

BETZVILLE TALES

Uncle Ashdod and the Bisquito

By Ellis Parker Butler

Author of "Pigs is Pigs" Etc.
ILLUSTRATED BY PETER NEWELL

Early this spring Uncle Ashdod Clute made up his mind that he was pretty sure to die within twenty or thirty years, and he felt that it would be a shame to die and not leave anything to carry his name down to posterity, and that he ought to hustle up a bit if he wanted to enroll his name on the banner of fame. The only thing that troubled him was that there were not many things a man could do in Betzville to make his name resound around the world like a June bug in a bass-drum, but one day, when he was down at the creek fishing, the idea came to him like a flash.

He says he was sitting there with a grasshopper in one hand and the fish hook in the other, ready to thread the grasshopper on the hook, when simultaneously at the same time a mosquito alighted on his left ear and a mosquito on his right ear. He says that any ordinary man might never have got an idea from that, but Uncle Ashdod can wiggle his ears to and fro like a flag in the breeze, and he wiggled them. He says he must have wriggled them too hard, but he wasn't paying much attention to his ears just then. He says that if he had wiggled his ears with just a slight wiggle all would have been well, but he must have wiggled them mighty strong, for

he has a photograph of himself wearing the gold medal presented by the Society for the Prevention of Pain to Those Who Sit on a Bee.

Along about the 6th of August Uncle Ashdod opened the hermetically sealed incubator in which he had deposited the eggs of the bisquito, as he called the new insect. He had prepared the eggs carefully, cutting each egg in two and then gluing the rear end of a mosquito egg to the fore-end of a bee egg. He did this with several thousand eggs, and then put them to hatch in a butter tub in his attic. It was his first attempt at egg grafting, and he hardly hoped that more than one or two of the eggs would hatch, but the results far exceeded his expectations.

The 6th of August was a warm day and Uncle Ashdod was but lightly clad when he entered his attic. When he took the lid off the butter tub he uttered an exclamation of surprise, for it seemed that every egg had hatched. The butter tub was full of bisquitos of the strongest quality. They were full of vitality and they seemed to recognize that Uncle Ashdod was a sort of step-father to them, and several immediately arose and kissed him in the face and he uttered several exclamations of surprise in a hasty



Peter Newell
Three Days Later the Biographer from Chicago Found Him There with only His Nose Above Water While Several Hundred Bisquitos Sat Patiently on a Log Nearby.

it angered the bee and the mosquito, and at the same moment that the mosquito angrily bit him on the right ear the bee arose in its might and swatted its stinger into his left ear up to the handle.

It was immediately after that—within one-tenth of a second—that Uncle Ashdod saw where a great improvement could be made in bees and mosquitoes. He says his ear began to swell immediately, but that before it had swelled enough to notice he had decided that the rear end of a bee could be greatly modified for the better. He also says that few men could think of two things at the same time, but that at the same moment that he thought of improving the bee he realized that the front end of a mosquito would be more popular with humanity if the stinger wasn't on it.

So, as soon as he got home, he set to work thinking how to improve the bee and the mosquito, and the more he thought about it the surer he became that life was too short for one man to improve both separately and that the right thing to do would be to mix the breeds of bees and mosquitoes. He said that the only objectionable part of the bee was its after-deck and rudder, so to speak, and that the mean part of the mosquito was its fore-deck and bowsprit, and what the world had been longing for these many centuries was a combination of the fore-end of the bee and the rear-end of the mosquito, thus forming one sweet and useful insect.

About that time a bald-headed man from Chicago came to Betzville to get material for a "History of the Prominent Citizens of Ringtail County," the cost of the book being only ten dollars, including the insertion of a hand-made biography of the purchaser as one of the most prominent of all, and \$25 additional for a steel engraving with a firm but gentle look. He strongly urged Uncle Ashdod to fall for it, saying that Uncle Ashdod had a bunch of the most biographical looking whiskers in all Ringtail county, and that now was the time to be steel engraved, before the price of steel went up. But Uncle Ashdod hid his face and his eyes, and he would not be ready until about potato-digging time. The fact was that Uncle Ashdod did not want his biography until he could run into it the facts about the creation of the stinging bee and the bitless mosquito, and he hoped, by the time pumpkins were ripe, to

manner, and then he put his hand on the back of his neck and yelped like a painful dog. The experiment had been a great success, and one end of each mosquito was annexed to one end of each bee, but Uncle Ashdod had got the wrong ends of them. Each bisquito had a bee's stinger on its tail, and they were ambidextrous, as one might say. They worked something like a see-saw. A bisquito could balance on its legs on a tender spot, and then see-saw up and down, and at each teeter the stinger on one end would do its dirt work. By the time Uncle Ashdod reached the attic door the whole production of his bisquito factory was showing him how it was done.

Uncle Ashdod was seen passing through Main street at about 3:30 o'clock accompanied by all the bisquitos known to be in existence, and he was on the jump, and at every jump he let forth a yell, but at the speed at which he was traveling the reporter of the Betzville News could not tell whether it was a yell of triumph or a mere expression of annoyance. It was later learned that he had no thought at the time of expressing his triumph, but was simply hiking for the swimming hole in the creek.

Three days later the biographer from Chicago found him there with only his nose above water while several hundred bisquitos sat patiently on a log near by. Occasionally a bisquito would fly toward Uncle Ashdod, who would then duck and swallow a quart of creek water. The gentleman from Chicago mentioned the subject of the biographical history to Uncle Ashdod at the time, but he did not wait for an answer. It seems that a bisquito answered him first. He ran all the way back to Betzville, and the history was forced to go to press without even a mention of Uncle Ashdod.

By the time he has a heavy frost Uncle Ashdod's friends hope the bisquitos will be in a comatose condition and Uncle Ashdod can come out of the creek.

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Teach "Baby Minding."
Instructions in "baby minding" are given to the students of the London garden schools. Babies are borrowed for the purpose.

The world has little use for the man who needs an ear trumpet to hear the call of Duty.

NOTES FROM MEADOWBROOK FARM

By William Pitt



The cow must be clean.
The well fed pullet is an early layer.
Between two fields—keep the fence clean.
The dirty egg is a sign of ill-kept poultry yards and houses.
Good feed and good care at this time makes the winter layers.
A horse suffers just as much from bolting his food as does a man.
Plant a good bed of iris next spring if you have not attended to it this fall.
Pay more attention to the condition of your soil and spraying and less to pruning.
It is a hard matter to overfeed the pullets at this time for the extra nutrition is put into eggs.
There is no stock on the farm yielding better returns in proportion to the food consumed than hens.
It does not pay to plant crops in the peach orchard. Some people do it but we believe it is a bad practice.
The farmer who turns off a good bunch of hogs each year can always get credit at the bank if he wants it.
Your sheep may be suffering with eye trouble without your knowing it. Keep the wool clipped away from the eyes.
Present deeds are the best explanations of past deeds. Time spent in explanations is generally time mispent.
Good strong seed put into a fine but firm seed bed, with all weeds eliminated, are the factors that insure good yields.
Dust in the house of a thrifty, active flock cannot be avoided, but there is no reason for allowing the cobwebs to accumulate.
Small plant pots dry out rapidly. A good way is to place them in boxes of moist sand. The pots should be sunk to the rim.
If you have no sorgum seed of your own, make an effort to obtain a load of some one who has grown a patch for molasses.
Be sure to obtain new plants each fall of the Chinese primrose, as these plants do not bloom so well in the house the second year.
The dairy should have the very best equipment possible, but the first application to pure milk production is common sense cleanliness.
Poultry may often with advantage be kept in the orchard. This makes it possible to engage in poultry keeping on a considerable scale without any cost for land.
Owing to the high prices of poultry it looks as though it will be necessary to put a combination lock with a shotgun attachment on the hen house door this fall.
Those who were anxious to get out of hog raising a couple of years ago are now knocking at the door to get in again. Hog raising, like everything else, has its ups and downs.
Nature never made a greater mistake than when she deposited sand on the surface of certain farms instead of placing it down ten or 15 feet so that it would be out of the way.
A load of sharp sand, or small gravel would be a good investment, and should be obtained before too late; also a pile of crockery for grit, either broken into bits now, or else stored to be broken as needed.
Pure water is essential for the cow's health and for the purity of the milk. Filthy or stagnant water is filled with disease germs destructive to the health of the cow. About 85 per cent of the milk is water. How necessary then that the cow have good, clean water in abundance.
Many farmers are indifferent about their seed corn. They think they are particular, but they have never studied the subject thoroughly enough to get right down to bottom principles. The difference between an ordinary stand of corn and the best possible stand is very great. There is no great difficulty in the way of selecting good seed corn. Intelligence and care are all that is necessary.
A firm in Ohio has invented a new kind of plow that will stir the soil to a depth of 12 or 16 inches without using any more power than is required to run an ordinary 16-inch plow six or seven inches deep. This firm claims that they have a principle involved in the construction of their "tilling" machine, which makes it possible to absolutely guarantee that this can be done. If such is the case there ought to be a broad outlet for this implement, because farmers generally are coming to believe that it pays to stir the land to a good depth, especially in the fall.

Eat an apple every day.
Put a blanket on the driving horse.
A dirty collar often makes a sore shoulder.
Dairy cows require better shelter than beef animals.
Keep busy—this must be the motto in every poultry yard.
Three leaf or four leaf, the clover is the farmer's lucky plant.
Grain should not be fed to cows oftener than twice a day.
It will cost no more per pound to grow a colt than a calf.
A ration of wheat and corn is beneficial to the fattening turkeys.
Every cellar should be thoroughly whitewashed at least once a year.
Removing a diseased branch at once when discovered will often save the tree.
The horse that shuns whole grain usually has something wrong with his teeth.
If the cows are fed crimson clover hay the cost of the milk will be reduced.
Apply manure to currants, gooseberries, raspberries, etc. Now is a good time.
The longer you keep sheep the more fine, white clover you will have in your pastures.
All animals love variety in their feeding, a change being really equivalent to a larger quantity.
Stables used exclusively for dairy cows should be disinfected frequently by the use of whitewash.
Cattle winter well on a little ration of whole cotton seed and plenty of oat straw or other roughage.
The hands and teats should be kept dry during milking. Moistening the hands with milk is condemned.
Poultry manure, which has been carefully preserved, commands good prices from suburban gardeners.
An orphan lamb may often be given a ewe that has just lost a lamb if the dead lamb is rubbed over the strange lamb.
Hogs are high priced, but so is corn; therefore feeding should be done with as little waste, as if hogs were cheap.
The wool you want is that which is thick and clean. Some sheep bear hairy wool. That never is in favor with dealers.
Keep all your turkeys roosting at home or some one else may feast on the big gobble you are fattening for Thanksgiving.
The old-time pig sty should be banished forever. It has given the hog his reputation for filth—and has no place now on the modern farm.
The roots of the cowpea penetrate rather deeply into the subsoil and enables the plant to feed upon the mineral food that is not readily extracted by other crops.
The great problem of the age is to instill into the minds of young men that there are as good opportunities on the farm for the man of talent as there are elsewhere.
A cow in milk needs more salt than a steer or a dry cow, because milk contains chlorine, one of the constituents of salt. She needs extra salt as a source of this chlorine.
There is much of value written these days about work on the farm which will never benefit some farmers, because they have the notion that they are too busy to read.
In many sections rye is grown for the straw. During the past summer rye straw has brought as good a price in the New York market as timothy hay. When grown for the straw a liberal quantity of seed is sown, from two to two and one-half bushels.
No money invested in hog raising is better spent than that used for portable houses and pens. They make it possible to distribute the brood stock over the farm in clean, fresh quarters, thereby utilizing grass and forage to the largest degree and at the same time reducing the danger of disease to a minimum.
Oats is a crop it pays to get in early, and often one or two weeks' time can be saved by plowing in the fall. Where corn is put in with a lister it is not necessary to harrow the ground in the spring, as the lister will make the soil fine around the seed, and as soon as the corn is planted the cultivator can be put to work and the ground put in fine condition.
Save all the cabbages, whether heads or not; hens dearly love to pick at the leaves and heads. Cabbage is of value for supplying the missing green stuff, chiefly; but it tends to keep the poultry in good health. Turnips are good as an appetizer, and are well worth saving. They should be chopped rather fine and fed raw, or else cooked done, and mixed with the mash, or with table scraps.
The young farmer-forester should be experienced in the art of stimulating the growth of trees in natural groves by cultivation. When we come to think how hard the ground is in some woods it is really strange that trees get enough moisture to support themselves. The difference in the amount of rainfall absorbed by a level plowed field and the hard baked hillside is very great, and it is wonderful how an oak or hickory growing on a hillside ever attains to great height and size.

NATIONAL CAPITAL AFFAIRS

Pester House Clerk About Ancestors



WASHINGTON.—Sir John Courts, Bart, K. C. M. G., K. O. C., C. B., who, as plain James C. Courts serves the United States government in the responsible position of clerk of the House committee on appropriations, has his troubles just like other folks. People are all the time pestering him to death to know if it was his grandfather or his great-grandfather or his great-great-grandfather who used to own about 20,000 acres in Maryland and who presided over the feudal glories of Clean Drinking Manor. And every time he gets through with one of these historic bugs and settles down to work a delegation of home folks from Tennessee drops in on him and demands to know why he accepted from the Emperor of Korea—before that eminent personage was sat upon by the Japanese—the military order of the Setting Moon, third class and wears the undress button that goes with it all the time.

But even these annoying things pale into insignificance beside an incident that happened just the other day. Mr. Courts has his nose in a chaotic appropriation bill and was dictating to four

adding machines all at once when a straight-backed, straight-nosed, white-mustached, white-haired and extremely dignified old gentleman marched in to the committee room. He was looking for his member and as the member wasn't on hand, had turned around to go out again, when he caught sight of Mr. Courts.

There was a moment of tenseness and of pause—a hiatus in other words. And then the old gentleman advanced and cast himself—a perfectly dignified cast—on Mr. Courts' bosom, clutched Mr. Courts' hand, patted Mr. Courts' shoulder and gazed into Mr. Courts' eyes. And as a dozen or so members of the appropriations committee gathered around the old gentleman enveloped his bomb.

"Captain," he said to Mr. Courts. "I am moan than happy to meet you again. I consider this the happiest day of my life, my dear comrade in arms. Well I remember the days when, side by side, knee to knee, we followed the fortunes of that flower of chivalry, that most dashing of cavalry leaders, our idolized chieftain, Gen. J. E. B. Stuart."

Of course it was a case of mistaken identity. Sir John says so himself. But nevertheless it was embarrassing. And he's going to ask for a couple of more assistants, for, with this Clean Drinking Manor story and the Setting Moon button and the Confederate cavalry yara, he's just fairly pestered to death and hasn't time to do his regular work.

Old General Got No Aid from His Aide



GEN. Luke E. Wright, told at a dinner in Washington a war story from Manila.

"There was once upon a time," he began, "a gallant old general. This general, leading a splendid charge in his youth, got a bullet in his chest and two sabre cuts across the head. In after life, relating over the nuts and wine his many battles, it was this particular charge that he always described most flamboyantly.

"The older the general grew the more splendid the charge became; the more awful was the slaughter that he visited upon the enemy; the more horrible were the wounds that he received. For corroboration he would always turn to a grizzled veteran on his left, his aide-de-camp. The aide-de-camp would nod his gray head in acquiescence silently.

"Taller and taller grew the general's stories of the charge. Higher and higher grew the mound of enemies slain by his sword. More and more numerous became the bullets, thrusts and slashes sustained by himself. At the end he always appealed to the grizzled aide; and in silence the aid nodded confirmation.

"The general one night gave a large dinner party. The wine was no less abundant than superb, and at dessert the old warrior let himself out upon the charge as he had never heretofore done. Four horses were killed under him. Three lances passed through his right arm, five through his left. Nine sabres crashed down upon his head simultaneously. The bodies of his slain formed a wall wellnigh impassable about him. And it seemed that there was hardly a muscle in his person wherein a bullet failed to imbed itself.

"You remember all this, don't you, De Courcy?" he said, in conclusion.

"The silent and long suffering aide at last spoke up.

"No, general," he shouted, in a loud, indignant voice. "No, of course I don't remember it. How can you expect me to? You know as well as I do that the cannon ball that killed your fourth horse struck the breastplate of a cuirassier behind us and then bounded back and took my head off!"

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Plans Homegoing of Irishmen in 1910



FIFTEEN years ago Francis J. Kilkenny arrived in this country from Ireland. He was so green that he mistook a Fourth of July celebration as a reception to himself. Young Kilkenny had relatives and friends in Milwaukee and Chicago and he made for the middle west soon after his landing. He had a fund of native wit and an abundance of energy and pluck. He got a job cutting grass and soon came under the notice of Charles G. Dawes. When Mr. Dawes came to Washington as controller of the currency he brought Kilkenny along as his private secretary. When Dawes retired from the controllership his successor found he couldn't get along without Kilkenny. Mr. Ridgely succeeded as controller by Lawrence O. Murray and that official has retained Kilkenny who has now become one of the institutions of the treasury department.

Young Kilkenny is making remarkable headway with a movement for the "home-going" of Irishmen in 1910.

The plan is to induce the Irish people from all over the United States to return to their native land during the months of July, August and September. It is proposed that the various Irish organizations, notably the A. O. H. and the Gaelic league shall take up the movement and carry it through. Kilkenny does not claim personal originality for the idea but he gave it initial impetus and has taken upon himself the burden of interesting Irish societies in the plan.

More than a sentimental purpose animates those who have undertaken this ambitious task. While the prospect of a visit to the old country, at reduced transportation rates, and in the glory of midsummer, will form a leading incentive, the real purpose of the movement is to stimulate Irish industry. Kilkenny has made several visits to his old home in Ireland and each time has been impressed with the industrial possibilities of the country and the apparent hopelessness of improving conditions without organized effort. He takes the position that the industrial and agricultural resources of Ireland have not been developed to one-tenth of their capacity. Capital is needed to develop them and Kilkenny believes that it will be forthcoming if the Irish people in this country are given an opportunity to see with their own eyes that profitable investments can be made.

Chautauqua Salute, Menace to Health



DR. WILLIAM C. WOODWARD, health officer of the District of Columbia, is in favor of abolishing the only form of athletics indulged in by members and graduates of the Chautauqua literature and reading circle. He says that the Chautauqua salute is a menace to health.

The salute, as all Chautauquans know, is a waving of the handkerchief when friends make a bit on the lecture platform or sail away for distant lands. Everybody waves and everybody is happy provided that one does not overtax his or her energy.

"The custom of waving a handkerchief vigorously in the air," says Dr. Woodward, "is dangerous. Nearly every contagious disease can be communicated in this manner, if the handkerchief is slightly soiled. If the square has just been purchased, or has come straight from the laundry, there is not the slightest danger, but the waving of the handkerchief that has been used even once is harmful.

"When a handkerchief is waved the wind blows the germs from it. Typhoid fever, scarlet fever, tuberculosis, smallpox and chickenpox, measles,

leprosy and diphtheria may be thus spread.

The Chautauqua saluters criticized the health officer's remarks.

"Dr. Woodward does not know what he is talking about," said a young woman. "We never carry soiled handkerchiefs."

A Perfect Stradivarius.
One hears frequent talk of Stradivarius violins, particularly at auctions, but, as a matter of fact, there is only one perfect "Strad" violin in the world, and that is owned by a gentleman of Edinburgh. For it he cheerfully paid \$10,000, and should it ever again be offered for sale it will doubtless command a much higher figure.

As long ago as 1872 Charles Reade, who knew almost as much about violins as he did about literature, valued the instrument at £600, putting the worth of the varnish alone at 2565 sterling. At that time it was owned by Guillaume of Paris, the greatest violin expert of the age, and he kept it until his death in 1875. M. Alard, a wonderful violinist, was the next owner, he paying £1,000 for it. It was at his death that Mr. Crawford, the present owner, purchased it for £2,000.

There is reason for this high valuation, as this is the only instrument that has come down from Stradivarius's own hands in a state of perfect preservation. The ruddy, glowing varnish is as fresh as though put on but a few weeks ago.

Nebraska Directory

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Stated in Cold Figures.
It costs on an average about \$250 to cure an incipient consumptive or to care for an advanced case of tuberculosis until death. If he is left in destitute circumstances without proper attention he will surely infect with his disease at least two other persons, and possibly more. Considering that the average life is worth to society in dollars and cents about \$1,500, the net loss which would accrue to a community by not treating its poor consumptives in proper institutions would be, for each case, including those who are unnecessarily infected, at the very lowest figure, \$4,250. On this basis, if the poor consumptives in the United States who are now sick were segregated from their families, and either kept in institutions until they died, or else cured of their disease, the saving to the country would be the enormous sum of \$1,275,000,000.

The Idea!
The wife of a western man of extremely humble origin, whose fortune had been accumulated within the last few years, recently confided to a friend her intention to enlist the services of a new family physician.

The friend expressed surprise in view of the fact that the physician thus attending the family was generally reputed to be the best in the city.

"Oh, I know all that!" exclaimed the first mentioned woman. "But the idea of his prescribing faxseed tea and mustard plasters for people as rich as we are!"

Taking the Tip.
"Why did Dolly tell his hotel?"
"He wasn't making money fast enough."
"What is he doing now?"
"He's luxuriating in the position of head waiter."

Method in Their Madness.
"Why do so many otherwise clever women write silly letters to men?"
"They're probably making a collection of the answers they get."

HABIT'S CHAIN
Certain Habits Unconsciously Formed and Hard to Break.

An ingenious philosopher estimates that the amount of will power necessary to break a life-long habit would, if it could be transformed, lift a weight of many tons.

It sometimes requires a higher degree of heroism to break the chains of a pernicious habit than to lead a forlorn hope in a bloody battle. A lady writes from an Indiana town:

"From my earliest childhood I was a lover of coffee. Before I was out of my teens I was a miserable dyspeptic, suffering terribly at times with my stomach."

"I was convinced that it was coffee that was causing the trouble and yet I could not deny myself a cup for breakfast. At the age of 36 I was in very poor health, indeed. My sister told me I was in danger of becoming a coffee drunkard."

"But I never could give up drinking coffee for breakfast, although it kept me constantly ill, until I tried Postum. I learned to make it properly according to directions, and now we can hardly do without Postum for breakfast, and care nothing for coffee."

"I am no longer troubled with dyspepsia, do not have spells of suffering with my stomach that used to trouble me so when I drank coffee."

Look in pills for the little book, "The Road to Wellville." "There's a Reason."

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.