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IT IS GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME.

This country don't suit Astor
And he's scoldin' us some more;
Here's where he gits his money,
But he likes a foreign shore;
He says our people's vulgar
And as coarse as they can be—
The Yankees don't suit Astor,
But they're good enough for me.

I know a little widder
Livin' just across the crick
That I'll bet could make that feller
Change his notions mighty quick;
She's long 'bout twenty-seven,
And as purty as can be;
She says she likes this country,
So it's good enough fer me.

See that little schoolhouse yonder,
With the flag a-floatin' there?
Just to stand and see it flutter
Makes me want to whoop, I swear!
Where the widder and that flag are,
By the jumpin' Jim-ma-nee,
Is the country that is always
Plenty good enough fer me!

—S. E. Kiser, in Chicago Record-Herald.

THE PROPOSAL

By LAMOTTE BREE.

HALF way up the hill, on the main road, crossing the small town of Pertuis, stands the plain, comfortable house of Dr. de St. Leonard, an old country physician, celebrated miles and miles around for his learning, his zeal, his inexhaustible kindness, his hump and his gig. The gig, an old-fashioned vehicle, is drawn alternately by two venerable animals, Cocotte and Javotte, so much alike that were it not that Cocotte's hair is grayish yellow and Javotte's grayish brown, one could not distinguish the one from the other. Going at their usual jog trot, that no objurgation, no castigation, can accelerate, the doctor, who knows the uselessness of his efforts, resigns himself to the inevitable; once on the road he rolls the reins around the whip, takes out a book and reads.

If you meet a hunchbacked little man in an antiquated gig drawn by a prehistoric animal, you have seen Dr. de St. Leonard. He has devoted himself for more than forty years to the arduous duties of country physician. Plain featured, it is true, but look at his eyes; they reveal a superior intellect, a keen spirit, and above all a divine kindness that illuminates his whole countenance.

John, the only son of the doctor, is neither hunch-backed nor ill-favored; quite the contrary, indeed. Having completed gloriously his medical studies in Paris, he renounced the brilliant career opened to him in the very capital, and preferred to assist his father in his humble work of devotion and charity. Tender-hearted, his only ambition is to continue his father's mission of perpetual abnegation, untiring and discreet generosity. For John, the supreme glory is to double, in this small place, the affection for the honored name he bears, and to prolong, by the exercise of the same qualities as the old man, the grateful popularity he enjoys.

So John came courageously and cheerfully, burying himself in Pertuis to attend patients at two francs a visit, following in everything the example of his father, who never claimed a fee from the poor, and often left a silver coin under the prescription.

Thenceforth there were two Drs. de St. Leonard at Pertuis. Everything went on as before.

Javotte and Cocotte were at first rather jealous of pretty Blanchette, the young doctor's nag, who in a most reprehensible juvenile ardor dared to pass them on the road.

The people had thus—happy people—two learned doctors and two good men devoted to their welfare.

Happy people! I repeat it, for, besides these two emeritus practitioners, they possessed the most active, the most charming the most generous volunteer Sister of Charity, Isabelle Duplessis, who resided in the sumptuous villa on the hill. Her father, a multimillionaire, had gone to America when quite a young man and identified himself with the country and advanced business habits of the Americans. Returning to France after a long absence, he introduced innovations and improvements in the iron industry, and amassed an immense fortune. His only daughter, Isabelle, born and reared in the United States, rode here and there through the country, with American independence, in her light phaeton, drawn by fleet ponies and accompanied by a little groom.

What a contrast with the old doctor's creaky vehicle!

Isabelle's drives took the direction of the neighboring villas when politeness required it, but very often she wended her way to the poor's stray cottages on the road where she was anxiously expected, giving abundantly to everyone, consoling the unfortunates, nursing the sick. They called her "Our Angel." There was joy at Pertuis and for many miles around when she returned from Paris for the summer season.

She often met Dr. de St Leonard in her charitable visits. Between the old doctor and the young girl in the bloom of youth and beauty, their sprang, at the bedside of the sick and the dying, a mysterious charity alliance, a friendship that amounted almost to adoration. Isabelle revered the humble, learned, devoted man who lived only for others; he worshiped the golden-haired young girl, all sunshine and grace.

An old admirer of the classics, he compared her to a goddess descended from Olympus to charm and assuage man's suffering at Pertuis.

When John began his medical calls with his father, what should naturally happen, happened.

Meeting everywhere the young girl who came to him as a friend, a sister—admitted to the villa in perfect intimacy—hearing at home the eulogies of the old doctor in honor of the Goddess of Pertuis, John de St. Leonard fell passionately in love with Isabelle. Deep love, the immense love of a true heart which, giving itself for the first time, gives itself forever; unique and absolute love; love which, at once realized, knows itself hopeless and surrounds itself with dignity in an impenetrable mystery. Dr. de St. Leonard did not suspect it any more than M. Duplessis, and if Isabelle was more perspicacious, notwithstanding all John's efforts, it is because the woman beloved always realizes the sincere love she inspires, and which ascends towards her as the perfume of flowers nothing can stiffle.

Not a word, not an allusion ever betrayed the young doctor's secret; he expected to live and die with it—maybe die from it. Between Isabelle and himself lay an insurmountable obstacle: the gold heap constituting her dowry. It sealed John's lips forever; humble enough to understand the distance between the rich heiress and the poor country doctor, too proud to allow anyone to suspect him of a covetous thought.

This discretion was not emulated by the numerous young men who in Paris or at Pertuis whenever Isabelle passed, followed her like a swarm of bees around a hive. The capital furnished its contingent of the army of pretenders, as well as the provinces and the foreigners—all degrees of society, magistrates, diplomats, financiers, military men, landed proprietors, manufacturers, many ruined noblemen, a celebrated professor of the university, two renowned artists, rich men who wished to double their income, young men who did nothing. It is usless to continue this enumeration of interested aspirants. Still, some were sincere admirers, few and far between, but it was difficult to distinguish them from those whom the dowry, and not the lady, attracted.

To every overture, past and present, M. Duplessis replied with equal courtesy. The worthy man could have avoided all this parley by providing himself with a printed answer:

"My dear Sir: Although I am a Frenchman, my wife was born in Chicago, my daughter born and reared in the United States, and I myself having resided many years in America, we are all a little American, and consequently rather eccentric. We have decided in our family council that my daughter shall study conscientiously all those who aspire to her hand. She will take note of her impressions, keep them to herself without imparting them to us, her parents; she is the one to be married—not ourselves. She will be free to choose her husband. Besides, we are certain she will make a wise choice, for we have full confidence in her sound judgment and her good heart.

"She is rich enough not to allow any mercenary consideration to balance the principal one, namely, that, besides pleasing her, the companion she chooses offer her real, true guarantees of happiness.

"The list is open, you may enter it."

Then M. Duplessis added, the year in which my story takes place:

"On the 12th of October my daughter will be 21 years old. On that day we will give a great reception to our friends and acquaintances. You, my dear sir, and all other aspirants are cordially invited. Before the ball my daughter will present her intended to our guests and to ourselves."

On the 12th of October Pertius was in a perfect bewilderment. All kinds of equipages had been put in requisition. The guests came from far and near. The two hotels were crowded to suffocation. The immense park was brilliantly illuminated, the sumptuous villa an enchanted palace.

The rivals at this court of love surrounding Isabella burned incense at her shrine, each one trying to plead his cause with the most eloquence. She stood, handsome, placid, smiling; a true goddess.

Her father asked: "Well, the verdict?"

The smile vanished; a shade of disappointment overspread her features. "One minute more, father," she replied.

There was a well-known, peculiar creaking of wheels.

The smile returned.

"There is Dr. de St. Leonard," said a familiar friend; he will be in time to succor the vanquished."

A servant announced:

"MM. de St. Leonard."

"How late you are," said Isabelle, holding out her hand to the father and the son.

"Forgive us, dear child," answered the old doctor; "we had to go out of our way to poor Landry, who broke his leg, and you know Cocotte will never hurry."

John, very pale, notwithstanding his efforts at self-control, disappeared in the crowd. In a moment the one he worshiped in his inmost heart would announce to whom she pledged her love. What was it to him? He was no aspirant. He would not have come had he not feared his absence would be misconstrued.

Isabelle advanced resolutely to the middle of the drawing-room. "My friends," she said, gravely, "what is going to take place is rather eccentric, more so even than you think. The kindness of my parents has allowed me to choose a husband among those who honored me with a proposal. I have made my choice, and he is precisely the one who never spoke a word of love to me, although I know he loves me with his whole soul as I love him. What kept him back is what attracted some others—my fortune.

"Since he does not ask it, I must offer it to him, wishing it were still greater, for I know well enough the use he will make of it—he whose principal hereditary virtue is kindness."

Addressing the old doctor, her voice trembling with emotion:

"With the permission of my parents," she continued, "Dr. de St. Leonard, I have the honor to ask the hand of your son. I love him. He loves me, and I believe we will be able to do a great deal of good together." She walked toward John, who, bewildered, stood motionless, and took his hand.

"Will you be my husband, John?"

It is needless to tell his answer.

With her radiant smile she cried, "My friends, I present to you my intended, Dr. John de St. Leonard."—N. O. Times-Democrat.

FISH-HAWK WEATHER GUIDE.

When the Birds Appear the Jersey Farmers Plant and Fishermen Set Their Nets.

When a solitary fish hawk was seen flying along the shores of the Delaware bay near the village of Fishing Creek, Cape May county, N. J., a few days ago, the news traveled from house to house and from town to town until the whole county knew of the bird's arrival. It was good news to all the residents of the county, but particularly to the farmers and fishermen, says a report from that section.

The coming of the fish hawk in the spring is regarded as a never-failing sign that mild weather has come to stay. There are many farmers who never start planting until the fish hawks get up from their southern winter homes.

The fishermen along the bay shore had their nets ready several weeks ago, but few of them cared to make a haul until they had seen the winged fishers soaring over the waters of the bay. The fish hawk makes its winter home along the Florida coast. In the early March days, when the fish, its only food, begin to swim north, the birds follow. Thus the fishermen of south Jersey know that when the fish hawk appears the fish are also near.

Year after year the birds have arrived between April 2 and 12. When the first hawk is seen the shad fishermen begin work with their big gill nets, for they have been taught by experience that the fish hawk follows the great schools of herring from southern waters and that the shad swim north in the wake of the herring.

A Curious Tip.

A certain little Flemish watering place, which is much frequented by English and American visitors in the summer, possesses two attractions in the shape of a Presbyterian place of worship and a roulette table. One of the "faithful" had quite recently a most ingenious idea. After the number of the hymn succeeding the sermon was given he stole away, made his way to the table, and invested all he was worth on the number of the hymn. Needless to say the number turned up, and the lucky coup became the talk of the village for the rest of the week. Next Sunday the church was crammed to the door. The pious pastor was rejoiced in heart. After a powerful address he gave out "Hymn No. 27." The moment the words left his lips, to his consternation, there was a rush to the door, and he was left with a faithful handful to upraise their agitated strain of praise. As for the rest, they made a bee line from the house of prayer to the house of play. We are happy to relate that their little adventure cost them very dear.—London Times.

A Kiss and a Snap.

In 1837 Mr. Thomas Saverland brought an action against Miss Caroline Newton, who had bitten a piece out of his nose for his having tried to kiss her by way of a joke. The defendant was acquitted, and the judge laid down that "when a man kisses a woman against her will she is fully entitled to bite his nose, if she so pleases."—"The Kiss and Its History."

Not to Be Surprised.

Boarder (warmly)—Oh, I know every one of the tricks of your trade. Do you think I have lived in boarding houses 20 years for nothing?

Landlady (frigidly)—I shouldn't be at all surprised.—Tit-Bits.

GOD'S POTENT GIFT.

Sermon on John 3:16 by the "Highway and Byway" Preacher.

No Fairy's Talisman or Aladdin's Lamp Ever Wrought Half the Blessing as Is Realized Through Jesus Christ.

[Copyright, 1902, by A. N. Kellogg Newspaper Co.]

Chicago,

Text: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life.—John 3:16.

The telescope of the astronomer tells us that beyond the vision of the natural eye there exist myriads of starry worlds, and we believe him, even though we have never been privileged to search them out for ourselves. The microscope of the scientist demonstrates that in the water we drink and the air we breathe there are perfect swarms of queer and grotesque and hideous looking creatures. We take our glass of water and hold it up to the light, and as the beams of sunlight flash and glint through the clear crystal liquid it is hard to believe that what the wise man says is true, yet we do accept his statement as a declaration of fact.

God's Word tells us that God's throne is in the heavens, and that the earth is His footstool, and if our spiritual vision is not holden we believe that it is true. Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him. There is a brief and complete biography recorded by God. It tells us of his earthly career. He left the earth at the behest of God, and went where? To the heavens where God has His dwelling place. Elijah, when his mission on earth was fulfilled, in the Providence of God, was wafted to the heavens in a chariot of fire, and Elisha was left behind with the mantle of the great prophet in his hands to tell the story. The former pupils of Elijah, who doubted Elisha's story, went out to search for the translated prophet, but found him not, but it was the privilege of Peter, James and John on the mountain in Galilee to see the Lord in His transfiguration talking to that same Elijah, who so many hundreds of years before had walked through the land of Palestine and warned the people of their sins and had destroyed the 450 prophets of Baal.

When Jesus began His public ministry the heavens opened, we are told by God's Word, and a voice from that unseen region said: "Thou art My beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased." And Stephen, with his face lit up by the glories of the Celestial Kingdom, as he looked steadfastly towards Heaven, saw it open, and Jesus Himself standing at the right hand of God, the place which He had designated, before His crucifixion and resurrection, should be His abiding place until the fulfillment of the time of the Gentiles, and He should leave Heaven with a shout of triumph and return to earth in the clouds of Heaven even as He went from earth into Heaven.

Paul bears testimony to the fact that he was carried into the heavens, and whether he was in the body or out of the body he could not tell, but he heard unutterable things and declares that "eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." Among the last declarations of Jesus Christ were the words, in which we find so much comfort, especially in the hour of bereavement: "In My Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am there ye may be also."

Surely from the beginning of the history of man, when Enoch stepped from earth into the glories of Heaven, to the vision of John the Beloved, who saw the new Jerusalem being let down from Heaven, we have ample proof and testimony that Heaven is a real place, even though we cannot see it with the natural eye, and it is the dwelling place of God, and His Christ and the hosts of angels and the great company of the redeemed.

And so in Heaven, before the foundations of the world were laid, God purposed in His infinite heart of love to give to the world the rarest treasure of Heaven in order that earth might be enriched and sinful man wooed back to Him. All Heaven was astir when the time drew near that the Word of God, the Son of God, should become flesh and dwell among men. Abraham, who had the promise of God that in his seed should all the nations of the earth be blessed, was among the long list of patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testament who rejoiced with the Heavenly hosts in the gift which God was going to give unto men, the fulfullment of all the law and the prophets.

Heaven's music burst upon human ears on that first Christmas morning when the shepherds on the hillside of Judea heard the glad tidings that "unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." They came and worshiped the young child and received Him into their hearts as the long-promised Messiah. The wise men brought their gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. They bowed in homage before the innocent babe, realizing, by inspiration from Heaven, that wise in the learning of the world though they were, still here was a gift from the God of all knowledge which made their learning pale into insignificance and made them realize that the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

And thus from Heaven came the gift of God to earth, for God so loved that He gave. We are to talk of the potency of this gift, but we cannot pass the ruling motive of the heart of God, which enabled Him to give, and made His Son obedient unto His will. God loved in the beginning and has patiently kept on loving all through the ages, though man's heart has been so slow to respond. Can we understand that love? Can we so speak as to convey an idea of what that love is? If John, the beloved disciple, who was nearest to the heart of Christ, could not fully understand, but exclaims: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is;" surely, we cannot hope to fathom that love, but also must wait until beholding face to face, we shall then understand what God's love really is.

There are beautiful pictures of human love running all through the Word of God, from devoted, loyal Ruth to Mary with the alabaster box of ointment, or Mary Magdalene, whose love for her Lord made her linger at the tomb and gave her the first vision of her risen Lord. Love! As the love of Christ fills our hearts we can begin to know somewhat of the love of God, but we cannot fully know until we stand on the other side and join in the grand chorus of the redeemed in praise of Him who alone is worthy to be praised.

The potency of the gift of God begins to be realized as we slowly read the rest of our text. This gift is all comprehensive, it is from everlasting to everlasting. Aladdin's lamp, if it ever had any existence beyond the imagination of the one who tells the story of its wonderful potency, has passed away, and only the memory remains. The story of Midas' touch which could transmute to gold any thing with which it came in contact has delighted and held the attention of readers for generations, but it is but a tale. The story of the magic carpet which used to whisk its owner in the story book to every conceivable and inconceivable nook and corner of old mother earth has performed its mission in fairy land and given place to other fairy potencies of the story writer's brain. But where in history, prose or poetry will you find an equal to the story of the potency of the Gift of God to the world.

Moses' rod, under the direction of God, could part the Red sea, could smite the rocks in the desert until refreshing waters gushed forth. The trumpets of the priests and the shouts of the children of Israel could lay low the walls of Jericho. The Gideon's band of three hundred could win a mighty victory over the hosts of the Midianites. The cry of a Joshua to God could cause the sun to stand still. The shepherd's sling of a David could send crashing to earth the terrible giant and deliver from the oppression of the Philistines for a time, but all these wonderful potentialities of God passed away and all we have is a living, thrilling memory. But the gift which God gave to the world nineteen hundred years ago is swaying the world more powerfully than ever before, and as we review the achievements of the past wonderful century we hear it echoed on every hand that it is the result of the Light which God sent into the world to light every man to Him.

Young Solomon, called to the responsibilities of a great and prosperous kingdom, sought a blessing from God. In choosing wisdom, in order that he might successfully conduct the affairs of state, he found that the lesser gifts were included and he had both riches and honor.

In God's Gift to the world we secure a Saviour from sin and find that all the lesser blessings of life are included. "Whosover receiveth (believeth in) Him hath everlasting life." The ambitious heart that receives Him as the center of his being finds that instead of the horizon of his hopes being limited to the possible three score and ten, he has all eternity in which to work out God's plans. The one who has a passion for gold and this world's goods may live to realize the accumulation of great wealth, but when he least thinks of it the call from his God will come: "This night thy soul shall be required of thee," and there will be borne in upon his soul with crushing defeat the words of Christ: "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Then he will realize that the realities of life are not to be compared to the riches of Heaven to which the soul has access in Jesus Christ.

And so with the pleasure seeker. The world is going mad in its quest after diverting pastimes and exciting pleasures. And is it ever satisfied? Does it ever reach the point where it can say I am content? Never. Like the dope of the morphine eater, each successive dose of pleasure must be intensified in order to secure the desired effect. Sodom and Gomorrah of ancient time, and the more recent examples of Rome and Greece, show to what end the pleasure seekers are tending.

But the secret of true happiness is found in the acceptance of God's Gift. No tarnish ever dims the luster of that presence. No aching head and shattered nerves ever come in the wake of the happiness of dwelling in the presence of Jesus. No anguish of soul which leads so often to the suicide's grave ever crushes the soul with its aftermath, when Christ is the satisfying portion.

The potency of God's Gift is felt in every throb and being of life. Why seek what the world can give when Heaven was emptied that all earth, and Heaven, too, might resound throughout the ages with the praises of the matchless Gift of God to men. They, who, with David, have said: "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than dwell in the palaces of the wicked," are to-day rejoicing in the realities of Heaven, while their contemporaries who rejected the rule of God over their hearts are awaiting in darkness their eternal banishment from the Lord.

God has come down into the midst of men and is holding out, to whosoever will take, this Gift of eternal life through Christ Jesus. "What will you do with Jesus, who is called the Christ?" "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." "To-day, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts."

I had occasion the other day to enter the home where affliction had come. The father had gone to his work as usual one morning. He kissed his wife and two little boys a cheery good-by and trudged off to work. With no thought that a terrible accident was impending, while the sun shone and the fresh air spoke of coming spring, and the birds echoed in glad notes the feelings of reviving nature all about, suddenly came the crash of cars, and "Papa lies over at the hospital," was the story the sturdy little boy told me in subdued tones when I called. As I turned my way homeward pondering on the uncertainties of life and repeating: "Yea, verily, while we are in life we are in the midst of death;" suddenly a tiny bird caught my eye as he circled the tree higher and higher seeking its food. Never a thought but for the moment. Seeking its complete joy and satisfaction in the present moment. How like some lives was that of this little bird. Here was life in all of its glad fullness. Not a cloud in the sky to darken the warming rays of the sun. Could it be possible that only a few steps back from the way that I had come a sorrowing wife and tender children were mourning the sudden accident to the husband and father. Ah, friend, are you counting on the morrow and the morrows that follow? Are you putting off the acceptance of this Gift offered you by God until a more convenient season. How dare we risk the eternal welfare of the soul in the face of life's uncertainties? Why should we delay when we gain all through the Gift, and have nothing without it?

As I neared my own door on that Lord's day afternoon I saw my neighbor standing in his doorway. "How is the little girl?" I asked. The report in the morning was that she was better, and as I made the present inquiry it was with the expectancy of good news of continued improvement, but as I looked into the drawn features of the sorrow-stricken father, I read his message, and "She is dead," need not to have been spoken.

Dead! What dread sound that word has to the human heart. How we shrink from the grim reaper. Oh, the anguish of that home. If the finger of God had reached out and touched those cold lips and made them warm with life, had put the light into the eye and strength into the little wasted limbs, what joy, what mad joy, would have shook the frames of the parents in revulsive emotion. We reason thus oftentimes in our childish imaginings, and fail to appreciate the sadder scene: the death of a soul. Why, what we call death may be but the darkly beautiful gateway which ushers into the eternal life of which we have been speaking. God's Gift, His only Begotten Son, makes of death but a shadow, and the soul can pass along the way with David while he sings: "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me, Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me."

The potency of God's Gift is felt in the present life as Jesus Christ becomes the ruling factor in the yielding will. Peter becomes the powerful preacher, before whom the hearts of thousands melt as the love of God is made manifest to them. Paul, from the raging lion of fleshly passion going about in his mad zeal to fight against God, becomes the great apostle to the Gentiles and the revealer of the mysteries of the church, the body of Jesus Christ. What the Gift of God has done for Peter and Paul can be realized in your life. Surely never was other gift so potent as this whose touch can transform the life and impart the germ of eternity where now is the seed of death.