

## RING FOR FRANCES

By MARGARET I. FEELEY.

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Frances K— simply detested her alarm clock. Every morning it brought her back from dreams of green fields and babbling brooks to brick tenement houses and city noises. Furthermore, it impressed on her that R— & Co. expected every clerk behind the counter at 8:30 sharp.

Although the mirror said her face was getting thinner, Frances blamed it on the new style of hairdressing. In another ten days she would have her week's vacation, while afternoons in the park would soon put the color in her cheeks again, she told herself.

She wondered if David B—, the new manager, noticed. Frances smiled afterwards. Just as if he could keep track of a half thousand salesgirls' tired looks.

Supposing he did ask her to share his umbrella to the elevated station the last rainy evening—it merely showed he was a gentleman. Nevertheless, she knew she was about the last girl to leave the store.

"Guess you'll have to set your alarm clock a little earlier," was Mrs. H—'s greetings as Frances came down late to breakfast.

Scarcely ten minutes after her arrival at the store, David B— approached the counter. "Miss K—," he said, "we are having a special sale on alarm clocks today. Miss M— is out sick. Will you please take charge?" Frances had no recollection of replying. She next remembered B— explaining how to regulate the clock, and try her utmost she could not keep the flaming color from her cheeks.

All that morning she wound and re-wound the alarm device for prospective customers until now it seemed as if her head would burst with pain from listening to the ringing.

For lunch she had an ice cream, hardly nourishing to a tired clerk.

During the afternoon her head throbbed. Would the public ever stop buying alarm clocks? "Yes'm," Frances remembered saying, "this alarm rings every 30 seconds, then stops, then rings"—how warm everything seemed the store was getting dark. It's funny the lights are out, didn't the alarm sound far away—and then—total darkness. She thought she heard David B—'s voice, but oh, so faintly.

Frances opened her eyes in a room she had often read about, a room that existed for her only in story books—cretonne curtains, a little enameled bed, cool white paper and a nurse. Surely, this was a dream. The nurse explained that R— & Co. had reserved a room at the hospital for any of their clerks who might become ill. This was news indeed, for the firm never had the reputation of being over kind-hearted.

When she next awoke it was early evening, while the corridor lights accentuated the growing darkness of her room. Suddenly, the smart trim figure of the nurse appeared in the doorway, followed by David B—. Frances was conscious that he was standing by her bedside. Slowly she opened her eyes, while the nurse switched on the lights.

"It was nice of you to come, Mr. B—," she began. "I am very thankful to the firm, also." With a nod B— dismissed the nurse.

"Miss K—," he said in a low modulated voice, "I'm awfully sorry I put you on that alarm clock counter, but I didn't know you weren't feeling well."

Frances smiled faintly. "It was foolish of me," she began, but B— interrupted.

"Please let us not talk about that now," he said, "but after a little while I hope you'll be well enough to go down and stay with my mother. Our home is much too large for the two of us, besides—a rest would—"

"Oh, but I couldn't, Mr. B—;—you see, I—"

"Now, I know you are going to say you don't know me, but you do, although you've long forgotten."

"Are you sure?" Frances inquired, her voice trembling.

"Am I sure?" B— answered. "I'm going to tell you something, then you may decide for yourself."

"You remember John M— in Northwood?"

Frances nodded.

"He was my uncle," B— continued, "and one summer along about five years ago I went down to visit him on his farm. He was a pretty cranky sort of a fellow, but good hearted, just the same. There was a family down the road who used to supply him with milk. A little dark-haired girl used to deliver it every morning. One morning she was late. He was terribly cranky; he told her that she ought to buy an alarm clock to wake her up. In her haste and confusion she dropped the milk. I felt sorry, but I knew my uncle's disposition, so I had to keep still. I left the next day, but I found out her name. When I came back the next year she had left the village."

"I didn't suppose you'd remember me, but I wanted to make sure. I guess you didn't understand, because you never mentioned it the night you walked under my umbrella, but somehow or other I didn't forget. I've been waiting for just the proper time to tell you and I hope you won't think I'm taking an advantage, but I've just got to tell you—you'll come, Frances, won't you?"

Frances' lips quivered.

"I will—if—"

"If what?" broke in B—.

"If you don't have alarm clocks."

## Keep Young.

The great enemy of youthfulness is the drying-up process, and this is why we should not only keep as much as possible with the young but should enter into their joys, their plays, with zest and enthusiasm. We should romp and play with them, interest ourselves in the things that delight them, instead of pushing children away from us and restraining them all the time, regarding them as a nuisance and a bore. Children were given us to keep us youthful, to keep our sympathies fresh.—Exchange.

## Expert Opinion.

"I attended a select reading of his own poems by Jay B. Iden at an East side church the other evening," said J. Fuller Gloom. "As an elocutionist Mr. Iden has very dark hair. The entertainment was free and I was convinced almost from the start that it was richly worth it."—Kansas City Star.

## Optimistic Thought.

When sovereignty is divided it is very easily destroyed.

## Sympathetic Burglars.

Paul Verlaine, the Parisian poet, woke up one night to find a couple of burglars in his room. His visitors were so touched by evidence of his dire poverty that they gave him a franc apiece.

## Staving Off Old Age.

Among many other extraordinary plans for prolonging one's stay on this interesting planet may be mentioned that of a South African farmer who advised people to eat every day four pounds of bananas steeped in sweetened whisky, and that of a professor in the University of Pennsylvania who believed that much could be done in the way of staving off old age by frequently having one's feet tickled!

## Mischievousness of Youth.

A young wife put down her book with a sigh. "What is it, darling?" her husband asked. "Ah, dearest, I am so happy!" she replied. "Yes, but you had such a sad look in your eyes just now." "I know, I've been reading about the unhappiness that the wives of men of genius have always had to bear. Oh, Alfred, dear, I'm so glad you're just an ordinary sort of fellow!"

## Recipe for Happiness.

This gospel of happiness is one which every one should lay to heart. Set out with the invincible determination that you will bear burdens and not impose them. Whether the sun shines or the rain falls, show a glad face to your neighbor. If you must fall in life's battle, you can at least fall with a smile on your face.—Well-spring.

## Extracting Salt From Ocean.

Experiments in Norway with a view to extracting salt from ocean water by means of electricity have been successful, and two salt factories will be started for this purpose in the near future. Each factory is calculated to produce 50,000 tons of salt a year for a start, but they will be so built that the production can be brought up to double the quantity, if necessary. Besides the salt, different by-products will be made.

## Where Gold Is Found.

India's production of gold is principally from Mysore. Russia is the oldest gold-producing country in the world. Mining is carried on principally in the Ural mountains, but climatic conditions impede progress. Mexico has many mines, but labor troubles have a restrictive influence on the industry. Other countries which produce gold in small quantities are China, Japan, Chile, Peru, Persia and Hungary.

## Zinc Shapes at Boiling Point.

Zinc is ductile between 212 and 302 degrees Fahrenheit and can then be shaped as required. But when either above or below these limits it becomes brittle and unpliant and therefore not adapted for treatment. It melts at about 786 degrees Fahrenheit if volatilization is guarded against.

## Artificial Marble.

Artificial marble for fancy articles is made by soaking plaster of paris in a solution of alum, baking it in an oven, and then grinding it to a powder. In using, mix it with water, and to produce the clouds and veins stir in any dry color desired; it will become very hard, and is susceptible of a high polish.

## Two Things He Remembered.

The proprietor and editor of a certain local paper had been indulging in a little plain talk and prophesying disaster to the little town if certain improvements and sanitary reforms were not forthwith adopted. A local parson sided with the rural council which neglected these things and, after a sermon evidently pointed at the newspaper man, said: "You should remember the fate of Balaam." "I do," was the prompt reply from the pew, "and I also remember who it was that warned the prophet."

## New York's Fire Bells.

Once, and up to a day within the memory of living men, New York had its fire bells. Eleven of them were hung in wooden towers about Manhattan. A writer of 1837 declared that these bells rang at least 500 times in the 365 days of the year. One of the old alarmers still hangs at the tip-top of Mount Morris park, in Harlem.

## A BLUNDER

By LIZZIE M. PEABODY.

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Rivertown's two remaining veterans of the Civil war met and passed each other without a sign of recognition; and Dolly D.'s pretty face wore a puzzled look as from her window she gazed after each in turn.

Both were of medium height, but Uncle Eb's kindly blue eyes were faded, he was thin, and his hair was snowy white, while Uncle Zeke was of stockier build, his dark eyes were still bright and his hair was an iron gray. "Why, they didn't speak!" the girl gasped in dismay, and added softly, "And they've always been such good friends. I hate to think that they may be unhappy."

Still thinking of the veterans she was soon on her way to the far end of the village, and accepted Uncle Eb's cordial invitation to come and sit with him on the tiny porch of his little old weather-beaten house.

The newspaper he had brought from the post office was still unfolded, and he appeared depressed.

She was troubled when Uncle Zeke passed by and said softly, "He didn't look up, Uncle Eb."

"Huh!" he snorted. "He doesn't have to! I don't care if he never speaks to me again."

"Now! Now! Uncle Eb! And you have always been such good friends," she said, protestingly.

After a silence Uncle Eb spoke. "I know," he said softly. "And always we have lived here side by side. We began going to school the same day, enlisted in the army together, and in the same company fought side by side."

"After the war," he continued reminiscently, "Zeke ran a little grocery store and I cobbled shoes for a living until we settled down here to putter around and keep hens." With a soft little sigh the veteran paused. "Who ever first said that an old dog won't learn new tricks?" he inquired resentfully.

"I never surprised us both one day by going over to Zeke's and killing his chickens."

"Then it became a habit, but the day he killed four of Zeke's best pullets Zeke lost all patience and shot him. Don't think I blamed Zeke. I didn't. But I missed old Rover, and somehow I couldn't feel so friendly again toward the one who shot him. Perhaps Zeke knew it. Anyway he sold his poultry and went over to Wingfield for a while. You remember, Dolly?"

She nodded and he continued:

"When he came home again 'twas toward night and I was out in my yard. I was glad to see him, and he seemed so friendly that I hoped for a return of the old happy times."

Again Uncle Eb paused and then burst out wrathfully. "And that very night that sneaking, revengeful, well, anyway, that night he shot the major." "The major?" she asked. "My cat!" he explained.

"I thought you called him the corporal," she said smiling. Uncle Eb straightened. "He was a common cat," he declared proudly. "I taught him many tricks, and the best ones earned him well-deserved promotions."

"How Zeke would have roared at some of Major's tricks," he said regretfully. "He was great" company, Major was," he resumed. "He'd wait patiently on a limb of the old elm tree, and on my return home he'd drop down on my shoulder as I came through the gate."

"But are you sure Uncle Zeke shot him?" she asked.

"Yes! By the moonlight I had seen Major in his yard a short time before and when I heard the report of a gun I ran to the window of my unlighted room just in time to see Zeke enter his house. Then I went looking for my cat and found him dead."

"Did you ask Uncle Zeke to explain?" "Not I. When he spoke to me the next day I turned away. We've never spoken to each other since." "I'm very sorry," Dolly said, as she rose to go, "and I wouldn't have believed it of Uncle Zeke."

"I am provoked; but still I suppose I must run over to see him."

"Hello, Dolly!" greeted Uncle Zeke as he placed a chair for her. "I thought you'd never get away from Eb. He's some buzzer when he gets started. All talk or no talk, Eb is," he said bitterly, "and as full of whims as an egg shell is of yolk and white."

"Why do you think that?" she asked coldly. "He's more than friendly one day, and for no reason at all refuses to speak the next or afterward," he returned hotly.

Her blue-gray eyes flashed. "You shot his pretty black and white trained cat!" she cried. "That's news to me!" he said. "Think!" she urged. "The night you came from Wingfield."

His face grew troubled.

"Was it Eb's cat I shot that night?" He sighed as he said ruefully: "I thought it was a skunk after Eb's chickens, and I've been well punished for my blunder."

"We are seventy-seven; and we've traveled down the long trail together. How I've missed Eb, no one will ever know—unless Eb does"—he added thoughtfully. Hastily he patted his pockets. His pipe and tobacco pouch were there. "Come, Dolly! I'll explain and then I'll tell him I'll get a cart load of kittens and train them all for him if he says so," he said eagerly.

Uncle Eb saw them coming, their faces alight with happiness; and raised his white head as a parched and drooping plant raises itself at the coming of the blessed rain.

## ISABEL

By LOUISE A. ADDESON.

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We knew as soon as we saw her that she was different. By the light of her eye, the sprightliness in her step, by her quick, defiant expression, Isabel made it clear to us that she was no ordinary cow.

"A Jersey," my father said. But I think he was mistaken. I don't know much about cows. She wanted a place in the sun. She had a hankering for caste, and she refused immediately to herd with the every-day, milk-giving cows in the neighborhood.

Old Mr. J—, who had taken the cows to the pasture for years, reported to father at the end of the first day that Isabel had taken one look at her placid, grass-munching companions—and bolted. He had chased her the entire day through forest and glade, and brought her home, after a spent day, rebellious and defiant.

"Taint no use talking," said the old man, "if a cow don't act like a cow I can't be bothered. That critter's got too much sense for an animal, taint natural. I know she jest did things today out of sheer spite, and I shan't chase after her no more."

And he didn't. So Isabel stayed home, while her companions went meekly to pasture every day. Still she was dissatisfied. It was evident that staying in a dreary barn all day irked her high-strung nerves. She had yearnings for a higher sphere of influence, so one day, the door being open, Isabel walked out in search of adventure and her place in the sun.

And it was on that same day that Evelyn, our pretty young city cousin, was packing her clothes to go home. Evelyn had been with us for three months, having been sent by her parents to recuperate after her illness. Evelyn was working very hard, lips compressed and eyes carefully turned away from the house next door, where lived Howard R—. She would return his ring by mail, for she was determined not to see him or speak to him before she left, or any time afterward.

It was certainly a pity that there was nobody home that day. Mother had gone to the house of a neighbor, and I had been obliged to substitute at the school because Miss F— was sick, and it was deemed inadvisable to close up altogether. We expected to return in time to see Evelyn off, and of course if we had known what was going to happen we would never, never have left her alone in the house. But then, we could hardly be expected to look so far ahead.

Evelyn was miserable, but she had lots of pride. She was going to leave the house and the village with a wonderful show of carelessness and sprightly gaiety. No spying eye from across the way would discover even a trace of sadness. Certainly that spying eye would never discover a tear in hers. But she had reckoned without Isabel, who, on leaving the gloom of the barn for the freshness of the bright summer day, strolled slowly along until she came to the back of the house. There, through the screen door, she could distinctly see a basket of greens, intended for the day's dinner, a barrel of apples, of which she was extremely fond, and another barrel of potatoes. Without hesitation, the screen door being unfastened, Isabel stepped in and helped herself liberally.

In the meanwhile Evelyn, hearing a sound, came forward to see who the visitor might be, thinking, too, that if it were that Howard R—, she would let him see, by her icy demeanor, that his presence or absence made very little difference in her young life. Now, the ice-cold demeanor might have been put on for its effect on Howard R—, but real chills ran down Evelyn's back when she saw who the visitor was. She couldn't help it. She knew it was absurd, but all her life she had had an aversion for cows. So, after staring at Isabel in terrified fascination for a full minute, she beat a hasty retreat to the front of the house. And Isabel left her greens, and apples, and potatoes, and followed, in a calm, dignified, unruffled manner. Evelyn rushed for the front door. It was locked and she couldn't find the key. Mortal terror overtook her. Scream on scream rent the air.

Howard R—, in the house opposite, suddenly concocting schemes for making Evelyn sorry, jumped to his feet on hearing his name called in frenzied accents. For a moment he stood still, doubtful if he had heard right. Again it came, Evelyn's voice, loud, shrill, terror-stricken. Howard rushed madly, made his way into the front of the house, and took in the situation at a glance.

Isabel; not the least frightened of the two by this time, received, I am sorry to relate, a blow on her aristocratic body, and much to her surprise and indignation was forced back to her stall in the barn, while Evelyn, almost fainting, fell into her rescuer's arms without a word, on his return.

"You're—you're—not going away, are you?" asked Howard, after a minute or two.

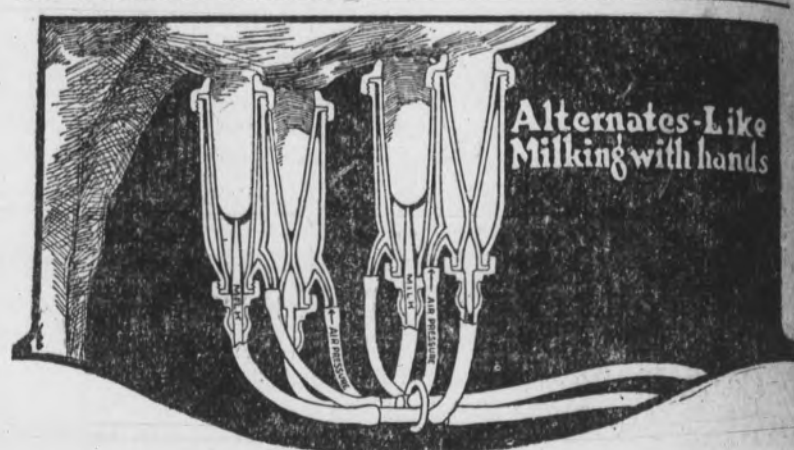
She shook her head in the negative, and, smiling wanly, put the ring, which she had intended returning by mail, on her finger again.

## Some Orchestra, That!

Life is a great orchestra; we cannot transform it into a drum and fife corps, nor insist that our children shall play the instrument which we have chosen for our playing.

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## Insects in Glaciers.

Few people know that in the glaciers of the western national parks live several species of minute insects, hopping about like tiny fleas. They are harder to see than the so-called sand fleas of the seashore, because much smaller. Slender, dark brown worms live in countless millions in the surface ice. Microscopic, rose-colored plants also thrive in such vast numbers that they tint the surface here and there.

## Tea Popular British Beverage.

Tea is the most popular of British beverages, and in spite of William Cobbett's lament that "tea shops" were being substituted for wholesome small beer to the detriment of the populace in his day, "the cup that cheers" is the staple drink of all classes. It cannot be said that there has been any marked deterioration of English people through constant indulgence in tea.

## Turning the Joke.

Now and then we meet men who are happiest when hitting some one a hard rap over the knuckles. These are the men that wither right up when you get a good joke on them. And have you not noticed that such men are most always in trouble because somebody has said mean things about them? How slow we are to learn that maple syrup beats vinegar all to pieces as an attraction for honey bees!

## Important Rivers.

Just as Egypt has been made by the Nile, so Mesopotamia has been made by the Tigris and the Euphrates. The view put forward with some authority that the rivers should be kept exclusively for irrigation and not be depended upon for transport is challenged on many grounds, one of which is that irrigation and navigation can be effectively combined, and indeed made mutually advantageous for many years to come.

## Bronzing Small Articles.

Small articles may be gilded by immersing them in the following solution, which must be used at nearly boiling heat: Caustic potash, 150 parts; carbonate of potash, 20 parts; cyanide of potassium, 9 parts; water, 1,000 parts. Rather more than one and one-half parts chloride of gold should be dissolved in the water when the other substances are to be added, and the whole boiled together. This mixture is often employed by dealers in cheap jewelry.

N. Goodman  
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Could you demand more convincing proof of merit?

John Pfeiffer, blacksmith, South St., says: "Many years of hard work as a blacksmith weakened my kidneys and caused backache. I have often been in a stooped position, shoeing a horse and when I tried to straighten, a sharp pain took me in my kidneys and I could hardly move. I had to get up several times at night to pass the kidney secretions and they were highly colored. One box of Doan's Kidney Pills, which I got at Harvey & Carey's Drug store, gave me fine relief and straightened me up in good shape."

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