A Good Beginning

By ESTELLE MARSH

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"Dick," said his aunt, "I think you are making a mistake in not marrying Jenny now. Start in with what you have and it will grow."

Dick Larramore was very much impressed with his aunt's advice. He talked with Jenny about it, and they agreed that they would make a beginning at once. Together they could raise $75, and they knew of a cottage they could get for $20 a month. They fixed a date for their wedding and began to hunt for furniture that they could pick up at small cost.

One day Dick heard of an auction sale of household goods that was to take place in a neighboring village and concluded to go over and see if he could get anything that would help him and Jenny at their housekeeping. He bought a dining table for $4 and a sideboard for $6. Among other things put up for sale was a basket full of shells, eggs and other oddities. Dick had always taken great interest in curious things and had quite a collection of old dirk knives, bits of uncommon metals, shells and other articles. There were two large eggs in the basket he saw at the auction that excited his curiosity. He had never seen eggs of that size or shape. He forgot for the time being that he needed furniture and began to bid on the basket of curios. An old woman seemed to covet them and bid against him till she had raised her offer to $7. Dick bid $7.25, and the basket was knocked down to him.

That brought him to his senses. He had invested about one-tenth of all he had to spend for furniture in a basket of worthless trinkets. He was so disgusted with himself that he left the auction and drove home.

The boldest thing he had ever thus far done was facing Jenny, showing her, among his purchases, the basket of knickknacks.

"Why, Dick!" she exclaimed when she saw the latter.

Dick hung his head.

"They'll make a nice ornament for our sitting room," said the girl, seeing by Dick's rueful appearance that he regretted his purchase as much as she did, and, putting her arms around his neck, she gave him a kiss.

"What big eggs these are!" she said. "What bird laid them?"

"I don't know," said Dick, "and I don't care."

"We'll ask Professor Drummond."

Jenny showed Professor Drummond the eggs, and he pronounced them auk's eggs.

"What's an auk?" asked Jenny.

"Alcidae—swimming birds with a pointed bill, very short wings and legs placed very far back. Penguins belong to the alcidae family. I'm not sure," he continued, examining the eggs critically, "but these are eggs of the great auk."

"Is the great auk superior to the rest?" asked Jenny.

"In one respect. They are extremely rare. Indeed, I think they are extinct."

"If they are extinct how came these eggs to be in existence?"

"They must have been procured before the bird's extinction. At any rate they are great curiosities. They must be very valuable."

Jenny's heart leaped for joy. Perhaps they could sell them for what Dick gave for them. This would relieve his mind, and they could buy some kitchen utensils she needed.

"Do you think, professor," she asked, "that we could get as much as $7.25 for them?"

The professor smiled. "If they are great auk's eggs," he replied, "you can get more than a hundred times $7.25."

Jenny opened her eyes.

"I would advise you to put them away carefully. I will bring Professor Wilson, the naturalist, to see them. He will settle the question whether they are great auk's eggs or not."

Jenny put the eggs away. It was all she could do to keep from telling Dick what the professor had said, but she shrank from raising her lover's expectations to have them blighted, so she kept her secret, and the next day the two professors called, looked at the eggs, and Professor Wilson pronounced the eggs those of the great auk. He gave their value at about a thousand dollars each. He agreed to send a man who would offer for them all they were worth except a fair profit.

Jenny kept her secret in fine style, though she said, "Heaven knows what a struggle I have to do so!" One night when Dick came to see her she said to him:

"Dick, you know what a poor business man you showed yourself in buying that basket of trinkets."

"Please bury that matter."

"Well, since you were so stupid as to buy those things I think I had better sell them for you. I've sold the two big eggs already."

"Sold them?"

"Yes. I got a good price for them."

"How much?"

"Two thousand dollars."

"Stop your nonsense and tell me."

Jenny drew a check for $2,000 and tried to show it to him, but her feelings overcame her, and, throwing her arms around his neck, he could see nothing at all.

They spent the rest of the evening locked in each other's arms and planning what they would do with their wealth.

BIRTH OF AN ICEBERG

The Dramatic Experience of Two Antarctic Explorers.

C. E. Borchgrevink, commander of the antarctic expedition of 1898, nearly lost his life by an accident of a nature so peculiar that it is probable no other man could duplicate the experience. At the foot of Mount Terror in February, 1900, he landed from his ship with Captain Jensen and three other men. Then, wishing to take a picture of the shore, he sent his boat back to the vessel to get a camera, and he and Captain Jensen were left alone on the rough beach. Before the boat returned a strange and awful thing happened. Mr. Borchgrevink told the story in the Outlook:

A roar and a rush, with tremendous explosions, shook the beach. The thought came to us that the perpendicular rocks above us were falling. Then we realized what was taking place. The mighty glacier immediately to the west of us was giving birth to an iceberg.

Millions of tons of ice plunged into the ocean. We could see nothing beyond an immense cloud of rolling snow. The water rose from the plunge of this antarctic monarch. I sang out to Jensen, "Now we shall have to face the wave!"

We rushed to the highest point of our limited beach, four feet above the sea. We saw advancing on us a dark green ridge with a white crest. I called to Jensen to struggle for dear life. We clutched the uneven rocks, with our backs toward the advancing water. Although it could not have taken more than seven minutes, the time seemed long before the water closed over our heads.

Floating upward, scrambling upon the rocks, I tore the nails from my flesh in my endeavor to keep from being dragged out. After the second wave we again felt the rocks under our feet.

At the place where Jensen and I first stood the rock was wet twenty feet above our heads. It was somewhat lower when it struck us. Where the wave had struck with full force the face of the rock had been altered, and rocks were still falling when the three men in the boat found us, bleeding and torn.

Two facts had saved us. To our right a small peninsula of the protruded some five feet from the rock, and the rock itself bent toward the west. From the moment it struck the curve of the mountain rock to the west of us the wave took a course more easterly than where Jensen and I stood.

Utilizing the Waste Product.

A parish in the highlands had been out of [illegible] communication with the [illegible] town owing to a severe [illegible] Supplies began to give out, and the minister was much perturbed in mind, as his snuffbox was quite empty. The Sabbath came round. How was he to get through his discourse without the aid of his usual stimulant? He appealed to his faithful henchman, the sexton. Alas, he was in a similar unsatisfactory predicament! How was it to be remedied? Andrew shook his head, thought long and suddenly disappeared. Presently he returned with something resembling snuff wrapped carefully in paper. The minister took a hearty pinch or two and then asked:

"Where did you get it, Andrew?"

"Please, sir, I just went and swept the pulpit cout," was the reply.—Dundee Advertiser.

Spoke Too Soon.

Alexandre Dumas was one day the guest of Dr. Gistal, a leading practitioner in Marseilles. After dinner, while the coffee was being handed round, the host requested the great novelist to enrich his album with one of his witty improvisations.

"Certainly," replied Dumas, with a smile, and, drawing out a pencil, he wrote under the eyes of his entertainer the following lines:

Since Dr. Gistal came to our town
To cure diseases casual and hereditary
The hospital has been pulled down—

"You flatterer!" here exclaimed the doctor, mightily pleased, but the poet went on:

And we have made a larger cemetery.

An Unlikely Substitute.

When I was teaching in the kindergarten I always tried to impress on my pupils the necessity of neatness. One little girl repeatedly forgot her handkerchief. One day I said to her, "Use your kerchief."

She, as usual, "fordot it."

I said, "You did not forget your lunch, did you?"

She looked up in great surprise and said, "I tan't wipe my nose on an apple, tan I?"—Delineator.

Practical Poetry.

"Pa, here's a piece of poetry that says something about a 'moated grange.' What is a 'moated grange,' pa?"

"Lemme look at it. I guess that must be a misprint for 'garage.' A moated garage is one that's designed for motors. That's it.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Contrary.

Biggs—That fellow Oliver is inclined to be somewhat contrary, isn't he?

Driggs—Contrary! Why, if he had two ideas in his head they would fall out with each other.

The Rooster Not the Only One.

You all laugh at the rooster for imagining the sun rises only with his permission and upon being announced by him. How much different are you? Can you conceive of a world without you in it?—Lawrence (Mo.) Journal.

[illegible]

A Good Bluffer

By C. B. BURGESS

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The best bluffer I ever knew was Ned Thornton of Chicago. One winter Ned and I were in Berlin and went together to a students' ball. While Ned was dancing with a very pretty fräulein a young fellow who evidently had a claim upon her came up to him and said:

"I will pigstick you."

That's the way they have over there of telling a man that he's got to fight.

Ned turned upon him with well assumed fury and replied:

"And I will let the sawdust out of you."

Later a dapper officer with a wasp waist stepped up to Ned and handed him a card on which was engraved "Lieutenant Ernst von Battenstein."

Ned, understanding that the officer addressed him as bearer of a challenge, whipped out his own card, on which he had scrawled, "Instructor of Fencing, No. — Dearborn Street, Chicago, U. S. A."

You see, Ned had known very well what was coming and with his usual quick foresight had prepared his first move. With a magnificent sweep of his arm he referred the lieutenant to me, and I agreed to meet the gentleman at a cafe in the Unter den Linden in half an hour.

"Ned," I protested as soon as we were alone, "you can't bluff one of these young Germans with so palpable a device as that. My opinion is that we'd better jump the town. You know well enough you've never handled a foil in your life, and at shooting you couldn't hit a ten story building at ten paces. We don't duel any in America, and it's no disgrace to flee from these fellows who do. All we have to do is to lose ourselves for the rest of the night and take an early train in the morning."

"Oh, there's some better way out of it than that. Do you know what General Grant said when going to conquer his first enemy? He said that the other fellow was probably as much scared as he was, and so he went on. Well, I've put at least the probability into this young man's head that I'm an expert, and if he doesn't believe me he won't be sure that I'm not. You go and talk with his second and hear what he has to say."

I went. Von Battenstein and to [illegible] had one in his gaze conveyed a [illegible] dent air. I said, as blandly as possible, for whom a man is playing a [illegible] game it's best to let him do it all [illegible] self. "The slightest bluffing [illegible] Ned in this instance might cost him his life. When the lieutenant asked what weapons my friend as the challenged party would choose I [illegible] replied, "Foils, of course," and [illegible] other details I let [illegible] but except that the matter must be settled at once, as my man had an engagement in Paris with a man who needed his services in an affair of the same sort.

I flattered myself that this was keeping up the "instructor im fencing" illusion pretty well. If the principal on the other side had been an officer in the army the pretense wouldn't be relied on, for a soldier can't very well back out from sure death. But the would be pigsticker was a civilian, and that wasn't so bad. The officer didn't appear in the issue. Lieutenant, but he was not the man who would have to meet a fencing master.

It was arranged, in order that Ned should meet his engagement in Paris, that we should be at a rendezvous where such affairs are settled at [illegible] o'clock the same morning. I went back and reported the outcome to Ned.

"What are you going to do?" I asked. "You're certainly not going to let this fellow run a sword through your vitals."

"Oh, I'll keep up the bluff till the last minute, and if the thing goes against me I'll find a pretext to slide out with honor."

At 5:30 we took a carriage and drove to the rendezvous. I had left the procurement of the weapons for the enemy, saying that my principal could fence as well with a cutlass as a foil and would rely on them for weapons. When we got on the ground the pigsticker was looking over a sheaf of foils and testing them, evidently thinking that if he was to meet a fencing master who didn't care whether he used a foil or a cutlass he must be carefully armed. It looked to me that the bluff game was up and Ned would have to wiggle out.

Just before taking position Ned sent me to the enemy to say that since he didn't wish to kill his antagonist he would give him the choice between losing an eye or having his nose cut off. I was to bring back word which of these the pigsticker preferred to lose.

I saw by the appearance of the principal on the other side when this cool proposition was announced to him that we had made a break. Von Battenstein took it to him, and they stood apart talking earnestly. I was in suspense as to the issue. Presently the lieutenant came to me and said that his principal had decided that the contest was too unequal to be undertaken and that since his enemy was about to leave for Paris the cause of the [illegible] would be removed.

Well, there was more [illegible] but that was the end of it. [illegible]

The Wicked Multiplication Table.

A minister was hearing his Sunday school repeat the catechism one Sunday preceding confirmation, when a boy from the class of small children ventured to ask a question of the minister.

Turning to the clergyman, the boy inquired in an earnest tone, "Why does the multiplication table spoil people's minds?"

The minister thought at first that the child had misread something or confused a conundrum of a spirit by some time and was about to reprove him when the earnestness of the expression in the upturned face assured him that the question was asked in good faith and required a reply.

"Why do you ask such a question, John? I never knew it to do so," he said.

John turned to his catechism and read from it with a mystified air the question, "Did man grow worse as he began to multiply?" and the accompanying answer, "He did."

Too Convincing a Reason.

Lord Peterborough, who lived in the reign of Queen Anne, [illegible] and one day, [illegible]

[illegible]

The Gypsies.

The origin of the people known as [illegible]

[illegible]

A ROUMANIAN LEGEND [illegible]

The Tragedy From Which Sprang [illegible] Manoli's Well.

A WEIRD TALE OF OLDEN DAYS

[illegible]

Tradition is not history, but it [illegible] to fill in the gaps left by the chronicles [illegible]

[illegible]