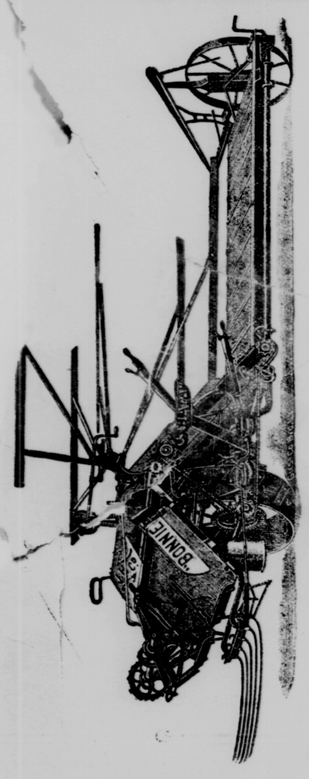
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A Hallowe'en Mystery

By Mrs. Caleb Larrabee.

THERE was a meeting of the Hopedale Fishing club, and it was held in Vance Craydon's back yard. It was a very informal as well as a very noisy meeting. The club had only been in existence for two weeks and it had held 12 meetings, at which the resolutions passed would have filled two or three minute books, had the club owned them. But this afternoon there seemed to be something of unusual interest on hand. Three bags full of something were lying on the ground, and three boxes stood beside them. Vance had a quart measure in his hand.

"Now, all of you keep quiet, till I measure them," he shouted, trying to make himself heard above the din.

"I seen a tent last Saturday; jist what we want, an' it was only—"

"The boys over at Westview have got a tent that—"

"Oh, what's the use gittin' a tent anyway. Let's put up a shanty. There's lots an' lots—"

"Do shut up, you fellows," entreated Vance. "Somebody'll have to keep count. Here's a piece of chalk. Now, Tom Caster, you put down a stroke every time I put a quart in the box."

"One!" Tom duly made a stroke.

"Don't make 'em so big; you'll have the box covered before we're half done," admonished Jimmy Elder.

"Whose doin' this?" inquired Tom, sharply.

"Two," counted Vance.

"Don't fill 'em so full; we ain't agoin' to sell 'em that way," suggested Ed Leslie.

"I do wish you'd be still," exclaimed Vance in despair. "We won't git done before dark."

A sudden silence fell, and through the open window above them floated the words: "Yes, it's a dreadful pity. She's getting more an' more helpless every year, an' she's that independent she won't take anything only what she works for. She's always had a little saved up until this year, but times have been that hard an' her havin' that sick spell along in the summer, took all she had."

"Yes," responded a voice that the boys recognized as belonging to Vance's mother, "and it does seem too bad that the nuts are a failure this year, too. She always made a good little sum making nut candy and taffy. If she were up in Brother Reuben's country now! There never were as many nuts there as this year."

The boys outside winked knowingly, for had not Uncle Reuben sent the very nuts that Vance was measuring out? To be sure they had all done many little kindnesses for the old gentleman when he was visiting his sister during the summer, but to think of him sending three bushels of nuts in return! How they envied Vance the possession of such an uncle!

"I'm sure," continued the voice from the kitchen, "we'd all be glad to help her, if she'd only let us. There isn't a family in the place that hasn't had her in sickness. She isn't able to nurse now, but she used to be an extra good hand at it."

"Well, I must be going. It'll soon be supper time," and Mrs. Craydon's caller departed. The boys continued measuring until the three bags were empty.

"Thirty-five quarts in every single bushel," exclaimed Vance, as Tom, after counting up and down to guard against any mistake, announced the result.

"He ain't noways stickin', is he?" remarked Fred Embury, and every boy present indorsed the sentiment expressed by Fred.

"Now," said Vance, "if we take them nuts over to the fair and sell them by the glass, like that fellow did last year, we'll clear over five dollars. Of course, we each want a quart of them for Hallowe'en."

"Well, let's put them in your woodhouse now, an' all come to-morrow after school, an' settle who's to take them to the fair."

"You'll have to sell them outside. Dan says all the stands are took up."

"Huh, that's no difference. You can sell nuts anywhere this year," said Tom.

"Wish spring was here, so we could git our tent up, an' go a fishin'," sighed Ed Leslie; "all the other fellows had a tent this summer."

The boys separated to meet again on the morrow. As the Craydon family gathered around the supper table that evening, Mrs. Craydon told them of her afternoon caller.

"It is really too bad that Aunt Hannah is so queer about taking help from any person," said Mr. Craydon. "I do not suppose that Vance knows how much he owes to her. If it had not been for her faithful care, you would not be here, my boy."

Vance looked up in surprise. "I always knew she took care of me when mother was sick, but I didn't know she kept me from dyin'," said the boy.

"Well, she did," said his father. "You and several of your boy friends owe old Aunt Hannah a world of gratitude."

"Yes," said his mother, "you took scarlet fever while I was in bed with pneumonia, and the doctor said you would have died if it had not been for Aunt Hannah. That was 13 years ago. She has grown old very rapidly this last three years."

Vance's head was so full of plans for the sale of the nuts to pay very strict attention just then, but after he had gone to bed her words recurred to him. Poor old Aunt Hannah! Many an apple had she given to the boys from her tree before the storm of last winter blew it down. As for nuts, her trees had always been full until this year, and such shellbarks! No one around Hopedale had such nuts. They were every bit as large as Uncle Reuben's. If Uncle Reuben had only known that Aunt Hannah would have valued the gift of a bushel of nuts! Here Vance's thoughts must have been rather exciting, for he sat up in bed, stared out the window a minute, and then shook his head and muttered: "Pshaw, it wouldn't do at all; the fellows don't want to give them away!" And then he did some hard thinking, and finally went to sleep.

The next day he held an earnest conversation with his chum, Tom Easter, and at noon he and Tom each held another conversation with two other boys, and by the time school was out each member of the club had been conversed with. If the meeting was not as noisy as the meeting of the preceding day, the business transacted was fully as important.

During the week intervening between that afternoon and Hallowe'en, the meetings became more and more frequent. I am afraid the lessons at school suffered from want of attention on the part of the boys. Various trips to the surrounding farmers were made; mysterious bundles began to accumulate in the woodhouse. A barrel of something that might be Baldwin apples stood in one corner. A large box full of—well it was either salt or sugar, and it didn't taste like salt—was on top of the barrel. It was only Tuesday, and Hallowe'en did not come until Thursday evening. Plenty of time for more bundles to accumulate! And all the result of a few minutes' hard thinking.

On Hallowe'en immediately after supper little Jennie Craydon made her appearance at Aunt Hannah's back door, and implored the old lady to come over to the Craydon house at once. Papa was lying on the lounge moaning and mamma wanted her to come right away, without waiting to lock her door, for what had she that anyone could steal? Aunt Hanna crossed the field which lay between her home and the Craydon residence. After inspecting the patient, she decided that an onion poultice was what he needed. And when it had been made and applied, Mr. Craydon's shoulder must be well rubbed with liniment. Then Aunt Hannah must have a roasted apple. By the time everything had been attended to and the roasted apples eaten, it was almost ten o'clock, and Vance and Jennie accompanied her to her door. Aunt Hannah opened her back door, went in and closed it after bidding the children good-night. She then went on to the little room in front, which served



THE BOYS OUTSIDE WINKED KNOWINGLY.

as a storeroom in which she sold her taffy and candy. As she lit the lamp, she glanced around what had been an empty apartment when she had last seen it. In one corner stood the barrel of Baldwins; beside it was the box before mentioned; hanging on a nail was a fine-looking ham; her own tea canister had been taken from the cupboard and stood on the shelf filled with tea; beside it nestled some packages of coffee; on the lower shelf were three large boxes, one full of chestnuts, one of shellbarks, and one of walnuts; while a sack of flour obligingly wedged the boxes in against the wall.

Aunt Hanna sat down on a chair in speechless amazement. When she had collected her thoughts, she searched for some trace by which she could identify the donors, but in vain. Every label had been removed, and when, next morning, she made her way to Mrs. Craydon's that lady earnestly disavowed all connection with the gifts. The storekeeper was discreetly noncommittal, and for years only the Hopedale Fishing club fully understood the mystery of Aunt Hanna's Hallowe'en gifts. When Uncle Reuben heard the story, which he did when he made his annual visit to his sister during the following summer, he—but that belongs to a summer story; not to a Hallowe'en mystery.—United Presbyterian.

A Strategist.

They both lived out in the suburbs where the air of the plains and from the mountains fans the flames of love. The date had been fixed for a buggy ride and for days and days and days the young man had anticipated the trip. Just as the robe had been properly arranged to keep the dust from interfering with their best clothes they started—but she told him to stop!

"What is it, dearest?"

"Won't you call the dog?"

"And what do we want a dog for?"

"I hate to tell you, Morrison."

"Confide in me, dearest. Should our enemies burn me at the stake to extort the secret, I would not violate your confidence."

"Then I can tell you. If Towser follows us he will not be at home when we return to bark and wake the old folks up, and in that way they will never know how late it is when we get back."—Denver Times.

Teeth Drawn to Show Servitude.

In Peru it was once the custom for domestic servants to have two of their upper front teeth extracted. Their absence indicated their servitude.

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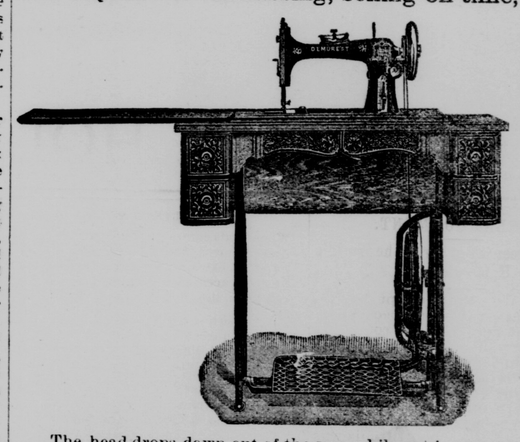
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And Fully Guarantee it for Ten Years.

The reason we can sell so low is that our manufacturing facilities are the largest and best in the world, and because we cut off the immense and useless expense of canvassing, selling on time, etc.



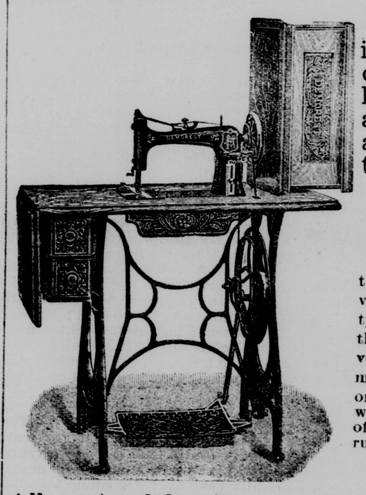
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OUR NO. 4 DROP HEAD.

The head drops down out of the way while not in use, thereby giving you an extra piece of furniture in the shape of a beautiful table. The wood work is elegantly finished in dark oak. Price, $23.50.

WE SELL FOR CASH ONLY.

therefore have no losses, and can afford to sell on small margins.



The old way of selling sewing machines, canvassing from one house to another, is almost as expensive as the manufacture of the machines.

Our No. 3.

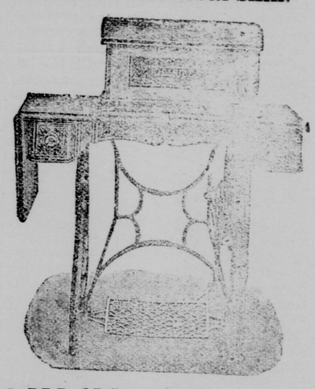
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Price, $19.50 cash.

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It stands alone in the Sewing machine field, the cheapest, the best, the most popular machine on the market.

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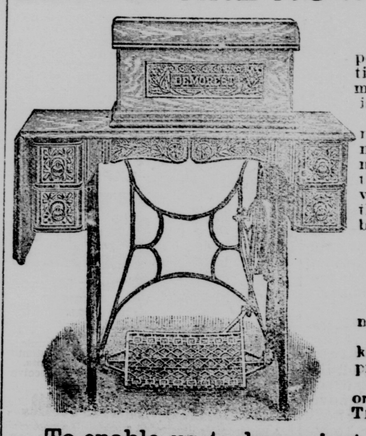
Exquisite, durable, quiet and reliable. Finished in light or dark oak or walnut. Price, $19.50.

Don't allow high priced agents to talk you into the notion that our machine is anything but the best.

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No one has yet attempted to excel the "Demorest."

250,000 ARE NOW IN USE.



The "Demorest" has no competitors, for their is no incentive to competition when the most that can be accomplished is to equal it.

All ordinary repairs free. Do not trade off your old Demorest machine, no matter how old it may be, a small investment in the way of repairs will most invariably put it in good order so that it will last you for a number of years longer.

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Light or Dark Oak or Walnut. Price, $22.50.

We do not make the poo kinds—neither do we ask big prices for our good ones.

Write us for particulars, but orders received only through THE GAZETTE.

To enable us to know just what this advertisement is doing all orders must pass through the GAZETTE and a list of persons who have bought the machines in Talbot will be cheerfully furnished.

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