lead toward Santiago that he failed to note his comrade's death until the poor fellow was being removed from the firing line. Then he saw Mueller in the act of appropriating two cartridge belts, one filled and the other almost empty. Now ammunition was to be had in abundance that morning. Every soldier in the regiment was supposed to have all the cartridges he could shoot away, regardless of accuracy of aim, so it galled Corporal Mulroney to see another—and a German at that—taking possession of what once belonged to his chum.

"If ye had any respect for the dead ye'd have thim cartridges alone," said Mulroney with a scowl on his face that would have scared a Spaniard into surrender. "It isn't the likes of ye, ye Dutch duffer, that can fall for me friend Cassidy's belongings. I'll thank ye, an' with a bad grace at that, to pass me thim belts before I take a punch at your dirty face."

"Dot was all right," replied Mueller defiantly, his phlegmatic blood stirred by the heat of battle. "Cassidy was a good feller, all right, and he told me I could haf dose ammunitions ven he was—"

"Ye lie, ye Dutch robber!" cried Mulroney, dropping his rifle and shaking his fist under Mueller's nose. "Ye'll put thim cartridges down this mornin' or I'll make ye wish a Mauser had struck ye instid of me fist."

"I was no liar," retorted Mueller, also dropping his rifle, "untd I can vlp any Irish dog robber who—"

This pointed allusion to the fact that Mulroney had once been a "striker" for his captain was more than Mulroney cared to stand, and his brawny arm straightened with stunning effect on Mueller's cheek. Almost as quickly the German's fist landed on Mulroney's nose, and then, to the wonder of their comrades on either side, the two men went down together, striking, kicking and biting with complete indifference for the fierce battle in progress. Before either combatant had inflicted any particular harm upon his opponent a young lieutenant intervened and ordered the men back to their faces, with the assurance that each would suffer severely for such a flagrant breach of discipline.

For a few minutes both men pulled their triggers with a fair degree of regularity, notwithstanding the constant exchange of civilities which they could not forego, but Mulroney changed the situation suddenly when he discovered that no commissioned officers were near enough to balk his scheme of vengeance.

"If ye're not a coward ye'll roll down the hill a bit of a ways behind the trench," Mulroney muttered to his foe, "an' when I meet ye at the bottom may hivin hev mercy on ye before I'm t'rough wid ye!"

Mueller looked to the rear and saw a steep slope of nearly fifty feet and a tangled growth of shrubbery at the bottom. He glanced along the line in both directions and saw no shoulder straps nearer than a dozen files, and then accepted the challenge by casting himself out of the trench and swiftly rolling toward the shrubbery. Before he had traversed half the distance Mulroney was descending in the same fashion, and a resumption of hostilities ensued immediately upon his arrival at the foot of the slope.

It might be stated parenthetically that a blue captain separated Mulroney and Mueller and sent them back once more to their places on the firing line, where they acted like good soldiers the rest of the day. After the fighting was over Mulroney lost his chevrons and several months' pay, and Mueller suffered even worse punishment.

HOME TOWN HELPS

POWER IN HANDS OF BOARD

City of Cleveland Has Scheme Which is Largely a Copy of Methods in Vogue in Europe.

The charter commission has provided for a city planning board for Cleveland under the new form of government. Its exact authority remains probably to be bestowed by legislation, though its utility in a modern metropolitan community is unquestioned. A city planning conference has just been held in Chicago. Among those in attendance was a German expert who told how the cities in his country, and in particular how Berlin, controlled urban development so as to avoid some of the evils too familiar in the United States. Berlin was divided into sections or zones and strict regulations established as to the height and character of the buildings which might be erected in each. Some things endured by the people of German cities might not be so acceptable in this country, but the general policy of more rigidly regulating the manifestations of growth could be copied profitably. American cities have grown haphazard. The skyscraper had run riot in New York. The tenement house evil might have been prevented in large part had government assumed more control over the utilization of private property. Narrow, crooked streets are a menace and a reproach. Cleveland takes a step forward in providing the machinery for city planning. The city has accomplished much already in this direction, but the further possibilities are unlimited.

START THE CHILDREN RIGHT

Early Training in Matters Concerning Rural Improvement Would Mean Much in a Few Years.

To train children in rural improvement ideas means to train children to see, to observe the beautiful in nature, to become interested in plant life, it means to awaken in the child mind a desire to have a plant, a tree, or a garden of his very own, where he can study out the mystery of "how to make things grow." When we have interested the individual child in the individual plant we have formed a nucleus for improvement ideas which may unfold into an association for creating "beautiful homes" in the neighborhood, the town or the rural community.

Our public schools are doing a great deal with their nature studies to interest children in improvements, but to the parent should the child be indebted for its first lessons in the industry of tree planting. Children naturally love to do things, but they do not love drudgery. How many boys have been driven away from the home because their fathers insisted on working them, instead of allowing them to work. How much better if parents would lure their children to industry by companionship and pleasant stories, especially about plant, animal and insect life found everywhere about them. No parent is so well posted but he may learn much about these things while instructing the children.

Needs of Window Boxes.

When the middle of summer comes, window boxes that made a brave show up to that time begin to look seedy and several light coats of manure will carry them nicely through the season. Or, the plants may be watered weekly with manure water the color of weak tea.

The geranium is well adapted to white houses of the conventional type, and variegated vinca supplants it well. Nasturtiums, too, look well with such a house. It often happens that a box filled with vines only is more attractive when used on a brick house than one boasting a profusion of flowers. Ivy and moneywort, like cinca, are good vines to grow. If the soil is made extra rich and the climbing nasturtiums used, there will be a wealth of foliage and not over-much bloom.

Other good decorative trailers are Thunbergia, which grows rapidly and has many dark-eyed blossoms in buff, orange and white, and variegated Japanese hop.

Fansies may be grown in the porch and window box very early in the season, and later replaced with geraniums and other plants.

Fixing It.

"Why were you late in returning to camp last night?" asked the lieutenant of a private at Camp Dennison, near Cincinnati.

"Train was very late, sir."

"Well, the next time the train's late take care y' come by an earlier one."

Expedience.

Few can afford to take the position taken by the captain of a company of guerrillas. The story is that this captain, at the head of a company of 300 men, when informed that the enemy, numbering 500, was approaching, said:

"Well, boys, we'll look 'em over, and if we can't lick 'em we'll live 'em."

Boiler Inspection Laws.

Thirteen states have boiler inspection laws.

To Destroy Airships.

French army engineers have designed a field gun for firing at airships that is carried in the rear of an automobile, can be aimed almost vertically and is provided with mechanism to relieve the automobile of the recoil shock.

Electric Torch.

An electric torch patented by a New Yorker is supplied with current by a generator contained in the handle, which is operated by the hand holding it.

Just What It Is.

After extended investigation we have reached the conclusion that rippling laughter is the giggling of the girl one likes.

Cannot Keep It Down.

Merit may be kept at the foot of the class for a while, but it will come to the head in its own good time.

Dining Room in Turkish Palace.

A Turkish palace there is a special door whereby anyone who desires a meal may enter.—London Spectator.