Oh Boy! Ain't It Great?

The Kitten and the Lineman

By BARBARA KERR

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"Do be still!" the trouble clerk called out sharply to those around her in the office. "I'm trying to get this message. Some one is crying and I can't make it out." Then to the person at the other end of the line, "Now, please repeat your message."

The clerk listened and her alarm gave way to an amused expression: "Wait a moment. The superintendent is here. You may speak to him." The superintendent took the phone and the girlish voice, now grown calmer, repeated: "My kitten has been up in a big high tree all yesterday and all night—I just can't stand it any longer. Won't you please send and get him down? Mother will pay you whatever you ask. We're so afraid he will fall and kill himself."

"All right—all right, little girl, don't you worry any more; we'll be right along." Then turning to the trouble crew waiting for orders, he said: "Tom, suppose you take one or two men and go over to the Bradford place on Bayview avenue and get that girl's kitten out of the tree and don't let them pay for it—understand? We don't want to start anything like that."

Stopped Near Her Seat.

And Tom togged out in a lineman suit took two men and hastened over to the Bradford place.

The kitten could be seen—an immense fellow he was, a terrified white and yellow ball—in the very top of a huge cottonwood tree, and his mistress was vainly trying to coax him to come down. Tom came forward politely and sympathetically, expecting to find a little school girl. Instead it was Christie Bradford, the young lady of the house. Her eyes were red, her beautiful brown hair was in a braid down her back and she had slipped a big coat over her morning dress. He looked his astonishment; she smiled apologetically and exclaimed: "I haven't slept all night; the poor thing cried so. I thought I couldn't stand it another minute; I was so afraid he'd get so cold that he could not hold on longer and would fall—poor old Dominie."

The ladder was soon in place and Tom, talking reassuringly to Dominie, was just ready to pick him up when the kitten, encouraged by his presence, turned and walked down the tree by himself and was snuggled in Christie's arms. He was truly a beautiful kitten, and of course Tom had to stop a moment and talk about pets and assure Miss Bradford that he could not accept pay for getting Dominie out of trouble.

Soon after this Miss Bradford was returning on the train to college, and as she sat glancing through her magazines a young man stopped by her seat and spoke to her. She didn't recognize him as he was not in lineman garb, and he had to remind her about the kitten, asking if it had given up exploring big trees.

Miss Bradford politely answered him, thanking him for his interest, but she was not friendly; so he moved on. She was much surprised that a telephone lineman could look so handsome and so dressed up in a business suit but she did not want to encourage any intimacy, so she pretended an absorbing interest in her reading when he was near.

Tom guessed that she did not know him, but was piqued that she did not give him a chance to tell her who he was. But when they changed cars at Buffalo she saw that his luggage was marked T. Carruthers. He was the son of the president of the telephone company.

Of course, on arriving at school she wrote to her chum and casually remarked that Mr. T. Carruthers had gone East on the same train with her, and immediately received a reply lauding Tom and wishing that she, the chum, could have the opportunity to travel in his company. So Christie was quite prepared to be much more sociable when on entering a crowded Pullman on her way home for Christmas holidays she was asked to share the seat with Mr. Carruthers, who was returning from New York where he had been placing some telephone bonds. She dimpled with pleasure and held out her hand saying: "It is good of you to let me sit with you and I will share my magazines and bonbons with you in return."

An ocean-going voyage speeds up acquaintance as does nothing else under the sun, but a long ride in a Pullman is quite next, so before the end of the journey Tom was asking her to attend the Christmas hop with him. "Thank you so much," Christie replied cordially, "but my big brother Jim is to be home and I've promised to devote the party to him. He'll have my program."

"Oh, Jim is an old friend of mine and I'll ask him to waive his rights ——"

"No, no, you musn't do that!" declared Christie seriously. "Jim and I are long-time pals. I couldn't let him think I'd go back on him, ever. I've bought the kind of dress he likes and we are planning to have a gay old time."

Tom was secretly pleased that a girl like Christie Bradford should put loyalty to her brother first. "I'll bet they are great pals," he thought enviously; "I'll have to cultivate old Jim myself."

When he saw Christie, a dream of delight in a filmy, ruffly dancing frock, talking animatedly to Jim, who was proudly filling out her program in a crowd of persistent youths, he hurried forward and joined the throng, to preempt a few dances for himself.

"Oh, I say, Jim, don't leave an old friend out—anyway, I've been promised——"

Christie was pleased at the way Jim received him. "Get a move, get a move, Tommy, boy. But here; you can't take all that's left. Do you think I'm going to drop out of this 'long about the middle?" And after much argument Tom had to be content with three dances.

After the first dance with Christie he had no desire to dance with any other girl, telling her that three dances with the right one were more to be desired than a dozen merely to be dancing.

"And," finished Tom soberly, "I'm coming tomorrow to call on you and Dominie and tell you why—may I? In the meantime you can ask Jim about me. Will you?"

"Oh, you musn't talk so seriously at a Christmas party. I'll tell Dominie you're coming. Of course he might be much more interested if he thought you would bring him a catnip mouse."

But the next day when Tom called up to learn when she would be in he was told that Miss Christie was engaged and could see no one. He hung up the phone, out of sorts and out of spirits, and getting into his old lineman togs he determined to spend the day inspecting telephone lines.

He was out on a side street where the snow and sleet had done much damage and was just going up a pole when the Bradford car drew up to the curb in front of a veterinary office.

"Why, hello, Tom!" called Jim. "Busy? Come over here." Tom was amazed to see Christie in the back of the car, in tears—a basket on her lap.

"Oh, Mr. Carruthers, don't think me a perfect little cry baby," she implored. "This is the second time you've caught me crying over Dominie. He is dreadfully hurt and we brought him to see what the doctor could do for him." And she handed the basket out to Jim.

"Well, I've got his catnip mouse for him," said Tom"; "he can have it while the doctor makes his diagnosis." And gently Tom and Jim took the basket in. But poor Dominie had been shot in the shoulder by some miscreant and all the doctor could do was to administer chloroform.

"Now please don't cry, sis," begged Jim, "Doc will be nice to him and he'll be out of his misery." Tom hastened to add, "And I'll get you another kitten—but poor old Dominie was a good soldier."

Christie smiled appreciatively. "No, I'll not cry any more. It's the suffering that simply breaks me up, you know." She met a pair of eloquent eyes that seemed to be asking "Well, can't you save a little sympathy for poor Tom?" Indeed, that was what he asked later.

And Christie confessed that she couldn't help loving a man who was so tender hearted that he could sympathize with her over her pet kitten, adding mischievously, "Even if he was only a telephone lineman."

TRUE TO TRADITIONS OF SEA

Bluejackets Would Accept No Reward for Their Part in Aiding Injured in Wreck.

Several Indianapolis men were passengers on the New York Central train wrecked near Batavia, N. Y. One of them, in describing the wreck, told the following story:

"When I got into some clothes and got out to see what the trouble was I was surprised to see dozens of sailors as busy as bees helping care for the wounded and making people as comfortable as possible. It developed that our train was carrying two day coaches filled with bluejackets, and a few seconds after the crash came they were out of the cars and making themselves generally useful.

"Some time later representatives of the railroad company came through the crowd settling with the passengers for slight damages. Some asked $50, others $100, and checks for the amount asked were forthcoming. One big man said that $100 would about square things with him, but added that the check should be made out to "those sailors out there." Accordingly the check was drawn in favor of the men who had been working like Trojans ever since the crash. But—

"The sailors refused to accept the money.

"The check was then turned over to the Red Cross to be used in naval relief work."

Soldiers' Effects Unclaimed.

Scores of tons of material, the effects of American soldiers who died in France, are stored in Hoboken awaiting claimants. The property includes jewelry, hundreds of wrist watches, souvenirs, and many other articles, some of considerable value. An officer of the effects bureau says that everything possible is done to get the effects of the men to their relatives, but that many letters of notification are returned, and others are unanswered.

PRIZED OLD RIFLE

Weapon Long Preserved as Heirloom in Family.

Belonged to John Ferril, Who Used It With Effect in Indian Wars of Kentucky—Passive During Civil War.

There is a story of the American rifle that has been handed down in the hearthstone history and traditions of those who for generations have lived in the West. It begins with the Greenbrier region of Virginia of colonial times, thence into Kentucky, to Missouri in the days of Upper Louisiana, thence to the great prairies of the far West and on to California. The family rifle was dear and sacred.

John and Margaret Ferril and their family were with a party of pioneers from the Greenbrier region who migrated to Kentucky in the early days. Owing to the hostilities of the indians, they were armed and under the command of Capt. Jacob Baughman, a brother of Margaret Ferril.

They "packed" on horses over the Alleghany mountains and when in camp at or near Crab Orchard, Ky., were attacked in the night by Indians. In the fight that ensued Capt. Baughman, John Ferril and others were killed, but the men held back the Indians long enough to enable some of the women and children to escape. Among the number thus saved were Margaret Ferril, a son, John Ferril, and two daughters; and also Mrs. Jacob Baughman, a son Henry of tender age, and two daughters.

The Baughman-Ferril fight, or massacre, occurred in the fall of 1779.

John Ferril, then fourteen years old, who had escaped, swore an oath of revenge on his rifle. He kept that vow, and his rifle became a bloody one in the Indian wars of Kentucky.

In the Boone Lick region of Missouri, now Howard county, in 1812, were built several forts for protection against Indians, especially the Sacs and Foxes and the Pottawatomies. John Ferril and family were in one of them, known as Fort Cooper. He here still possessed his old Kentucky rifle. After the war of 1812, in addition to farming, he often engaged in hunting expeditions up the Missouri and Kansas rivers, and sometimes far out on the great prairies.

Over a century ago he hunted bear and other game on what is now the site of Kansas City. He and other frontiersmen then predicted that a great city would be founded on the confluence of the Missouri and Kansas rivers.

The old rifle of John Ferril has been preserved. During the Civil war, when the authorities were collecting all the guns in Saline county, Missouri, they seized the old Ferril rifle. Keziah Ferril, then about ninety years old, cried and begged that it be not taken. Her sons and grandsons were wearing the blue and gray and a compromise was effected. It was agreed that this old rifle should be hid away, and thus the old Ferril rifle became a noncombatant in the Civil war. It later passed to the possession of Jesse Ferril, county judge, son of Henry Ferril, who founded Miami, Mo. On the death of Judge Jesse Ferril the rifle was passed on as an heirloom to his brother, John Ferril, who had been a soldier from Saline county with Doniphan's Missourians in the Mexican war. John Ferril died some months ago at his home in Exeter, Cal.

As Good as a Youth.

Workmen at a mill in Greencastle are telling a good story regarding one of the workmen. It has been a rule of the company not to employ men over a certain age.

A few days ago a man living within a stone's throw of the mill solicited work, but was turned down because of his gray whiskers and his snow-white hair. The "old" man was not daunted. He felt he was still good for many days of work, so he went to a drug store, bought a bottle of black hair dye and soon had his whiteness a jet black. He again asked for work of the same foreman and was accepted at once. He was put to work and made good from the start. Then he was worried because his white hair was growing, as also were his equally white whiskers. He again bought a second bottle of dye and used it to hide his identity.

The "old" man is still working his eight hours a day and one official of the company stated he had done such a good job he did not have to buy another bottle of dye, but could hold his job, even with his white hair and whiskers.—Indianapolis News.

Pent Up Emotions.

"I don't suppose you bear any ill will toward your officers?"

"No," replied the discharged mule skinner. "But there's a mule somewhere in France that I'd like to give a piece of my mind to now that I'm out of the service. I wasn't allowed to swear at the brute when I was in the army."—Birmingham Age-Herald.

Literary Note.

Longfellow had just written "Excelsior."

"If I want to wait," he mused, "I might get a big price for this as breakfast-food poetry."

Heaving a sigh, he mailed the manuscript to his publishers.

That's the Question.

"I bought one of those fountain pens I was telling you about today. The price has come down."

"But will the ink come down?"—Boston Transcript.

Both True.

"I think Smith will realize a fortune from his dreams."

"Why, you told me his plans were all in the air."

"So they are. He's invented an improvement for airplane steering."

Quit It.

"You don't read the newspaper aloud any more."

"No. Got tired of having the children correct my pronunciation."

Concerning the Operator

A telephone operator is not simply a machine by which telephone calls are completed. She is entirely human. Her training, coupled with her humanness, makes her an efficient, interested worker.

She comes in contact with more people in a day than an average man sees in a week, and she tries to please each one. She usually succeeds according to the amount of cooperation furnished by those she serves.

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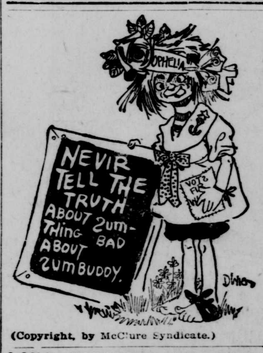

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LONG HARASSED BY WITCH

New England Man Finally Gets Relief by Using Silver Bullet in Time-Honored Way.

Your description of the many tribulations of William Morse and family of Newbury in 1781 brings to my mind some singular occurrences about the year 1780, S. P. Ridley writes to Boston Herald. This is the story told me about 1846:

My grandfather was captain of a schooner that went to Grand Banks fishing. They had a man aboard that was tormented, so they say, by a witch. He would lie in his berth hours at a time insensible. When he recovered he told them the witch had turned him into a horse and rode him around on the Sable island. His arms were black and blue where she had kicked him when he attempted to bite her. When he was told to pump a pail of water from the cask, it would be salt and rough. The next one pumped by another crew would be all right. While stirring up dough in the galley the bowl of the spoon would drop off and a twin would appear in the handle. He was annoyed so much that his health failed and he was sent to the galley to do what he could.

It has been said that you could only shoot a witch with silver, so my grandfather took his silver sleeve buttons and loaded the gun and told the man to shoot the witch when she appeared again. One day they heard the report of the gun and rushed to the cabin to find out the cause. The man lay insensible on the floor, and there was a spot of warm blood on the shins. He was never troubled after that.

He was asked the reason of his being troubled, but he did not know. He said he lived on Cape Cod, and one day he was traveling along the road and called at a house. There was no one in, but a goat was lying on the hearth. There was a pan of doughnuts in a pan. He took a few and passed on. He said when she took him and rode him around Sable island she twitted him of stealing the doughnuts. That was as near as he could see about it.

From about 1800 for a long time my grandfather was pilot in Boston harbor and a man of intelligence, and although I was small I fully believed that he believed the story he told me. He gave me the gun that the witch was shot with. His name and address of his office is in Boston directory of 1806.

Jet.

If you have made the trip to the bottom of a coal mine and have seen how the black lumps are made ready for use, perhaps you know that jet, the shiny black substance that you see so often, made into pretty ornaments, beads, buttons, etc., is closely akin to coal. The history of the formation of jet is much like that of coal. Thousands of years ago, masses of wood were carried down into the sea by the rivers, and, there waterlogged, it sank and became embedded in the mud. Pressure and heat and the salt water wrought the change in the wood. Even now traces of the wood structure can be detected in the jet itself. In years gone by jet used to be found in lumps off the coast of Yorkshire, the jet incased in shale known as jet-rock, washed up by the sea; but now that supply is not sufficient and jet has to be regularly mined. In Whitby, Yorkshire, the best jet is produced, but there are also important mines in France and Spain, and America, too, has quantities of the shale, though it is not systematically mined.

SUPERSTITION AN OLD ONE

In All Ages the Belief in "Crystal Gazing" Has Been More or Less Strongly Held.

Crystal gazing, or "scrying," as writers on the subject term it, has been practiced pretty well over the world from ancient times to the present. In early times they used to scry in springs and bowls of water. In the British museum there is a crystal ball said to have been used by Dr. Dee, a wizard of the time of Queen Bess. Cagliostro, that sublime humbug of the eighteenth century, used to place a pail of water on the stage and request some child to come out of the audience and gaze into it. The child would babble of castles, pageants and other marvelous pictures he could see in the clear liquid. The society for psychical research, certain of whose members, one would almost conclude, are ready to swallow whole superstition in any shape, has done some crystal gazing and at last accounts had glass balls for sale at its headquarters in London. The late Andrew Lang stated his belief that some people have the faculty "of seeing faces, places, persons in motion in a glass ball, in water, ink or any clear deep," but scouts the notion that scrying can accomplish anything in the way of finding lost property or in foretelling the future, as has been claimed for it by crystal gazing enthusiasts. As a crystal ball is not absolutely necessary, by all accounts, and a glass pitcher of water will do just as well, almost anybody may make experiments in scrying. The liquid first turns black, it is claimed, then come the pictures. Some of us may feel that it would require a wait of at least a hundred years before anything could be seen.

GIFTS FROM THEIR MOTHERS

Maternal Talents That Have Been Reflected in Work of Great Musicians and Writers.

There are numerous instances in history in which parents possessing uncommon gifts are supposed to have passed them on to their children. This is especially the case in regard to musical talents, observes a writer in London Tit-Bits.

The mother of Schumann, for instance, had great musical ability. Chopin received his wonderful gift—and also his delicate constitution—from the maternal side; Gounod's mother was exceedingly fond of music, while the mother of Spohr, the German composer, was an excellent judge of music and a fine critic, without being herself a musician.

Sir Walter Raleigh declared that he inherited from his mother the politeness of deportment which ever distinguished him. Goethe pays frequent tribute in his writings to the character and culture of his mother, as does also the poet Wordsworth.

Sydney Smith believed that he inherited from his mother his rare conversational powers and quickness of repartee. It is well known that the mother of Edward Gibbon, the historian, was a great reader and cultivated the same taste and habit as her son.

The mother of Charles Darwin made herself acquainted with all the branches of natural history and entertained a great fondness for animals. This record seems to show that maternal talents and tastes are frequently transmitted to sons; it is also claimed that the gifts of the fathers usually descend to the daughters.

Value of Green Vegetables.

Though green vegetables and fresh fruits have little food value, they are universally desired by mankind. The Journal of the American Medical Association says this is explainable by the fact that they seem to be a safeguard to health. The recent studies of C. B. Osborne and L. B. Mendel on the properties of green leaves show that these contain large quantities of the vitamines which, though not food, are necessary to health. According to these investigators spinach contains far more of the vitamine that promotes normal growth than do whole wheat, soy beans, eggs, meats, milk or potatoes.

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