

# His Father's House

By HAROLD CARTER

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"It has always been my practice," said the dean, "to baptize a child on Easter eve. I ask the members of my congregation to help me to continue this practice."

Everybody knew the dean's love of children. He had had three of his own, one, a girl, had died, another girl was married and living in the West; and of the dean's son only a few people knew anything. After a wild college career he had disappeared abruptly from his father's house. The cause of the quarrel nobody knew, but all knew that the fault lay with the son. Since that day father and son had never communicated with each other.

It lacked five days of Easter, and, prolific in births though Madbury was, no child had been born lately that had not been baptized, except the occasional child that was not destined to be baptized. In vain the good-hearted women of the congregation hunted through the lists of the parishioners.

"There's Mrs. Martin's baby," said one to another, as the news came of the tenth child of the baker's wife. "But you can't take a baby six days old to be christened in weather like this."

"We've got to get somebody," said Mrs. Latour. "Have you tried the hospitals, dear?"

They hunted through the hospitals, and at last their quest was rewarded. There was a colored baby, two and a half weeks old, in perfect health. But the parents belonged to an obscure sect which insisted on baptism by its own ministers.

"If you'll help us not disappoint the dean, Mrs. Washington, I'll give you ten dollars," said Mrs. Latour. "And



"But I've never seen Dean Farrell," a silk dress. And a new suit of clothes for your husband. And a job in our garden."

"Do you think Ah'm going to sell mah baby's soul for silk and gold?" demanded the indignant Mrs. Washington, sitting up fiercely among her pillows.

The women beat a hasty retreat. The last hope seemed gone. And then it was that the great discovery was made.

There was a baby—and Mrs. Latour found it. It had been born three weeks before, in a rooming house at the other end of the town. The mother, a delicate, frail young thing, listened in awe as Mrs. Latour told her of the dean's wish.

"But I've never seen Dean Farrell," she whispered.

"That makes no difference," answered Mrs. Latour. "Now don't be a foolish girl, but do just as I tell you. I'm going to let the dean know an hour or so before the christening."

She did not tell any of the other women of the congregation, and Madbury was agog to know whether or not Dean Farrell would be able to carry out his long-cherished custom. And, as the days went by, and the scramble to find a baby became more and more acute, without visible result, it was confidently anticipated that the dean would not.

Dean Farrell was greatly distressed. He had kept to his custom for more than thirty years. In fact, the first baby that he had ever baptized had been his own wayward son, of whom he thought constantly. Like every father, he saw him, not as the grown man who had defied him, but as the little child whom he had held in his arms at the baptismal font and who had filled all his life.

His heart was very heavy. The boy might be dead. Worse things than death might have befallen him. Somewhere on the broad face of the earth was the man whom he had held in his arms at the baptismal font and who had filled all his life.

It was at the eleventh hour that Mrs. Latour came to the deanery, when the dean had long given up hope. Her face was alight with triumph.

"I've found him!" she cried happily. "Him!" said the dean vaguely. He had been seated in his office, thinking of his son at the time when she was announced. The words seemed like an answer to his prayer, and he connected them with him.

"The dearest little boy baby. And he'll be here with his mother in half an hour. She's a girl from the other end of the town, and I found her by accident. I'm going to be god-mother, my husband will be one god-father, and the verger has just said he'll be the other."

"But the father?" queried the dean. "Dean Farrell," said Mrs. Latour seriously, "you know you said that you would give anything to have a baby to baptize, and it was pretty difficult to get one for you. This is a case of private troubles, and you mustn't complicate matters by asking questions, please."

"I won't, then," answered the dean. Half an hour later he stood before the christening font, looking thoughtfully into the face of the girl-mother, who was opposite him. Beside her stood Mrs. Latour, holding a baby that behaved with all a baby's traditional goodness at baptism. It neither stirred nor cried, but lay in Mrs. Latour's arms with its blue eyes wide open, and fixed on the dean's face.

The service proceeded, and all the time he was speaking the Dean was thinking of his own lost child. His son had lain in his arms in the same tranquil way, and he had never guessed what trouble was to come after.

But there was trouble now. There was trouble on the young mother's face. Timid and shy, she seemed unable to conceal her grief. The Dean saw the tears well into her eyes and roll down her cheeks as he took the infant into his arms and asked its name.

After a slight pause Mrs. Latour stepped forward and whispered it. And the Dean stared into the face of the child he held. It was his own name that she had spoken.

One little hand clutched at his surprise. The face, upturned to his, the eyes that looked gravely, almost questioningly, into his own, told him the secret. It was his own grandson that he was holding. He traced his son's features, as a child's, in this child's face; it might have been his own boy that he held in his arms again. His prayer had been answered, although not as he had asked it.

He felt that as he poured the water over the head of the babe. Then the ceremony was over. The mother held the babe in her arms again and the register had been signed. Mrs. Latour and her husband had slipped away. The mother had gone, and Dean Farrell stood alone in the vestry.

Only a minute, but in that minute he summed up an eternity. Then he went through the church. At the door he came upon the young mother. She was just leaving, and at her side, behind the pillar, where he had stood throughout the ceremony, he saw his son.

For just one instant the two men hesitated. Then the Dean's arms were about the grown man, as if he were the little boy whom he had lost.

"You must come home," he said. "This day I have taken two children into my Father's house."

## SOME NATURAL SOAP PLANTS

Weeds of the Southwest That Will Produce a Copious Lather.

In western Nebraska and Kansas, in Colorado, New Mexico and parts of Utah, Arizona, Texas and Mexico, grow the plants commonly known as Spanish bayonet, hen grass or soap weed. The Philadelphia Inquirer observes:

The first name is suggested by the stiff, sharp-pointed leaves that stand like a cluster of bayonets round the crown of the plant, as if to protect the tall spike of large, greenish-white flowers that shoots up during the early summer. The last named comes from the use that the native peoples of these regions have long made of the plant, for it contains a substance known as saponin, which forms a lather in water much like that of soap. The material can be used to wash articles that would be injured by the alkalis of ordinary soaps. The roots of the plant, which contain most of the soap-like substances, are generally used.

The Indians bruise these roots between two stones and put them into cold water to steep for a few minutes. Then they stir the mixture vigorously and rub it between their hands, an operation that soon produces a copious lather. Then they throw away the root fibers and use this suds they have produced.

Soap manufacturers have begun to use soap weed in making a mild soap for the toilet and for washing delicate fabrics. Ranchmen, on whose land the soap weed is a nuisance, can often sell it for enough to pay for clearing the land. The weed can be dug at any time, dried, baled and sent by rail to the soap factories. The species of soap weed most commonly employed is the large fruited, Spanish bayonet, *Yucca baccata*, the fruits of which were formerly eaten, when dried, by the Indians. Another common species, *Yucca glauca*, is also employed as a source of the vegetable soap.

A Crab's Ingenious Disguise.

There is a species of small crab found upon the English coast that is so afraid of its enemies that it has found out, or perhaps been taught, a clever way to hide itself. An Englishman had one of these crabs as a pet, and he was lucky enough to visit the creature when it was in the very act of making his "wig." The crab first tore off a piece of green, ribbonlike seaweed with his pincers and placed one end in his mouth. This he sucked and nibbled and mated with some secretion of the nature of glue, that hardened under water, and then he pressed the sticky end upon his back. By and by his back was covered with a regular green and wavy wig, so that, as he crawled about, he looked like a bunch of seaweed in gentle motion. It is to be presumed that such a crab makes a sweet mouthful for a hungry fish, and that he makes the wig to prevent his being gobbled up. From time to time, of course, the wig requires repairing.

Ancient History.

Jonah had just been swallowed by the whale. Gazing upon his narrow quarters, he said: "Oh, well, this isn't any worse than the flat I've been living in." Whereupon he doubled himself up and proceeded to take a nap.

Result of Association.

"This aviator's assistant takes too readily to the business."

"In what way?"

"He has been at it only a week and here he wants a raise."

"Something Just as Good."

During the prevalence of high prices for drugs many citizens have taken to fresh air, sunshine and good foods, with excellent results.—Chicago News.

# On the Mighty Tigris



PICTURESQUE CRAFT ON THE TIGRIS

ALONG the flooded banks of the Tigris river the English campaign in Mesopotamia is still being waged. It has brought into the light this great water course of western Asia which has almost as many historical associations as the Euphrates, which flowed through the Garden of Eden. A bulletin issued by the National Geographic society gives an interesting account of this highway of ancient civilization, which seems to have assumed once more the role of history maker.

The great Tigris, upon whose banks there flourished the magnificent city of Lagash and the great Babylonian empire more than three thousand years before the Christian era, today has fallen to such lowly estate that even the Turks and Arabs, whom it sustains, scorn to do it honor. Almost contemptuously they have given it the sobriquet, "the cheap camel," because it is used by the natives of its upper reaches to bring down rafts or keleks from Diarbekir to Bagdad, where the wood is sold while the inflated skins used as floats are deflated.

On its turbid course through Mesopotamia, the Tigris, which is traversed by small boats for a distance nearly four times as great as the navigable reaches of the Hudson river, flows past many ruins which have proved an almost inexhaustible mine of information for archeologists. Opposite Mosul, from which we have derived the word muslin, applied to the fabric first imported into Europe from this town in the twelfth century, there are to be found the extensive remains of what was once haughty Nineveh, ever associated in the popular mind with the Biblical account of Jonah, the great fish and the gourd vine.

Ruins of Once Mighty Assur. Sixty miles down the river from Nineveh, which was the last capital of Assyria, there squats the mean little Arab village of Kal'at-Shergat, on the buried ruins of Assur, the first great city of the Assyrian empire. It was in honor of their god Assur that high priests founded the city of the same name. These priests, builders and administrators were at first under the suzerainty of Babylon, but when that empire fell into decay they succeeded in establishing themselves as independent kings, founding a dynasty which held ruthless sway over this section of the world for centuries.

Another historic place on the banks of the Tigris is Nimrud, which legend tells us was built by the Biblical hero who in addition to being a mighty hunter is credited with having been the projector of the Tower of Babel, and also with having cast Abraham into the fire because the father of the Israelites refused to worship idols.

Not long ago British soldiers were contending with the Turks in the environs of the ancient capital of the Parthian kings, Ctesiphon, a few miles south of Bagdad. Here one finds the ruins of the great palace known as "the throne of Khorsrau," the most remarkable example of sassanian architecture extant.

The Tigris has two main sources in the Taurus mountains, at an elevation of 5,000 feet. The headwaters of the western branch are only two or three miles from one of the sources of the Euphrates. After the two branches join the river flows in a southeasterly direction for 800 miles until it unites with the Euphrates 70 miles above the Persian gulf, and forms the Shatt-el-Arab. The two principal towns on this waterway of ancient glory are Bagdad and Basra.

Diarbekir Once Was Rich. Diarbekir, situated on the upper Tigris, has an impressive situation. Built upon a basaltic table land, surrounded by walls constructed of basaltic rock, the city overlooks a broad bend of the Tigris, which flows by its eastern side. Beneath the walls of the city and within the bend of the river lies a plain covered with vegetation of every shade of green that the East can produce.

Few cities of the earth have undergone greater vicissitudes than Diarbekir. Roman and Persian, Armenian and Parthian, Arab and Turk have dominated its fate.

Satisfied.

Returning home from a scientific meeting one night, a college professor, who was noted for his concentration of thought, was still pondering deeply on the subject that had been under discussion. Upon entering his room he heard a noise that appeared to come from under the bed.

"Is anyone there?" he asked, absently.

"No," professor, answered the intruder, knowing his peculiarities.

"That's strange," murmured the professor. "I was almost sure I heard someone under the bed."—Harper's Magazine.

Reasonable Assumption.

"What do you think of a sounder who would drive nails through a board and lay it in the road to puncture automobile tires?"

"If anyone should play tricks like that on me," said the man, who reads diplomatic notes, "I would consider his act deliberately unfriendly."

MAN MUST PAY IN THE END

Social Law Exacts Living Wage From Communities After All—Conditions in New York.

It has been estimated by social scientists that \$400 a year is the lowest income on which a family of five can live in decency in New York. The wages paid by New York city to laborers is \$480 a year. This is \$80 below the mark. But is it \$360 saved? It is not, declares Detroit Free Press. There is a law, a natural social law, that when society refuses to pay the price of decency and justice, it pays the price of indecency and injustice—and the latter is the heavier price.

Take the case of New York. The worker who earns \$360 less than a living wage still lives, but he takes the difference—and more—out of the community. When his children are sick the public doctor attends them. When the child is injured, a public hospital cares for it at public expense. When work is not to be had public funds buy the family its bread and fuel.

When the moral fruits of such a life

## TO MATE WITH AMERICANS

Probable That a Part of the Surplus European Women Will Come to This Country.

For every man that has fallen in the European war a woman somewhere has lost a sweetheart or a husband. The final figures which death, the reaper, will write red at the bottom of his record will correspond with just so many unmarried women, unmarried with small possibility of marrying while they live in their native lands.

The women of the man-reduced nations must either face lives of celibacy or go elsewhere for their husbands. It is therefore predicted that a vast influx of woman immigrants to America will be witnessed as soon as peace is established.

The question of handling this possible influx is already being discussed and a large philanthropic land development concern has been suggested to form colonies where the immigrant war widows and others may own and operate farms.

But a woman without a man on a farm would not be a very safe investment even for a philanthropist. So the question of finding husbands for the various nationalities of Europe is one that must be seriously met and solved.

The great percentage of our own women live in the East. And in the middle West and Southwest there are hundreds of thousands of ranch owners, cowboys and miners who have few opportunities for marriage.

But suppose a shipload of fascinating foreign women were transported to the center of the cowboy region—all desiring to make some lonely, healthy and handsome "puncher" a helpful wife. What would be the effect on those sturdy Americans on the range? Suppose another shipload were carried to a prosperous mining town, where thousands of lonely men live in barren boarding houses, or keep bachelor cabins among the hills. Would the cowboys stampede and would the miners drop their muck sticks to marry the transplanted female species?

Both the owners of mines and ranches prefer to have their men married, because in that state they don't drift around from camp to camp so much. They would therefore give such a matrimonial propaganda sufficient and encouraging backing. And as for the bachelors, who among them would not feel the call of romance offered in such a way?

French, Russian, Viennese, English and Italian, with a corresponding language and manner to each. The only need would be a hyphenated dictionary and a hurrying clergyman. Does romance ever need a language when mating does the talking?

Trick to Dodge U-Boats.

There is one trick in the game of beating the submarines which was played very well by the ship that brought me across the Atlantic from Liverpool. She was advertised to sail on a Wednesday at 5 p. m. On Tuesday afternoon each person who had booked passage by her received a personal and private notification from her agents that her sailing had been postponed for two days. Of course, it would be extremely difficult to get that information to any submarine which might be lying in wait for that particular ship in time to do the submarine any good; but, just to make it a little more certain, she did not sail even at the postponed time. The passengers all went up to Liverpool on Friday and aboard ship. The vessel pulled out of the dock and anchored in the stream. There she waited for orders from the admiralty. It was thick and cold, with frequent snow squalls, all day on Saturday—ideal weather for dodging submarines; but the admiralty did not give the word to go until that evening. Then we went out into the murk at top speed.

—Oscar King Davis in the Saturday Evening Post.

Animals Can Swim.

The author of a book on animals once said "Sheep cannot swim." The statement was accepted because no contradictory evidence could be found, and there seemed to be a prevailing belief in its accuracy. But now Mr. C. H. Hammond, Newton, Kan., writes: "Please take this back. Some years ago a large flock of sheep owned by a Mr. Berryman did swim the North Fork of White river in Arkansas. The sheep were being taken from Arkansas to Howell county, Missouri. The river at that point was over a hundred yards wide, and the current swift."

This seems to settle an interesting point in natural history. That is, it shows that sheep can swim, though it does not make quite clear whether they do so voluntarily, or just how much persuasion was necessary to induce them to enter the water. Even cats and fowls float, so that, when forced into the water in any way, they make some kind of desperate struggle to reach the land.

Denise He Was Eaten by Fish.

George H. Baldwin positively denied that he had been eaten by a shark, despite seemingly overwhelming evidence to the contrary.

Recently a man-eating shark was killed off Catalina island, and when its interior was examined fragments of a man's coat were found, to which was attached a pin of the American Society of Civil Engineers bearing Baldwin's name. His demise was announced in Los Angeles newspapers, and his wife began to receive scores of telegrams and letters of condolence.

Mrs. Baldwin some months ago gave away one of Baldwin's old coats, from which she forgot to remove the pin.—Berkeley (Cal.) Dispatch to San Francisco Chronicle.

Plenty of Blunders.

"That 'Charge of the Light Brigade' was a great poem. What a ringing refrain—'Someone had blundered.'"

"Was that the idea that inspired the poem?"

"You may say so."

"Oo, what a lot of poetry this war ought to bring forth."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

# NEWS and GOSSIP OF WASHINGTON



## Marie Gets Autograph, but Not One She Expected

WASHINGTON.—A smiling gentleman with eyeglasses walked down the curbed path on the White House lawn and was stepping through the gate, when one of two young women, just about to enter, rushed up to him with extended hand. The gentleman lifted his hat and shook the hand.

"Pardon me, Mr. President, but I just can't help telling you how perfectly lovely we think you are, Marie, this is Mr. Wilson. She lives in Wilkes-Barre and has never seen you—"

Marie from Wilkes-Barre ventured out a hand and the gentleman shook it.

"I knew you the minute I saw you, Mr. President. Anybody would know you by your smile. You recognize him by his pictures, don't you, Marie? And, oh, Mr. President, will you mind giving Marie your autograph? It would be perfectly lovely to show it to them at home. Give the president your note book, Marie."

Marie held out the note book. The gentleman took it and wrote: "John T. Brown, Chicago."

It's all right to give his name. He told it himself to a newspaper man.

## Labor Department to Have Handsome New Building

CONTRACTS have been awarded for the construction of a thoroughly modern office building for the department of labor. The new home of the department of labor is to include many features not often found in ever the most modern office buildings. Commodious rest rooms for men and woman employees and a roof garden, are among these features, which also include the probability of a cafe and restaurant for the use of employees of the department.

The new building is to occupy a site 62 by 101 feet on the south side of G street, just west of the corner of Seventeenth street, opposite the department's present home in the Mills building. Two dwellings, two old buildings that have stood since before the Civil war—one of which has been occupied as a branch of the Associated Charities—and a marble yard and ornamental cement works now occupy the site.

The building is to be nine stories in height, and the arrangement is to be such as to provide ample light and ventilation on all sides. Especial attention is being given in the preparation of the plans to provisions for the comfort and health of employees of the department, and it is claimed that the new building, when completed, is to be a model among buildings devoted to the use of government departments.

Materials to be used are buff brick and stone trim, the general style of the new building to be somewhat similar to that of the building occupied by the department of commerce at Nineteenth street and Pennsylvania avenue.

The department of labor has a lease on the building for a term of years at an annual rental of \$24,000.

## Neither "Eels" or "Snakes;" Merely Stringbeans

WHEN John S. Ward of Cherrystone, Va., sauntered into the District building the other day he managed to create a sensation unequalled since that memorable day when Detective Patrick O'Brien shaved off his mustache. The doorkeeper looked at Ward suspiciously.

"I'm not sure you can bring eels into this place," he said.

Ward, lightly twirled the three-foot, limp and lifeless things that dangled from his right hand.

"They're not eels," he stated, confidently.

Then the elevator boy saw them.

"Snakes!" he exclaimed, with sincere emotion. "Oh, my Lawd!"

And the elevator bounded skyward, with the elevator boy praying at every jump that the passenger wouldn't ride to the top floor.

However, that is what Ward did. He landed on the fifth floor and carried his treasure into one of the offices.

"Stringbeans," announced Ward, calmly. "They're three feet long, too." There was no question about it. The stringbeans were measured, and one of them was 38 and a fraction of inches in length. Ward claims that one stringbean, upon which he lavished particular attention, reached the length of 44 inches, which he states is a stunning record-breaker for this part of the country. Six of Ward's stringbeans will provide a sufficient supply for a small family—providing the family isn't overfond of stringbeans.

The butt end of these mammoth beans is strongly reminiscent of the head of a reptile.

## Career of Historic Coast Guard Cutter Is Ended

THE remarkable and historic career of the coast guard cutter *Thetis*, covering a period of 35 years, is done. Having "outlived her usefulness," in the said, matter-of-fact way in which she is thrown into the discard as superannuated, who consider only efficiency, she was sold recently for \$25,100.

In normal times the *Thetis* would have fetched, coast guard officials estimate, less than \$4,000. The present scarcity of ships caused many firms to submit bids for the vessel. Even at the price \$25,100, however, officials believe she virtually will pay for herself on her first commercial trip because of the prevailing high rates of ocean transportation. It was the *Thetis*—a Dundee whaler—that found the explorer Lieut. A. W. Greely and his six surviving companions of the Lady Franklin Bay Arctic expedition, with death only a matter of hours, in the frozen North and brought them back to civilization. This was the great and glorious accomplishment of this staunch ship, which successfully battled with ice, leading the companion ship, the *Bear*, in this quest, while a third ship, the *Alert*, found the way barred to her utmost endeavors.

This was the feat that brought an undying and unquestioned glory to her commander, then Commander Winfield Scott Schley, afterward the hero of Santiago, and the other naval officers and men who accompanied him in this Greely relief expedition.

Scattered over a U-shaped area a mile long, covering 450 acres, a great powder plant, costing upward of \$1,500,000, was recently completed in five months at Drummondville, Quebec, by an American firm of engineers and constructors. Two acid-making plants added to the original contract have since been built, at an additional cost of \$500,000. As described in the current issue of the *Engineering Record*, the work as a whole required extensive clearing and grading, the construction of heavy machinery, and the fitting of an extraordinary quantity of pipe. It will be operated by the Actua Chemical company of Canada for the manufacture of gun cotton and smokeless powder.

HIS HEART IS IN THE RIGHT PLACE.

Among the soldiers in a London military hospital was a rough-looking fellow with the physiognomy of a prize-fighter, and apparently a complete stranger to the tender and sentimental feeling.

In the same ward lay a drummer boy concerning whom no hope of recovery was entertained. The man puzzled the doctors and nurses. His recovery was strangely delayed, though there was no apparent reason, except his own disinclination, why he should not admit that he was all right and fit to be discharged from the hospital.

A watch was set upon him, and it was then discovered that he was in the habit of making his way to the side of the bed, smoothing his pillow, watching over him, and generally performing the duty of a watchful and affectionate nurse. It was this devotion to the boy which held him to the hospital.