

OVERNIGHT GUEST

By BEN AMES WILLIAMS

THE STORY THUS FAR: Adam Bruce, department of justice operator vacationing in the Northeastern hills, where he had formerly lived, ran into his previous boss, Inspector Tope, and Mrs. Tope. He recommended that the Tope's spend the night at Dewain's Mill, operated by Bee Dewain, whom Bruce regarded very highly. Later that night Tope phoned Bruce to come out to the state camp and have Ned Quill, a state trooper, join them. Despite the fact Bruce was to leave the next morning, he went out to meet Tope, knowing that something serious had happened. He was assured that Bee was not in trouble. He was to meet them at the Faraway cottage.

CHAPTER II

While Tope began to get out the bags, Bee and Mrs. Tope approached the cabin and the girl produced a key. Then, as she tried the knob, she said, in a surprised tone, half to herself: "Why, that's funny! It's unlocked!"

She entered and began to raise shades and let in a flood of light, and when Tope followed, with a bag in each hand, she was explaining to Mrs. Tope: "You see, I had all the furniture built in. It's cheaper than buying."

Tope set down the bags; and he saw beds end to end along one wall, and a chest of drawers beyond. The beds appeared to promise comfort. The carpenter had built frames to support the springs and sheathed these frames down to the floor, so there was no chance for dust and rubbish to accumulate underneath. There were windows in front and rear and toward the brook; and a fireplace at one end, with birch logs ready for the match, and kindling and a crumpled newspaper under them on the clean hearth upon which, clearly, there had never been a fire.

Said Bee Dewain: "I'll open the windows. It seems stuffy. Would you like a blaze?"

"I think so," Mrs. Tope agreed. "It may turn chilly."

Tope crossed to touch a match to the paper under the kindling; but as he stooped down, he noticed something lying on the hearth, and held his hand.

It was a thing of no apparent importance. Another man, even though he saw it, would have discovered in this object no implications at all. It was simply a match which had been lighted and allowed to burn down till only half an inch of uncharred wood remained.

Tope's eye was caught by this match almost completely burned, and he saw two or three more, lying here and there. He had an old habit of noticing unimportant things, of suspecting importance in them; so now before he lighted the fire, he searched in the kindling and in the crumpled paper and on the hearth behind and beneath the logs, till he collected eleven matches which had like the first been lighted and burned almost to the ends before they were thrown away.

"Whoever lighted these matches used them to see by."

"Nothing," he insisted, mendaciously. "Which bed shall I take?"

"The one nearest the fire."

"I never saw anyone yet who tucked in my covers at the foot the way I like them," he remarked.

"I'll do it!"

"Not even you!"

"She laughed softly. 'All right,' she assented. 'You're fussy as an old maid! I'll be down by the brook, if you're bound to be so independent. Come out when you're through!'"

"Mrs. Tope left the inspector inside, and walked toward the brook and sat down beside the water."

"The supper was a good one and most of them ate in a silence that was to some degree enforced; for Mrs. Murrell, almost from the first, monopolized the conversation. Once Tope interjected a question. 'You say you've been here two weeks, Mrs. Murrell? I thought most people just stayed overnight.'"

spoke, perhaps summoned by the bell, the gray-haired violinist appeared in time to hear her words.

"Adam?" the newcomer echoed. "Our young friend Bruce?" His tone was sardonic, hostile.

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"Some pot or pan rattled angrily in the kitchen, and Mrs. Tope suspected that Mrs. Priddy had perhaps been meant to overhear. Bee said hurriedly: 'Of course, we have a lot of people here in the course of a week—coming and going all the time.'"

"I suppose the week-ends are your busy times?" Tope suggested.

"Well, yes," Bee agreed. "There were six cabins full last night, and eight Saturday night."

"But Mrs. Murrell, not to be silenced, turned her catchism to Whitlock and Bee; and Mrs. Tope saw that Tope watched Whitlock with an unobtrusive eye. After supper, without apology or excuse, these two men went out of doors; and Tope turned to Mrs. Tope, almost briskly.

"Shall we go to our cabin, my dear?" he asked. "I thought you might read aloud to me a while."

"Mrs. Tope had never read aloud to him; yet she betrayed no least surprise at this suggestion. 'We must finish our book,' she agreed, and rose.

IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

By HAROLD L. LUNDQUIST, D. D. Of The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago. Released by Western Newspaper Union.

Lesson for December 9

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THE CHRISTIAN'S PLACE IN THE LIFE OF HIS NATION (Temperance Lesson)

LESSON TEXT: Matt. 5:13-16, 43-46; I Peter 2:13-17. GOLDEN TEXT: Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord.—Psalm 33:12.

Men make up nations. Human beings in a land like ours determine by their interests and attitudes the direction in which the entire social order moves. That in turn determines what kind of government we have.

If the totalitarian philosophies have colored our thinking and caused us to forget the importance of the individual in the life of our nation, let us turn at once to the right view.

Particularly important is the bearing which individual Christians can and should have on our national life. We have tended to draw back and fall to use the power and position which we have by God's grace.

Nowhere does that show more than in our failure (perhaps one should say shameful failure) to bring Christian principles to bear upon the appalling liquor problem. This is temperance Sunday. Do not fail to stress that phase of Christian citizenship today.

How should Christians make their influence felt in the nation? By being what they ought to be and contributing to its life. Note these things in our lesson—the Christian gives:

I. Salt (Matt. 5:13).
We are the salt of the earth, and the pungent savor of Christ is to be evident in us as we touch life round about us—in the church, in the home, and in the nation.

II. Light (Matt. 5:14-16).
A light is intended to give illumination to all round about it. It always does unless someone hides it under a cover, and then it becomes not only useless but dangerous.

III. Love (Matt. 5:43-48).
"Love your enemies" (v. 44); that is the standard which Christ has established for His followers. While the love one has for the brethren is without doubt a more intimate relationship than the love one may have for an enemy, we must not seek to minimize the real love we should have even for those who curse and revile us.

It is to move us so deeply that we not only treat them kindly, but also pray for them. Humanly speaking such a thing is impossible, but in Christ it is not only possible, it has actually been demonstrated in life.

It is so easy for Christians to speak with derision that borders on hatred about "the devil's gang," and to lose all love for the crowd that hangs around the tavern and the gambling house. Let us hate their sin, but may God help us to show that we really love them.

Love will do more to reach the world for Christ, and more to direct our national life into right channels than any other influence we can bring to bear. Let us do all we can, but let us do it all in love.

The Home Town Reporter

in WASHINGTON

By Walter Sheard
WNU Correspondent

WNU Washington Bureau, 1616 Eye St., N. W.

What Is Future of Price Support System?

RECENT removal of the five-cent-a-pound subsidy on butter brings into focus the whole question of government subsidies insofar as they apply to farm products. Will these subsidies be rapidly removed? Will the change-over be a gradual one? And whose policy will prevail—that of Secretary of Agriculture Anderson for a complete elimination of food subsidies as rapidly as conditions warrant, or the more cautious policy of O.P. Administrator Chester Bowles, who wants to keep prices down with the help of subsidies.

Farm-minded congressmen and government officials concerned with the operation of the subsidy program, mostly agree that subsidies were all right as a wartime practice, but that they have no place in a peacetime economy. Farm organizations, particularly the dairy interests, have been outspoken against the subsidy practice, especially against those subsidies known as "consumer subsidies," and have declared that the consumers are well able to pay fair and fixed prices without the benefit of a subsidy paid out of the federal treasury.

Costs 2 Billions a Year
The whole subsidy program has cost the government, and that means the taxpayers, approximately two billion dollars a year. It is agreed that the roll-back subsidies during wartime have helped to absorb abnormally high wartime production costs and keep prices on a "reasonable" plane. Whether the subsidies, however, have saved the general public any money in the long run is a moot question upon which not all are agreed, although testimony before one of the congressional committees was to the effect that, for every dollar spent in government subsidies from three to five dollars would be saved in the price of food at the retail level. If this is true, then based on an annual two billion dollar outlay, this would mean a yearly saving of at least six billion dollars to consumers in the retail stores of the country.

Government subsidies are of two classes and work both ways—one, the consumer subsidy, paid to hold down prices, and the other the price support or incentive subsidy, paid to hold up prices and to increase production in certain products.

Will Prices Hold Up?
The question which remains unanswered is—will removal of subsidies bring about a drop in prices to farmers? Or will supply and demand help keep up the parity prices which the farmers are guaranteed?

The best opinion here is that there will be a compromise base adopted on consumer subsidies, and that they will be finally eliminated, but on a piecemeal or gradual program, with the sugar and flour subsidies probably the last to be eliminated.

Besides these, commodities subsidies are in effect on wheat, milk, peanuts, cooking oils, beans, meats and a few other items. There is also a subsidy paid by the RFC to a certain class of oil operators. This alone has cost almost a hundred million dollars.

The RFC also has handled the subsidy on meats, butter and wheat, and at the end of 1944 these payments had been approximately 660 million dollars on meat, 117 million dollars on butter and 86.1 million dollars on wheat and flour.

New Base Wanted
While the program for elimination of subsidies goes forward slowly, farm organizations are busy organizing themselves for a fight to set up a new base for arriving at parity prices for farm products. On the theory that the present parity price, which means farm purchasing power equivalent to the 1909-1914 period, no longer fits the picture under present increased costs of production and living, action may go along two courses:

1. Setting up an entirely new set of figures for determining parity, or demanding 100 per cent of parity instead of the 90 per cent now guaranteed under the law, or

2. Attempting to add farm labor costs into the parity price as provided in the bill introduced by Congressman Face (D., Ga.).

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The 1,000 American men who own a model or miniature railroad with a steam locomotive consider themselves in a different class from the 100,000 who own an electric model, says Collier's. As such steam locomotives and their rolling stock cannot be bought, they are made by their owners on scales ranging from 1/4 inch to one inch to the foot.

Therefore, owing to their size and power, steam systems, unlike electric models, are installed outdoors. For instance, a typical one-inch-to-the-foot locomotive weighs 300 pounds, requires a 4 1/2 inch track and is capable of pulling a one-ton load.

Word 'Gas' Individual; Most Countries Use It

The word "gas," in its true sense, is virtually in a class by itself because it was not derived from any other word, being the outright invention of Jan van Helmont, the Dutch chemist, who coined it about 1625.

As the languages of the world then contained no word of similar meaning, the majority of them have since adopted "gas" as their term for the gaseous form of matter.

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