FROM CITY TO FARM

"Ye who listen with credulity to the whisperings of fancy, who pursue with eagerness the phantoms of hope, who expect that age will perform the promises of youth, and that the deficiencies of the present day will be supplied by the morrow—attend to the history of Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia."

By ERNEST McGAFFEY

Author of "Poems of Gun and Rod," "Outdoors," "Poems of the Town," Etc.

(Copyright, by Joseph B. Bowles.)

A Baby in the Country

"Do you love me, little children, O sweet blossoms that are curled,
Life's tender morning-glories, round the casement of the world?"

There is something inexpressibly sweet and comforting in the sight of little children at play, where the skies are clear, the grass green and the trees wave a canopy of leaves above them. Men and women of sensitive natures bleed inwardly at the sight of children in the cities, storming the dingy streets and rickety side-walks in a vain effort to find a play-ground somewhere. In the metropolis, the souls and bodies of thousands of children are stunted beyond hope of salvation by the poverty-stricken environment that blights hope and happiness. Even in the parks there are surly signals of "keep off the grass" staring from almost every patch of greensward, and vigilant guardians alert to swoop down on any daring tot who has innocently plucked so much as a single blossom.

Housed in dingy and ill-ventilated shanties, as in the case of the very poor, and hermetically sealed in modern flats, as in the case of the very uncomfortable, the city small boys and girls, except the wealthy, are shut out from sunlight and freedom almost all the year round. No wonder they rebel against such conditions; no wonder they reach out for some respite from the monotony of existence, and too often grow to tragical endings.

Yet in the country, a thousand slopes and flower-strewn forests beckon to the children, and nature seems to wonder that where so many sheep and cattle wander over the emerald carpets of outdoors, there should be such a lack of children's forms and faces. For in the country every fence corner and hedge-row laughs into blossom during the spring and summer, and away into autumn, and flowers are there for the picking, and seas of waving grass, unburned by any warning, to romp and play in.

When we came from our "apartments," as the garish and half-darkened atrocities were called that we camped in, our little girl was a mere slip of a child, as pale and lifeless almost as a stick of vermicelli. She looked languidly on the apple-blossoms and the lilac blooms, and the thick carpet of grass about the door-yard held no invitation out to her at first. But little by little, from one day to another, she crept out into the sunshine, and began to drift about amid the glories of the mild and sun-illumined weather; and before we could hardly realize it, she was beginning to peep herself in the life and, color of it all. Her cheeks became sunburned, her hair bleached a little from its golden-brown hue nearly to flaxen, and she began to laugh and run in the sunshine, herself a living ray of light. She grew like corn in the night.

"Lily-like, white as snow,
She hardly knew
She was a baby
So sweetly she grew."

Her appetite for milk was something prodigious; and in fact, her appetite for everything. In a few months she was eating almost as much as a grown person, and her baby limbs and chest commenced to fill out and get drum until she was really another child from the one we had brought from town. And every day was such a delight to her. Even when it rained she would be running around in the yard, or out in the garden or orchard, and her ruddy cheeks and sparkling eyes told of perfect health.

Just across the road was a magnificent oak tree, and under this tree was a large log. Here Lenore would gather acorns, and set the block with her dishes, and have elaborate Barmecidal feasts to which all of the neighbors were duly invited. Here she would hold extended conversations with her invisible guests, and the ceremony and etiquette prevailing was strictly up to date. All the toys we got her and all that were sent her from the city soon palled upon her, but the fascination of this old oak never seemed to lose its hold on her childish fancy. It was a massive trunk, with a dense clustering shade of broad leaves, and in it the jay-birds foregathered and planned raids on neighboring bird's nests; and occasionally choirs of blackbirds would sing in and chicker and chanted as the wind rocked the limbs of their green-girdled chancel.

Another of her joys was walking down the road and picking clover blossoms. White and red she would gather huge bunches of them, and come running back to the house in triumph with her trophies. Flowers of all kinds were her special delight, and she soon learned the names of some of the commoner wild flowers, as well as those of the numerous flowers which had been planted in the yard. With her tiny spade she was always eager to lend her vigorous but usually ill-directed aid to any work about the flower-beds, and in picking a bouquet from the beds generally adopted the simple plan of picking all there were in sight of the flowers she was after.

Her mode of salutation to the neighbor children was just to kiss them impartially, whether little boys or girls; and she enjoyed having them come to see her or go to see them; but at the same time she did not appear to miss them when they were not with her. There was so much that was still a marvel to her in the manifold mystery of the country, that she was companioned by the grass, the birds, the leaves, the sun and the rains. Sometimes she would swing in a little hammock I had fixed up for her under a maple tree, and remain in a sort of dream for hours together.

At such times she would drift back and forth, looking into space, and dreaming, maybe, of the miracles which she was passing through. At least, if that be a mere supposition,

"The wonder was not yet quite gone
From that still look of her's."

And her mother and I would watch her from some nearby window as she sat there and rocked idly, the sun glancing in on her yellow hair, the shadows deepening in her wide-open brown eyes.

In the spring and summer, and indeed until along in September and October, in that almost semi-southern country, Lenore went about in the yard and over the adjoining country in a very un-ornate attire consisting of a linen slip or "shift," without sleeves, and reaching about to her knees. Bare-headed and bare-footed she raced around in the grass, and while she often got muddy and sometimes dusty, she was not hampered in her movements by reason of any elaborateness of dress. She would tear off her little sun-bonnet and throw it aside as fast as it was put on her head and shoes she seemed to hate instinctively. She ran in the sun like a mimature Indian, and every month she appeared to get more sturdy.

A walk with her mother and myself of three miles or more over the hills would not tire her in the least, although at that time she was not yet three years old. Of course we dressed her more when we took these walks, and put shoes on her. As a rule, she raced ahead of us, and was not in the least fatigued when we got home. Usually she would not wander far away from the house when she was alone, but occasionally she departed from this custom, and dire were the tragedies which followed. One time I saw a flock of plover circle over the house and light in a pasture about a half mile away, and took my shot gun and went after them. Lenore was swinging in her little hammock, and she opened the yard gate and came down the road after me. I did not notice her, and slipped under the pasture fence and began to walk in the direction of where the birds had gone.

Meanwhile she had trailed along the road for over a half mile from home, and her mother and the girl had missed her. There was a swift search of the garden and the orchard, a looking around a clump of trees by the roadside, and at last a grand rush to pull the well that hung over the smoke-house. This was in the nature of a notification that something had happened, as it was not meal-time. But as Mrs. McGaffey grabbed the wire that swung the bell, it broke and came down, incidentally cutting a groove in her nose, and further adding to the confusion.

By that time the girl had taken another peek down the road and discovered Lenore, and came tearing down the highway. Meanwhile I was just getting into the plover and reducing the census in that direction, totally oblivious to the hubbub along the road and at the house. When the baby was reached and caught up she was frightened, and when she reached home her mother was just about ready to furnish a medium case of hysterics for inspection. And who got the blame for all this? You must be a single man to ask such an absurd question. I ought to have known that a baby which had never wandered away before was going to follow me if I went after plover; I should have heard the bell which didn't ring; it seemed incredible that I didn't hear the women call for me, with me only a mile away and the wind blowing strongly from me to the farm; and any man not a brute would have inevitably noticed a baby on a road half a mile away to the south while he was facing north and shooting birds as fast as they got up. It was plain to be seen that I was palpably in the wrong. I admitted my disgrace, and was finally forgiven. But don't let it happen again.

On another occasion Lenore had gone into the garden and after filling up comfortably on green gooseberries, had followed the path out into the orchard, and was amusing herself picking white clover blossoms. Solemnly questioning and examination revealed the fact that one of these blossoms was probably occupied by a honey-bee, whose sting is exceedingly painful. Lenore picked this particular blossom, not knowing the habits nor the irritability of the honey-bee, and the bee had just stung her for an example.

At the time of this catastrophe, I was asleep up stairs and Lenore's mother and grandmother were busy below deck, with a doughnut outfit. When the buzz bee inserted his sultry snickersee in Lenore's thumb, a yell went up that startled the haymakers on the hills for miles away. Talk about "Freedom" shrieking when "Kosciusko fell," it wasn't a circumstance to the howl that infant let out. I fell off of the bed, ran down stairs and butted myself awake against the wall. The child's mother darted out of the west door and fetched up in the screen that covered the west porch. Baby's grandma rushed out the front door and around the house, and, as a second piercing shriek went up, they both located the scene of the disturbance.

Both flew into the orchard and Lenore was holed in, yelling industriously, and perfectly confident that she had been exterminated, if not worse. Hot applications and soothing conversation brought Lenore around to a tearful resignation to her trouble, but after that she picked flowers with rare caution and circumspection. And if anything hurt her after that it was a "bee."

Now, of course, I could have proved a perfect alibi as to that accident, but the women folks sort of consulted together to one side as though they were going to tack the blame on me for this misfortune. But I was so stern and tyrannical that they "dasn't" try it on. I wouldn't have stood for it! A man must be firm and courageous in his own family part of the time, at least. But I could see that if I had not been determined, I would have had this bee business charged up against me just like the plover mishap was, so I took steps to fend it off before it got started.

To tell the truth, when I heard the first yell, I thought that some of the old chiefs of the cairns on the Illinois river bluffs near by had "riz," and were scalping white settlers. I remembered my first bee when I was a small boy, but it was of the gold-barred or "bumble" variety. I was helping rob its nest when it came at me like a furry bullet and lodged against my left cheek. When it broke away my cheek swelled up like a soap-bubble, and that was my last investigation as to the habits and honey of the bumblebee.

There was no bird's song that sounded as sweet as the baby's voice sounding among the grasses and leaves; there was nothing like her face, flushed with the sunshine, her hands holding a posy of drooping wild-flowers; there was no ripple of the water over gravelly shadows that held anything half so liquid as her laugh; even her tears were mere April interludes to the happiness in which she found herself.

And all the time I could see the pinched childish faces in the smoke and grime of the city we had left and my heart ached for them.

There is no place like the country to bring a child up in, and when they miss this experience, they have missed a rare part of their lives. They have lost the echoes in the song that nature sings, and that loss is irremediable and poignant, for that song is the song of songs.

"Many reeds grow together by the river, and men tread them at will and none is the worse. But in one reed of a million song is hidden, and if a man breaks that reed in twain, she shall miss the music often and long. Yea, all the days of his life."

The tragedy of it all is that it must be as a child that you should feel this awakening and unfolding of the mysteries of outdoors, and hear the music and see the pictures that sun and wind and cloud spread on the canvas of the seasons. If you wait until manhood and womanhood, you are too late. The joy that passeth understanding cannot be yours. Nature's lovers must woo her early, even as children, to be admitted to her inmost sanctuaries.

And so our little girl played in the meadows and pastures, entered into the life about her as part of its moods and complexities, and as she grew up into its blossoms and branches, its music and its silences, there grew in her childish brain and heart a love for the open which would not be denied, even though it could scarcely be called a definite understanding with the warp and woof of the seasons.

She ran wild with the sun and wind, careless of her abandoned toys, heedless of the transition from the snows to the baby's apple blossoms to the snows of December's whirling drifts. Each change was a joy to her; each mystery of the nights and days a perpetual delight. And wrapped in these childish dreams she lost sight of the passing of time and remained a baby to the last, as much of a fixture in the unfolding of nature as the robin's fledgling that looked wide-eyed from the nest in a gnarled apple tree by the orchard's edge.

"The fox-glove shoots up from the green,
Scarlet-feathered,
Preparing her hoods of down.
She was idle, and slept till the sunshiny weather,
Our children, take long to grow."

ERNEST McGAFFEY.

THEIR "TOPSY-TURVY" LUNCH.

Could Keep No Track of the Deluge of Food Which Poured Forth.

Some one had worked hard over the ordering of this lunch—to secure the maximum of explosive effect. They called it a "topsy-turvy" luncheon. It began with ice cream, molded in fancy shapes and then buried in white of egg and baked brown. Then there was a little soup, thick and green and greasy; and then—horror of horrors—a great steaming plum pudding. It was served in a strange phenomenon of a platter, with six long silver legs; and the waiter set it in front of Robbie Walling and lifted the cover with a sweeping gesture—and then proceeded to, and served it himself. Montague had slept about enough his mind that this was the end, and began to fill up on bread and butter, when there appeared cold asparagus, served in individual silver holders resembling andirons. Then—appetite now sufficiently satisfied—there came quail, in piping hot little casseroles; and then half a grapefruit set in a block of ice and filled with wine; and then little squab ducklings, bursting fat, and an artichoke, and then a cafe parfait; and then—as if to crown the audacity—huge thick slices of roast beef. Montague had given up long ago—he could keep no track of the deluge of food which poured forth. And between all the courses there were whips of precious brands, tumbled helter-skelter—sherry and port, champagne and claret and liquor—From Upton Sinclair's "The Metropolis," in the American Magazine.

The Pet Squirrel.

The old soldier, propped on his crutch in the snowy park, called:

"Here, Buster! Here, Buster!"

Half a dozen squirrels rattled down the bare trees and ran to him, but he drove them away.

"Git," he said. "I want Buster."

And finally Buster must have appeared, for the veteran allowed the seventh squirrel to run up his crutch and to take nuts from his coat pocket.

"Say, how can you tell one squirrel from another?" a bystander asked. "How do you know that's Buster?"

"By his face, of course, same as you know your friends," said the old soldier. "If you like 'em you can tell squirrels by their faces, and sheep, and robins, and even Chinamen."—New Orleans Picayune.

FRIENDLY ADVICE.

"Yes," said Gustibus, "I find it very hard to get anything in the restaurants that appeals to my appetite. In fact, there is only one place where I can eat with any relish, and that is at home. I always save up at luncheon for the dinner that I know will be set for me at night."

"That's fine," replied the man who had invited him to luncheon. "If a fellow can be well fed at home there isn't much danger that he will ever be very unhappy. What are you going to have?"

"Well, let's see? I'll take some oysters—half a dozen blue points, I guess, some of the cream of tomato soup, some roast beef—middling rare—and, by the way, you might order some of the broiled trout for me, too. Um—some of the roast duck, combination salad, celery and radishes, and—no, none of the punch. A piece of apple pie, if they have it good and thick here; a cup of coffee and some crackers and Roquefort. That'll be all, I think."

"Very well; but I wouldn't go too far in the way of saving up my appetite for dinner, if I were you. You may get home and find that the cook has gone, or something like that, you know. One never can tell what may happen."—Chicago Record-Herald.

An Ambition.

"Why are you so ambitious to have all the railways in existence under your management?"

"I want to be in a position," answered Mr. Dustin Stax, "where I can have my transportation in my pocket, no matter what part of the world I may strike. I don't want to be obliged to stand in line to await the leisure of a nervous and overworked ticket seller.—Washington Star.

A Spring Poem.

'Twas in the dark,
And for a lark
He thought the girl he'd kiss
But it proved to be her father
And—
'Twas
went
unop
stairs
still this

HOMER H. COLVIN

Attorney for Mortgagee, Pontiac, Michigan.

MORTGAGE SALE.

Default having been made in the conditions of payment in a certain mortgage made by Clarkson F. Worden and wife to Sarah J. Nicholson, dated October 17, A. D. 1904, and recorded in the office of the Register of Deeds of Oakland county, Michigan, of the 19th day of October, 1904, in Liber 167 of Mortgages, at pages 26 and 27, on which said mortgage there is claimed to be due at the date of this notice the sum of two hundred sixteen and 96-100 dollars, together with an attorney fee of thirty-five dollars authorized by statute and provided for in said mortgage. That no suit or proceeding at law or in equity has been instituted to recover any of the moneys secured by said mortgage; now, therefore, notice is hereby given that by virtue of a clause in said mortgage contained, that, should any default be made in the payment of interest on the day upon which the same is payable, and should such interest remain unpaid and in arrear for thirty days, that from thenceforth the principal sum may at the option of the mortgagee be and become due immediately; that the interest on said mortgage is past due for more than thirty days, and that the said mortgagee claims said option and hereby elects to declare, and hereby does declare the whole amount of the principal sum of said mortgage to be now due, amounting in all to the sum of twelve hundred fifty-two and 98-100 dollars, exclusive of said attorney fee. By virtue of the power of sale in said mortgage, and by virtue of the statutes aforesaid, notice is hereby given that on **Saturday, the 26th day of April, A. D. 1908,** at 10 o'clock in the forenoon of said day I will sell at public auction to the highest bidder, at the front, or Saginaw-Street, door of the Court-House, in the City of Pontiac, Oakland county, Michigan (that being the place where the Circuit Court for the County of Oakland is holden), the premises described in said mortgage, viz: The southwest quarter of the southeast quarter of section sixteen, in township three north, range eight east, Oakland County, State of Michigan—Dated Pontiac, Michigan, January 21, 1908.

SARAH J. NICHOLSON, Mortgagee.
HOMER H. COLVIN, Attorney for Mortgagee.
Business address: Pontiac, Michigan. 24jan-17apr

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Good Advice.

Professor—If you were called in a case where a man had fallen head foremost down a 50-foot mining shaft, what would you advise?

Medical Student—Advise his friend to fill up the hole and save funeral expenses.

Not Answering.

"Are you going to answer the accusations your enemies have made?"

"I think not," replied Senator Sorghum. "As a rule, answering accusations merely helps to keep the public from forgetting them."—Washington Star.

Put Your Money In a New Country

The Pacific Coast extension of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway now under construction, opens to the settler thousands of acres of excellent agricultural land. The new country in Adams, Hettinger, and Bowman Counties, North Dakota, and Butte County, South Dakota, is now reached by the new track. The soil is a dark loam with clay subsoil, and produces in abundance wheat, oats, barley, spelz, flax, corn and potatoes. The land is well adapted to farming, good water is found at a depth of from twenty to fifty feet, and the whole country is underlaid with lignite coal that outcrops along the streams, and in most cases can be had for the digging.

The climate is healthful, the air is dry and invigorating, and the percentage of sunshiny days is high. Outdoor work can be done almost every day in the year. Rainfall is amply sufficient to raise the crops. Regular mail service has been established, the roads are good, rural telephone lines traverse the country, and automobiles are in common use. The deeded land in this district sells for from $10 to $18 per acre. There are many instances this year where the crop equalled in value the cost of the land.

In Butte County, South Dakota, there is considerable government land open for homestead entry. Government land offices are maintained at Lemmon, Hettinger and Bowman, where filings and final proofs may be made. All of these towns are on the new line of the

Chicago Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway

In Montana, the new railroad traverses good farming land. It has been demonstrated that big crops of grain may be raised. Along the Yellowstone and Musselshell rivers, the water is used for irrigation, and phenomenal yields of alfalfa, sugar beets, and grain, are always certain. In the Judith Basin near Lewistown, Montana, is one of the most remarkable sections to be found on the new line. Under natural rainfall, the famous bench lands produced this year an average of 35 bushels of hard wheat to the acre, and the price was 94 cents per bushel. The basin contains about 1500 square miles and is sparsely settled. Some government land still remains open for settlement. A government land office is maintained at Lewistown. In Fergus County, outside the Judith Basin, is one of the greatest stock countries in the world, and good ranches can be purchased at a reasonable figure.

The Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway Co. has established an immigration department for the purpose of assisting in the settlement and development of the new lands now being opened. Pamphlets descriptive of its resources will be forwarded free on request

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"Have any of the hold-overs resigned?"

"Only those who saw preparations doing for making them pop-overs."—Baltimore American.

A Natural Question.

He (passionately)—Something stirs within me.

She (calmly)—Why don't you drink filtered water?

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ORDER FOR PUBLICATION—Appointment of Administrator.

State of Michigan, the Probate Court for the County of Oakland. At a session of said Court, held at the Probate office in the City of Pontiac, in said county, on the 23d day of March, A. D. 1908. Present, Hon. Joseph E. Maxwell, Judge of Probate. In the matter of the estate of

ELI GILLETT, Deceased.

Ann W. Gillett having filed in said Court a petition praying that the administration of said estate be granted to Almeron Whitehead or to some other suitable person.

It is ordered that the 28th day of April A. D. 1908, at 9 o'clock, in the forenoon, said Petition be and is hereby appointed for hearing said petition. It is further ordered that public notice thereof be given by publication of a copy of this order, for three successive weeks previous to said day of hearing, in THE BIRMINGHAM EXCENTRIC, a newspaper printed and circulated in said county.

JOSEPH E. MAXWELL,
(A true copy.) Judge of Probate.
ROSS STOCKWELL, Probate Clerk. 27mar-3ap17

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