

PRUDENCE

of the PARSONAGE By ETHEL HUESTON

(Bobbs-Merrill, Copyright, 1916)

THE TWINS TRY TO EM-BARRASS FAIRY WITH SOME PRACTICAL JOKING WHEN HER BEAU COMES TO VISIT HER.

Mr. Starr is a widower Methodist minister with five charming daughters. Prudence, the eldest is nineteen. She keeps house. Fairy, aged seventeen, is a college freshman. Carol and Lark, twins, are in high school, and Constance is in the grades. Mr. Starr is assigned to the congregation at Mount Mark, Ia., and the advent and establishment of his interesting family in the parsonage there stirs the curiosity of the whole town. The story concerns the affairs of the parsonage girls. Prudence has her hands full with the mischievous twins and Connie. Fairy has just announced that her beau is coming to spend the evening. The twins decide to have some fun, and have made their plans accordingly.

CHAPTER V—Continued.

As soon as they finished supper Lark said, "Don't you think we'd better go right to bed, Prue? We don't want to taint the atmosphere of the parsonage. Of course Fairy will want to wash the dishes herself to make sure they are clean and shining."

"Oh, no," disclaimed Fairy, good-naturedly. "I can give an extra rub to the ones we want to use—that is enough. I do appreciate the thought, though, thanks very much."

So the twins plunged in, carefully keeping Connie beside them. Connie had a dismal propensity for discoveries—the twins had often suffered from it.

Then they all three went to bed. To be sure it was ridiculously early, but they were all determined.

"You keep your eyes open, Fairy," Prudence whispered melodramatically. "Those girls do not look right." And she added anxiously, "Oh, I'll be so disappointed if things go badly."

Fairy was a little late getting up-stairs to dress, but she took time to drop into her sisters' room. They were all in bed, breathing heavily. She walked from one to another, and stood above them majestically.

"Asleep!" she cried. "Ah, fortune is kind. They are asleep. How I love these darling little twinnies—in their sleep!"

An audible snuff from beneath the covers, and Fairy, smiling mischievously, went into the front room to prepare for her caller.

The bell rang as she was dressing. Prudence went to the door, preternaturally ceremonious, and ushered Mr. Babier into the front room. She did not observe that the young man sniffed in a peculiar manner as he entered the room.

"I'll call Fairy," she said demurely. "Tell her she needs a primip for me," he answered, laughing. "I know just how she looks already."

But Prudence was too heavily burdened to laugh. She smiled hospitably, and closed the door upon him. Fairy was tripping down the stairs, very tall, very handsome, very gay. She pinched her sister's arm as she passed, and the front room door swung behind. But she did not greet her friend. She stood erect by the door, her head tilted on one side, sniffing, sniffing.

"What in the world?" she wondered. Eugene Babier was strangely quiet. He looked about the room in a peculiar, questioning way.

"Shall I raise a window?" he suggested finally. "It's rather—er—hot in here."

"Yes, do," she urged. "Raise all of them. It's—do you—do you notice a funny smell in here? Or am I imagining it? It—it almost makes me sick!"

"Yes, there is a smell," he said, in evident relief. "I thought maybe you'd been cleaning the carpet with something. It's ghastly. Can't we go somewhere else?"

"Come on." She opened the door into the sitting room. "We're coming over here if you do not mind, Prue." And Fairy explained the difficulty.

"Why, that's very strange," said Prudence, frowning her brows. "I was in there right after supper, and I didn't notice anything. What does it smell like?"

"It's a new smell to me," laughed Fairy, "but something about it is strangely suggestive of our angel twins."

Prudence went to investigate, and Fairy shoved a big chair near the table, waving her hand toward it lightly with a smile at Babbie. Then she sank into a low rocker, and leaned one arm on the table. She wrinkled her forehead thoughtfully.

"That smell," she began. "I am very suspicious about it. It was not at all natural—"

"Excuse me, Fairy," he said, ill at ease for the first time in her knowledge of him. "Did you know your sleeve was coming out?"

Fairy gasped and raised her arm. "Both arms, apparently," he continued, smiling, but his face was flushed.

"Excuse me just a minute, will you?" Fairy was unruined. She sought her sister. "Look here, Prue—what do you make of this? I'm coming to pieces! I'm hanging by a single thread, as it were."

Her sleeves were undoubtedly ready to drop off at a second's notice! Prudence was shocked. She grew positively white in the face.

"Oh, Fairy," she wailed. "We are disgraced."

"Not a bit of it," said Fairy coolly. "Remember now that Lark was looking for the scissors before supper. Aren't those twins unique? This is almost bordering on talent, isn't it? Don't look so distressed, Prue. Etiquette itself must be subservient to twins, it seems. Don't forget to bring in the etc.—at a quarter past nine, and have it as good as possible—please, dear."

"I will," vowed Prudence. "I'll use cream. Oh, those horrible twins!"

"Go in and entertain Babbie till I come down, won't you?" And Fairy

ran lightly up the stairs, humming a snatch of song.

But Prudence did a poor job of entertaining Babbie during her sister's absence. She felt really dizzy! Such a way to introduce Etiquette into the parsonage life. She was glad to make her escape from the room when Fairy returned, a graceful figure in fine blue silk!

A little after nine she called out dismally, "Fairy!" And Fairy, fearing fresh disaster, came running out.

"What now? What—?"

"I forget what you told me to say," whispered Prudence wretchedly. "What was it? The soup is ready, and piping hot—but what is it you want me to say?"

Fairy screamed with laughter. "You goose!" she cried. "Say anything you like. It doesn't make any difference what you say."

"Oh, I am determined to do my part just right," vowed Prudence fervently. "According to etiquette and all. What was it you said?"

Fairy stifled her laughter with difficulty, and said in a low voice, "Wouldn't you like a nice, hot oyster stew?" Prudence repeated it after her breathlessly.

So Fairy returned once more, and soon after Prudence tapped on the door. Then she opened it, and thrust her curly head inside. "Wouldn't you like a little nice, hot oyster stew?" she chirped methodically. And Fairy said, "Oh, yes, indeed, Prudence—this is so nice of you."

The three gathered sociably about the table. Babbie was first to taste the steaming stew. He gasped, and gulped, and swallowed some water with more haste than grace. Then he toyed idly with spoon and wafer until Prudence tasted also. Prudence did not gasp. She did not cry out. She looked up at her sister with wide eyes—a world of pathos in the glance. But Fairy did not notice.

"Now, please do not ask me to talk until I have finished my soup," she was saying brightly.

Then she tasted it! She dropped her spoon with a great clatter, and jumped up from the table. "Mercy!" she shrieked. "It is poisoned!"

Babbie leaned back in his chair and laughed until his eyes were wet. Prudence's eyes were wet, too, but not from laughter! What would etiquette think of her, after this?

"What did you do to this soup, Prudence?" demanded Fairy.

"I made it—nothing else," faltered poor Prudence, quite crushed by this blow. And oysters forty cents a pint!

"It's pepper, I think," gasped Babbie. "My insides bear startling testimony to the presence of pepper."

And he roared again, while Prudence began a critical examination of the oysters. She found them literally stuffed with pepper; there was no doubt of it. The twins had done deadly work!

"Revenge, ye gods, how sweet," chanted Fairy. "The twins are getting even with a vengeance—the same twins you said were adorable, Babbie."

It must be said for Fairy that her good nature could stand almost anything. Even this did not seriously disturb her. "Do you suppose you can find us some milk, Prue? And crackers! I'm so fond of crackers and milk, aren't you, Babbie?"

"Oh, I adore it. But serve a microscope with it, please. I want to examine it for microbes before I taste."

But Prudence did better than that. She made some delicious cocoa, and opened a can of pear preserves, donated to the parsonage by the amiable Mrs. Adams. The twins were very fond of pear preserves, and had been looking forward to eating these on their approaching birthday. They were doomed to disappointment! The three had a merry little feast, after all, and their laughter rang out so

often and so unrestrainedly that the twins shook in their beds with rage and disappointment.

It speaks well for the courage of Babbie, and the attractions of Fairy that he came to the parsonage again and again. In time he became the best of friends with the twins themselves, but he always called them "the adorables," and they never asked him why. The punishment inflicted upon them by Prudence rankled in their memories for many months.

"The offense was against Fairy," said Prudence, with a solemnity she did not feel, "and the reparation must be done to her. For three weeks you must do all of her bedroom work, and run every errand she requires. Moreover, you must keep her shoes well cleaned and nicely polished, and must do every bit of her darning!"

The twins would have preferred whipping a thousand times. They felt they had got a whipping's worth of pleasure out of their mischief! But a punishment like this sat heavily upon their proud young shoulders, and from that time on they held Fairy practically immune from their pranks.

Prudence did not bother her head about etiquette after that experience. "I'm strong for comfort," she declared, "and since the two cannot live together in one family, I say we do without it quite."

And Fairy nodded in agreement, smiling good-naturedly.

CHAPTER VI.

Practicing Economy.

It was a dull day early in December. Prudence and Fairy were sewing in the bay window of the sitting room.

"We must be sure to have all the scraps out of the way before Connie gets home," said Prudence, carefully fitting together pieces of a dark, warm furry material. "It has been so long since father wore this coat, I am sure she will not recognize it."

"But she will ask where we got it, and what shall we say?"

"We must tell her it is goods we have had in the house for a long time. That is true. And I made this fudge on purpose to distract her attention. Poor child!" she added very sympathetically. "Her heart is just set on a brand-new coat. I know she will be bitterly disappointed. If the members would just pay up we could get her one. November and December are such bad months for parsonage people. Everyone is getting ready for Christmas now, and forgets that parsonage people need Christmas money, too."

Fairy took a pin from her mouth. "I have honestly been ashamed of Connie the last few Sundays. It was so cold, and she wore only that little thin summer jacket. She must have been half frozen."

"There are a lot of us careless about providing for the preacher and his family. Some of us seem to forget that his needs are just as real and urgent as our own. Are you prompt with your tithes?"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

MANY CAUSES OF HEADACHE

Sufferer From Annoying Complaint Can Generally Make Correct Diagnosis of His Particular Case.

Early morning headaches may be due to many causes—eye strain, kidney trouble, overeating, too much smoking, overeating of proteins, excessive mental labor or too high blood pressure. The Medical Record quotes some observations by the French Doctor Renon, which extended over 13 years, and in which he found in many cases excessively high blood tension. When the persistent headaches are so severe that they unfit the sufferer for work, it is generally found that his heart is enlarged and his kidneys are affected. Such cases often speedily terminate fatally, but intensive treatment will alleviate the symptoms. The Medical Record says coal-tar derivatives and tobacco must be shut off. The patient must have mental rest; he must go on a purely milk diet for at least a week, after which he may eat fruits and vegetables on certain days for two weeks more. A light, low protein regimen follows for several weeks.

Sounded Like It.

Clergyman—You ought to get work, my friend. Satan finds employment for idle hands.

Hobo—Yer not suggestin' dat I go ter the devil, are yer?—Boston Evening Transcript.

Neutral Questions.

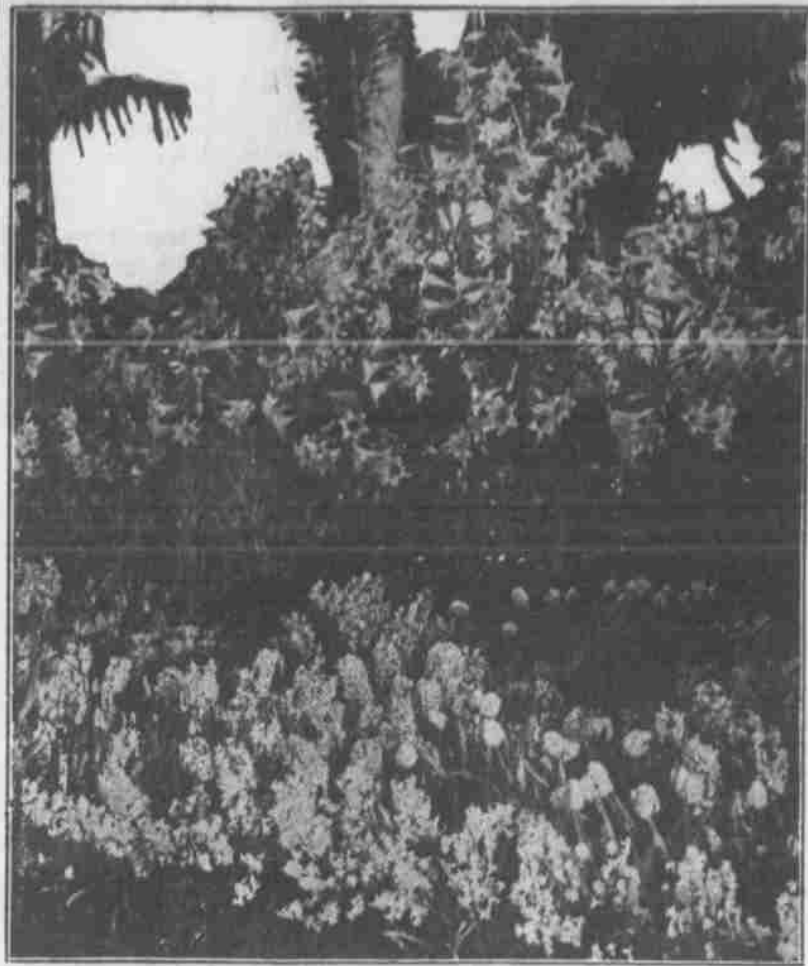
High—There's Fred! Sends over there. He made a million in the street last year.

Lows—Honestly?

High—I don't know; but he made it.—The Lamb.

It is better to be able to turn your foot to anything than to put your foot in it.

The HOME BEAUTIFUL Flowers and Shrubs Their Care and Cultivation



Plan Your Bulb Garden Now. Hyacinths, Tulips and Daffodils, with a Background of Lilies Makes an Effective Arrangement.

PLANNING THE BULB BEDS

By ELIZABETH VAN BENTHUSSEN

There is no more profitable pastime for the winter days and nights than the planning of the bulb beds that are to come with the new season. Everyone knows just how large a place in the lawn the beds can have. There is no question as to the location of the beds. Why not plan an arrangement that will make your beds attract attention as the distinctive work of a person of ideas?

First, measure your lawn space and decide how many beds you will have. Then take a sheet of paper and lay off on it the entire lawn and draw into it a number of designs. The more you practice making drawings for the beds the easier it will become and the more apt you are to get something that will make the passers pause to admire not only the flowers but the genius of their arrangement. Hyacinths, tulips and daffodils, with a background of lilies, makes a fine combination. There is no limit to the number of designs and arrangements that can be made, and every shape and angle known to the geometry can be utilized in the plans.

As an item of home pleasure and instruction some slight regard might be offered to the children for the brightest suggestions. It will create a new interest among them in the flowers and will prove of material value as well as having educational elements.

There are so few things about the management and making of a home where the children ever get a chance to take a hand in suggesting work that they usually like the dignity of being consulted.

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TO KEEP YOUTHFUL ALWAYS MIX WITH YOUR WORK A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF PLAY.

New York Expert Physical Director Tells How to Avoid Growing Old—His Treatment for Tired Business Men

An advocate of play as a prevention of old age is Dr. Louis H. Welzmueller, physical director of New York's West Side Young Men's Christian association, says Hawthorne Daniel in the "World's Work."

"A man was in here just this morning," he said in answer to my question as to what he did to keep men young, "who is in the 'old man' class, and in years he is young. Let me see," and he looked at a card covered with data concerning the man in question. "He was born in '84. That makes him thirty-two, but he is as old as most men of fifty. With him it is overwork, resulting in 'nerves.' He finds it almost impossible to concentrate. When he starts along a certain line, when he wants to run along a single track, so to speak, he finds that his mind is continually turning switches that put him out to the sidetracks. I am going to make him play until he stays on the main line. I'll give him a medicine ball and teach him to become so interested in that ball that everything else is left out of his head."

He stopped for a moment, and looked out on to the busy gymnasium floor. "Then some other men," he continued, "get into a rut and can't get out. Instead of being switched on to every sidetrack by their minds, they are kept diligently at work on the main line. You have seen business men who could not forget their business. All the time their business problems are uppermost in their minds. When they come to me I make them play. I get them interested in something else."

"Did you ever see a filter cleaned by reversing the flow of water? The water going in one direction leaves sediment behind it until the filter does not operate at it should. Then, when you reverse the flow, the sediment 'boils' out, and always you are surprised to see how much was there. That's what play does. It reverses the flow, and it takes out of you all the grubbiness and worry."

"When I find that I am getting short and crusty in my answers to the boys around here, I go out and play handball. When I come back I feel younger. I believe that a man is as young as he acts. He grows old because he does old things. You must have noticed how the mother of a large family stays young when her husband grows old. I believe the reason is that she plays young games with the children while he sits with his newspaper and his troubles."

The Armenians.

The New International Encyclopedia says: "By language the Armenians, or, as they call themselves, Haik, are entitled to rank as a very old branch of the Aryan stock, in some respects intermediate between the Aryans of Europe and the Aryan peoples of middle Asia. Physically also they are of a primitive type, short and thickset, dark-skinned, and of exaggerated brachycephallism, in part artificially induced. They are thought to be related, on the one hand, to the 'Alpine' stock of Europe, and on the other to the Galtchas, etc., of central Asia. They inhabited in early prehistoric times a considerable portion of Asia Minor, and have contributed to, or borrowed from, Aryans of other types, Semites, Caucasians, and later intruding Europeans and Turks. Prof. F. von Luschan (1911) is of opinion that the modern Armenians are of a primitive type, short and thickset, dark-skinned, and of exaggerated brachycephallism, in part artificially induced. 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