

THE BLESSING

By ARIA E. CUTTING

There! Everything's all over with! cried vivacious Junie as she hurried into the library. "What's all over with?" inquired Aunt Beth, who sat reading by the fire. Aunt Beth was loved by everyone. She was a woman of talent and of worldly experience, and in her travels at home and abroad she had made many lasting friendships. Junie often went to Aunt Beth for consolation and advice. Her mother was so taken up with social duties that Junie had always seemed to be left "dangling" somewhere. And it really was lucky for Junie that Aunt Beth made her home with them some of the time. "I've broken the engagement. Jack was so angry because I danced with others at the dance the Forbes gave the other night. I don't see why he should be so silly. "I think you're both wrong, at that," interrupted Aunt Beth, with great firmness. "He was wrong in one sense for being selfish, for he has not the final claim. But the blame really rests upon you, for you probably teased him. I know you, Junie. I'm afraid you did wrong. He has a right to be selfish. I think Jack is a fine man, and you know it. You're rather temperamental, Junie. Think it over." Junie sighed, opened her mouth as if to speak, but changed her mind. She sat down very decisively in the window-seat and glanced out of the window. Suddenly Junie looked toward her aunt, and what she saw in that face made her speak. "Aunt Beth, I'll admit I was wrong. Oh, Aunt Beth! You make me feel so ashamed! How I need you! I just think of what I've done—sent him away! But it's over now, Aunt Beth, and Junie suddenly stood erect. "I'm not going to worry about it. But it'll be so hard. I suppose I'll be an old maid now. No one could ever take Jack's place." She stopped speaking. Was Aunt Beth listening? What did that far-away look mean? "Aunt Beth, why didn't you ever marry?" "Well, to make a long story short, I was in a far-off country when I met him—we were to be married—we quarreled—just the same as you and Jack did tonight. Well, we made up, but he went to war—and the next thing I knew he had gone to the land of the unknown. So, you see, I never was claimed. I suppose I am what they call an 'old maid' or as your father puts it, 'unclaimed blessing.' However, but the blessing!" "Why, Aunt Beth, but I'm glad you told me! How saved it all! Why, I really wouldn't mind being an unclaimed blessing if I could be like you!" Long hours after Aunt Beth had retired, Junie remained in the library. Try as she might, she could not stay awake. She went to sleep, and dreamed—dreamed of a wonderful book opening before her—a gold-leafed book, with printing of gold! Then it suddenly came to her that this must be God's own book of lives! Yes! There were names there that she knew—and loved. And then she read with amazement: Your dear Aunt Beth. One of many of my children—A happy, sacrificing woman—A life dedicated to My name—An unclaimed blessing! No, claimed in heaven and in earth, though not wife of mortal man. My child—Beth— Started, Junie awoke. The fire had gone out. She sat in the great arm-chair perfectly rigid, not daring to move. "But she may be ill. I must go and see if she's all right," she said over and over again to herself. She rose and turned on the lights. At that moment who should enter the room but Jack! How haggard he appeared! Junie sprang away in fright. "What—how—why are you here! How did you get in?" she stammered. "I just couldn't leave at once. I was passing through the garden there under the window when you and your aunt were talking hours ago. After that I lingered. I don't know why. Then I heard a sudden cry of some one in pain. You see, I couldn't help answering that call—being a doctor. And I got along well—I don't need you at all. So I let you rest." "Oh, Jack! How wonderful! You're glad! Is she all right?" "Yes—and guess what I found under her pillow. A little book entitled, 'The Unclaimed Blessing.' I wonder..." He held it forth. "You see, she wrote it. Oh, bless, her! She's just the sweetest woman, Jack! And I think you're so much, too. Let's go up and see her again together." In a certain distinguished-looking home, a noted doctor and his wife, cherishing with a love that knows no words a little gold-leafed volume entitled "The Unclaimed Blessing."

AND HE WAS ABOUT RIGHT

Little Newsboy Certainly Had Some Correct Ideas Concerning Success in Business.

The homely, freckle-faced little newsboy had not greeted the young woman who works in one of the downtown office buildings for several days. Instead she had had to explain to a serious-looking little fellow which paper she preferred. Soon she began to realize how much the cheery smile and "How are you, miss?" had meant to her when she walked along with the latest edition. Then one evening he was back at his doctor and the young woman stopped to tell him how glad she was to see him again and that she hoped he was there to stay. "Yes, guess I'm here to stay sure enough. That other one was my brother. I thought I could lend him this corner and sell papers myself at another, but the business can't run itself and he never was no business man." The young woman smiled and said: "He is not very old, perhaps he will learn." "Not him; he never will learn. Twice I have tried to set him up in business for himself and he can't make it go. Papers won't sell themselves. You've got to be happy if you want to sell papers. You can't be a grocer. He don't know the first thing about a good business man. He just can't smile." The young woman demonstrated her own business ability with a smile, took her paper and hurried into the car. But she did not read the paper on her way home. She had other things to think of.

TRUSSING FOX IN HAY SHEAF

New Zealand Farmer Reports Occurrence Which in Many Respects is Remarkable.

A New Zealand farmer in Ploverton Plains reports the unique feat of trussing a fox in a sheaf of hay. The farmer was working his binder in a heavy crop, and was frequently in difficulties owing to the density of the crop. He therefore did not take much notice of a severe bumping and jolting of the machine, until he saw something dark pass under his feet going through the machine. The difficulty cleared itself and the binder went smoothly, but the farmer thinking over the matter, thought he had caught a rabbit, and got down to investigate. He found that the machine was all right, but on the apron were splashes of blood, which caused him to go back to some sheaves that had been thrown off the carrier. To his surprise he found a fox, securely trussed up in the hay, the binder being entangled the sheaf. The animal had both hind legs off, one close up to the thigh where the knives had caught it, presumably asleep in the crop.

Machinery for South Africa.

Imports of mining machinery into South Africa in 1921 exceeded those of 1913 by more than 20 per cent, and show an appreciable increase over those of the intervening years, says the industrial machinery division of the Department of Commerce. The most notable feature shown by these imports statistics is the expansion which has taken place in machinery imported from the United States. Despite the fact that there was a decided drop in imports from the United States in 1920, as compared with those of 1919, the excellent fact is that in 1921 the manufacturers of the United States supplied more than 35 per cent of the mining machinery purchased by the mines of the Union of South Africa, which is more than twice the amount purchased from the United States in 1913.

Vitality of Matthew Arnold.

Matthew Arnold has been dead 34 years. Most of the men who knew him intimately are also gone. The fusillade of diary, reminiscences, and post mortem recollections have been fired. Now value only is the test of his poetry. What survives? When a twentieth century publisher was asked this question, he turned to his bill of sales under Arnold. One feels like Chesterton when he heard a writer describe to what heights can rise "a Shakespeare, a Burns and an Emerson." Can imagine a man and a whisper such a delightful incident to Arnold's tomb in Laleham. Yet, after all, this was a reasonable rest. To read an author's book is a compulsion; to buy it a recognition. Stanley T. Williams in the North American Review.

His Position.

"As I was driving home from town a spell ago," related Cap Johnson of Kumpers Ridge, "I saw Hamp Strodger come bounding out of the front door of his house fully dressed, except that he didn't have his britches on. "How in the name of wonder did he happen to be in that fix?" interestedly asked Mrs. Johnson. "I don't know. Prob'ly he didn't want 'em on, or hadn't time to put 'em on, or something. I never was the kind of a man to be messing into another gent's affairs. If he didn't have 'em on for any reason, that was his business. And, anyhow, I had Jig Bidlin in the wagon with me, and we were sorter talking Hoss swap at the time."—Kansas City Star.

Showing in Dark Room.

In the handle of a new safety razor is inclosed an electric flash light large enough to enable a man to see to shave himself in a dark room.

DANA'S SECRET

By ANABEL C. ANDREWS

A clear, sweet whistle floated up the stairway: "Alice, Where Art Thou?" is theme. Expectant, waiting, then, close behind him, a soft: "Right here." "Thought you were upstairs. Oh, chum-chum-chum, I have a secret." "From me?" "From thee. For a time only; will you give me ten cents, please?" "I get in return labor of some kind; a little spading in the lily-bed, for instance." "You do not; you get one silver dime." "What is the idea of the change? Here's ten cents." "Oh, Aunt Alice, that's the secret! May I keep this box in your desk?" "You may; but why?" "Questions, when not readily answered, are embarrassing. I've been told by my auntie-chum." "True. Please accept my apology, and forgive me for my flight to the kitchen, where I'm cooking—a secret!" "From me?" "From thee." "Oh, good! When is it to be revealed?" "At dinner." "Am I invited?" "You are invited." "With heartfelt thanks I accept; guess I'll set ahead the kitchen clock. Can't wait." "Vanish, Dana, vanish. You must store your mind at school for use later; and I must store the pastry for the same reason." Time, two months later. Same place, same people, same box, being placed on the table with much ceremony by Dana. As he poured the contents out he said: "The time has come, the walrus said." Now, Aunt Alice, what do you see? "I see a collection of perfectly good dimes; some new, some old, some clean, some dirty." "Is that all you see?" "What should I see more?" "You should see that there are one hundred in all. You should also see the backaches, the tired, blistered-up hands, the Saturday trips with the bunch, the floor polishing at home, oh, any amount of work, and self-denial. I'm just changing them now to quarters. Just you think of that—to quarters." "Explain and elucidate, please." "You recollect that I asked you for ten cents two months ago?" "I do." "Well, I put one hundred cents in the box; that was easy, of course. Then, as fast as I could, I took out a cent, replacing it with a nickel; that wasn't so bad, but it began to pull when I took out the nickels, replacing with quarters—have three here. Now I plan to replace these quarters with halves, the halves with dollar bills before September—think how that will help dad; and no one knows it save my auntie-chum." "Some work ahead for Dana; but such a bright idea. How would it do to put each dollar, as you get it, in the bank? Then hand the book to dad when you get your hundred?" "Great! Now help me to some work if you can." "Would you wash Mr. Slade's car? He would be glad if he could have it washed at home; it would save him much time." "There's one job already. But you must hike and ask for it." "Just a minute. Mrs. Day needs someone to go to town with her when she goes to attend to her affairs, the first of each month. She also wants someone to go to Manchester with her Tuesday; want these jobs?" "We who are about to die salute you." "Dana!" "Oh, all right; if she'll have me I'll leave her. Do I go and propose to her now?" "No; I'll attend to that." "I thank you, chum." "You can report for duty; she likes to take an early start." "Sit up all night, if need be." "Same place; same people; time, last week of vacation." "Oh, see, see!" pressing a bank book into her hand. "Look at my name on the cover. Come on, we're going to show it to dad." "I can't go just now, dear boy; wouldn't a little later be all right?" "Auntie-chum, the future is behind us; the past is before us, the present is ours. Last statement true alone is." A few minutes later two rather breathless young people stood before Mr. Dayton with dancing eyes, which mocked the quiet greeting, as Dana placed the book in his father's hand. After looking at the book he said: "Where did you get the money, Dana?" "Earned it"—telling how. When he finished his father clasped the boy's hand, saying, in a voice not quite so steady as usual, "I'm proud of you, son." "Gee, dad! This is worth all the backaches and all—oh, all the wheel of it!"

RIVAL THE NATURAL PEARL

Artificial "Gems," Cheaply Produced, Said to Be as Beautiful as the Real Ones.

It appears that the lining of a pearty mussel shell or of a pearl oyster is precisely the same material as that which composes the pearl itself. Coat buttons and other articles made of this "mother-of-pearl" are very beautiful, and would bring high prices for the fact that the material is so common. To make artificial pearls, close mother-of-pearl is reduced to a fine powder and mixed with rosin, shellac, stearin and a little pigment to afford color. This is the process devised by a westerner who possesses much knowledge of the pearting industry of the Middle West. A New Jersey man has invented a process to make imitation pearls from beads of highly polished silver-coated with a translucent cellulose varnish that contains a little white pigment. Light rays reflected through the coating from the mirror-like surface beneath afford a pearl-like effect. The most familiar artificial pearls of commerce are globules of glass lined with a substance derived from the scales of a fish called the bleak. It is to this substance that the iridescence of the scales of many species of fishes is due.—Exchange.

Roosevelt's Two "Red Rags."

Dr. John H. Richards, Colonel Roosevelt's physician during his last illness, writes in the Saturday Evening Post: On my first visit to Oyster Bay it was considered necessary to take blood from Colonel Roosevelt's arm for a chemical examination. He insisted on standing while this was being done, in spite of the fact that his ankles were acutely inflamed at the time. While the needle was being inserted he was joking with Doctor Swartz and Dr. W. Martin, who were in the room with us, and I fearing lest he should move his arm, thereby making another vein puncture necessary, said: "Please do not move your arm, so that I shall not misplace the needle." "All right," he answered, "but don't anyone mention Wilson or the Kaiser."

It Wasn't Hubby.

One night while at a dance I was introduced to a dashing young man by my husband. We stood talking for some time, and I turned to talk to some one else, and as the music started I turned around and not looking to see whom I was taking hold of, I said: "Well, honey, aren't you going to have this dance?" I found I had grabbed this young man and that my husband was talking to some one else.—Chicago Tribune.

A Quick Retreat.

"I have here, sir," began the brisk agent, "a device which—" "Jobson," yelled Mr. Wadleigh, "what do you mean by letting this fellow get into my private office? If I have to throw him out you'll go with him." "I have here, sir," continued the agent, "my hand on the door knob, which I am turning for the purpose of letting myself out. Good day, sir."—Birmingham Age-Herald.

Starting Out.

"Have you ever had any business experience?" asked the self-made man. "No, sir," replied the brisk applicant for a job. "I'm just out of college. But I have a diploma." "Well, you look like an intelligent young man. I'll give you a trial." "Thank you, sir. What's the first thing you want me to do?" "The first thing I want you to do is to forget that diploma."—Birmingham Age-Herald.

DIAMOND NOT NOW SUPREME

Scientists Have Put Forward Products Which Rival Famous Precious Stone in Hardness.

The diamond has always been regarded as possessing one quality which placed it beyond rivalry, namely, that of hardness. There are several gems which compete with it in beauty, and at least one, the ruby, when of rare size and quality, outranks it in costliness. But none in the whole list equals it in hardness. "Diamond cut diamond" is a popular saying. The hardest steel cannot equal the diamond in that respect. The diamond, the textbooks used to declare, "is the hardest substance known." But science progresses, and if nature has set aside for her king of gems the distinction of unparalleled hardness, the art of man has not been equally considerate. There are several products of chemical experiment which have proved, it is claimed, to be as hard as diamonds. These are produced from the rare metal titanium. One investigator succeeded in preparing titanium in the electric furnace. In the pure form it is harder than steel or quartz, and when combined with silicon or boron, so as to form a silicide or boride of titanium, it matches the diamond itself in hardness. Titanium resembles tin in its chemical properties, and it is the characteristic element in the beautiful red and brown crystals of rutile. These, in the shape of needles, are sometimes found penetrating large white quartz crystals, forming gems that the French call "love's arrows."—Washington Star.

DERIVED FROM ROMAN NAME

Term "Scandinavian" Frequently In-Correctly Used, According to This Newspaper Writer.

The name "Scandinavia" is derived from one the Romans gave to the region now forming the southern part of Sweden. Gradually it was applied also to Norway on the western part of the same peninsula, and then the Danes, who occupy an entirely separate peninsula, came to be included in the term "Scandinavian" because of their racial relationship to the two countries to which the term was applicable geographically. As the people of Iceland are descended from Norwegian colonists they, too, may be counted as Scandinavians, and the same holds true of some Finns of Swedish descent, though the general population of Finland is ethnologically no more Scandinavian than are Magyars. The point is made by those interested in clarifying the terms "Scandinavian" and "Scandinavia" that one should refrain from unqualified use of the former unless the first four at least of the nationalities mentioned, are being referred to collectively, and the latter term should be used only to indicate the entire region occupied by these nations.—Detroit News.

Pockets of Marbles in Lava.

If prehistoric lads did not enjoy the regular spring game of "mibs" it was not for want of glass marbles. Pockets of marbles, formed by the molten lava, have recently been found on the west slopes of Mount Adams, Washington, and indications point to an Eldorado of them. The substrata, under a thin layer of earth and leaf mould, contains an unlimited number of the spheroidal bits of stone. Many of them are perfect in shape and just about the right size for childhood's old-time game. The theory advanced as to their origin is that the molten lava sprayed high into the air, was cooled by a cold air current and in falling the rounded drops solidified in the same manner as bullets are formed while the hot lead drops from the shot tower.

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DIFFER IN VIEWS OF LIFE

Orientals Look at Existence in a Manner Radically Different From the Westerners.

We feel that the things others desire from life must be the same that we desire. Yet, in fact, the races of Asia and Africa—beyond the primitive belly-need—make quite different claims on life from ours. Most of us desire, among other things and above them, comfort and security; but Asia and Africa take little account of comfort and still less of security. They want the joy of living and a chance to do their own living for themselves; a life not so much protected, but with color and excitement in it, with the zest of creation and accomplishment in it—a life in which a heavy-handed man would have a chance, and anybody could come to the top. The life of the Arabian Nights—the real Nights—is still the ideal of the Moslem East. For Orientals those stories are not tales from fairy, but such reckonings with the wonders of the world and of science as Mr. Wells used to give us before he became didactic. Or, to put the same point a little differently, the Orientals today are like our ancestors in the age of Chaucer, with an unknown world around them, in which anything may any time happen—a world full of adventure and romance.—Exchange.

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