BETZVILLE TALES

Aunt Rhinocolura Betz and the Absent Treatment

By Ellis Parker Butler
Author of "Pigs is Pigs" Etc.
ILLUSTRATED BY PETER NEWELL

Philo Gubb is one of the tenderest hearted men in Betzville. He hasn't the style necessary to mingle in our best society, but he has a good heart, and when his speckled hen died after setting on a nest of eggs for a week Philo's heart bled with pity for the poor motherless eggs. The very minute he saw the dead hen he hurried over to Aunt Rhinocolura Betz' and asked if he could borrow one of her hens, but they were all engaged in family business of their own just then, and Philo sat down on the edge of the porch and wept. After he had wept about a quart of tears he perked up all of a sudden, and asked Aunt Rhinocolura if she was using her hot-water bottle. When she said no, that her neuralgia wasn't giving her much trouble that summer, Philo just jumped up and down for joy.

As soon as Aunt Rhinocolura gave him the hot-water bottle he hurried home, hippity hopping with joy, and filled the hot-water bottle up to the neck, and screwed the stopper in, and laid it with gentle hand on top of the eggs. During the day the eggs did not worry him much after that, for the sun kept the water in the hot-water bottle warm enough, but it was a touching sight to see Philo at night. He spent all his time at the edge of

He Got Thoroughly In the Notion That the Hot Water Bottle was Really a Hen.

could to help the beauty-waves by keeping her nose well vaselined and by massaging it with the flat of her thumb to render it soft and sympathetic. At the eighth treatment, however, she gave this up, for she was startled to find that, as she supposed, the massaging was gradually pushing her nose into her face. But when, after two more treatments, she found that her nose would no longer hold her eye-glasses, she knew the beauty doctor was really having some effect.

At first Aunt Rhinocolura was surprised to find her nose lessening in this way, and it was quite an annoyance not to be able to wear her nose glasses, but she got a pair of lorgnettes, which she could hold in her hand, and got along very well. As for her nose retreating a little, she looked at it logically. She knew she had a very stubborn case of nose, and that it would be quite a feat to turn it into an aristocratic nose, with a bee-line profile, and she knew that when a jumper is going to make an extraordinarily hard jump he usually steps back a few feet to get a good start, and she thought that probably her nose was just backing up a little to get a good ready for a big spurt.

So Aunt Rhinocolura rested peacefully, and every Thursday at 10 a. m. she would turn her nose toward Philadelphia and assume a quiescent state of mind, and the beauty waves would come hurtling along and impinge on her nose. So many citizens wanted to be present at the occasions when the waves arrived that she had to issue admission cards, and it was indeed affecting to see our best society sitting around Aunt Rhinocolura waiting for her nose to wiggle. It affected her nose that way. Exactly at 10 a. m. the waves would arrive, and for 15 minutes, while they continued, Aunt Rhinocolura's nose would tremble like Omma, Noocha, Poppa, Toocha—Rick, Stick, Stan, Staw—O-U-T, all out!"

But the most gladdening thing to the hard heart of man was to see the way in which Philo helped supply a mother's care to those little chicks. They seemed to sense right at first that the hot-water bottle was the only mother they had, and they would run to it, chirping out their little joys and sorrows, and Philo kept it full of hot water, so it would feel cosy and comfortable to the chicks. He used to sneak away once in awhile and dig a worm or two in the potato garden, and come back and drape it through the handle of the stopper of the bottle, and then stand off behind the door and cluck like a hen does when it has found a worm, and then he would smile when the chicks ran up and grabbed the worm. When the chicks got large enough to venture out a little Philo tied a string to the hot-water bottle and dragged it around the yard after them.

He got so thoroughly into the notion that the hot-water bottle was really a hen that sometimes he would drag it over into his vegetable garden, and then shoo at it to drive it out. He treated that auto-hen just as a mother hen should be treated.

Probably he took to it more because that as soon as the treatment began the warts began to grow, until they were so long he had to braid them and do them up in a coil to keep from stepping on them. He said he hoped it was part of the cure, but that if they got much longer he would write to the man. He said no man could expect to remain indolent while his warts were rapidly gaining the two-yard post.

By that time Aunt Rhinocolura's nose had shrunk until it was a mere reminiscence, and she persuaded Cousin Gildad that they ought to write to the beauty doctor, so they did. Come to find out, the office help had got the two Betz names mixed, and had entered them wrong on the card system, and the doctor had been giving Cousin Gildad a growing treatment for his warts and Aunt Rhinocolura an effacing treatment for her nose.

But the doctor was a most accommodating man, and he wrote that, although their course of treatment had expired in both cases, he would give them a post-graduate course at only half price. So the next Thursday at 10 a. m. he began, and at 10:15 Aunt Rhinocolura had enough nose to see with a microscope, but it was still more of a dent than a bump. And the next Wednesday at 4:15 p. m. Cousin Gildad measured his warts and found they had shrunk an inch. So he kept on with the treatment until his warts were all gone, but the very minute Aunt Rhinocolura found her nose back to its old size and specifications she turned her nose away from Philadelphia. But she will never be quite the same again, for whenever her nose happens to point in that direction accidently it begins to tremble and palpitate like a thing in distress.

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THE BOY WHO RAN AWAY

A Story That Turned Out the Other Way.

This boy decided that he would run away from home.

He had a good home, and all like that, but he didn't care for home any more.

Anyhow, he figured it that his folks, namely his father and mother, were handing it out to him pretty hard. They declined to permit him to play with the gang. They interfered with him in lots of ways.

Consequently, after giving the matter due and proper thought the boy decided that there was but one thing for him to do, and that was to run away.

Away from home, he felt he would be able to indulge in his natural propensities without let or hindrance.

Now, his most natural propensity, as it seemed to him, was for the robbing of trains—far western trains.

The boy had a profound feeling that he was modelled, cut out, fashioned, devised and intended by nature to be the greatest robber of trains that ever crawled over the tender of an engine and put the engineer and fireman under a sawed off shotgun filled with slugs.

He felt, too, that his folks would be liable to thwart such an ambition on his part were he to mention it to them.

He figured, therefore, that in view of these considerations the only proper thing for him to do was to get his few things together and beat it. He had read many pieces of fiction—all of the fiction, however, as he understood, founded upon fact—which related how famous train robbers had started off upon their distinguished careers by running away from home just as he meant to do, and hom something always turned up pretty soon to put them in a way of achieving a mastery of their chosen profession.

And so the boy, working very secretly and deliberately, gathered together all his little possessions and wrapped them up in a big silk muffler belonging to his father. There wasn't much to be packed in the muffler, but still he didn't elect to leave his few little possessions behind, since he was very certain that he would not return to his boyhood home for many, many years, if ever.

It was a beautiful moonlit night when he decided to make the jump. He went to bed, or pretended to go to bed, and waited for his parents and grown-up brothers and sisters to turn in. Then with his little bundle slung over his shoulder at the end of a stout stick he softly stole down the stairs, opened the front door noiselessly, tiptoed out after closing the door, and, reaching the front gate, turned to gaze, as he felt, upon the home of his youth for the last, last time.

He made directly for the freight depot at the other end of the town, his idea being that, as he had often read in connection with other runaway heroes, he might be able to catch an outgoing freight train. As there wasn't any outgoing freight train that night, daylight found him still hanging around the freight yard.

By this time he was pretty hungry, and he thought of the usual ham and eggs and hot muffins and things that he'd been accustomed to eat for breakfast. Somehow in the clear, sunny light of morning it looked a heap more difficult to get a start as a train robber than it had seemed while he was planning the great expedition. He stood and watched the freight hands making themselves some coffee on a little stove in a signaling shack, and his hunger became something fierce, and he thought of the nice clean tablecloth and—

However, just a minute. Just one minute.

Here is the spot where it is customary to get in swift climactic action.

It is the usual thing to narrate how the hungry would-be runaway boy who hankered to be a train robber fizzled out in his desire as he thought about the home grub, and how he began to whimper around the freight yard, and how two or three kindly, grizzled freight yard hands asked him what was chewin' on him, and how they finally got his story out of him, and how they sympathetically advised him to beat it for home and paw and maw just as fast as he could go, and how he, of course, hated to go home, because he didn't know how he was going to square things for having remained out all night, but how, eventually, he became so dad-blasted hungry that he had to just nachully abandon all thought of becoming a train robber, and how he slunk into the alley back of his home after dark, and how he got nailed by his dad as he tried to nudge through the kitchen door, and how his dad got out the old trunk strap and whaled him good and plenty, and how that eternally killed his ambition to become a train robber, and—

Well, and all like that-a-way, a lot of it, always and infallibly just like that.

But it didn't break that way at all

This boy caught a freight right out of town on the morning following his running away from home, and after some vicissitudes he finally fell in with the famous Bill Dalton gang, and he became a full-fledged train robber and a mighty dangerous specimen, and after seven or eight years of robbing trains he was finally corralled somewhere in the Panhandle of Texas and riddled with bullets by a sheriff's posse.

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The Dove of Peace Seeks In Vain for a Resting Place.

Stories of Colorado and The Rocky Mountains

SOME FACTS ABOUT THE WONDERFULLY RICH GRAND VALLEY.

In the great valley of the Grand River, on the Western Slope of Colorado, thousands of fruit growers are getting rich off of five and ten-acre tracts of land. They work a few months each year real hard, and a majority of them spend their winters in California—or go to Europe. Grand Junction is the largest town in the valley, being located near the confluence of the Grand and Gunnison Rivers, only a short distance from the Utah line. Residents of the valley leave home at 4:00 o'clock in the afternoon over the Colorado Midland and are in Denver for breakfast. Palisade, twelve miles east of Grand Junction, is the second largest town in the valley.

One by one the Eastern farmers are learning of the advantages offered them in Colorado, and once they are convinced do not hesitate long in surrendering the big 160-acre farm back East for the little peach and pear and apple orchards of the Western Slope. For instance, H. J. Box of Perry, Iowa, came to Palisade a short time ago and looked around. He saw and was convinced. A few days ago he bought a six-year-old orchard of fifteen acres at $2,250 per acre. Six years ago the same land changed hands at $45 an acre. The fruit trees made the difference. Box's Iowa farm probably brought $150 an acre, and his fifteen acres will pay double that amount annually on each acre.

A fruit country makes a good business town. Instead of drawing trade from big farms scattered over a wide territory of 160 to 320 acres each, the merchant has a population of about one to every acre. And so, although the Grand Valley is small in area, considered from the eastern standpoint, it is a rich and populous territory from the merchant's point of view.

The Grand Valley is only forty miles in length, with an average width of six miles. On either side loom high mountains, which shut off cold winds and from whence comes the precious water which makes the wealth of the fertile land. Approximately it has 150,000 acres of fertile land adaptable to the cultivation of fruit.

All of the fruit land is irrigated, but there is no lack of water. The available water supply can irrigate more than 1,000,000 acres. The United States government is now completing the surveys on what is known as the High Line ditch and actual work has started. This ditch alone will bring an additional 70,000 acres under irrigation, and some of the land is being planted now, with the expectation of getting water as it is needed.

Fruit is the poor man's harvest, so the people of the Grand Valley believe. Five acres will support a family, ten will make a man independent for life. They estimate that each acre of fruit will support one person. And acting on that theory, the Grand Valley will have a population of 150,000 depending upon fruit alone within a few years.

Chance for the Poor Man.

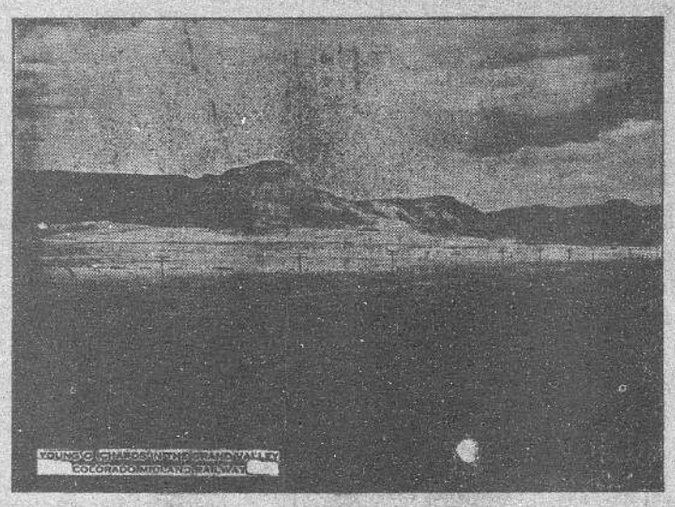
Ten acres, the fruit men say, will make a man rich. This is all one man can care for, and as the acreage under one control is increased, it is claimed, the productiveness must necessarily be less from lack of individual attention. Of course, all men do not hold to the same theory. Verner Z. Reed, the Colorado Springs millionaire, put out 1,000 acres to fruit on the Western Slope last year. W. B. Cross of Denver, who was and still is interested in the shoe business there, has recently moved to the Grand Valley, where he has planted 240 acres in fruit—apples, peaches, pears and cherries. He has one of the most magnificent ranches on the slope, on a high level stretch of ground, commanding a view of miles, and with an ideal home. His is a new orchard—240 acres. In a few years at the estimate usually indulged in at Grand Junction, his farm will be producing an income of nearly $150,000 annually.

The poor man has the same chance with the man who can buy hundreds of acres—better. For he can produce more fruit to the acre than the man or corporation with the big acreage. Ten acres is the average sized fruit ranch in the valley. Many are but five acres, while one acre suffices in many cases for the man who lives in town. In Palisade are many homes with the average yard, where sufficent fruit is produced to pay the living expenses of the family. In Grand Junction the fruit trees within the city are few. In Palisade the reverse is true. A mile and a half from Palisade is a big country school house with six rooms. Three hundred students attend the school, which may give an idea of the density of the population.

The fruit industry in Grand Valley is conducted on a business basis. The farmers early learned the advantages of cooperation.

The fruit growers' organizations market the entire crop. The usual friction between farmer and commission man is thus eliminated. The fruit growers' association arranges for the shipments east and west and to Europe. It takes entire charge of the crop once it is ready for market. The grower need not bother his head after he gets his fruit packed. The association does the rest, thus giving the grower the advantage of carload rates in shipment, the profit of the best prices and also the assurance of a steady market.

Persons interested in visiting the valley for the purpose of sight-seeing, or with a view to settling there, are furnished full information in the form of literature, together with names of reliable real estate firms, upon application to C. H. Speers, general passenger agent, Colorado Midland Railway, Denver, Colo.



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The Greatest Gift

By Wilbur D. Nesbit

"In the beginning . . . . ."—(Genesis i. 1.)

Only one man was made of dust.
So did a blessing fall on all the rest
That gives us hope and joy and faith and trust
And memory of what was right and best;
For to us all then came the beaten gold
Of childhood days, that we might cherish when
We should sit, empty-handed, bent and old,
But dream the dreams of other days again.

Only one man was made of earth.
To him alone the blessing was denied
Of knowing fields that rang with magic mirth;
Of footing over meadows fair and wide,
Of singing to the birds that in return
Sang childish pipings that but childish ears
May understand, and little hearts may learn—
And old hearts know when come the fleeter years.

Only one man was made of dust.
And so we had our fellowship with bees,
And knew the secret of the sighing gust
That shook the honeyed blossoms from the trees;
And we knew where the fairies danced at night
And we heard fairy horns blow blithe at morn,
And we heard spear on shield in warfare smite
All through the summer regiments of corn.

Only one man was made of earth.
And so we knew the days that were the best,
The days that made all else of little worth—
Their sunshine lingers yet within the breast.
Their clouds? Ah, had they clouds? We do not know,
For in those golden days we knew,
Those wondrous days in that far long ago,
It seems the sky was always clear and blue.

Only one man was made of dust.
So we, when worn and weary of our play,
Had father arms in whose strength we could trust,
And mother lips to kiss the hurts away.
Else, now that we are old, we could not find
The marvel-things our memory has freed,
And to the childhood days all deaf and blind,
This life of ours were very dust, indeed!

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The Lost Eden

By Wilbur D. Nesbit

"Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the Garden of Eden."
The Book of Genesis, iii. 23.

A breeze sighs out from Eden
When day draws on to night—
A gentle breeze that sways the trees
Upon each distant height.
It whispers, whispers, whispers
Of lonely Edenland,
But there be few save I and you
Who hear and understand.

The breeze comes perfume-laden
From apple-bloom and rose,
And honey-wines from flowering vines
In fields where no man goes.
And on into the sunset
The Eden breeze will drift,
To faint and drowse about the brows
That wearily uplift.

It brings the crooning echoes
Of humming of the bees;
Across the hill it bears the trill
Of birds' fair melodies;
It chants of reaching meadows,
It speaks of laughing streams,
The wondrous shade the good trees made
It flings above our dreams.

O, you and I we know it—
The breeze that comes at eve,
When mint and musk float through the dusk
And fantasies we weave;
The breeze that seems to murmur,
When all about is still,
Of all we lost—the bows that tossed
Their welcome from the hill

The dark grows close and closer,
And once again we start
To thread the ways of those old days
That linger in the heart.
The breeze it whispers, whispers,
Of lonely Edenland,
But there be few save I and you
Who hear and understand.

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