BLACK IS WHITE

By GEORGE BARR McCUTCHEON

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CHAPTER XX—Continued.

—14—

"No, I do not forget, James. There was but one way in which I could hope to steal him away from you, and I went about it deliberately, with my eyes open. I came here to induce him to run away with me. I would have taken him back to his mother's home, to her grave, and there I would have told him what you did to her. If after hearing my story he elected to return to the man who had destroyed his mother, I should have stepped aside and offered no protest. But I would have taken him away from you in the manner that would have hurt you the worst. My sister was true to you. I would have been just as true, and after you had suffered the torments of hell, it was my plan to reveal everything to you. But you would have had your punishment by that time. When you were at the very end of your strength, when you tremble on the edge of oblivion, then I would have hunted you out and laughed at you and told you the truth. But you would have had years of anguish—years, I say."

"I have already had years of agony, pray do not overlook that fact," said he. "I suffered for twenty years. I was at the edge of oblivion more than once, if it is a pleasure for you to hear me say it, Therese."

"It does not offset the pain that her suffering brought to me. It does not counter-balance the unhappiness you gave to her boy, nor the stigma you put upon him. I am glad that you suffered. It proves to me that you secretly considered yourself to be in the wrong. You doubted yourself. You were never sure, and yet you crushed the life out of her innocent, bleeding heart. You let her die without a word to show that you—"

"I was lost to the world for years," he said. "There were many years when I was not in touch with—"

"But her letters must have reached you." She wrote a thousand of—"

"They never reached me," he said significantly.

"You ordered them destroyed" she cried in sudden comprehension.

"I must decline to answer that question."

CHAPTER XXI.

—1—

Revenge Turned Bitter.

She gave him a curious, incredulous smile, and then abruptly returned to her charge. "When my sister came home, degraded, I was nine years of age, but I was not so young that I did not know that a dreadful thing had happened to her. She was blighted beyond all hope of recovery. It was to me—little me—that she told her story over and over again, and it was I to whom she read all of the pitiful letters she wrote to you. My father wanted to come to America to kill you. He did come later on, to plead with you and to kill you if you would not listen to him. But you had gone—to Africa, they said. I could not understand why you would not give to her that little baby boy. He was hers and —" She stopped short in her recital and covered her eyes with her hands. He waited for her to go on, sitting as rigid as the image that faced him from beyond the table's end. "Afterwards, my father and my uncle made every effort to get the child away from you, but he was hidden—you know how carefully, he was hidden so that she might never find him. For ten years they searched for him—and you. For ten years she wrote to you, begging you to let her have him, if only for a little while at a time. She promised to restore him to you. God bless your poor soul! You never replied. You scorned her. We were rich—very rich. But our money was of no help to us in the search for her boy. You had secreted him too well. At last, one day, she told me what it was that you accused her of doing. She told me about Guido Feverelli, her music-master. I knew him, James. He had known her from childhood. He was one of the finest men I have ever seen."

"He was in love with her," grated Brood.

"Perhaps. Who knows? But if so, he never uttered so much as one word of love to her. He challenged you. Why did you refuse to fight him?"

"Because she begged me not to kill him. Did she tell you that?"

"Yes. But that was not the real reason. It was because you were not sure of your ground."

"I deny that!"

"Never mind. It is enough that poor Feverelli passed out of her life. She did not see him again until just before she died. He was a noble gentleman. He wrote but one letter to her after that wretched day in this house. I have it here in this packet."

He drew a package of papers from her bosom and laid it upon the table before him. There were a half dozen letters tied together with a piece of white ribbon.

"But one letter from him," she went on. "I have brought it here for you to read. But not now! Not yet. There are other letters and documents here for you to consider. They are from the grave. Ah, I do not wonder that you shrink and draw back from them. They convict you, James."

"Now I can see why you have taken up this fight against me. You—you know she was innocent," he said in a low, unsteady voice.

"And why I have hated you, at—?" But what you do not understand is how I could have brought myself to the point of loving you."

"Loving me! Good heaven, woman, what do you—"

"Loving you in spite of myself," she cried, beating upon the table with her hands. "I have tried to convince myself that it was not I but the spirit of Matilde that had come to lodge in her treacherous body. I hated you for myself and I loved you for Matilde. She loved you to the end. She never hated you. That was it. The pure, deathless love of Matilde was constantly fighting against the hatred I bore for you. I believe as firmly as I believe that I am alive that she has been near me all the time, battling against my insane desire for vengeance—You have only to recall to yourself the moments when you were so vividly reminded of Matilde Valeska. At those times I am sure that something of Matilde was in me. I was not myself. You have looked into my eyes a thousand times with a question in your own. Your soul was striving to reach the soul of Matilde. Ah, all these months I have known that you loved Matilde—not me. You loved the Matilde that was in me. You—"

"I have thought of her—always of her—when you were in my arms."

"I know how well you loved her," she declared slowly. "I know that you went to her tomb long after her death was revealed to you. I know that years ago you made an effort to find Feverelli. You found his grave, too, and you could not ask him, man to man, if you had wronged her. But in spite of all that you brought up her boy to be sacrificed as—"

"—I—God God, am I to believe you? If he should be my son!" he cried, starting up, cold with dread.

"He is your son. He could be no other man's son. I have her dying word for it. She declared it in the presence of her God. Wait! Where are you going?"

"I am going down to him!"

"Not yet, James. I have still more to say to you—more to confess. Here! Take this package of letters. Read them as you sit beside his bed—not his deathbed, for I shall restore him to health, never fear. If he were to die, I should curse myself to the end of time, for I and I alone would have been the cause. Here are her letters—and the one Feverelli wrote to her. This is her deathbed letter to you. And this is a letter to her son and yours. You may some day read it to him. And here—this is a document requiring me to share my fortune with her son. It is a pledge that I took before my father died a few years ago. If the boy ever appeared, he was to have his mother's share of the estate—and it is not an inconsiderable amount, James. He is independent of you. He need ask nothing of you. I was taking him home to his own."

She shrank slightly as he stood over her. There was more of wonder and pity in his face than condemnation. She looked for the anger she had expected to arouse in him, and was dumfounded to see that it was not revealed in his steady, appraising eyes.

"Your plan deserved a better fate than this Therese. It was prodigious! I—I can almost pity you."

"Pity!—have you no pain—no regret—no grief?" she cried weakly.

"Yes," he said, controlling himself with difficulty, "Yes, I know all these and more." He picked up the package of letters and glanced at the subscription on the outer envelope. Suddenly he raised them to his lips and, with his eyes closed, kissed the words that were written there. Her head drooped, and a sob came into her throat. She did not look up until he began speaking to her again, quietly, even patiently. "But why should you, even in your lofty zeal for revenge—why should you have planned to humiliate and degrade him even more than I could have done? Was it just to your sister's son that you should blight his life, that you should turn him into a skulking, sneaking betrayer? What would you have gained in the end? His loathing, his scorn—my God, Therese, did you not think of all this?"

"I have told you that I thought of everything. I was mistaken. I did not stop to think that I would be taking him away from happiness in the shape of love that he might bear for someone else. I did not know that there was a Lydia Desmond. When I came to know, my heart softened and my purpose lost most of its force. He would have been safe with me, but would he have been happy? I could not give him the kind of love that Lydia promised. I could only be his mother's sister to him. He was not in love with me. He has always loved Lydia. I fascinated him—just as I fascinated you. He would not have gone away with me, even after you had told him that he was not your son. He would not do that to you, James, in spite of the blow you struck him. He was loyal to Lydia and to himself."

"And what did he think of you?" demanded Brood scornfully.

"If you had not come upon us here, he would have known me for who I am and he would have forgiven me. I had asked him to go away with me. He refused. Then I was about to tell him the whole story of my life, of his life and of yours. Do you think he would have refused forgiveness to me? No! He would have understood!"

"But up to that hour he thought of you as—a what shall I say?"

"A bad woman? Perhaps. I did not care. It was part of the price I was to pay in advance. I would have told him everything as soon as the ship on which we sailed was outside the harbor yonder. That was my intention, and I know you believe me when I say that—there was nothing more in my mind. Time would have straightened everything out for him. He could have had his father, even though he went away with me. Once away from here, do you think that he would ever return? No! Even though he knew you to be his father, he would not forget that he has never been your son. You have hurt him since he was a babe. Do you understand? I do not hate you now. It is something to know that you have worshiped her all these years. You were true to her. What you did long, long ago was not your fault. You believed that she had wronged you. But you went on loving her. That is what weakened my resolve. You loved her to the end, she loved you to the end. Well, in the face of that, could I go on hating you? You must have been worthy of her love. She knew you better than all the world. You came to me with love for her in your heart. You took me, and you loved her all the time. I am not sure, James, that you are not entitled to this miserable, unhappy love I have come to feel for you—my own love, not Matilde's."

"You—you are saying this so that I may refrain from throwing you out into the street—"

"No!" she cried, coming to her feet. "I shall ask nothing of you. If I am to go it shall be because I have failed. I have been a blind, vain-glorious fool. The trap has caught me instead of you, and I shall take the consequences. I have lost—everything!"

"Yes, you have lost everything," said he steadily.

"You despise me?"

"I cannot ask you to stay here—after this."

"But I shall not go. I have a duty to perform before I leave this house. I intend to save the life of that poor boy downstairs, so that he may not die believing me to be an evil woman, a faithless wife. Thank God, I have accomplished something! You know that I love your son. You know that my sister was as pure as snow. You know that you killed her and that she loved you in spite of the death you brought to her. That is something. That—"

Brood dropped into the chair and buried his face on his quivering arms. In muffled tones came the cry from his soul. "They've all said that he is like me. I have seen it at times, but I would not believe. I fought against it, resolutely, madly, cruelly! Now it is too late and I see! I see, I feel! Damn you—oh, damn you—you have driven me to the killing of my own son!"

She stood over him, silent for a long time, her hand hovering above his head.

"He is not going to die," she said at last, when she was sure that she had full command of her voice. "I can promise you that. James, I shall go from this house until he is well. I shall nurse him back to health and give him back to you and Matilde, for now I know that he belongs to both of you and not to her alone. Now, James, you may go down to him. He is not conscious. He will not hear you pray at his bedside. He—"

A knock came at the door—a sharp, imperative knock. It was repeated several times before either of them could summon the courage to call out. They were petrified with the dread of some thing that awaited them beyond the closed door. It was she who finally called out: "Come in!"

Doctor Hodder, coatless and bare-armed, came into the room.

CHAPTER XXII.

The Closed Door.

The doctor blinked for a moment. The two were leaning forward with alarm in their eyes, their hands gripping the table.

"Well, are we to send for an undertaker?" demanded Hodder irritably.

Brood started forward. "Is—is he dead?"

"Of course not, but he might as well be," exclaimed the other, and it was plain to be seen that he was very much out of patience. "I was called in another doctor and a priest and now I hear that a Presbyterian parson is in the library. Hang it all, Brood, why don't you send for the coroner and undertaker and have done with it? I'm blessed if I—"

Yvonne came swiftly to his side. "Is he conscious? Does he know?"

"For God's sake, Hodder, is there any hope?" cried Brood.

"I'll be honest with you, Jim. I don't believe there is. It went in here, above the heart, and it's lodged back there by the spine somewhere. We haven't located it yet, but we will. Had to let up on the chase for awhile, you know. He opened his eyes a few minutes ago, Mrs. Brood, and my assistant is certain that he whispered Lydia Desmond's name. Sounded that way to him, but, of course—"

"There! You see, James!" she cried, whirling upon her husband.

"I think you'd better step in and see him now, Jim," said the doctor, suddenly becoming very gentle. "He may come to again and—well, it may be the last time he'll ever open his eyes. Yes, it's as bad as all that."

"I'll go—at once," said Brood, his face ashen. "You must revive him for a few minutes, Hodder. There's something I've got to say to him. He must be able to hear and to understand me. It is the most important thing in the—" He choked up suddenly.

"You'll have to be careful, Jim. He's ready to collapse. Then it's all off."

"Nevertheless, Doctor Hodder, my husband has something to say to his son that cannot be put off for an instant. I think it will mean a great deal to him in his fight for recovery. It will make life worth living for him."

Hodder stared for a second or two. "He'll need a lot of courage and if anything can put it into him, he'll make a better fight. If you get a chance, say it to him, Jim. I—I—if it's got anything to do with his mother, say it, for pity's sake. He has moaned the word a dozen times—"

"It has to do with his mother," Brood cried out. "Come! I want you to hear it, too, Hodder."

"There isn't much time to lose, I'm afraid," began Hodder, shaking his head. His gaze suddenly rested on Mrs. Brood's face. She was very erect, and a smile such as he had never seen before was on her lips—a smile that puzzled and yet inspired him with a positive, undeniable feeling of encouragement!

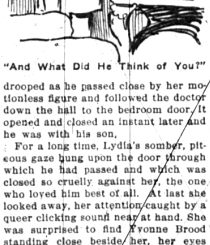
"He is not going to die, Doctor Hodder," she said quietly. Something went through his body that warmed it curiously. He felt a thrill, as one who is seized by a great overpowering excitement.

She preceded them into the hall. Brood came last. He closed the door behind him after a swift glance about the room that had been his most private retreat for years.

He was never to get foot inside its walls again. In that single glance he bade farewell to his career. It was a hated, unlovely spot. He had spent an age in it during those bitter morning hours, an age of imprisonment.

On the landing below they came upon Lydia. She was seated on a window ledge, leaning wearily against the casement. She did not rise as they approached, but watched them with steady, smoldering eyes in which there was no friendliness, no compassion. They were her enemies, they had killed the thing she loved.

Brood's eyes met hers for an instant and then fell before the bitter look they encountered. His shoulders



"And What Did He Think of You?"

drooped as he passed close by her motionless figure and followed the doctor down the hall to the bedroom door. It opened and closed in the same manner as he was with his son.

For a long time, Lydia's sombre, pitiful gaze hung upon the door through which he had passed and which was closed so cruelly against her, the one who loved him best of all. At last she looked away, her attention caught by a queer clicking sound near at hand. She was surprised to find Yvonne Brood standing close beside her, her eyes closed and her fingers telling the beads that ran through her fingers, her lips moving in voiceless prayer.

The girl watched her dully for a few moments, then with growing fascination. The incomprehensible creature was praying!

Lydia believed that Frederic had shot himself. She put Yvonne down as the real cause of the calamity that had fallen upon the house. But for her, James Brood would never have had a motive for striking the blow that crushed all desire to live out of the unhappy boy. She had made of her husband an unfeeling monster, and now she prayed! She had played with the emotions of two men and now she begged to be pardoned for her folly! An inexplicable desire to laugh at the plight of the trifler came over the girl, but even as she checked it another and more unacountable force ordered her to obey the impulse to turn once more to look into the face of her companion.

Yvonne was looking at her. She had ceased running the beads and her hands hung limply at her side. For a full minute, perhaps, the two regarded each other without speaking.

"He is not going to die, Lydia," said Yvonne gravely.

The girl started to her feet. "Do you think it is your prayer and not mine that has reached God's ear?" she cried in real amazement.

"The prayer of a nobler woman than either you or I has gone to the throne," said the other.

Lydia's eyes grew dark with resentment. "You had better step in and see him now, Jim," said the doctor, suddenly becoming very gentle. "He may drooped as he passed close by her motionless figure and followed the doctor down the hall to the bedroom door. It opened and closed in the same manner as he was with his son.

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Lydia's eyes grew dark with resentment. "You had better step in and see him now, Jim," said the doctor, suddenly becoming very gentle. "He may have a chance to live. Yes, I think it will be a fight. Come, Lydia, we must go. We have—"

"What is your object in keeping me away from him at such a time as this, Mrs. Brood?" demanded Lydia. "You refuse to let me go in to him. Is it because you are afraid of what—"

"There are trying days ahead of us, Lydia," interrupted Yvonne. "We shall have to face them together. I can promise you this: Frederic will be saved for you. Tomorrow, next day perhaps, I may be able to explain everything to you. You hate me to-day. Everyone in this house hates me—even Frederic. There is a day coming when you will not hate me. That was my prayer, Lydia. I was not praying for Frederic, but for myself."

Lydia started. "For yourself? I might have known you—"

"You hesitate? Perhaps it is just as well."

"I want to say to you, Mrs. Brood, that it is my purpose to remain in this house as long as I can be—"

"You are welcome, Lydia. You will be the only one who will care to see me restore him to health of mind and body. Yes, I shall go further and say that you are commanded to stay here and help me in the long fight that is ahead of us."

"I—I thank you, Mrs. Brood," the girl was surprised to say.

Both of them turned quickly as the door to Frederic's room opened and James Brood came out into the hall. His face was drawn with pain and anxiety, but the light of relaxation was in his eyes.

"Come, Lydia," he said softly, after he had closed the door behind him. "He knows me. He is conscious. Hodder can't understand it, but he seems to have suddenly grown stronger. He—"

"Stronger?" cried Yvonne, the ring of triumph in her voice. "I knew! I could feel it coming—his strength—even out here, James. Yes, go in now, Lydia. You will see a strange sight, my dear. James Brood will kneel beside his son and tell him—"

"Come!" said Brood, spreading out his hands in a gesture of admission. "You must hear it, too, Lydia. Not you, Therese! You are not to come in."

"I grant you ten minutes, James," she said, with the air of a dictator. "After that I shall take my stand beside him and you will not be needed." She struck her breast sharply with her clinched hand. "His one and only hope lies here, James. I am his salvation. I am his strength. When you come out of that room again it will be to stay out until I give the word for you to re-enter. Go now and put spirit into him. That is all that I ask of you."

He stared for a moment and then lowered his head. A moment later Lydia followed him into the room and Yvonne was alone in the hall. Alone! Ranjab was ascending the stairs. He came and stood before her and bent his knee.

"I forgot," she said, looking down upon him without a vestige of the old dread in her eyes. "I have a friend, after all."

CHAPTER XXIII.

The Joy of June.

On a warm morning toward the middle of the month in June Frederic and Lydia sat in the quaint, old-fashioned courtyard, in the grateful shade of the south wing and almost directly beneath the balcony off Yvonne's boudoir. He lounged comfortably, yet weakly, in the invalid's chair that had been wheeled to the spot by the doughty Ranjab, and he sat on a pile of cushions at his feet, her back resting against the wall. Looking at him one would not have thought that he had passed through the valley of the shadow of death and was but now emerging into the sunshine of recovery. His face was pale from long confinement, but there was a healthy glow to the skin and a clear light in the eye. For a week or more he had been permitted to walk about the house and into the garden, always leaning on the arm of his father or the faithful Ranjab. Each succeeding day saw his strength and vitality increase and each night he slept with the peace of a care-free child.

As for Lydia, she was radiant with happiness. The long fight was over. She had gone through the campaign against death with loyal, unfaltering courage, and there had never been an instant when her stanch heart had failed her; there had been distress but never despair. If the strain told on her it did not matter, for she was of the fighting kind. Her love was the sustenance on which she thrived despite the beggarly offerings that were laid before her during those weeks of famine.

Times there were when a pensive mood brought the touch of sadness to her grateful heart. She was happy and Frederic was happy, but what of the one who actually had wrought the miracle? That one alone was unhappy, unrequited, undefended. There was no place for her in the new order of things. When Lydia thought of her—as she often did—it was with an indescribable craving in her soul. She longed for the time when Yvonne Brood would lay aside the mask of resignation and demand tribute; when the strange defiance that held all of them at bay would disappear and they could feel that she no longer regarded them as adversaries.

There was no longer a symptom of rancor in the heart of Lydia Desmond. She realized that her sweetheart's recovery was due almost entirely to the remarkable influence exercised by this woman at a time when moral agencies appeared to be so small. Her absolute certainty that she had the power to thwart death, at least in this instance, had its effect, not only on the wounded man but on those who attended him. Doctor Hodder and the nurses were not slow to admit that her magnificent courage, her almost scornful self-assurance, supplied them with an incentive that they sought never have got beyond the form of a mere hope. There was something positively startling in her serene conviction that Frederic was not to die. No less a skeptic than the renowned Doctor Hodder confided to Lydia and her mother that he now believed in the supernatural and never again would say "there is no God." With the dampness of death on the young man's brow, a remarkable change had occurred even as he writhed for the last feeting breath. It was as if some secret, unconquerable force had suddenly intervened to take the whole matter out of nature's hands. It was not in the books that he should get well; it was against every rule of nature that he should have survived that first day's struggle. He was passed for death and there was no alternative. Then came the bewildering, mystifying change. Life did not take its expected flight; instead it clung, hickering but indestructible, to its clay and would not obey the laws of nature. For days and days life hung by what we are pleased to call a thread; the great shears of death could not sever the tiny thing that held Frederic's soul to earth. There was no hour in any of those days in which the best informed scientist and his assistants did not proclaim that it would be the last, and yet he gave the lie to them.

Hodder had gone to James Brood at the end of the third day and with the sweat of the haunted on his brow had whispered hoarsely that the dead was out of his hands! He was no longer the doctor but an agent governed by a spirit that would not permit death to claim its own! And somehow Brood understood far better than the man of science.

The true story of the shooting had long been known to Lydia and her mother. Brood confessed everything to them. He assumed all of the blame for what had transpired on that tragic morning. He humbled himself before them, and when they shook their heads and turned their backs upon him he was not surprised, for he knew they were not convicting him of assault with a deadly firearm. Later on the story of Therese was told by him to Frederic and the girl. He did his wife no injustice in the recital.

Frederic laid his hand upon the old brown head at his knee and voiced the thought that was in his mind.

"You are wondering, as I am, too, what is to become of Yvonne after to-day," he said. "There must be an end, and if it doesn't come now, when will it come? Tomorrow we sail. It is certain that she is not to accompany us. She has said so herself, and father has said so. He will not take her with him. So today must see the end of things."

"Frederic, I want you to do something for me," said Lydia, earnestly. "There was a time when I could not have asked this of you, but now I implore you to speak to your father in her behalf. I love her, Freddy, dear. I cannot help it. She asks nothing of any of us, she expects nothing, and yet she loves all of us—yes, all of us. She will never, by word or look, make a single plea for herself. I have watched her closely all these weeks. There was never an instant when she revealed the slightest sign of an appeal. She takes it for granted that she has no place in our lives. In our memory, yes, but that is all. I think she is reconciled to what she considers her fate and it has not entered her mind to protest against it. Perhaps it is natural that she should feel that way about it. But it is—oh, Freddy, it is terrible! If he would—would only unbend a little toward her. If he—"

"Listen, Lyddy, dear. I don't believe lies altogether up to him. There is a barrier that he can't see, but they do—both of them. My mother stands between them. You see, I've come to know my father lately, dear. He's not a stranger to me any longer. I know what sort of a heart he got. He never got over loving my mother, and he'll never get over knowing that Yvonne knows that she loved him to the day she died. We know what it was in Yvonne that attracted him from the first, and she knows. He's not likely to forgive himself so easily. He didn't play fair with the girl of them, that's what I'm trying to get at. I don't believe he can forgive himself any more than he can forgive Yvonne for the thing she set about to do. You see, Lyddy, she married him without love. She defiled herself, even though she cannot admit it, for she I love her, too. She's the most wonderful woman in the world. She's got the finest instincts a woman ever possessed. But she did give herself to the man she hated with all her soul, and—well, there you are. He can't forget that. She can—and she can't. Leaving me out of the question altogether—and you, too—there still remains the sorry fact that she has betrayed her sister's love. She loves him for herself now, and—that's what hurts both of them. It hurts because longed for the time when he was her son my mother."

"I'm not so sure of that," pronounced Lydia. "He loves your mother's memory, he loves her for the wrong he did her, but—well, I don't see how he can help loving Yvonne, in spite of everything."

"Ah, but you have it from her that he loved my mother even when she was in his arms, because, in a way, she represented the love that had never died. Now all that is a thing of the past. She is herself, she is not Matilde. He loved Matilde all the time."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

TELLS OF LIFE IN VIENNA

Wherein Conditions Are Different From Those That Prevail in American Cities.

Life in Vienna offers many incongruities to the American. First, he will find, unless he has taken the precaution to equip himself with large sums of money, that he cannot possibly afford to live anywhere except in a flat. No one except the nobility and extremely rich foreigners can hope to have a whole house to himself.

He will find that he can ride upward in an elevator, but that he must walk down. He will find that if he wants to see anything of the place, and how its inhabitants enjoy themselves, he must stay out all night. When he comes home late he must tip the doorkeeper in order to get into his own house.

The people frequent the cafes of Vienna so constantly that peddlers of linen derive a smart income from sales to be used on the spot. The guest who is accepting hospitality may decline to have a drink, but in all likelihood he will accept a clean collar.

In Vienna the retired chorus girls are pensioners, the flower girls are grandmothers and the messenger boys are men. These known-up messenger boys are known as "commissioners." They are dressed in distinctive uniforms and are licensed to perform many kinds of work other than running errands. It would doubtless be more correct to style them "men of all chores" rather than "jacks of all trades." Witness the varied and unusual service rendered by one of them in a single day:

His first job was to rebottle some wine; then he cleaned a pipe for an invalid bachelor. After that he clipped a dog for an actress; next he beat a carpet for a boarding-house keeper; then he carried a cabman's horse, polished an officer's sword, and after packing a trunk for a departing traveler wound up the day by helping a plumber deliver a bathtub.

Yet the "commissioner" did not hesitate to complain of the times. He was quite willing to be quoted as stating that he hoped conditions would improve soon so that he might be kept busy.

A Pathetic Letter.

In the height of the great cotton situation many interesting letters were received by representatives and senators from Dixie. The following one—most pathetic in spite of its odd spelling—was received by Senator Bank-head:

"Gents: I have heard that forrein countries in Europe are issuig merrytoriums, so that the people can put off paying there detts a while. Now I have 18 bales of cotton and owe detts amounting to about six hundred dollars. I can't sell my cotton for enough to pay out and leave anything to pay taxes and live on next year. If they are selling merrytoriums in New York I wiaht you would see what it will cost to buy me one for the amount of my detts, good for six mos.

"Yours truly, ——."

SHOULD NOT HAVE MOVED

Story of a Man Who Was Making Good, but Roving Fever Got the Best of Him.

On May 4th, 1915, the St. Paul Farmer's Dispatch contained a very interesting account of the experiences of a man from Stapleton, Minn. Realizing that he was not making much headway, he decided to look up a homestead in Canada. With $200 he and his wife took up a homestead near Outlook, Saskatchewan. After recounting his experiences of a few years in which they had undergone hardships which were likely to be unavoidable with a small amount of capital, he continues the story by stating that in the fall after a fair summer's work on his 200 acres cropped, he cleaned up nearly all his debts, having now four good horses, a complete set of farm machinery including two wagons and a "Swell" top buggy and eleven head of cattle. He continues, "However, I was not satisfied. I had been reading of the splendid homesteads that were to be had in Montana. Wheat was cheap and I thought it would be cheaper. I began to think that homesteading as a moneymaking proposition was better than farming.

I did not stop to consider that wheat was not the only thing, as a matter of fact I had sold pork for 14 cents a pound. Eggs and butter had kept us groceries and clothes, we had now four milch cows, two heifers coming in and more growing up. We had a cream separator, and some hogs. We had a quarter section of land that would raise an abundance of small grain, roots and grass for feed, but I could not see all that. I had the "moving fever, and decided to sell.

I set the price on the land at $3,000 cash. I could not find anyone with that much money, however, so I came down until I finally sold for $1,400.

We had an auction and sold the personal property. On the sale we got just about enough cash to pay the auctioneer; the rest was all notes.

The horses brought about two-thirds what they were worth. The implements sold for hardly one-third of what they had cost. The cattle brought a good price.

Must Make Another Start.

We now have a homestead in Montana, but we find that after moving here and getting settled, what money we had did not go far. We have three horses, about all the implements we need, and a little better buildings than we had on our former place. We have no cattle, though we had to build much fence to keep ranch stock out of our fields. We have about $500 worth of honest debts.

True, we have a half section in place of a quarter, but that is no good to us, as long as we have not the capital with which to work it.

In summarizing it all up I see where I made my mistake. It will take fully five years to get into as good circumstances as we were before we made the change. It is five years lost.

My advice to anyone contemplating a change of location is to think twice before you act, and if your present circumstances are not too bad, stay by your bush till you pick it clean."—Advertisement.

Mother's Little Joke.

The young people in their summer flannels and white shoes were out on the tennis lawn, and the head of the house was in the library trying to read, but the noise was very annoying.

"What's the matter out there?" he asked his wife.

"Nothing much," she replied. "It's only a tennis racket."

TENDER SENSITIVE SKINS

Quickly Soothed by Cuticura. Nothing Better. Trial Free.

Especially when preceded by a hot bath with Cuticura Soap. Many comforting things claimed for pimples, super-creamy emollients may do for the skin, scalp, hair and hands and do it quickly, effectively and economically. Also for the toilet, bath and nursery.

Sample each free by mail with Book. Address Potter Drug & Chem. Corp. Dept. XY, Boston. Sold everywhere.—Adv.

Wouldn't Wear a "Molesuke."

"What are you studying now?" asked Mrs. Johnson.

"We have taken up the subject of molesuke," answered her son.

"I hope you will be very attentive and practice constantly," said the mother. "I tried to get your father to wear one, but he could not keep it in his eye."

Important to Mothers

Examine carefully every bottle of CASTORIA, a safe and sure remedy for infants and children, and see that it

Bears the Signature of Chas. H. Fletcher

In Use For Over 30 Years.

Children Cry for Fletcher's Castoria

Can You Base It?

"That old Crœsus believes in getting his money's worth."

"I should say he does! Why, he takes a trip into town every Sunday so as to get the full value of his commutation ticket."

MANY WAR SORE HOSPITALS

have ordered Allen's Foot-Ease, the antiseptic powder for the feet, to be used in their Shakers into the shoes of disabled in the footbath. Allen's Foot-Ease takes the sting out of blisters, corns, bunions, swollen, sweating feet or blisters. Use it TODAY. Sold everywhere. 25c. Trial package FREE. Address, Allen S. Olmsted, Le Roy, N. Y.—Adv.

Correct.

"Can you tell me which class of people live the longest?"

"Why, centenarians, I believe."

Perfume Gave Out the Odor of Violets

If perfume gave out the odor of violets, beefsteak after meat would satisfy most people.—Life.