

# The Premium For Patchwork.

By Martha McCulloch Williams.

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"ALLAN! I say, Allan! Here's a row you have just got to settle—a woman's row at that," the chief marshal said, plucking at the sleeve of Allan McNeal, president of the Clay County Fair association. The president scowled and tried to shoulder him away. Nan Ware was waiting for him out in the amphitheater. Naturally he was in a fever to get done with the absolutely necessary routine affairs.

"Come on! You must!" the marshal repeated. Allan made a feint of clenching his fists. "Go away, you nuisance!" he said. "Taylor, you are a nuisance, the very worst sort!"

"I appeal to the president. It is my right. Under the constitution and by-laws—a woman's voice said outside the door. Taylor grinned. "I knew it was coming. Don't say I didn't tell you," he said in a stage aside as two stout and very angry dames bulged simultaneously through the door. The president's room was a mere caddy, ravaged from the end of Horticultural hall. One rickety chair, a goods box and an apologetic desk made up its furnishings. Even then there was scant room for the pair who had planted themselves at Allan's elbows and glared at each other across him.

"Taylor, you scoundrel, why didn't you tell me I was wanted?" Allan said mendaciously; then to his visitors: "Mrs. Pease, Mrs. Sawyer, what can I do for you? You know you have only to name it."

"I want justice," Mrs. Sawyer began, "and I'm a-goin to have it!"

Mrs. Pease broke in: "It's a perfect shame, Allan—yes, I will call you Allan; I used to know your mother so well—the way things are run at this fair. Everything is in a ring, and you never get the least bit of justice unless you are in a ring yourself!"

"You ought to know about that. Everybody has said for the longest time you were the head ringster," Mrs. Sawyer interrupted pointedly. Mrs. Pease gave her a withering glance, but went on as though she had not heard. "I do hope the gentlemen are honest in their part. But here in this hall—Well, I don't want to name names, but truly I don't see how some people ever have the conscience to go to preachin after the way they act."

"Oh, you know, mistakes will be made," Allan said soothingly. "I'm sure, though, if they are made, they are honest ones. People see things so differently, you know!"

"Yes, and always their own way or their friends'," Mrs. Pease said acridly. "That's the sole and only reason you see me here. The association did me the honor to appoint me a judge of patchwork!"

"And me," Mrs. Sawyer added.

Mrs. Pease went on. "I ought to know something about it. I have got just 40 patch quilts, five of em silk, that I've made myself. I've made every pattern I ever saw, in fact, so it stands to reason when I say the star and feather is more trouble than the basket of tulips nobody ought to dispute it."

"I don't dispute it. All I say is that the tulip basket's the prettiest and the newest and the nicest made," Mrs. Sawyer interrupted. "If quiltmakin counts, I do reckon I could have a face to beg the whole country for pieces."

"I could buy my pieces, too, if my husband's store sold whisky," Mrs. Pease began, her face an apologetic scowl. Allan interposed. "If you two can't decide, we all know nobody can," he said diplomatically. "The thing to do is to give two premiums instead of one."

"No, no!" both women cried in the same breath. "You must come out and judge yourself. That's partly what a president is for."

"Correct, ladies!" Taylor, the marshal, said, his eyes twinkling. "The by-laws is explicit on jest that very p'int. Make Allan go and pick the winner. I'm too much his friend to see him ruin himself right out."

"Oh, let me tell you something, Mr. McNeal," Mrs. Pease said. Then in a raucous whisper, "My choice, the star and feather, belongs to Miss Elvy Ware, and she told me yesterday she had willed it to Nan because the child did think it was so pretty."

"Oh, say, I wish you'd settle it with-out me. Double the premiums," Allan said, beads of sweat breaking out on his face. Taylor chuckled at sight of them. Mrs. Sawyer pursed her mouth and said loftily: "I might try to influence you, Allan, only I have some principle about me. The tulip basket was made by Mrs. John Groome. She's Nan Ware's aunt, too, and has no daughter of her own."

"And neither would have a premium unless she got it over 't'other," Taylor said, rubbing his hands and chuckling again. "That's what I meant, Allan. I can't see you set all Miss Nan's family against you. You're bound to make one-half of it mad. But do your duty like a white man, and maybe the good Lord'll have mercy on your courtin."

"Shut up! I'll fling you outside if

you don't!" Allan said, holding the door wide. "Now, ladies, come and make up my mind for me. And please be quick about it. I have a hundred other things to do."

Man disposes, but woman proposes. Most commonly it is to have her own way. Allan McNeal had a will and a mind of his own, but found himself helpless in the face of the patchwork feud. It was nothing less. It had begun, in fact, in that same Horticultural hall ten years back. Miss Elvy Ware and Mrs. John Groome were not merely Nan Ware's aunts, sisters respectively to her father and mother, but bitter rivals in notable housewifery. At the very first Clay county fair they swept all before them in their own particular lines, but Mrs. Groome got a blue ribbon the more. It was for cut flowers, and Miss Elvy's roses did not win even the red. Naturally the fact rankled. It rankled so deeply, indeed, she was not pacified by the offer of a special rose premium next year. She won it, of course, but the winning was robbed of savor. Mrs. Groome did not make a separate rose display.

So it had gone at every fair. Now one was ahead in the matter of premiums, now the other. At this particular fair both had outdone themselves, with the result of winning a dozen blue ribbons each. There would have been more, but that old Sister Dempsey, the committee on jelly and crystallized fruits, placidly ate up the Groome and Ware entries, saying she "did believe in givin somebody else the least little smidgin of a chance." So that \$5 had gone to an entirely new person, a slim, dark eyed girl, shy and strange, who came afoot, with only a lad for company. Her people had bought less than a year back a somewhat ramshackle farm lying a mile away. Nobody knew much about them, except that they minded their own affairs, paid cash for the little they bought and from the looks of things about the place were not in the least afraid of work.

Sister Dempsey had felt fully repaid for her threatened indignation by sight of the girl's eyes when she got the blue ribbon. They had brightened and softened until they were like misty stars. Then she had said something to the boy at her elbow that made him stand on tiptoe and stick his hands deep in his pockets, as though he had hard work to keep from turning hand-springs and shouting aloud.

"It was Lee's idea, you know, our bringing the things. I should never have had the courage—or the hope," she had explained, with a blush, to Sister Dempsey. Lee, standing very straight and looking as though he owned at least half the fair grounds, had added: "Why, Ellie, I knew we'd get premiums if this old show played fair! Didn't you make all your things the way Black Mammy taught you? You know she cooked for grandfather 50 years."

Mrs. Pease and Mrs. Sawyer had heard nothing of all this. They had

quitting indeed rose to the rank of high art, and, though one might question the harmony of orange feathers surrounding a red star upon a ground of ultramarine, they were quite offset by crimson and purple tulips with finger wide stems, falling over a blue and yellow basket to trail on a staring white background.

Even Sister Dempsey admitted that her own rising sun was quite put out of court by them. As for the Irish chains, monuments, even the extravagant silk crazy quilts, everybody understood that they were exhibited solely through public spirit, to make a good showing, with no hope whatever of a premium. Allan glanced despairingly over them. To his confusion he spied Nan just entering the hall, laughing and talking at a great rate with his pet aversion, Tim Boyliss. Tim was rich and not ill looking, but, as everybody agreed, "hadn't sense enough to lead a goose to water." Everybody said further it was a shame the way Nan Ware kept him dangling after her when she had been as good as engaged to Allan McNeal ever since she was out of short frocks.

"Here, pin the blue on the star and feather! Quick! Before Nan comes!" Mrs. Pease commanded, thrusting a length of ribbon into Allan's hand. Mrs. Sawyer snatched it away. "Oh, but don't those tulips hang down graceful!" she said coaxingly. "I do hate a stiff thing. That's why I like Nan so. She couldn't be stiff. No, not if she tried."

Insidiously she slid another ribbon—a full yard of fluttering azure—be-



"WHAT HAS MY LITTLE BROTHER DONE?"

tween Allan's fingers. "You have got to decide it somehow," she said very low. "I know Nan thinks a heap the most of her Aunt Groome!"

"Excuse me, I—I must get out of this," Allan said desperately. As he rushed toward the door his eyes fell full on Lee. Lee's coat was clean and whole, but whole through the most exquisite patching and darning. Any other lad roundabout would have refused to be seen in it. Lee wore it as though proud of it. Allan made three steps to the boy's side, caught him by the arm and drew him forward without a word. Lee's sister followed, amazement and concern struggling in her face. "I—we—what has my little brother done?" she asked unsteadily. Allan gave her a comforting look, took Lee by the shoulders and set him where all could see, saying clearly: "As it is my prerogative to award the disputed premium for patchwork, I give it to this coat, the most excellent and the most eloquent specimen it has ever been my luck to see. These others," with a sweep of the arm toward the line, "may be more ornamental. The declared purpose of this fair association is to 'encourage thrift, industry and the useful arts.' Mr. Marshal, see that this premium is paid at once, and," this under his breath, "be sure it is doubled."

"Oh, you mean thing!" Nan cried, flitting past him. "I believe I shall never speak to you again!"

Allan did not answer. He was busy pinning the long blue ribbon on Lee's left shoulder. Even if he heard it did not break his heart. He married Ellie Floyd, Lee's pretty, dark eyed sister, long before the next fair came round.

**English Manners Abroad.**

With the exception of the writer and her mother all the people in the house were French. One day the manager asked his guests if they would mind having the middle day table d'hôte a little earlier, as a dejeuner for a number of English excursionists had been ordered for 12:30 o'clock. While the company were still seated the "excursionists" arrived. Some 50 men and women came clattering and chattering into the room. Many of the men kept their hats on and continued to smoke their pipes. Some of them even sat down at the table at which the hotel guests were lunching and called out loudly to their friends who were still in the hall to hurry up. The French people shrugged their shoulders and murmured, "Les Anglais," and the English lady and her mother for the first time in their lives felt ashamed of their nationality. The English excursionists meant no harm. In their bolsters John Bullism they look upon themselves as masters of every place in which they are going to spend money. They do not know that foreigners are punctilious in the matter of etiquette, and they sin in sheer ignorance.—Reference.

**Roasted Lawyers in His Will.**

George F. Bloss, for 13 years butler in the family of James A. Strymser, in this city, died on April 12 last, leaving about \$3,000 in personality and a curious will drawn by himself. This document, which is filed in the surrogate's office, says in part: "This will is expected to be understood by people of ordinary intelligence and not by lawyers, idiots, imbeciles and others who may perhaps become insane in their desire to make money out of it by robbing my wife of what will through my wishes rightfully belong to her."—New York Letter.

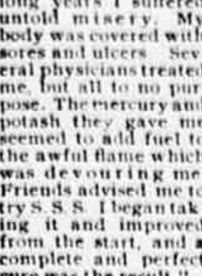
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It is a peculiar poison, and so highly contagious that an innocent person handling the same articles used by one infected with this loathsome disease, may be inoculated with the virus. It can be transmitted from parent to child, appearing as the same disease or in a modified form—like Eczema or Scrofula.

Many an old sore or stubborn skin trouble appearing in middle life, is due and traceable to blood poison contracted in early life. You may have taken potash and mercury faithfully for two or three years and thought you were cured, but you were not, for these poisonous minerals never cure this disease; they drive it from the outside, but it is doing its work on the inside, and will show up again sooner or later. You may not recognize it as the same old taint, but it is. S. S. S. has cured thousands of cases of Contagious Blood Poison, and it will cure you. It is the only purely vegetable blood purifier known, and the only antidote for this poison. S. S. S. cleanses the blood thoroughly of every particle of the poison—there is never any return of the disease.

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**SSS**

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**Articles of Incorporation of the Norfolk Tontine Savings Association.**

Know all Men by These Presents: That we, George H. Spear, H. H. Patterson and D. Williams all of the city of Norfolk, county of Madison, state of Nebraska, have associated ourselves together for the purpose of forming and becoming a corporation in said state of Nebraska, for the transaction of business hereinafter described.

1. The name of this corporation shall be The Norfolk Tontine Savings Association. Its principal place of transacting business shall be in said city of Norfolk, Nebraska.
2. The nature of the business to be transacted by said corporation shall be the buying and selling of merchandise, stocks, bonds and other securities.
3. The capital stock of said company shall be thirty thousand dollars to be issued in shares of one hundred dollars each, to be issued as required by the board of directors, and paid up in full at the time of issuance.
4. The existence of this corporation shall commence on the twenty-second day of June, 1900, and continue until the twenty-second day of June, 1950, unless sooner dissolved by the mutual consent of its stockholders.
5. The business of said company shall be conducted by a board of directors, not to exceed three in number, to be elected by the stockholders, at such time and in such manner as shall be prescribed by the by-laws.
6. The officers of said corporation shall be a president, a secretary and a treasurer, who shall be chosen by the board of directors, and shall hold office for a period of one year or, until their successors shall be elected and qualified.
7. The highest amount of indebtedness to which said corporation shall, at any time, subject itself, shall not be more than two-thirds of said capital stock.
8. The manner of holding stockholders' meetings and the method of conducting the business of this corporation, shall be as provided by the by-laws of said corporation.

In witness whereof the undersigned have hereunto set their hands this 22nd day of June, A. D. 1900.

D. WILLIAMS,  
GEO. H. SPEAR,  
H. H. PATTERSON.



**SHE WAS BLIND.**

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GUS DETMERS,  
2515 Douglas St., Omaha.  
Traveling Salesman for the Newton Proprietary Co.

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Signed JOHN E. HIMOE.

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