

## A JUGFUL OF BEANS

By M. QUAD

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The town of Swan Creek had been founded five years when the inhabitants began to talk about a church. Then it took three more of hard scratching to get up a building that stopped short at the roof. There was neither spire nor belfry, but the people were well satisfied with things as they were until a tin peddler drove into the village one day and raised a dissension. He got hold of Uriah Goodspeed and Deacon Sparrow and others said:

"I'm telling you that nothing makes me feel like telling the truth and leaving off swear words as the sound of a church bell. It's the same with lots of other men. You want a bell on a church just as much as a man wants a hat on his head. If you don't have a bell you might as well put your preacher in a stable to preach."

The peddler went his way, and there was talk and talk. After three or four days he came back, and there was more talk. Everybody had decided that it would be a good thing to get a bell, but no one knew just how to go to work to raise the money. It was for the peddler to show the way.

"It can be done as easy as falling off a log," he explained, "and you can have some fun over it at the same time. I'm going to lay up here for a couple of weeks while I paint my wagon, and I'll see you through."

His plan was to get a gallon jug and put a lot of beans into it. No one else should know how many. Everybody should pay 50 cents to guess, and the one who came nearest the number should get his half dollar back, and the rest of the money should go for a bell. Two or three of the deacons hung off a little, thinking the plan looked like a lottery, but after a day or two the thing was a go. Indeed, Deacon Hosmer, who was always considered a lucky man, planked down \$2 and recorded four guesses, and the ball was started rolling. Inside of four days every man in Swan Creek had paid for at least one guess, and inside of a week most of the farmers for five miles around had caught the spirit. The peddler had charge of the money as well as the beans, and every evening there was a gathering at the postoffice to talk the thing over.

After two weeks there were no more guesses to come in, and a meeting was arranged to count the money and the beans and send a committee up to Troy to buy the bell. Everybody turned out to the meeting. Deacon Hosmer took charge. He didn't exactly know whether to open with a Fourth of July oration or the singing of a hymn, but upon a hint from Silas Wigfall, who had just got over the measles and was feeling happy, he recited a poem and gave Christopher Columbus a certificate of character for sobriety.

Then the meeting waited for the peddler to show up, and while it waited Peernaught Pilgrim got up and started to eulogize George Washington. He had been sorting over potatoes that day and had got things mixed. He said Washington and Nero had gone down in history together and that the Father of His Country and Captain Kidd would never be forgotten while the fires of patriotism continued to burn. Just about that time Lish Billings came sauntering in. It had been whispered around that he was the only man in Swan Creek who hadn't come with a guess, but nobody had dared to ask him. As soon as Deacon Hosmer caught sight of him he said:

"I observe that Mr. Billings has just entered the hall. May I ask him to give us some information on the subject of church bells?"

"You may," answered Lish. "You are going to buy a bell for the meeting house, but I don't understand where you are going to hang it. Will it be on a fence or a post? There's no tower or belfry. Why didn't some of you thick headed people think of that?"

"Yes, why didn't he?" shouted a dozen voices in chorus.

"It wasn't my fault," explained the deacon. "I was bossing the bell, and I supposed some of you would look out for the other things. It's no use to get a bell until we get a belfry."

"Perhaps the tin peddler can help us out," suggested some one, and there were shouts of "Peddler, peddler!" from all over the hall. As he did not stand up in response Deacon Hosmer held up his hand and said:

"Perhaps Mr. Billings will be kind enough to act as a committee of one to step across to the paint shop and bring the peddler over."

"It wouldn't be any use," replied Lish, with a grin. "He left town half an hour ago, and he had a gain of fifteen miles an hour on him when he rattled over the bridge!"

"The people were benumbed for thirty seconds. Then they broke loose with a yell and began thumping one another, and it took some of them four weeks to get rid of their black eyes and skinned noses. Deacon Hosmer lost three front teeth and most of his chin whiskers, and Peernaught Pilgrim had his nose knocked out of plumb and his ear bitten. Night closed down on a scene of carnage, and the sun came up on a picture of desolation, and it took the town ten years to recover its childish confidence in lightning rod and tin peddlers.

Some were simple enough to hope that the peddler might again appear at or near Swan and that they might hammer him. But he never gladdened them by his presence.

## Hilda's Christmas Gift

By LIZZIE W. GOLDWIN

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This Christmas story really happened. It occurred at an orphan asylum situated in the United States, where a number of orphans and half orphans are received, some children being taken from parents who are unable to provide for them. The buildings are located in attractive grounds and near the margin of one of America's most beautiful lakes.

Christmas was coming on, and the children at the orphanage were invited to write letters to Santa Claus, mentioning such gifts as they would like to receive on the approaching anniversary. The boys asked for sleds, skates, bats, balls and such other articles as pertain to youngsters of their age. The girls would have dolls, doll-houses, toy pianos, kitchen sets and other girl toys.

Hilda was nine years old, and her affections had strengthened as her years increased. They were stronger than her love for playthings. Most children at that age doubt if there is such a person as Santa Claus, but the children of the orphanage, not mingling with the world, retain the innocence of their babyhood and their belief in the white bearded old gentleman who brings the Christmas gifts. Hilda was as innocent as the rest. She did not expect that Santa Claus would bring the children everything they asked for, but she did believe that he would read their letters and do what he could for all of them.

Hilda's letter was very different from all the rest. Instead of asking for toys to play with or some ornament to decorate her person Hilda wrote to Santa Claus:

I wish for my Christmas present this year to see my mamma.

The letter was sent with the rest to Santa Claus. Who transmitted them is one of those mysteries that is as inexplicable as Santa Claus himself. Nevertheless he received every letter and set himself to work to gather in the things the children asked for. But Hilda's letter puzzled him. He could cram a doll in a stocking or hang it on a Christmas tree, but he could do neither of these with Hilda's mother. Besides, Hilda's mother lived some distance away, and it would cost a good deal of money to bring her from her home to the orphanage. If Santa Claus could bring her in his sleigh, drawn by the "eight tiny reindeer" the case would be simple enough, but there was only room for the toys in the sleigh, and human beings are not used to riding up brick walls, over roofs and down again on the other side. No wonder Santa Claus was puzzled. It looked as if Hilda's present could not be given her. That would be too bad, because she had asked for nothing else, and if she could not see her mother she would get no Christmas gift.

Hilda, innocent child that she was, didn't trouble her little head about all this. She didn't realize that she had given Santa Claus a knotty problem to solve. She had simply asked for what she wanted, just as she would ask for something in her prayers before going to bed.

Well, Christmas eve came at last. The children of the orphanage always receive their presents on the night before Christmas, and Santa Claus brings the gifts in person. On Christmas eve the children gathered in the schoolroom and while waiting for Santa Claus sang a Christmas carol. They had scarcely finished when there were a jingle of sleighbells without, a ring at the doorbell and a clucking of snow off Kriss Kringle's boots.

Every child rushed to the door at once. It was opened, and old Santa Claus, with a bag of gifts on his shoulders, came in, bringing a cold puff of wind with him. The children followed him back into the schoolroom where a large Christmas tree stood, illuminated with electric lights and covered with spangles and toys. There are so many children at the orphanage that Santa Claus couldn't bring all the toys for them with him and had sent the larger ones before.

He tossed a jumping jack to one, a doll to another, a mechanical cat to a third, the matrons and other grown persons assisting in the distribution.

Poor little Hilda did not see her mother in the room and sorrowfully made up her mind that Santa Claus could not give her present. All the girls and boys received their gifts but Hilda.

When it was all over Hilda went upstairs to do some duty—for being one of the older girls she was assigned duties—and while she was at work she heard voices downstairs calling:

"Where's Hilda? Hilda Burton, come here!"

Hilda went downstairs, and there stood Santa Claus waiting for her.

"Are you Hilda?" he asked.

"Yes."

"I have a present for you that is too big to be put on the Christmas tree, so I must give it to you now."

He stepped aside, and there stood Hilda's mother.

She took her little daughter up in her arms and hugged and kissed her while the others looked on, some laughing, some sniffling through tears of the happy reunion of mother and daughter.

How did Santa Claus get the gift to the asylum? For an answer for this you must ask the good people who contribute to the support of the orphanage.

## A Tragedy of the Mexican Revolution

By F. A. MITCHEL

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I was sitting on the veranda of a hotel in Mexico when I saw a young Mexican and a girl pass in each other's company. She was talking rapidly to him, evidently trying to persuade him to do or not to do something. Suddenly I heard a crack, and the young fellow fell dead. He had been shot by a man standing on the other side of the street.

The girl was wild with grief and horror at this seeing one I believed to be her lover shot down beside her. She fell upon the body and called wildly for him to come back to her. A little knot of people collected, and presently I saw them bear the body away, the girl following, supported by a woman, doubtless her mother. The party disappeared in a house a short distance up the street.

Presently a man came out of the house into which the body was carried, and, passing me, I asked him in a mixture of Spanish and English to tell me what caused the affair.

"Nothing, señor, except that the murdered man is a supporter of the Diaz government. We are all insurgents here."

With this brief summary of the story he passed on. I learned from another, however, that the murderer and the murdered man both wanted the same girl.

I had caught a glimpse of the murderer. I did not see him fire the shot, but saw him walking away a moment later. He was a villainous looking man in Mexican costume and with a swagger. I saw him pass several times during the day and did not see in his face or in his manner the slightest compunction for what he had done. On the contrary, he seemed to be proud of his deed.

The second act of the drama was more astonishing still. I saw the murderer go to the house where the body of his victim had been taken and knock at the door. The summons was answered by the woman who had supported the girl after the murder. The villain said something to her, and she disappeared. The man waited some time on the step, and at last the girl whose lover he had shot came to the door. He talked to her for quite awhile, after which she went back into the house, and the man came on down the street. He had lost some of his swagger, and his face wore a serious look. He disappeared in a saloon in the next block where pulque was sold.

That evening after supper I lighted a cigar and strolled beyond the outskirts of the town. I was on the plateau where the climate is temperate, and the air was very pleasant. A full moon was rising as the sun was setting. Hearing voices behind me, I turned and met with another surprise. The murderer and the girl whose lover he had murdered were coming toward me. He was doing the talking, while she walked in silence.

"These are a strange people," I said to myself. "The villain, having murdered his rival, is persuading the girl to be reconciled to him and take him instead."

They passed me on the other side of the road without appearing to notice me, too absorbed in their own greivous affair to think of any one besides themselves.

If self preservation, as has been said, is the first law of nature curiosity is certainly the second. Indeed, there are instances where curiosity has been prevalent. I was interested in this affair, and instead of turning away from the path the couple were taking I strolled on behind them, keeping them in sight. But presently the road where they were walking made a turn and I lost them.

I stopped and, leaning against a fence, looked at the broad face of the moon rising over the distant extinct volcano Iztaccihuatl or the "White Woman," from its resemblance to a woman lying dead robed in a shroud of snow, my thoughts divided between the drama of the day and the mountains of many ages. Realizing that I might get into trouble by being too observant of other people's affairs, I was thinking of going back when, turning my eyes for a last glance to the point where the couple had disappeared, I saw the girl coming alone. She was walking very fast seemingly flitting along like a spirit. I stood perfectly still. She passed me, walking in the middle of the road and so wrapped in her own emotions that she did not see me. I will not attempt to find a word to describe the expression on her face. I never wish to see such an expression again.

I did not need to go on to discover what she had done with her companion. Her returning alone and that look on her face assured me that she had taken a swift revenge for the death of her lover. I went back to my hotel, threw my belongings into my trunk, paid my bill, went to the station, where I waited two hours for a train to take me out of the country. I did not draw a free breath till I had boarded it and was moving away from the town and the double tragedy.

I supposed I could leave it behind in Mexico, but I have been disappointed. It haunts me. I dream of it. I wake up in the middle of the night and the scenes roll before me as if painted on the canvas of a panorama. And that poor girl! I am constantly suffering with her.

After the Secrets.  
"Ma's just crazy to serve on a jury."  
"That so?"  
"Yes; she says she wants to be one of the first to tell the secrets of the jury room."—Detroit Free Press.

Overdoing It.  
"She married him to reform him."  
"And what was the result?"  
"He's so good now that he's shocked at nearly everything she does."—Boston Transcript.

It is easier for the generous to forgive than for offense to ask it.—Thomson.

A Slave to Style.  
"Your little friend has the ribbon of honor again this week, while you never win it."

"Why, mamma, Suzanne is blond, and blue is becoming to her, but I am a brunette and can't wear it."—Petie Mele.

Sore on Them.  
He—I feel, darling, that I am not half good enough to be your husband, but—  
She—But what, George?  
He—I'm a darn sight too good to be the son-in-law of your grouchy parents.

No Annoyance.  
The wife of a very irritable landlord in Ireland once received a letter from a disaffected tenant warning her that her husband would certainly be shot, but that nothing would be done to injure or annoy her in the least.—London here.

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CHICAGO THEATRES.

Powers.  
Manager Daniel Froham has made history repeat itself at Powers' Theatre, for he has again brought a bright, sparkling and humorous play to Chicago with a splendid cast headed by Charles Cherry with Edna Goodrich, the noted stage beauty, as a feature of the company. "His Neighbor's Wife" is a smart play for smart people including suburbanites, for it appeals especially to the latter. It ripples with fun and its complications are a source of continuous, hearty laughter from the beginning to the final curtain. Charles Cherry is delightfully humorous in the role of a husband. Edna Goodrich's real turbulent matrimonial affairs have not diminished in any respect her splendid beauty and fine ability as an actress. Miss Alice John, a Chicago girl, acting as the elder sister in "The Seven Sisters" has more than duplicated that success. As her sport-loving husband, Reginald Mason is fully up to the high standard. All the smaller parts are satisfactorily played. If you want to have a good hearty laugh, be sure and see "His Neighbor's Wife."

Olympic.  
Kipping's famous poem, "The female of the species is more deadly than the male," has found stage improvement by David Belasco in "The Woman," where he pictures the female of the species "more heroic" than the male. There are only two female characters in "The Woman." One is a young matron whose memory is lashed with an indiscretion committed before her

marriage. The other is a girl, an optimistic little telephone operator, who becomes entangled in an intrigue of congressional statecraft through the nature of her duties. How this weak, demure girl defies a cross-examining conclave of shrewd lawyers and rough politicians in order to spare the fair name of the older woman forms the supreme moment of the swift-moving story. Marjorie Wood plays Wanda Kelly and Gladys Hanson the title role; other members of the cast are Oscar Eagle, James Seeley, Howell Hansel, Starr King Walker, Hardee Kirkland, Homer Granville, Peter Raymond, Kalman Matus and Frank Austin.

Majestic.  
Another of those remarkable bills which have become the rule at the Majestic Theatre, Chicago, is arranged for the week of February 5th. The headline feature, or one of them, will be Paul Armstrong's "Romance of the Underworld," with a full equipment of imposing scenery and all the accessories of a complete play, it only lacks a little padding to make it a three act drama. Another big act is "The Leading Lady" in which Marguerite Haney appears. Chester's Canines De Luxe is a feature act employing some of the most wonderfully trained dogs ever seen on the stage. Nana, the wonderful Parisian whirlwind dancer, with the assistance of M. Alexis, will present those remarkable exhibitions of dancing which have made her name famous. Another headline feature will be Joseph Howard, the famous composer and singer who, with the assistance of

Mabel McCane, will appear in one of those typical musical singing acts. Harry Breen, the singing comedian, is another feature of the bill, and Al & Fannie Steadman, the singers and dancers; Panita, the wonderful flutist returns, and Honors and Prince, Europe's funniest comedy acrobats, with their remarkable skill for pantomime humor will add interest to the bill.

Chicago Opera House.  
What promises to be the big novelty of the season is the sensational European success "The Typhoon" which Mr. Walker Whiteside will present for the first time at the Chicago Opera House Sunday evening, February 4th. "The Typhoon," written by Melchor Leyngel, has won its success abroad for more reasons than are offered in its interesting scenes. The author's use of Japanese characters is quite original. The story is that of a young Japanese diplomatist in Berlin on a secret mission for his government, who falls in love with an attractive European woman. He has become so crazed about her that his associates fear that he might betray some political secrets of his country. "The Typhoon" is profoundly interesting. It is a great big, vital, throbbing, human drama and no one who knows anything about the theatre should miss it. Mr. Whiteside, an actor of distinction, who has been identified with the serious drama for many years will enact the leading role. The supporting company includes Florence Reed, Malcolm Williams, Florence Fisher, Stephen Wright, Frank Nelson, Henry Bergman, Christopher Losch and Ernest Cossart.

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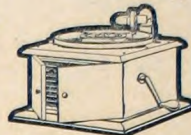
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SERMON SUBJECTS

SUNDAY, FEB. 4th—  
Morning—Elijah's First Work.  
Evening—The Healing Touch.

MONDAY—Great Expectations.

TUESDAY—The Verdict of the Lower Court.

WEDNESDAY—Hydrophobia.

THURSDAY—Seven Confessions.

FRIDAY—What is Conversion?

The Song Service will begin each night at 7:15.



SERMON SUBJECTS

SUNDAY, FEB. 11th—  
Morning—Without Limit.  
Evening—The Saints' March.

MONDAY—Some things I know about CARD PLAYING AND THE DANCE.

TUESDAY—Hell, Or How the Lost are Punished.

WEDNESDAY—Heaven, The Saints' Reward.

THURSDAY—Two Divisions; Find Your Place.

FRIDAY—SECRET SINS.

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