

## FROM HEAVEN VIA CAROLINE

By H. LOUIS RAYBOLD

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Down on their knees before the bed, their scant front hair twisted in grotesque curls, the two Nelson sisters were saying their prayers. To be accurate, it was Sarah who was doing the actual petitioning, but her words found an ardent echo in Fanny's heart.

"Dear Lord, send us a sign. We're at the end of our rope. O Lord, you know we must decide tomorrow. If it be meant that we keep our little place send us a sign from heaven. Let it be that the money we take in over the counter comes to five dollars—was it five, Fanny? If we don't get that much we'll know that it was best for us to sell. Amen."

Solemnly arising, they climbed to their high four-poster, and without a word, folded their withered hands beneath the patchwork comfortable and sought refuge from their worries in fitful slumber.

The last of their line, except for an errant, harem-scurum nephew, "All West in Kansas," the Nelson sisters had been facing for some years a steadily decreasing income. So far they had managed to hang on to the old homestead by closing up the main portion of the house and living in an ell, one room of which they had turned into a tiny shop, the proceeds of which seldom averaged four dollars a day, but served to pay their taxes and very semi-occasional repairs.

Not many people nowadays in Farmingdale remembered when the "Nelson girls" were young. To the newer generation they were just two old hinds, who kept a little store "where you can buy anything you want, my dear, from little cakes and souzvenir spoons to Chinese lily bulbs that grow in stones set in water."

School children stopped in on their way to school to buy a penny's worth of candy, out-of-town visitors drifted in and poked around, and—there was Caroline.

The sisters often said they would have had to go out of business long ago had it not been for Caroline. Ever since she was a brown-curled little thing of five she had been a regular customer. And she was the only one who heard at all regularly from Billy, the harem-scurum nephew.

To Caroline, and indeed to everyone, the two women often debated it was a great trial to them to keep the shop. It was not right that women, particularly of their bringing up, should have to "work."

As a matter of fact, interest in their little store was the one thing life held to color their gray days. Without it, they could have done nothing but sit in the windows of the big house and watch life go by—go by without ever turning to wave a hand at them. No—there was one other thing they could do—besides that, and it seemed more than likely that that was just what they would have to do. They could sell the old house, and with the proceeds take out a lease until death of a brightly furnished, utterly unindividual room in the Home for Aged Women.

For several years, Charlie Wallace, Farmingdale's very up-and-coming real estate agent, had pestered the life out of them with offers for the house—not very large offers. As long as the meager earnings of the little shop had been just sufficient to carry them by, they had refused. But recently, since thrift campaigns had swept the country, people hadn't been so desirous of buying their wares—not even the Chinese lily bulbs guaranteed to bloom by Easter.

Letters to Billy, whom they had brought up as their own son until he had grown old enough to seize a wild opportunity to go West and make a "pile," had not been answered. Earnestly and often, the aunts assured each other that the letters had never reached him. Yet deep in their old hearts, each felt that the only man in the family to whom they could go, even for advice, had failed them.

And now the day of decision was at hand. Charlie Wallace was coming around at eight o'clock that morning to get their final word as to whether they would sell. And true to their New England tradition, they had laid their burden in the hands of the Lord.

In the morning, Sarah arose an hour earlier than usual to take down the shutters. A passing milkman, fortifying himself with a cruller, might make the very difference between five plus and five minus.

Little by little during the day, trickled in the pennies and dimes and occasionally quarters. Along about three o'clock, the tin box held nearly three dollars. At five, Jimmy Williams' purchase of crackers and cheese brought the total up to three-fifty. A few minutes later, a neighbor paid up a small account of one dollar. Four-fifty! Then came Caroline.

Her purchases came to 30 cents. Then she decided on a bottle of fountain pen ink—she bought a great deal of that—that made 45 cents. The two old women watched her as she tucked her packages under her arm and started slowly for the door, her eyes sweeping the shelves for something she might have forgotten. They looked upon her as holding in her small chains the very mandate of the Lord; not by word or sign would they in-

"I guess that will be all," she said brightly, one hand on the door. At that moment the six o'clock whistle from Farmingdale's one factory broke shrilly on the air. That meant closing time. The shop never had any evening trade.

As Caroline went out, Sarah looked at Fanny and Fanny looked at Sarah, and in that brief interchange of glances was expressed all that they saw descending upon them—the final putting up of the shutters, the last sight of the filled shelves, the locking of the door, themselves on the outside.

"Oh, I forgot," sounded the voice of the Lord's emissary on the doorstep. "Did I said to bring him home an apple pie, if you had one. Have you?"

"Thank the Lord, yes!" almost sobbed Fanny. "Here it is!"

When Charlie Wallace came at eight, he had a very short conversation with Sarah, who as the elder by two years transacted all business. Quite confident that there was nothing else for the "old girls" to do than to meet his price, he was astounded to get a refusal, and left with a slightly sarcastic comment as to their folly in refusing such an eminently reasonable offer.

And the two sisters themselves figuratively drew down in their belts as he went out.

"Hello—hello!" Who was that tall bronzed youth just blown in like a breeze?

"Billy!" cried the aunts; then, sure of it, "Billy."

"It's me," he said. "Just dropped off the old stacy-five. I got your letter and decided it was quicker to answer in person."

Much excited conversation followed. And at the end, while Billy made way with the note to Caroline's apple pie, he said quite casually: "I'll buy the house, Aunt Sarah. It's just what I want."

"Why—why, you sound as if you had made your pile," said Fanny shyly.

"I sure did," he said, "and then some."

"But will you want so big a place?" asked Sarah.

"I think we will—Caroline and I," said Billy.

"Caroline?"

"Who else?" asked Billy, indignantly. "I always said I'd come back to her, and I just stopped now on my way up from the station to ask her to marry me very soon. She said 'yes.' And you needn't work in this old shop any more."

Sarah and Fanny each gave a little gasp. They would have said it was a sigh of relief.

But Caroline, some days later, discussing the matter with Billy, said: "Don't take the shop away from them, darling. It will be wonderful to buy the house and have them make their home there—but they would miss the little store, even if they don't admit it."

"Whatever you say, goes," said Billy.

And as Fanny remarked one day to Sarah, as she gently dusted a Chinese bulb: "You can't go against Providence."

## IN EVERYTHING TOPSY TURVY

Dress, Manners, and Customs in China Are Direct Opposites of Those of the West.

Men wear gowns and women trousers in China, which is one of the customs that makes the land topsy turvy. Upon meeting a friend, the Chinaman shakes hands with himself, not with the friend. In hot sunshine he shades not the face of his neck, but the front of his head, while returning home he refreshes himself with a cup of tea, putting the saucer on top of the cup and not under it.

It is not unknown in China to kill one's enemy, but it is more common form of revenge to keep shame upon an enemy by committing suicide at his doorstep. Many other instances can be mentioned which make the Chinaman different from the Westerner. Thus, he blows eggs to keep cool, but those that have been boiled for several years. He drinks his wine hot instead of cold. Books are printed with the end at the top, and work backward with the lines reading from the top of the page downward, and from right to left.

The most unusual Chinese way in rowing a boat is to "jutah," with one long oar at the stern. When two oars or sculls are used, the Chinaman, contrary to the European's method, stands and pushes instead of sitting and pulling. If he sits he leans back against the stern and thrusts on the handle of the oar with his feet.

## Dickens' Appreciation of Himself.

That Dickens was fully cognizant of the reception his writings would receive from many persons is shown by the following quotations from his Charles Dickens' edition of "Martin Chuzzlewit": "What is exaggeration to one class of minds and perceptions is plain truth to another." And "I have never touched a character precisely from the life, but some counterpart of that character has incredibly asked me: 'Now, really, did I ever really see one like it?' And 'All the Pecksniff family upon earth are quite agreed, I believe, that such a character as Mr. Pecksniff is an exaggeration and that no such character ever existed.'"

## Sometimes Happens.

"A man that's too set on havin' his own way," said Jud Tunkins, "is mighty liable, along towards nightfall, to find himself ringin' doorbells and inquirin' how to get back to the main road."

## GOWNS OF CLASS FROCKS OF COTTON

Tailleur Flou, Tailleur Classique, Popular in Paris.

Interesting to Study the Subtle Difference Between the Lines, Fashion Writer Says.

It is interesting to study the subtle difference between the lines of the "Tailleur Classique" and the "Tailleur Flou," otherwise the severely plain tailored suit and that other outdoor costume which is tailored, but still orate.

In Paris, notes a fashion writer, we have the Tailleur Classique and the Tailleur Flou. In fact it would be difficult to say which is the more popular.

The full length sketch shows a recent model by Paquin. The material of this lovely suit was rust-red velours de laine and the big fur collar was goldfishy. There was a curious plaid band of rust-red suede halfway down the coat and the creature was made of the same leather with inserted ornaments of dark tortoise shell which recalled exactly the tones of cloth and fur.

The coat was lined with a beautiful Japanese brocade silk, brilliant dragons on a black ground. Here again the skirt was rather short and tight. On the whole, according to a correspondent, the best Paris fashions and



Tailleur Flou.

dressmakers are remarkably faithful to skirts of this order; we hear a great deal about wide skirts, but, except for evening wear, one does not often see them. Of course everything connected with dress is comparative. It is certain that the skirts of today are really much wider at the hem than those of last summer, but they are so cleverly cut that they look narrow and clinging.

The Tailleur Classique is one of Redfern's designs and it is very beautiful. The material used for the original model was tan whipcord, with a decorative waistcoat in tan doeskin embroidered in dull blue silk and bordered with mink. The skirt was short and comparatively tight, not really the lighter, but so cut that it fell in round the lower limbs.

The coat was Louis XV in outline; knee length, fitted to the figure above the hips and cut with a distinct flare at the hem. The sleeves were of the plain coat design, with turn back cuffs. The buttons were covered with tan doeskin to match the waistcoat. And the latter garment was quite delightful.

It was almost as long as the coat itself, shaped to the figure and laced down the back. It was finished with a high, rounded collar bordered with mink.

Redfern is showing some exquisite embroideries in doeskin and glove kid. Never were these leather trimmings more fashionable; indeed, it is a case of leather and yet again leather all along the line. All the rich tan shades are popular, and also the darker tones of gray. And for the severely plain tailleur classique black velours de laine is much in demand.

## GINGHAMS FOR PALM BEACH

Fabric Favored for Morning Wear Where Weather Does Not Demand Heavier Frocks.

Ginghams prevail at Palm Beach for morning wear. One of the prettiest seen recently was of medium size blue and white check, buttoned up the back with pearl buttons and sashed with gingham, the ends tying in the back, apron fashion. The long sleeves had cuffs of sheer white lawn, hemstitched in blue thread, and the collar, of the same material, was round in the front and came to two points in the back on either side of the buttons.

Two small pockets in the front of the skirt were also trimmed with white. With this was worn an attractive blue straw hat, with a wide brim, and on the large crown were several flowers in yellow and old rose, made from threads of wool yarn cut at the ends.

Fabric Promises to Supplant the More Expensive Materials.

Beautifully Figured Voiles Rival Flow-ered Silk Georgettes; Swiss and Organdies Are Good.

And now the word comes from Paris that skirts are to be slightly longer no fuller but with an additional length of an inch or so, it is said. At this rate the American woman will have hard work to keep her skirt length regulated to suit the whims of Paris.

Fortunately the distance of the bottom of the skirt from the floor is no such an important matter after all the woman of good taste wearing them, at whatever length is most becoming to her.

Next season will probably be one of cotton, as silk has advanced so in price that it is almost out of reach. The fabric, which in its raw state is sold by the pound, used to be wholesale in pre-war days at \$2.50 to \$3.50 a pound. Now the same quantity brings \$20.

Of course, if cotton, which is already high enough in price, is featured as the correct material for summer frocks, some horrid weevil in all probability will attack the cotton boll, and the cost of this material will advance also. As it is, beautifully figured voiles are offered which rival the flowered silk georgettes. Dotted swiss, it is said, will also be good as well as plain and figured organdies.

A new style blouse is shown by some of the shops which has caused quite a good deal of comment as to whether it is a frock or a waist. It is in one piece and falls to the bottom of the skirt, its beauty lying in the material employed in its development and the embroidery with which it is trimmed. The long-ago waist of Irish crinolin has been revived this season. It is usually fashioned in the short peplum style.

In neckwear lace plays an important part. Irish crochet, dated or in white, and Carrickmacross, also an applied design on a background of net are much used for collars, are round, square, and rolling and are shown attached to their vestees.

## BREATH OF SUMMER IN THIS



A creation that makes us realize that soon the mid weather will be with us, and we'll see lots of pretty misses attired in printed blue chiffon over tan georgette for it bids to become popular again.

## JERSEY CLOTH FOR BLOUSES

Slip-Over With Peplum Said to Still Hold Prominent Place; Silks Desirable.

Jersey cloth in silk, in one of the weaves that go by various names, is used increasingly for blouses. In spite of everything that has been predicted, the slip-over blouse, with a peplum, is still the smartest vogue. To be sure, some of the very smart new blouses reach only to the waistline, but the peplum is the rule. And it is in these blouses that jersey in silk weaves is especially desirable. For it has body enough and at the same time suppleness enough to hang well around the hips. It is often elaborately embroidered, sometimes heavily braided in soutache, sometimes worked in machine stitchery with colored wool in a way that adds distinction to many of the new blouses.

## New Coiffure.

The quaff and the unusual are appearing in the new hair dressings. Besides the bobbed hair the contours are showing an adaptation of the Grecian knot. With the bobbed hair, we have a covering of the ears, but the latest tendency is to let the lower tip of the ear lobe show below a soft roll of waved tresses. The Spanish style headress has entered the field, and the open filigree of a high backed comb now makes the dividing line between a smoothly brushed head and a large, loose knot in many fashionable headresses for the evening.

## DADDY'S EVENING FAIRY TALE



CAMEL'S CARELESSNESS.

"I've said so before and I will say so again," remarked the Dromedary with the single hump, also known in the zoo, or anywhere else for that matter, as the single-humped camel.

"What have you said before?" asked the Bactrian Camel with the two great humps.

"Something about you," said the Dromedary.

"You can't expect me to remember something you may have said before," said the Bactrian Camel. "For I am stupid and I cannot bother to even try to remember things."

"Oh, I suppose you can't," said the Dromedary.

"And anyway," said the Bactrian Camel, "what would be the sense in trying to when you say that you are going to say this same thing again which you have said before? As long as you're going to repeat yourself why should I bother to try to remember or to think?"

"It would be too much to expect of you in any case," said the Dromedary.

"I would," said the Bactrian Camel. "I know that much."

"Well," said the Dromedary, "I might as well be saying what I set out to say, though I don't feel so very smart and clever myself."

"You're not very smart anyway," said the Bactrian Camel, "or, at any rate, you're not a great, great student; but still you might as well say what you set out to say. I don't care whether it is worth hearing or not. That doesn't make any difference to me. That is where a friend like myself is rather a nice sort to have at times."

"Well," said the Dromedary, "I was going to say, and I have said it before that it does seem a great, great pity that your hair is so splendid in the winter time. You have a handsome, brown, shaggy coat now."

"It is really very good looking and you look all dressed up for the winter."

"I always dress up for the winter," said the Bactrian Camel.

"I know," said the Dromedary, "but it seems so foolish. You shed your nice coat in the summer when all the visitors come to the zoo and folks ride and everyone sees you."

"You have so few visitors now it doesn't matter how you look. Now with me it is different. I never have any long hair at any time. I'm different from you in many ways. I'm not so heavy and big and I can travel faster."

"Of course you can," said the Bactrian Camel. "You haven't as heavy a load to carry in yourself as I have, so naturally you can move faster."

"Why, that's quite bright of you," said the Dromedary. "Now, do you suppose you can tell me why you don't look better in the summer when all the guests come to the zoo, and why you look so fine now when it is winter and there are few visitors?"

"I suppose," said the Bactrian Camel slowly, "it is just that I have gotten into such careless habits. I began to dress up in the winter and then got the habit."

"Why, it is as absurd," said the Dromedary, "as though a child should wear her party dress to school and when she went to a party wear her swimming suit or gymnasium clothes!"

"Just as absurd," said the Bactrian Camel, "but, as I say, it must have been carelessness. I don't bother to think so much about what I am doing. I don't care about being bright. And I am carelessly. And my carelessness has become a habit."

"Too bad," said the Dromedary. "It's too bad you're a careless camel, alas, a careless camel."

"A careless camel, a careless camel," repeated the Bactrian Camel, as he chewed from side to side, twisting his great mouth around in a most peculiar fashion.

"Will you ever change?" asked the Dromedary.

"I doubt it," said the Bactrian Camel. "I'm too stupid to really think out the foolishness of the whole thing, and I'm too careless to take the trouble to try to form a good habit. I'm careless in every way, I guess—a careless camel; that's me, a careless camel."

"Careless camel," said the Dromedary, "careless camel, to dress all up in the lonely winter time!"

Good Either Way.

What time is that which spelled backward or forward is the same? Noon.

## Soothing Cigar Has Been Overtaken and Passed by Popular Little Cigarette

Cigar types of tobacco are produced in New England, New York, Pennsylvania, the Miami valley in Ohio, Wisconsin, Georgia and Florida. Of the entire tobacco crop of 1,389,000,000 pounds in 1919, the cigar types constituted about one-sixth, and the chewing, smoking, snuff and export types most of the remainder, according to the bureau of crop estimates, United States department of agriculture. The cigar types are heavy producers per acre, the average for 1919 being 1,265 pounds, while the other types had an average of 679 pounds.

Before 1919, the average farm price of the cigar types of tobacco was always above that of the other types, as a whole, but in that year the extraordinary demand for tobacco other than the cigar classes and the immensely increased use of tobacco for cigarettes raised the average farm price of the composite chewing, smoking, snuff and export types to 41.3 cents on December 1, or greatly above the price of 21.9 cents for cigar tobacco. Indeed, the latter class of tobacco had a lower price than in either 1918 or 1917, not because of increase of production, but because of weaker demand. The cigar has been overtaken and passed by the cigarette.

## BACK-YARD PULLETS MAKE GOOD RECORD

Chickens which lay so prolifically that they pay in a short time for their original cost and their feed are the kind of which all suburbanites dream. S. B. Horton of Washington, D. C., has them in his back yard.

On May 1, 1919, Mr. Horton bought 15 two-day-old White Leghorn chicks. The baby chicks were brooded with jars filled with hot water until they were old enough to be put in an outside coop. Later a six by eight-foot house was built for them, with an outside yard only four feet square.

Seven of these were pullets which began laying on October 22, when they were less than six months old. Their laying record for November was 115 eggs, and for December 137 eggs, a total of 252 eggs for the two months, or an average of 36 eggs a pullet for the two-month period. In all probability they would have made a record of 150 eggs in December but for the cold wave during the latter part of the month.

Crediting the birds with eggs at the market price of 90 cents a dozen (they were \$1 part of the time) for the period, they had paid for their original cost and all feed by December 15. In figuring the total cost of the project, the cost of the seven other chicks raised, which were cockerels, was figured, and allowance was made for their market value when slaughtered. From now on the upkeep of this flock will be small compared with the revenue.

The pullets were fed scratch feed morning and night, with a dry mash made of equal parts of middlings, bran, cornmeal, and meat scrap, before them all the time. This ration is one used and advocated by the United States department of agriculture. Nearly every day they were given a little green stuff, such as cabbage or sprouted oats, as well as table scraps and grit and oyster shell.

## Death Rate for 1918 Was Highest in History of the Country, Statistics Show

The death rate of 18 for each 1,000 of population in the death registration area of 30 states and 27 cities, with a total estimated population of 81,868, 104 for 1918 was the highest on record, according to the census bureau's annual mortality statistics, which show 1,471,367 deaths for the year.

Of the total deaths, 477,467, or more than 32 per cent, were due to influenza and pneumonia, 380,096 having occurred in the last four months of the year when an epidemic of these diseases prevailed. The rate for influenza and pneumonia was 583.2 for each 100,000. Influenza caused 244,681 deaths and pneumonia 232,780, showing rates of 289.9 and 284.3 for each 100,000, respectively, the highest rates which ever have appeared for these causes. The rate in 1917 for influenza was 17.2 and for pneumonia 149.8.

The other principal causes of deaths were organic diseases of the heart, tuberculosis, acute nephritis, Bright's disease and cancer, which together were responsible for 391,381 deaths, or nearly 27 per cent of the total during the year.

## Natives Employ Curious Methods to Heal Wounds

Inhabitants of the little mountain country of Montenegro employ curious methods of medical treatment, according to American physicians who did relief work there. The first thought of the natives in healing wounds is to apply chewing tobacco, horsehair or fresh rabbit skin to a sore, with the hair facing inward. Common ink is considered to be a sovereign remedy for burns. Cobwebs are used in Montenegro to stop bleeding sores or wounds. When a person is bitten by a dog, the favorite remedy is to pull off the animal's ear and rub the wound with it. Since the arrival of American physicians, however, the natives are making numerous visits to Red Cross clinics and dispensaries as a means of curing their ills.