

**What Was the Biggest Smoke During the Chicago Fire?**

Ask Dad, he knows.

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**AUNT PERSIS HAS A PLAN**

By LOUISE OLIVER.

This morning I awakened as happy and carefree as a puppy on a farm; tonight I feel like the fellow in mythology who had to keep the world balanced on his shoulders. And what has made this difference in my outlook on existence?

A girl, of course. And such a girl!

When I think of the way her hair curled over the tops of her ears and her eyes—basting one moment and then half closed to see how you'd take it the next—it drives me mad. Here is what happened:

I came yesterday on a visit to Aunt Persis. You see, Aunt Pers has the family fortune, and so of course all the branches out to the sixteenth cousins are nice to her. So as I finished college last week dad said: "You must make your Aunt Persis a visit and let her see what a decent fellow you are. She may have some plan up her sleeve for you, son, and so humor her as far as you can."

So I packed up and arrived last night.

Well, as I said, I awakened heart whole and care free and enjoyed a good breakfast—until auntie said: "Addison, do you remember the little Lumble girl you used to play with next door? The one you got cross at one day for laughing when your pony threw you into the mud and whom you chased with a handful of burrs and stuck them all through her curls?"

The memory brought a guilty flush. "Yes, I remember, Aunt Pers."

She nodded. "Well, Grace is a great favorite of mine now, Addison, and I've taken a notion I'd like to see you two married. I love you two young people better than anything in the world and I'm getting old," significantly. Then she went to a desk and brought out a box. "I've had another fancy lately, too. I've had my jeweler design a ring that any girl would be proud of, I should think. Do you like it?"

"You might put it in your pocket," suggested the old lady. "And now, Addison, don't you think you'd better apologize for the burrs?"

There certainly was no risk in motoring over to call on old friends, so I took my roadster and went over at ten. I was going along the road that leads to the Maples and just before I came to the big gate a little car jumped around a curve and I hit it. A girl flew out into some bushes as my car caught here and carried it along a bit. I finally got the engine stopped and ran back as fast as I could, but the girl wasn't hurt a bit, and there she stood, tumbled, with a smudge across one cheek, but laughing and looking too sweet for anything.

"It was my fault!" she protested. "No, mine!"

"I beg of you—!" Then something familiar struck me.

"Is your name Grace?"

"Yes!"

"I thought so. Don't you remember me? I am Addison Jennings. I was just going over to pay my respects."

She was silent a minute then—"Addison Jennings! No, I don't believe I do."

I was piqued that she should forget. "Oh, don't you? I was just on my way to ask you to marry me. See, I've brought the ring and all. I'm Miss Persis Grant's nephew."

"Miss Persis told you to do it, no doubt."

"Asked me to, to be exact. And I'm being dutiful."

She slipped the ring on her finger with an odd look. "Do you know I think I will take you up, Mr. Jennings?"

Things were going differently from the way I had expected.

"Won't you take me home?" she asked.

I took her on to the big house and

she asked me to wait while she repaired the damage to her toilet.

In a few minutes a girl came down—not my girl; another, tall, statuesque and dignified.

She came in and held out her hand. "How do you do, Addison?" she remarked pleasantly. "It's years since I've seen you. The last time I believe you stuck burrs in my hair."

The room was whirling. "Are you—" I began. "I thought you were—will you please tell me who the girl is I ran into just now and nearly killed."

"Grace Tilden, my companion!"

"Ye gods!"

"It's two o'clock and I'm afraid to go to bed. I can't wake up and face Aunt Persis."

And yet down in my heart I'm disconcertingly happy.

A week later.

I have re-read my confession and the joke's on me.

I fell asleep in my chair that night and the telephone bell on my table woke me at eight in the morning. Aunt Persis was talking to a girl. I knew the voice and listened.

"Miss Persis," she said, "it will do him good to let him think he's engaged himself to Grace Tilden. We planned it in a hurry to change places while he was waiting for me down stairs. He's terribly blunt and honest, but adorable, Miss Persis. I think I've loved him since he chased me with the burrs. Don't give us away yet, please. The joke's too good and he deserves punishment."

Jolly old world this.

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**Guns Which Save Life.**

The three and six pounders with which all the sea-going revenue cutters of the service are armed now are used to shoot lines to vessels in distress. For years they have served as nothing more than ornaments on the decks of the cutters; for it never was necessary to use them in the enforcement of customs and navigation laws. They were carried mainly for their moral effect.

These guns have been found far more effective in line shooting than the line guns formerly carried—small brass cannons of the type seen at lifesaving stations along the coast. Although the cannons were in use for many years, they were never entirely satisfactory. It was almost impossible to aim them with any degree of accuracy, and accordingly line shooting with them was a "hit or miss" matter in the majority of cases.

The rapid-fire guns now used are a great improvement on the old pieces and insure accuracy.

**Lo, the Poor Mule in Mexico.**

Americans are wont to employ the mule as a symbol of stubbornness and to speak of the donkey as the epitome of stupidity, but patience and meekness are the outstanding characteristics of these animals in Mexico, the National Geographic Magazine says. With rations on which an American sheep or a European goat would go hungry, the burdens which these poor beasts are forced to bear are out of all proportion to their strength and size, and they are driven many a weary mile over bridle paths where a horse would find hard traveling; but they are always docile and uncomplaining, as if adversity were a stranger to them. Imagine a dozen donkeys transformed into as many lumber wagons with long, heavy boards strapped on each side, and driven a dozen miles without food, except now and then a chance bit of prickly foliage which they manage to nip as they walk along!

**The Question.**

Little Willie (who is of a painfully moaning turn of mind)—"Mamma, tell me: do mosquitoes bite us because they like us, or because they don't like us?"

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**KNEW HOW IT WAS MAKING DUTY EASY**

SON UNDERSTOOD WHAT MEMORIES MEANT TO MOTHER.

Lesson in This Story to the Young Who Fail to Realize What Associations Represent to Those Who Are Aging.

The time had come for the family to be broken up. One by one the children had married and moved away. Mother had bidden them good-by with tears. She had taken care of them all for so long! She had been the big factor in all their lives. Yet she knew that it could not last forever. The boy, the "baby" of the household, was the last to go.

The daughter who was to live with mother had been getting along well in the world and had seen no reason for having a man help her manage her affairs, and as she vowed that this state would last forever she decided that mother had best go with her.

Daughter decided that all the old furniture must be sold and that they must move into a new house with all new furniture.

It was pathetic to see how mother watched each old piece of furniture, as she dusted it on her daily rounds. The old walnut bedstead, the cherry dresser, the old-fashioned cane-bottomed walnut chairs that had been in her room so long were old friends.

She protested feebly against having to have a new brass bed in the new home. As the day for moving drew nearer mother became more and more depressed. The business daughter, engrossed in her own affairs, did not know the heart pangs it was taking for mother to reconcile herself to the parting with the old furniture. It was mother's link to the past.

A day before moving into the new place, the son from the far city came home. He had an understanding heart. He saw in a minute what the daughter had failed to see. Mother just could not part with the old furniture.

The daughter insisted that she must not have any old-fashioned stuff cluttering up the new house. The son argued for a room for mother with all the old furniture. But the daughter was not sentimental.

A bed was to be slept in. That was the extent of its value. How mother could cling to those relics was more than she could understand. Sister had always remembered her brother as too sentimental for his own good. She had wondered how it was he had escaped marriage thus far. But the son understood his mother.

He could see how she was aging, for he had not been with her every day for years. He understood her as her daughter did not. Life without the old associations would be mere existence.

He found mother rubbing the looking-glass on the old dresser. There were tears in her eyes. Then he could stand it no longer.

"Mother, I just came home to tell you that I have come back to the old town to accept a new position, and I am sick and tired of hotels. Why can't I move my trunk home here, fix up father's old room for my desk and papers and live like I used to?"

"Everything in this old house will stay just as it is. Only I have to get some of those old rag carpets for the bedrooms like we had years and years ago. You are going to be boss of the ranch. I'll be the hired hand, and I'll make the old house be glad it's still standing!"

Mother did not say a word. She began to cry. And because the son understood women—and especially mothers—he was glad to hear her cry, for he knew it was for joy.—Indianapolis News.

**Irrigation in Egypt.**

The Egyptian ministry of public works, which has been experimenting in cotton raising during the past ten years in the Gezira region in the Sudan, has issued an optimistic report to the effect that it will be possible to do better than double the yield of cotton in the Nile Delta by means of a system of dams for irrigation in connection with the White Nile and the Blue Nile.

Vast quantities of water have been stored already, and during the past 30 years nearly a million acres of entirely new land have been added to the taxable soil of the country. It is estimated that in this newly explored region about 2,500,000 acres of land could be made capable of growing cotton. This, as a matter of fact, would give more land than is now planted with cotton in Egypt. Irrigation works are now being constructed, and a plot of 150,000 acres is being treated.

**His Unique Proposal.**

He was a morbid youth and a nervous lover. Often had he wished to tell the maiden how he longed to make her all his own. Again, and again had his nerve failed him. But tonight there was a "do-or-die" look in his eye. They started for their usual walk, and rested awhile upon his favorite seat—a gravestone in the village churchyard. A happy inspiration seized him. "Marta," he said in trembling accents—"Marta! When you die—how should you like to be buried here with my name on the stone over you?"—London Opinion.

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HOUSEWIFE'S SCHEME DECIDEDLY WORTH CONSIDERATION.

Much Less a Task When One Can Contrive to Turn Necessary Work into Something That May Be Termed Amusing.

"Dear, will you see to Horace? I think he's hungry," remarked the hostess to her husband.

"Who is Horace?" asked the weekend guest. The hostess laughed.

"Why, it's the furnace," she admitted. "You see, we have got into the merry way of playing a game with our housekeeping, and running everything in the house. It isn't nearly as much of a task to tend the furnace when it is named Horace and is, in a way, a helpful, active member of the family, as when it is regarded merely as a nuisance. A furnace isn't a nuisance, you know. It is a big, comfortable friend—only, like most friends, it has to be liked and appreciated and visited with in order to do its best work. So, instead of going down to put coal in a cold, forbidding, ugly stove, my husband goes down to feed Horace, and make him feel better for having his cinners shaken down, to put him metaphorically with the poker, and thank him for keeping the water in the bathroom warm. Silly, isn't it? But it brings such a nice glow of fun into an ordinary job."

"My kitchen range is named Aunt Susan. Into her ample lap I put my cooking utensils, knowing that she will help me make everything appetizing and savory, and me in getting my dinner ready on time, and hum gently to herself when I leave her alone with the teakettle. She is like a wise, experienced old aunt to a young housekeeper like me."

"We have a battered old roadster that is lovingly termed Old Dobbin, since the accession of the smart little car which we call James—as if it were chauffeur, footman and butler rolled into one. Dobbin drives the children to school, runs all the village errands, and takes us on all the family outings, while with James, I go calling, we drive to church, and altogether keep up the family 'tone.'" The hostess, a simple woman of simple tastes, smiled at this as at a huge joke, for she and the host were their own chauffeurs and footmen, and were as free from pretension as well could be.

"It is just one way of making friends of the familiar objects we have about us every day," she explained. "One takes a special interest, then, in even the commonplace, uninteresting, even unattractive, things one may have to deal with. For example, I don't so much mind scouring my big iron skillet now that I call it Old Black Joe. And the children do not mind washing and wiping dishes when they name the different kinds of china and glass by families—Mr. and Mrs. Willowware being the two large platters, and the plates and other dishes being their children, nephews and nieces. It is just one of the jolly little games that may make over the prosaic program of everyday duties into fun."

**Brightening the Shave.**

An Englishman, weary of bloodshed, has bethought him of a means of enlightening the gloomy and otherwise dangerous ritual of the shave, says Popular Science Monthly. He has invented a miniature electric lamp provided with an adjustable clip and flexible cord which may be attached to the razor and light the path of the blade through the tough bristles of the human face.

With his lamp attachment one may plunge fearlessly into the blackest depths of a three days' growth of beard and emerge from the ordeal unscathed. The lamp is attached to a conventional type of razor by a simple clip. It travels with the blade or with the motion of the hand. By looking into the mirror the man shaving himself can determine just what progress he is making and whether or not he is going to come through the operation with his two ears intact.

**Paper, Sir?**

Experiments with Jack pine have shown that it is well suited for making kraft paper. On some of the national forests this tree is used to plant land which is too poor to grow other timber.

**Daily Thought.**

A soul occupied with great ideas, best performs small duties; the divinest views of life penetrate most clearly into the meanest enterprises.—Martineau.

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