

TALES OF YANKEE ENCHANTMENT.

The Permanent Snow Compound.

By Charles Battell Loomis.

(Copyright by the author, Charles Battell Loomis.)

"It is soon sold you may farm for 2 cents as to buy your compound," said Farmer Catlin to the black-haired and unsmiling-looking stranger. He had arrived just at nightfall at the close of a long winter's storm. The fields and trees and fences and roofs were white with snow and the air was cold and clear.

"Why, I've sold quantities of it to fellows down in New York, who are going to use it to make toboggan slides that'll last all summer."

"Well, people in the city may have time for such foolishness, but what in tarnation do you suppose I want my farm buried under three feet of snow the year round for summer season's short enough as this."

"But what, Mr. Catlin, you wouldn't have to work so hard."

"And we'd live on the snow I'd stop. Snow pudd'n and ice cream," said the old man sarcastically.

"And we could go sleigh riding when the weather was so warm that we'd wear just a shirt and trousers. Wouldn't that be dandy?" said Brainerd.

"Well, it's out of the question. I ain't got to buy your compound an' I ain't got no use foolish in all Squash Armoire to do such a thing. How much is it?"

"Only \$5 a quart and a quart will sprinkle an acre, besides which I donate a beautiful nickel-plated machine for distributing it."

"Say, young man," said Mr. Catlin, suddenly. "I think you're dealin' in unlawful goods an' ef they ain't they ought to be \$5000 a piece you strike some mischievous fellow that had a grudge ag'in his neighbor. He'd sprinkle his fields with it while he sleep an' 'twould be winter all the year 'round on that farm. I don't question your being able to do it. Since I see horse cars an' steam I'm prepared for anything, but you don't sell no nothin' of the kind. Good night."

With a little sigh the man slung his bag over his back and left the house. Mr. Catlin went out to the barn to bed down the cattle and the boys followed the stranger.

"Say, do you sell that in small quantities?" asked Bernard.

"Don't like to open a can. You see a quart will last a life time, so you only have to buy the first expense. Your father's got the wrong idea. I don't want to cover up his potato fields with snow the year round, but if he has a hill that ain't worth cultivating and sprinkles it with this powder you boys can coat all summer long and he can keep his milk and butter cool and comfortable without any need of ice."

"With we could see the thing work," said Bernard with caution. "Course such weather as this snow is going to stay any way, but how do we know it would stay when a thaw comes?"

"That's so," echoed Brainerd.

"Easy proved," said the stranger with a smile. "I'll build a little fire here out of some pine cones if you boys'll get 'em and I'll sprinkle a little of the powder on some snow and you can make snow balls that'll be good to play croquet with next August."

"Won't they melt?" asked Brainerd.

"If you can melt 'em I'll give you my whole outfit."

A bonfire in the snow always appeals to a boy and they soon collected about a hundred cones from a tree near at hand. Then the stranger built a little pyramid of them, poured some kerosene oil on them from a tin can that he carried in the pocket of his ulster and touching a match to it had a blaze in a few seconds.

The brick-red blaze lighted up the snow and made it sparkle with a million diamonds, but the boys were too interested in watching the further progress of the stranger to notice the beauty of the scene. He took a little water sprinkler out of his pocket and filled it with some of the powder. Then he dusted the snow with it for the space of a yard square.

"Now make snow balls boys and put them into the fire."

The boys got to work and fashioned big, round snow balls, patting them into shape and hardening them by a pressure of the knees. When a dozen had been made the stranger said, "Now dump them in the fire."

The boys did so and were not at all surprised to see them roast the heat, for they had perfect confidence in the stranger. After they had been in the bed of coals for five minutes the stranger kicked them out of the fire, although they were somewhat smoked, they were otherwise just as good as when put in.

"Now, you see that my compound does just what I claimed for it. You'd better buy a quart. Haven't you any money laid by for a rainy day?"

of hard snow, while all around the grass was fresh and green, owing to its winter blanket just removed, they came out, too young and old, bringing sleds and trawls and anything on which they could coast.

And from that time until people got tired of the sport, which wasn't until late in September, that hill was alive with coasting parties when the mercury was up in the hundreds and stored ice melted like heated butter.

But the pathway of three foot snow in the Catlins' front yard was a good deal of an eyesore to the old people and at last they covered it with dirt and planted grass seed on it and named their place "The Embankment," and took summer boarders on the strength of it, and now Mr. Catlin believes the day the stranger sold the boys the wonderful compound.

"Whittling as a recreation. Said to be a healthful relaxation for people who flock southward during the winter as a relief from the cares at home take on some new and strange occupations. At present the passion is for whittling. In fact, it is the amusement of the hour of the banker, the merchant and the tired-out millionaire. But it is not the same aimless chipping away of a stick that delights the school boy; very pretty things are made by these great designers, paper cutters being the most general.

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"THE MAN WITH THE HOE." Three Poems Awarded Prizes by a Competent Committee. In July last a New Yorker criticized Edward Markham's poem "The Man with the Hoe" and authorized the New York Sun to offer \$750 for the three best poems on the theme suggested by Markham. Of this sum \$400 was to go to the first, \$200 to the second and \$150 to the third. Nearly 1,000 manuscripts were submitted to a committee consisting of Thomas Bailey Aldrich and Edmund Clarence Steadman. The prizes were awarded to the following three poems, naming them in the order of their estimated distinction:

The Man with the Hoe. (A Reply to Edwin Markham.) By John Vanne Cheney, Chicago.

"Let us a little permit Nature to take her own way; let better things than her own affairs than we."—Montaigne.

Nature reads not our labels, "great" and "small"; Accents the one and all. Who, striving, win and hold the vacant All are of rural race.

Him, there, rough-cast, with rigid arm and limb, The Mother moulded him. Of his rude realm ruler and demigod, Lord of the rock and chid.

With Nature is no "better" and no "worse," On this bare head no curse. Humble! It is and bowed; so is he crowned Whose kingdom is the ground.

Diverse the burdens on the one stern road Where bears each back his load. Varied the toil, but neither high nor low, With pen or sword or hoe.

He that has put out strength, lo, he is strong; Of him with spade or song Nature but questions—"This one, shall he stay?" She answers "Yea" or "Nay."

"Well, ill he digs, he sings," and he bides on, Or shoulders, and is gone. Strength shall he have, the toiler, strength and grace. So fitted to his place.

As he leaned, there, an oak where sea winds blow; Our brother with the hoe. No blot, no monster, no unsightly thing, The soil's long-lineaged king;

His changeless realm, he knows it and commands; Erect enough he stands, Tall as his toil. Nor does he bow unblest; Labor he has, and rest.

Need was, need is, and need will ever be For him and such as he; Cast for the gap, with gnarled arm and limb, The Mother moulded him.

Long wrought, and moulded him with Mother's care. Before she set him there. And eye she gives him, mindful of her own, Peace of the plant, the stone;

Yea, since above his work he may not rise, She makes the field his skies; See! she that bore him, and metes out the lot. He serves her. Vex him not.

To scorn the rock whence he was hewn, And what was dug from it; Let he no more in native virtue stand, The earth-sword in his hand.

But follow sorry phantoms to and fro, And let a kingdom go. The Incapable. By Hamilton Schuyler, Orange, N. J.

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It is in his gaze, his countenance, his mien, while behind his forehead, his brow forever glows. The mocking ghost of what he might have been.

Here, where men toil and eat the fruit of it. He idly stands apart the whole day through.

Here, in a land of ceaseless work and toil, His hand and brain can find him naught to do.

No sweat of manly effort damps his brow; In workshop, field or mart he hath no place.

To earn his daily bread he knows not how, Or scornful, counts the offered measure—disgrace.

The proud to die yet not too proud to eat. The bread of strangers to his face and name. Humble, he wanders with uncertain foot. Of thrift the scorn, of fate the idle game.

What though he wear the hall mark of the schools, A weakling in the world, he stands content. For lack of will to use the number tools. He walks the earth a byword and a jest.

The precious promise of his youthful years, All unfulfilled, upon his manhood waits. He wakes to his shame with bitter tears And knows himself to be the thing he hates.

Inevitable! His destiny we spell In logic of inexorable fact. At naught may his uncurbed hand excel: The curse of Reuben blasts his every act.

The ploughman whistles blithely as he goes And turns upon the world no coward face. In joy he reaps that which in hope he sows, Nor bows his head to aught but Heaven's grace.

The craftsman, too, rejoices in the thing To fashion which his cunning hand was taught. Of want he feels not fears the bitter sting. In manhood's strength his destiny is wrought.

But this one—futile, hopeless, crushed to earth. A prey forever to forebodings grim, Well may he curse the day that gave him birth. And summon God and Man to pity him.

Work—Let the anvil clang! Work—Let us sew the seam! Let us bind the girth of the mighty earth With the muscles of our looms!

Sing as the wheels spin round, Laugh at the red sparks' flight, As fire will dash from the sledge's clash Till all the land is light!

Over the desert's waste We measure the miles of chain Till the Steam King roars from both the shores And rends the hills in twain.

We search in the ocean's bed, And prize where the mermaid buried, And we stretch a wire like a line of fire To signal through the world!

You with your lips crowned And kingdoms of crumbling clay, You with gold in its yellow mould Rotting your lives away,

Sleep when the day goes by, And the sweat of the hand that ploughs the land Are gone that you cannot buy!

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Sing as the wheels spin round, Laugh at the red sparks' flight, As fire will dash from the sledge's clash Till all the land is light!



TESTS PATIENCE!

Nothing spoils a good disposition. Nothing taxes a man's patience, Like any itchiness of the skin, Itching Piles almost drive you crazy, Makes you miserable all day, Keeps you awake all night, Just the same with eczema Or any itching skin disease.

No need to suffer longer, Doan's Ointment will cure you. Plenty of testimony to prove it. Read this case in Omaha:

Mr. James Grace, lineman for the Thompson-Houston Electric Light Co., living at 207 N. 17th street, says: "If everybody receives as much