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# The Enterprise.

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WHOLE NO. 400

## A Pottersville Episode.

By Frank H. Meloon.

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IT was at the fall elections that the feud began in Pottersville. John Grant, the village blacksmith, a big, rawboned fellow of enormous muscle, whose family had hailed from Nova Scotia, had dared to oppose Judge Weaver, candidate for the legislature. From the judge's point of view the worst feature of this presumptuous antagonism was its success. Judge Weaver had been defeated by the narrow margin of one vote, and bitterness was ever thereafter to rankle in his heart.

Another source of vexation for the judge was the attachment which he could not fail to see existed between his daughter Nellie, a girl of pretty face, medium height, plump person



HE GENEROUSLY OFFERED TO FIGHT THEM, and many suitors, on the one hand and Willis Wenham, son of the first selectman, who was in the midst of his course at one of the big eastern universities.

Selectman Wenham was another of Judge Weaver's political opponents; but, though the judge never forgave one who crossed his will, this was not the reason for his opposing the match between his daughter Nellie and the selectman's son Willis. The judge was a man of means, while Selectman Wenham, though possessed of a moderate competency, could leave but a small sum at his demise to each of his numerous family, of which Willis composed exactly one-thirteenth.

With young Wenham absent at college, the judge was able to give his undivided attention to the village blacksmith. He was willing to bide his time, for he knew John Grant to be one of those men who with unflinching regularity get themselves into a beastly state of intoxication just once every twelve months. For a full week it was the blacksmith's custom to wrestle with John Barleycorn, quite willing to be overcome.

The only article in the warrant for the last town meeting over which there had not been more or less contest was that which called for the erection of a town lockup. It was generally conceded that Pottersville had reached that stage in a town's progress where a jail is demanded for the preservation of peace and order. An outsider might have objected that there had been no arrest made in the little village excepting of boys on truancy charges since the convening of the last town meeting, but this would have been regarded as a Machiavellian attempt at impeding the wheels of progress. The new structure had risen triumphantly, with not so much as a hint of graft, under the supervision of the selectman, and, although the suggestion of building had come from the mouth of Judge Weaver, none sang the praise of conception and execution more loudly than the village blacksmith.

It was at the fall elections, as we have said, that the feud started between John Grant and Judge Weaver. It was not until the approach of the following spring that the latter found the sought for chance to "get back" at the smith. One morning in early February the blacksmith failed to show up at his place of business. A line of six or more impatient teamsters set out to look up the reason. At Henry Come's hostelry, known as the Come Inn, they found it. Red eyed and maudlin, mostly oblivious to the cares of this world, yet occasionally bursting into tears and hiccoughs as he expatiated against the hard fate that had carried an uncle of his away on the wrong side of a log drive thirty years before, was the village blacksmith, leaning for sympathy and support against the rose colored, reeking bar over which the liquors of the Come Inn were served.

John Grant refused to do the work the teamsters desired of him, but generously offered to fight them, either one at a time or all together. The tender was courteously refused.

This time, however, John Grant was not to enjoy his parting from the path of sobriety without paying the penalty

thereof as provided and laid down in the statutes of the state. Judge Weaver forced the unwilling constables, after considerable goading, to action. The blacksmith, snoring in slumber, was dragged out of the woods and cast into the new lockup. On the following morning he had sobored up sufficiently to appear before the court, which in Pottersville meant Judge Weaver.

Two of the constables swore to having seen John Grant very drunk and disorderly at the Come Inn. There was no defense. The blacksmith even pleaded guilty with a certain amount of elation. Apparently the one uncomfortable feature of the affair to him was the long and maliciously worded harangue which, behind the dignity of the law, Judge Weaver delivered to the prisoner, closing by sentencing him to sixty days in Pottersville jail and fixing him \$0.75 costs.

There was a beautiful smile on the highly colored face of the prisoner as he was led off to the lockup, closely guarded by quite unnecessary constables, after offering to work out the fine by shoeing the yoke of oxen kept to aid the paupers in their work on the town farm. The proffer had been refused with a great show of dignity.

It would have required no great effort for the burly prisoner to tear down the bars which covered the windows of the jail and which were rather more for decoration than for anything else, but other thoughts were in his mind. He was, for the first time in his life, a prisoner. It was the duty of the town to which he had paid poll and property taxes for more years than he could really remember to provide him with bed and board. The experience was not only novel, but also distinctly pleasing, vesting him with a sense of new importance.

It was easier than working, this jail life, and after the first week in the well warmed lockup he began to look forward with regret to the time when he must leave it.

With the passing of the first fortnight of the sixty days' confinement this state of affairs, however, began to pall on him. He found that a vacation may be of too long duration. He began to pine for work. Furthermore, on two or three occasions Jailer Gibson on leaving the lockup after bringing in the blacksmith's supper had forgotten to lock the door after him. The prisoner remonstrated in forcible language at this inattention to duty.

"I'm goin' to be locked up nights hereafter, Jim Gibson," he said, knitting the red skin of his forehead into a mass of frowning wrinkles, "an' I want you to understand it. Think of me stayin' in jail without bein' locked up! Ain't I got a right to be locked up?"

"I'll put a spring lock on the door tomorrow, John, an' then if I go away an' forget to lock the door you can close it an' lock it any time you want."

"Well, Jim, all I ask is to be locked up like I ought to be," answered the mollified prisoner. "That's all I ask."

Nellie Weaver once more became a source of annoyance to the Judge. Sympathy in Pottersville, as it is apt to be in any town, was with the young people. In some way it got rumored around the town that Nellie's life at home was made none of the pleasantest by her father. Further comment was aroused when the postmaster gave out that Miss Nellie had returned one of Wrangle's (the wealthy summer visitor's) letters unopened. The incident showed a further progress in the stand taken by the energetic young lady against the plan of her father to marry her to the aforesaid Wrangle instead of to young Wenham.

The crisis was reached early in April. There had been an ice storm during the night, making the roads as slippery as glass. Unfortunately indeed was the horse that with unsharpened shoes had to venture on them. Trade was brisk at the improvised blacksmith shop, and John Grant had all the work he could handle. Judge Weaver's trotter Kellock was late in getting into line, so that it was nearly nightfall, with a bitter wind blowing from the northeast, when the prisoner blacksmith at last stripped Kellock of his shoes and commenced with his usual expedition the task of reshoeing.

Three shoes had been nailed to Kellock's prancing hoofs when an exclamation from the judge drew the attention of the waiters and loafers to a couple dashing by at high speed in a familiar sleigh. They were Willis Wenham and Judge Weaver's daughter Nellie. As they turned up the road where, two and a half miles distant, the house of the minister was situated, it dawned on the company that they were witnesses of an elopement.

There was ample time for the angry judge to overtake the couple, provided John Grant drove the nails of the fourth shoe with his customary quickness. The judge commanded him to hurry. Instead of doing so he laid the shoe down and said that, as he was a prisoner, working only to oblige folks, he'd be hanged if he'd do another tap of work for a man so low down as to swear at him. The judge pleaded and apologized in vain. It was only when the young couple returned and rendered Judge Weaver speechless with rage by the announcement of their marriage that John Grant would consent to put on the other shoe.

The very next day came an April thaw. The traveling was so bad that the prisoner's only visitor was Jailer Gibson, who brought him his meals. In the night when the blacksmith retired the rain was pouring outside in a monotonous drizzle. The Pottersville jail was situated on the bank of a small but deep river, and the waters of this stream were yellowed and swollen by the freshet.

In the early hours of the morning there was a slide and a fall and a splash. Over into the river went a section of banking, the Pottersville jail and the prisoner therein. The structure did not float far, but grounded on the shelving shore opposite the blacksmith shop where John Grant had practiced his trade prior to his latest departure from the narrow path of sobriety. As John Grant forced

open the conveniently arranged door it occurred to him that at midnight the sixtieth day of his imprisonment had been completed. His face wore a satisfied smile.

His equanimity was undisturbed the next morning when Judge Weaver drove over, furiously accusing him of stealing the jail and demanding that he return it to the place he had taken it from. The easy grin on the features of the blacksmith grew to broader dimensions.

"I whipped you at 'lection, Judge," he drawled slowly, "an' you sent me to that place," indicating the floating jail, "when you had your turn. Then I wouldn't put the shoe on your horse so's you could stop your daughter's marryin' young Wenham. Now you say I stole the jail, Judge. It's this way, I've got a chance to see the town of Pottersville fr false imprisonment. I ought to have let out o' jail at 12 o'clock last night. More'n that, the jail's mine?"

### IN A DIFFERENT CLASS.

So Thought Melinda When Her Salary Was Increased. Melinda had successfully eliminated the servant girl problem from our domestic circle for four or five years, and we felt kindly toward her, of course. One day the folks got conscience stricken on the subject of her pay.

"We've been paying Melinda \$4 a week for three years," mother said, "and she does the washing every Monday just as regularly as the day comes."

"Why don't you pay her \$5 a week?" father suggested. "Let's," mother responded promptly. The next Saturday evening Melinda was informed that she was to get five per cent more. She was delighted. On the following Monday she did not bring forth the tubs on the back porch, as was her wont.

"Aren't you going to wash today, Melinda?" mother asked after the morning had worn along. "No," Melinda answered sharply. "De five dollah gals don't do no washin'." Dat is fo' de cheap ladies.—Lippincott's.

Retaliation. A guest at one of the summer resorts in West Virginia tells of a wedding ceremony he witnessed in the town nearby. The minister was young and easily embarrassed. It was the first wedding he had ever undertaken. The prospective bride and groom were both younger and still more easily embarrassed than he.

When the minister had finished the service and muttered a few kindly but halting words to the young couple he had just united, the bride looked at him, blushing, but content. "Thank yer," she said clearly. "It's some kind of ornate suit, an' as long as you haven't ever been married yet, maybe we'll have a charred yim day to retaliate."—Harper's Weekly.

One More Chance. In an Arizona court a barber was recently tried for the murder of his wife. The evidence was entirely circumstantial, but as a result of the eloquence and persuasion of the district attorney the accused man was convicted and sentenced to be hanged. Before leaving the courtroom the judge gave the prisoner permission to make a statement of express a last wish if he desired to do so. The barber stood up and, facing the district attorney, said in a clear voice:

"Your honor, I should like just once more to be allowed to shave the district attorney."—Philadelphia Ledger.

Too Lazy to Look. Gentleman on the Fence—Willie, Willie, yer boot's aight! He on the Ground—Which one?—Once a Week.

### The Patchwork Quilt

(Published by Request) The autumn winds were blowing cold. The summer's bloom was o'er. When Mr. Trott, infirm and old, Entered his cottage door. With feeble step and wistful look, Trembling with cold and age. He tottered to the chimney's nook, But heard a voice of rage.

"I hate this mean old elbow chair, Forever in my way! Say! do you think that I will bear To have it here all day?" The aged man with tears replied, "My work on earth is done; Yet, since my presence you despise, Where shall I go, my son?"

"You need not ask," said Asa Trott; "The poorhouse is in view. Before this time you should have thought It was the place for you." My little reader, think of that! Poor grandpa said no more; But, taking up his tattered hat, He staggered to the door. Beneath a naked apple-tree, Whose autumn-leaves were shed, He sat him down, and on his knee Reclined his aching head.

But soon he heard a pleasant sound, And little Tommy said: "Why sits my grandpa on the ground, And what does ail his head?" "Alas! my boy, I have no more A place to call my own; And I must join the pauper poor, Supported by the town. But I am very cold, my dear; My strength is almost gone. I must not stay and perish here; That would be doing wrong. "Go to my chamber, little son, (I take it without guilt, For by my wife those seams were run.) And bring my patchwork quilt."

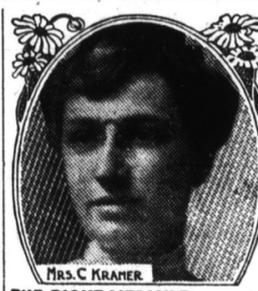
With swelling heart poor Tommy ran, Determined now to know If his own father was the man Who treated grandpa so. Now Asa, in a sullen mood, Was posting books that day; And Tommy said: "This very rude! To send grandpa away. Pray tell me, now—what has he done, That you should treat him so?" Said Madam Jenny, "Hold your tongue!" Said Asa, "Let him go."

To grandpa's chamber Tommy went And there his sorrows found a vent In bitter tears, at last; "But grandpa waits," he sobbing said, Then snatched the quilt from off the bed, And down the stairway passed. Then close to father's ear he drew And whispered: "Cut this quilt in two; Grandpa needs only half; You'll want the other half, my poor old, I drive you from my door, And at your sorrows laugh."

The father started with surprise: "O Tommy! if you're despicous And treat your father thus, May heaven!" he paused with sudden dread, And felt upon his guilty head The stern, half-uttered curse. The boy had held a mirror there. He saw himself with hoary hair, His life race nearly run, Turned out in autumn's chilling air, Bidden to seek the poorhouse fare, Scorned by his darling son.

And conscience, too, held high its glass, O'er it he saw a specter pass— Fiend-like ingratitude; It changed into the deathless worm, Where festering wounds forever burn, He saw and understood. "O Tommy! take my hand," he said, And Tommy to the garden led. Poor Asa, bowed with shame, And then he fell upon his knees Beneath the leafless apple-trees, And called his father's name. The father raised his head and heard: "Forgive!" 'T was but a single word, But on the withered face, A smile proclaimed the pardon won. He held his loved but long-lost son, In close and warm embrace. 'T was rapture to the little boy, And angles heard the sound with joy. When, in an humble tone, Repentant Asa, sad but calm, Said, "Father, lean upon my arm, And let us now go home."

Now in the chimney's warmest nook Sit grandpa, with the Holy Book, His countenance serene, But dimmer grew his sunken eye. A cough proclaimed that he would die Before the grass was green. And Asa watched him day by day, And wept alone, and tried to pray That God his life would save, Yet still the old man weaker grew, And nearer still each he drew Unto the silent grave. He saw that into Asa's heart Remorse had sent its keenest dart; And so he sought to hide The death hue on his withered cheek, And even when extremely weak, To walk he vainly tried. But grief on that old heart still fed, Although its last, last tear was shed— Life's sea had been so rough; The voyage now was almost o'er, Sweet voices from the other shore Cried "Come! it is enough."



Mrs. C. KRAMER

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"This was my unfortunate experience for nearly two years when my attention was called to Peruna. I hardly dared believe that at last I had found the right medicine, but as I kept on using it and was finally cured, I could only thank God and take courage."

"I have had most satisfying results from the use of your medicine and have advised dozens of women who were suffering with woman's ills to use Peruna and let the doctors alone. "Those who followed my advice are better today and many are fully restored to health."

Mrs. Wilda Mooers, R. F. D., No. 1, Leno, Ore., writes: "For the past four years I was a wretched woman, suffering with severe backaches and other pains, leaving me so weak and weary that it was only with difficulty that I was able to attend to my household duties. "I used different remedies, but found no relief until I had tried Peruna."

"Within two weeks there was a change for the better and in less than three months I was a well and happy woman. "All the praise is due to Peruna."

And bathed his brow with tenderest care, And propped his sinking head. 'T was just before the dawn, one day, That Asa heard him feebly say: "Forget what is forgiven; Remember, 'tis my dying prayer; Forget the past, and meet me there In heaven, my son, in heaven."

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"That'll be quite a swell wedding at your home tonight," said the old friend of the family. "Of course you'll give your daughter away." "No," replied the girl's father. "I guess they'll be back to live with me."—Philadelphia Press.

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