

# The BROWN MOUSE

By Herbert Quick



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## JENNIE IN POLITICS

**SYNOPSIS**—Jennie Woodruff refuses to marry Jim Irwin, young farm hand, because of his financial condition and poor prospects. He is intellectually above his station, and has advanced ideas concerning the possibilities of school teaching and farming, for which he is ridiculed by many. In short, Jim is an off-beat. He flocks by himself and reads books and has a philosophy of his own. But there are latent powers in him unsuspected even by himself and Opportunity comes knocking at his door. Jim is nominated for school teacher, as a joke. The joke results in his election. He visits his scholars.

### CHAPTER IV—Continued.

But, true to his belief in honest, thorough work, like a general preparing for battle, he examined his field of operations. His manner of doing this seemed to prove to Colonel Woodruff, who watched it with keen interest as something new in the world, that Jim Irwin was possibly a Brown Mouse. But the colonel knew only a part of Jim's performances. He saw Jim clothed in slickers, walking through rainstorms to the houses in the Woodruff district, as greedy for every moment of rain as a haymaker for shine; and he knew that Jim made a great many evening calls.

But he did not know that Jim was making what our sociologists call a survey. For that matter, neither did Jim; for books on sociology cost more than 25 cents a volume, and Jim had never seen one. However, it was a survey. To be sure, he had long known everybody in the district, save the Simmses—and he was now a friend of all that exotic race; but there is knowing and knowing.

He now had note-books full of facts about people and their farms. He knew how many acres each family possessed, and what sort of farming each husband was doing—live stock, grain or mixed. He knew about the mortgages, and the debts. He knew whether the family atmosphere was happy and contented, or the reverse. He knew which boys and girls were wayward and insubordinate. He made a record of the advancement in their studies of all the children, and what they liked to read. He knew their favorite amusements. He talked with their mothers and sisters—not about the school, to any extent, but on the weather, the horses, the automobiles, the silo-filling machinery and the profits of farming.

Really, though Jennie Woodruff did not see how such doings related to school work, Jim Irwin's school was running full blast in the homes of the district and the minds of many pupils, weeks and weeks before that day when he called them to order on the Monday specified in his contract as the first day of school.

Con Bonner, who came to see the opening, voiced the sentiments of the older people when he condemned the school as disorderly. To be sure, there were more pupils enrolled than had ever entered on a first day in the whole history of the school, and it was hard to accommodate them all. But



"That Feller'll Never Do."

the director's criticism was leveled against the free-and-easy air of the children. Most of them had brought seed corn and a good-sized corn show was on view. There was much argument as to the merits of the various entries. Instead of a language lesson from the text-book, Jim had given them an exercise based on an examination of the ears of corn.

The number exercises of the little chaps had been worked out with ears and kernels of corn. One class in arithmetic calculated the percentage of inferior kernels at tip and butt to the full-sized grains in the middle of the ear.

All the time, Jim Irwin, awkward and uncouth, clad in his none-too-good Sunday suit and trying to hide behind his Lincolnian smile the fact that he was pretty badly frightened and much

embarrassed, passed among them, getting them enrolled, setting them to work, wasting much time and laboring like a heavy-laden barge in a sea-way.

"That feller'll never do," said Bonner to Bronson next day. "Looks like a tramp in the schoolroom."

"Wearin' his best, I guess," said Bronson.

"Half the kids call him 'Jim,'" said Bonner.

"That's all right with me," replied Bronson.

"The room was as noisy as a caucus," was Bonner's next indictment, "and the flure was all over corn like a hog-pin."

"Oh! I don't suppose he can get away with it," assented Bronson disgustedly, "but that boy of mine is as tickled as a colt with the whole thing. Says he's goin' reg'lar this winter."

"That's because Jim don't keep no order," said Bonner. "He lets Newt do as he pleases."

"First time he's ever pleased to do anything but deviltry," protested Bronson. "Oh, I suppose Jim'll fall down, and we'll have to fire him—but I wish we could get a good teacher that would git hold of Newt the way he seems to!"

### CHAPTER V

#### The Promotion of Jennie.

If Jennie Woodruff was the cause of Jim Irwin's sudden irruption into the educational field by her scoffing "Humph!" at the idea of a farm-hand's ever being able to marry, she also gave him the opportunity to knock down the driver of the big motorcar, and perceptibly elevate himself in the opinion of the neighborhood, while filling his own heart with something like shame.

The fat man who had said "Cut it out!" to his driver, was Mr. Charles Dilly, a business man in the village at the extreme opposite corner of the county. Mr. Dilly was a candidate for county treasurer, and wished to be nominated at the approaching county convention. In his part of the county lived the county superintendent—a candidate for renomination. He was just a plain garden or field county superintendent of schools, no better and no worse than the general political run of them, but he had local pride enlisted in his cause, and was a good politician.

Mr. Dilly was in the Woodruff district to build a backfire against this conflagration of the county superintendent. He expected to use Jennie Woodruff to light it withal. That is, while denying that he wished to make any deal or trade—every candidate in every convention always says that—he wished to say to Miss Woodruff and her father, that if Miss Woodruff would permit her name to be used for the office of county superintendent of schools, a goodly group of delegates could be selected in the other corner of the county who would be glad to reciprocate any favors Mr. Charles J. Dilly might receive in the way of votes for county treasurer with ballots for Miss Jennie Woodruff for superintendent of schools.

Mr. Dilly never inquired as to Miss Woodruff's abilities as an educator. That would have been eccentric. Miss Woodruff never asked herself if she knew anything about rural education which especially fitted her for the task; for was she not a popular and successful teacher—and was not that enough? So are the officials chosen who supervise and control the education of the farm children of America.

When Jim Irwin started home from putting out his team the day after his first call on the Simms family, Jennie was waiting at the gate to be congratulated on her nomination.

"I hope you're elected," Jim said, holding the hand she had extended; "but there's no doubt of that."

"They say not," replied Jennie; "but father believes in working just as if we didn't have a big majority for the ticket. Say a word for me when on your pastoral rounds."

"All right said Jim, "what shall I say you'll do for the schools?"

"Why," said Jennie, rather perplexed, "I'll be fair in my examinations of teachers, try to keep the unfit teachers out of the schools, visit schools as often as I can, and—why, what does any good superintendent do?"

"I never heard of a good county superintendent," said Jim.

"Never heard of one—why, Jim Irwin!"

"I don't believe there is any such thing," persisted Jim, "and if you do no more than you say, you'll be off the same piece as the rest. Your system won't give us any better schools than we have—of the old sort—and we need a new kind."

"Oh, Jim, Jim! Dreaming as of yore! Why can't you be practical! What do you mean by a new kind of rural school?"

"It would be correlated with rural life. It would get education out of the things the farmers and farmers' wives are interested in as a part of their lives."

Jennie looked serious, after smothering a laugh.

"Jim," said she, "you're going to have a hard enough time to succeed in the Woodruff school, if you confine yourself to methods that have been tested, and found good."

"But the old methods," urged Jim, "have been tested and found bad. Shall I keep to them?"

"They have made the American people what they are," said Jennie. "Don't be unpatriotic, Jim."

"They have educated our farm children for the cities," said Jim. "This county is losing population—and it's the best county in the world."

"Pessimism never wins," said Jennie.

"Neither does blindness," answered Jim. "It is losing the farms their dwellers, and swelling the cities with a proletariat."

For some time, now, Jim had ceased to hold Jennie's hand; and their sweetheart days had never seemed farther away.

"Jim," said Jennie, "I may be elected to a position in which I shall be obliged to pass on your acts as teacher—in an official way, I mean. I hope they will be justifiable."

Jim smiled his slowest and saddest smile.

"If they're not, I'll not ask you to condone them," said he. "But first



"Good Night," Said Jennie Curtly.

they must be justifiable to me, Jennie."

"Good night," said Jennie curtly, and left him.

Jennie, I am obliged to admit, gave scant attention to the new career upon which her old sweetheart seemed to be entering. She was in politics, and was playing the game as became the daughter of a local politician. Col. Albert Woodruff went South with the army as a corporal in 1861, and came back a lieutenant. His title of colonel was conferred by appointment as a member of the staff of the governor, long years ago, when he was county auditor. He was not a rich man, as I may have suggested, but a well-to-do farmer, whose wife did her own work much of the time, not because the colonel could not afford to hire "help," but for the reason that "hired girls" were hard to get.

The colonel, having seen the glory of the coming of the Lord in the triumph of his side in the great war, was inclined to think that all reform had ceased, and was a political stand-patter—a very honest and sincere one. Moreover, he was influential enough so that when Mr. Cummins or Mr. Dolliver came into the county on political errands, Colonel Woodruff had always been called into conference. He was of the old New England type, believed very much in heredity, very much in the theory that whatever is is right, in so far as it has secured money or power.

A very respectable, honest, American Tory was the colonel, fond of his political sway, and rather soured by the fact that it was passing from him. He had now broken with Cummins and Dolliver as he had done years ago with Weaver and later with Larrabee—and this breach was very important to him, whether they were greatly concerned about it or not.

Such being her family history, Jennie was something of a politician herself. She was in no way surprised when approached by party managers on the subject of accepting the nomination for county superintendent of schools. Colonel Woodruff could deliver some delegates to his daughter, though he rather shied at the proposal at first, but on thinking it over, warmed somewhat to the notion of having a Woodruff on the county payroll once more.

"I want a new kind of rural school, but I don't see any prospect."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

#### Comprehensive Appeal.

A street car conductor called out shrilly to the passengers standing in the aisles: "Will thim in front plaze to move up, so that thim behind can take the places of thim in front an' lave room for thim who are nayther in front nor behind?"

#### House and Its Owner.

My precept to all who build is, that the owner should be an ornament to the house, and not the house to the owner.—Cicero.

# Uncommon Sense . . .

By JOHN BLAKE

## WOLF AT THE DOOR

THIS isn't a fable. The wolf that figures in it is a wolf you've often heard of. He's the widely celebrated wolf-at-the-door.

Most men work all their lives to be rid of him. When he is gone they stop working—and, too often, back he comes. Only a few get rid of him forever. And the sense of security that takes his place is considerably more dangerous than the wolf could possibly be.

Most of us need the wolf in our business. When, of a morning, we glance out of the window and see him sitting hungrily on the doorstep we take more interest in our day's work. When we are on the job the thought of him keeps us hustling. And by keeping hustling we put our brain in condition, which helps a lot with the next day's work.

The wolfless man is a worryless man, and a worryless man isn't much use in the world.

The man who knows he can't be fired helps very little around an office or shop. Necessity did not limit her family to the one child—invention. She is the mother of effort, of achievement, of energy, of industry—a very goodly brood of children.

If Thomas A. Edison had made a competence before he was thirty it is possible that he would have kept on working, but we doubt it.

It is true that men long past all fear of the wolf are still doing important work, but they got the habit of work

when the wolf was leering at them as they left the house for the job. The habit persisted.

Poverty is an ugly thing which we all should avoid. But the very avoiding of it stimulates ambition, brings out such talents as we may have and opens our eyes to our own possibilities.

In the South Sea Islands the natives don't have to work. The breadfruit supplies their food and kills their ambition.

Winter, which we associate with our friend the wolf, forces men to step lively on the road to competence. And the highest achievement is to be found in the temperate zones, where there is winter enough to keep men thinking about the coal supply and not enough, as in the Arctic regions, to keep them in the house all the time.

Don't be afraid of the wolf. He is evil to look upon, with his red eyes, and his lolling tongue, but he is one of the best friends you have got.

(© by John Blake.)

# WE WERE NOT SATISFIED

By GRACE E. HALL

CAN you forget the myriad things That made the cycle of those years:

The witchery of tender springs,  
The autumn leaves, the tears,  
The gray mists blurring out the view,  
The somber scenes across the way,  
The unsaid things we sensed and knew  
Each passing day?

Can you forget the mystic thread  
We wove on fancy's magic loom  
Into those days that now are dead—  
Dead as that first April's bloom  
We watched the gray doves come and  
go,

Stood at the window while the rain  
Tapped with a ghost-touch soft and  
low  
Against the pane.

The hours were commonplace, we said,  
And wished for scenes some other  
where,  
We saw the sunsets, gold and red,  
Watched snow-clouds fill the air;  
Heard song birds in the trees above,  
Had all God's gifts, and yet  
We were not satisfied with love—  
And now—regret!

(© Dodd, Mead & Company.)

# SCHOOL DAYS



place in their respective callings, command the most respectful consideration and win the highest recompense.

Life to those who give their best wears a different aspect from that which is so dimly seen by the heedless, heading for no particular port, lacking the ability to judge the direction of the wind or energy to study the charts.

Close application, holding constantly to one specific course, working hour after hour without every little while pausing to scan the clock, cannot in their state of indifference be done.

Such persons in their reflective moments may be annoyed at the progress of their rivals, but the annoyance lacks strength to shake them from their lethargy.

Any continuous exertion calling for excellence, is too violent, too wearing to body and mind to be tolerated.

So they remain passive, and when the frequent ugly moods come upon them they censure the fates for their pitiful plights.

How then, can such humans who habitually and generally from choice travel among the irresolute and the grumblers, blame others for delinquencies which are obviously their own?

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# The Young Lady Across the Way



The young lady across the way saw in the paper that the largest gun uses half a bale of cotton at every shot, and it seems more than man than bullets.

cold sliced lamb on this and cover tightly. Cook for an hour over slow heat. Add one tablespoonful of butter, one-half teaspoonful each of curry powder and flour, salt and pepper to taste and one-half tablespoonful of worcestershire sauce. Cook five minutes and serve.

Nellie Maxwell  
(© 1922, Western Newspaper Union.)

Three Ways to Wealth.  
There seem to be but three ways for a nation to acquire wealth: the first is by war, as the Romans did, in plundering their conquered neighbors; the second is robbery; the third is generally cheating; the third by agriculture, the only honest way, wherein man receives a real increase of the seed thrown into the ground, in a kind of continual miracle wrought by the hand of God in His favor, as a reward for his innocent life and his virtuous industry.—Franklin.

# Has Anyone Laughed At You Because—

By ETHEL R. PEYSER

You Like to Putter in the Garden?

The world after all is a garden and it is from the garden that we get our wheat and water and all the things we civilized people must have to exist at all. Ever since the world began masses of us have been gardeners and farmers. You love the smell of the earth, it strengthens you. You get something stimulating from outdoors, from helping things to grow, from watching them develop. You like the garden for putting rather than an ill-smelling garage. You like the garden, it gives you healthful exercise and brings you near to God—whether you realize it or not.

SO  
Your get-away here is:  
You belong to a noble line of earth's beautifiers.

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# Something to Think About

By F. A. WALKER

## DO YOUR BEST

YOU cannot by any newly conceived process hope to get the best and apply it to the best use, unless you give the best.

The studious scholar stands at the head of his or her class simply because he or she gives the best—the closest attention, the deepest thought and the hardest work. Concentration is wearisome, but it produces effective results and yields enduring rewards which can be attained in no other way.

In art, literature, business and in the crafts, those who become conspicuous for their skill, give their best energy in perfecting themselves, and as a result they hold the foremost

# Mother's Cook Book

Every addition to human knowledge is an addition to human power. Success treads on the heels of every right effort.

## MEATS THAT ARE DIFFERENT

THOSE who are fond of liver will enjoy another way of preparing it.

### Liver Baked With Vegetables.

Take a pound and a half of calf's liver, dredge with seasoned flour and add to a hot pan in which a tablespoonful of drippings has been cooked with a sliced onion and one cupful of celery. Lay the liver uncut in the pan and cover with two slices of bacon, season with a teaspoonful of salt, a few dashes of pepper and bake closely covered for half an hour. Add six small potatoes pared and halved. Recover and bake until the potatoes are done, remove the lid and brown the bacon. Dish up the meat, add two tablespoonfuls of flour to the

liquid in the pan; stir smooth, add one-half cupful of stewed, strained tomatoes; season well and serve the sauce in a separate dish.

### Emergency Pudding.

Take a pint of thick breakfast porridge, farina or any similar preparation, to it add one cupful of milk, heat and add an egg white stiffly beaten. Cook a minute to cook the egg, add two cupfuls of fresh berries mixed with a cupful of sugar and crushed. Pour into a mold; do not mix the fruit. Serve hot or cold.

Custards of various flavors are all acceptable dishes for children, easy of digestion and nutritious. Junkets, jellies of gelatin and sago and tapioca combined with fruit and served with cream and sugar are all good.

### Cold Sliced Lamb With Onion Sauce.

Slice three large onions and lay them in the bottom of a saucepan, add the juice of half a lemon. Lay the