

# WHAT AILS NANCY?

By M. QUAD

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Miss Nancy Lee was a maiden of forty and dwelt in the village of Charleeta. She was thirty years old when her parents died, and then she and her brother Ben kept house together for seven or eight years. Then he died, and Nancy was left alone in the world.

Miss Lee could have rented or sold her cottage and boarded, but she elected to be independent by continuing to occupy the place. It was a peaceful village, with nothing to make her afraid, and for several years things went on without a break. Then, all of a sudden, an aunt in a town thirty miles away was brought to her dying bed and sent for Nancy. The spinster was absent two weeks. She smoothed the pillow of the dying woman and brought home a feather bed and half a barrel of pickles. No one noticed anything strange about her until she had been home about a week. She fed her hens and swept her house as usual.

The first one to discover that Miss Nancy Lee was in trouble was Deacon Haskins. He called at the house one evening to borrow a rat trap, and he noticed that she was very nervous. She kept shrugging her shoulders and hitching about, and now and then her mouth would give a twitch at the corners. He solicitously inquired if she had stepped on a carpet tack, and she replied in the negative, and he went home to say to his wife:

"Prudence, Nancy Lee is acting very queer tonight."  
"Good lands!"  
"Hitched around all the time I was in the house."  
"You don't say?"  
"Acted as if she wanted to back up to a tree and rub."  
"Deacon Haskins! I'll run right over! Maybe she's been taken with a spell."

"Oh, I guess it don't amount to anything. Been eating a green apple-like as not. If she gets worse she'll bother us from the kitchen window."  
The deacon's wife didn't go over, but early next morning Mrs. Partridge sent her son Willie over to borrow three eggs for breakfast. He got them, and he returned home with his eyes flicking out to exclaim:

"Ma, Miss Lee was crying when I went in."  
"Is it possible?"  
"Yes; I caught her at it."  
"Was she just crying or boo-hooing?"  
"She was crying and rubbing her back agin the edge of a door."  
"Heaven save us! I can understand that she might be crying over so many deaths in the family, but what on earth was she rubbing her back for?"  
"It itched probably," replied her husband.

"It probably didn't do anything of the sort. There's a mystery here, and I'm going to try to get to the bottom of it."  
After breakfast Mrs. Partridge made an excuse to drop in and see for herself. The spinster's eyes showed that she had been weeping. She also began to hitch about.

"You're like a cow in syntina, Nancy. I've known you for fifteen years, and if you are in trouble I want to help you out."  
"But I'm not in trouble. One feels lonely once in awhile, and then they cry a-come."  
"Yes; I know how it is, and I'm glad it's no worse for you. Run into my house any time. You know you're always welcome."

Miss Lee had denied things, but she hadn't fooled Mrs. Partridge a little bit. The caller left the house ostensibly for home, but slipped into the house of Mrs. Goodhue and greeted her with:

"Ruth Goodhue, there's something going on in this town."  
"Anybody's clothes been robbed?"  
"No, but Nancy Lee is crying and hitching around and rubbing her back on the edges of doors."  
"But what ails her?"  
"That's to be found out. That's the mystery. She says it hasn't nothing to do with course we know better. We must make her tell."  
"Yes, she's got to."  
The two women started out and called on one or two other women, and before night Nancy Lee was the talk of the village. She had been crying and hitching and rubbing and yet had refused to explain. The good wife of Deacon Haskins had dropped in to borrow a rat-trap and then had made opportunity to say:

"Nancy, your mother and me used to play together as children. Why don't you tell me what ails you?"  
"I can't tell," was wailed out.  
"Nancy Lee, are you in love?" was sternly asked.  
"No."  
"Have you been jilted?"  
"No."  
The deacon's wife stuck and hung, but the mystery was not to be solved that day. It was three days later when twenty-seven women, headed by the minister's wife, called and put the spinster through the third degree. Then the awful truth came out.

"Nancy leaned her back crying over her chest," explained Mrs. Haskins to the deacon that evening. "She got a woman to get on a porch painter for her, and when it began to rain, she went to fetch a umbrella."  
"Fetch a umbrella?"  
"Fetch a umbrella?"  
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It is a wise man who knows his own business, and it is a wiser man who thoroughly attends to it.—Wayland.

## HIGH AND LOW CITIES.

And the Differences in Our Altitudes East and West.

The differences between the eastern and western elevations in this country are strikingly striking. Colorado has forty peaks that are more than 14,000 feet above sea level. Mount Washington, in New Hampshire, and Mount Mitchell, in North Carolina, the highest peaks in the Appalachian system north and south respectively, are considerably less than half as high as this above the ocean.

Several transcontinental railway lines in the west pull their main line trains over a greater elevation than that reached by the cog railroad up New Hampshire's above mentioned peak. These western elevations are, of course, reached gradually.

Most large cities lie low. Chicago is only about 600 feet above sea level and Pittsburgh but a hundred feet higher. Philadelphia ranges from sea level to a height in its suburbs of some 300 feet. Minneapolis, near the head of the Mississippi, has an elevation of less than 1,000 feet, and various parts of New Orleans, at the mouth of the great river, are recorded in the government tables as having elevations of from one foot to fifty feet. St. Louis lies about halfway between these terminal cities.

Montana is away up, with its leading city perched at the elevation of the highest peaks of the Adirondack mountains. In Denver there is a mark near the state capitol which is just one mile above sea level.—New York Sun.

## SLEEPING IN CHURCH.

Restful Pews From the Serious and Numerous Standpoints.

It is a matter of common experience that bright lights in a chamber, church or hall where numerous persons are gathered have the effect of producing drowsiness among certain members of the congregation or audience. This phenomenon is easily explained by the current knowledge of hypnotism. The drowsiness produced by the lights is a species of hypnosis. It has been suggested also that lack of proper ventilation causes a toxic quality in the atmosphere to which some people are especially susceptible, the result being an irresistible drowsiness.

Sleeping in church has always been a ready subject for humor. It is recalled that on one occasion when a proposal was under discussion to have a series of sermons preached on topics of the day which were agitating the public minds Rufus Choate, as a member of the congregation, protested vehemently, saying, "I seek my pew, as I seek my bed, for repose." There is also an anecdote of an old Scotchman who was asked if he knew a certain man in the same neighborhood. "Know him?" he replied, with emphasis, "Why, I've slept in the same kirk with him for forty year." But the majority of preachers have never been inclined to take a humorous view of the matter any more than Dean Swift.—Philadelphia Press.

## Largest Water Tank.

The water supply system of Calcutta includes the largest water tank in the world. It covers an area of two and a half acres, and the total weight when it is full of water is 72,000 tons. There are thirty-two miles of steel joists in the vertical-columns and bracings and in the foundations twenty miles of steel joists and tie bars. The capacity of the tank is 9,000,000 gallons of water. The tank acts as a balancer and to assist the pumps when they cannot send sufficient water into the mains to meet the demand. During the night hours, when the pumps provide more water than is required, the excess quantity goes into the tank. When the demand is greater the water from the tank flows automatically into the mains.—New York Herald.

## Brewing's Pat.

Browning shared Rossett's taste for queer pets. His pet owl was well known to visitors at Warwick crescent; also his pet geese, which followed him about like dogs and upon which, "having suffered much from the cackle of reviewers," he bestowed the names of Edinburgh and Quarterly. As a boy he had a monkey and an eagle in the garden at Camberwell, and later in life his pockets were often full of uncanny "portable creatures" to which he had taken a fancy—frogs, toads, lizards and even snakes.—London Standard.

## A Man of Nerve.

He—I called to see you last evening. She—Yes? He—Yes; the servant told me you were not in. She—Yes; I was so sorry to have missed you. He—I thought you must be; I heard you laughing upstairs in such grief stricken tones that I almost wept myself out of sympathy.

## Picking Pockets.

"Picking pockets," said the reformer to the thief, "must be a difficult and precarious business."  
"It is," agreed the pickpocket. "It is until you get your hand in."

## Unhappiness.

It is well for us that man can only endure a certain amount of unhappiness. What is beyond that either annihilates him or passes by him and leaves him apathetic.—Goethe.

## Quite Liberal.

Patience—Isn't she liberal in her views? Patrice—Sure. She can't keep a thing to herself.—Yonkers Statesman.

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## A Realistic Proposal

By EDNA S. TOMES

It was in the sweet summer time when the leaves were beginning to move slowly, that two young persons sat in a flower garden. If the restful scene about them were not enough to stir their young blood, the perfume of the flowers was more than enough.

"I went the other night," he said, "to see this young fellow Brown show off in palmistry. He read my lines, and it was really quite remarkable how many truths he told me."

"What did he tell you?"  
"Well, he said that I hadn't yet met the girl who would make me happy."

He looked at her searchingly. She looked out at the flowers.  
"Did he say you had met the girl who would make you miserable?" she asked.

"Well, no; he didn't say anything about that."  
"Then he didn't mention any particular girl?"  
"No; he didn't."  
"Oh, I didn't know but that he had somebody with a red head and freckles in view."

"He explained that what he meant was that I had met a girl who could make me happy if she wanted to, but that she didn't want to."

She was not to be drawn out in this fashion. Young men are prone to fish for a sign. They don't usually get it. The girl prefers to have him do it all alone by himself. It's not her part to tell him anything to aid him in making up his mind whether he is to be accepted or thrown over her shoulder.

"Did he say she was red headed?"  
"No. Why do you ask that?"  
"Oh, everybody has noticed your attentions to Sue Baker."

"Everybody except myself. I have not noticed it."  
"Then it's time you did."

His feeling around for a sign was not succeeding. There was a faint indication of jealousy in this continued introduction of a girl to whom he had shown some attention, but this didn't mean love or that he would be an accepted suitor if he proposed. He was ready to offer both love and marriage, but what man cares to do that without some assurance that he is not to be turned down?

"Miss Baker is a lovely girl," he said after a pause. "Any man who wins her I think she would make happy. Her hair isn't red, it's auburn, and I never noticed any freckles on her face."

"I dare say she is a beautiful character. That's what you want, I suppose, and if you are color blind she would suit you very well."

"I don't see what she has to do with this conversation. I didn't bring her into it."  
He said this in a miffed tone. She recognized that it was time to tighten the line a bit—the fish might get off the hook. But she didn't do any jerking.

"Are you going to the tennis tournament on Saturday?" she asked.  
"I don't know. I'm not especially interested in tennis just now."

"Got anything on your mind?"  
"Nothing particular—I mean anything that should make me stay away from the tournament. Shall I drop in for you as I go by?"

"Oh, not sure I'll go."  
"No; I have a partial engagement for Saturday."  
"Oh! The men don't have to work Saturday afternoons. They have a chance to daily with their sweethearts. I should have remembered that."

"I didn't say my engagement was with a man."  
"No, but that was to be inferred. Don't you think you could get out of it and go out for a spin in my auto?"

She divined that this indicated an intention to put off what he was trying to get out till the auto ride. He had made several failures before, and she preferred to have it over with.

"No," she replied. "I couldn't."  
"I thought you said the engagement was only a partial one."  
"I can't go to ride anyway."  
"Why not?"

"Well, I'm going away on a visit, and on Saturday I must be making my preparations."  
"How long are you going to be away?"  
"Several weeks or several months, maybe."

This was beginning to wobble in the line. He knew these weeks or months would be a miserable suspense to him. He must brace up and know the worst before she went away. Suppose she should defer a definite answer till her return. The thought was terrible. Better have it over with one way or the other. He started in:

"You know we've been a great deal together. I've always had a great deal of respect for you."  
"Are you going to the Carters' on Wednesday evening?"

He had made up his mind and was not to be thrown off the track even by so irrelevant a remark. He continued:  
"I tell you what—I love you a whole lot, and I want you to be my wife."

Her head dropped on his shoulder, in the most approved fashion. She said she had never dreamed of his loving her, and now that she knew it, she couldn't understand how he had come to it from her. She must ask for a few days in which to—He began to speak, and she said, "If you—"

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## FRENCH KID SKINS.

Why the Young Animals Are Not Sold in This Country.

The raising of kids for their skins is an important industry among the French mountaineers. The industry is a source of income to the mountaineers, and the value of the skins is not to be underestimated. The kids are raised in the mountains, and the skins are sold to the dealers.

When the kids have attained a certain age at which the skins are in the best condition for the use of the gloves, they are killed and the skins are sent to dealers.

The superior quality of these kid skins, due somewhat to climatic conditions, is what has given France the supremacy in the manufacture of the finest grades of real kid gloves, a supremacy that will doubtless long be maintained. Inasmuch as foreign manufacturers must resort to second-rate skins.—Harper's Weekly.

## "THE LOST CHORD"

Sullivan Writes the Music at His Dying Brother's Bedside.

Perhaps the most successful song of modern times is "The Lost Chord," whose sale in Great Britain has exceeded 250,000 copies. The story of its composition, as told by Mr. Williby in his "Masters of English Music," illustrates that in art, as in statecraft, success comes to those—

Who knew the season when to take Occasion by the hand.

For nearly three weeks Arthur Seymour Sullivan had watched by the bedside of a dying brother. One night when the end was not far off and his brother was sleeping he chanced to come across some verses of Adelaide Procter's which five years before he had tried in vain to set to music.

In the silence of that night which he had just over-gone, and which he had just over-gone, he conceived a melody. A stray sheet of music paper was at hand, and he began to write. The music grew, and he worked on, delighted to be helped while away the hours of watching. As he progressed he felt sure the music was what he had sought for and failed to find on the occasion of his first attempt to set the words. In a short time it was complete and not long after in the publisher's hands.

## A Book and a War.

Copyright questions are grave enough nowadays, but they no longer threaten to end in war, as in the case of St. Columba, the Irishman who settled in Iowa, converted north British and commemorated on June 5. He had a passion for the manuscript and copies of them and among others copied a certain Latin psalter belonging to an Irish abbot, whereupon King Diarmid condemned Columba at Tara, ruling that "to every book belongs its cow, as to every cow its calf." Columba appealed against the verdict—in the practical form of leading his kinsman to revolt, and they defeated Diarmid in the battle of the Fuar. The book is claimed to be the one which in a silver cover was carried into battle by the O'Donnells during more than a thousand years.

## Cats as Food in China.

One often waxes up the value of sheep fur by describing it as having been obtained from the domestic cat, but in China garments of catkin rank as high and are as precious as garments of sable in this country. In the Fingway Land cat's flesh is also much eaten and is especially recommended as a cure for consumption and all lung diseases. It is vastly superior to cod liver oil, and therefore cats are considered extremely valuable possessions. Black cats provide the best meat, and in a great many parts of China this food is so highly esteemed that cats are reared for sale like fowls or sheep.

## Satisfaction For Him.

"Well," said the millmaker's best friend, who has achieved success by his own efforts, "I have one great satisfaction."  
"What is that?" asked his admiring friend.  
"At least some of you can say that you know me when I didn't have a nickel."—Detroit Free Press.

## Friendship.

It is a common observation that differences of taste, understanding and disposition are no impediments to friendship and that the closest intimacies often exist between minds each of which supplies what is wanting in the other.—Lord Macaulay.

## Trying to Beat the Game.

"Every note that prima donna sings costs me at least a dollar," said one musical manager.  
"Well," replied the other, "get a man to write her a song with only whole notes and rests in it."—Washington Star.

## With the Scalpers.

"Oh, mother, why are the men in the front builded?"  
"They bought their tickets from the scalpers, my child."—Chicago Tribune.

## That She Got It.

"The young man who was in my class at school had three signed letters of recommendation, which rendered the word all the sweeter.

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