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*"Go to the ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways and be wise."—Bible.*

How strange that so many people, who should be far superior to the ant, go through life with no sense of saving for the future. If you are not "wise" yet, start now!

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**BEN AND MARY**  
 By LAWRENCE ALFRED CLAY  
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It began the day Mary Lester was nine years old and Ben Holmes was ten. He overtook her on her way to the little country schoolhouse, whither he was also bound. They were son and daughter of farmers.

They did not say much to each other on that mile walk. He had a stick of "real store gum" which he divided with her, and she said that if she ever broke her new slate pencil she would give him half of it. There might have been no love but for the red-headed boy who snatched her half-eaten apple away at the noon hour. She burst into tears over it, and Ben Holmes sailed into the offender and forced his head into a snowdrift. From that moment on, she was the vine and he the oak.

During four winter terms Ben Holmes and Mary Lester walked to school together, and when the snow was deep he carried her over the worst places on his back. They felt themselves "engaged" from the day he licked the red-headed boy. They used to discuss marriage in the most sober manner. It was years ahead of them, of course, but if any one had told them that their minds might undergo a change they would have been astonished.

When Mary was 13 she was sent away to stay with an aunt and attend a higher school. Ben had to take his place at farm work. They wrote each other every week, and the boy soon discovered that the girl was getting ahead of him. He spent his evenings catching up. He became his own teacher and added much to his store of knowledge.

At 15, when Mary came home, he saw a great change in her, but she could see very little in him. Higher education hadn't changed her so much, but mingling with the world had. She had a certain assurance and polish that Ben regarded with dismay. She chided him; she corrected him; she criticised him. Her three months at home brought little pleasure to him, and when she went away again for another long stay he felt that he had lost her. A few letters passed, and then they dropped out of each other's lives. It has been so thousands of times.

If plowing, sowing, planting and reaping makes a clodhopper, then Ben Holmes became one. He had freckles and sunburns and frostbites and calloused hands. If Mary Lester came home for a few weeks and he called at the house, he was overpowered. Night after night he had studied to improve while others slept, and yet she had soared above him. She held him at a distance; she wouldn't talk of school days; she smiled at his awkwardness.

It came to Ben at last that he must give it up. They called him a smart young man, but he realized that there was something that must go with education.

He could not quench his love for the girl he had fought for and carried on his back and built play-houses for. He carried it with him every day, but at the same time he recognized the hopelessness of it.

"Mary's home for good, I guess" announced his mother one evening as Ben sat bent over a book.

He had heard so three days before, but had said nothing.

"She's brought one of her girl chums with her."

He had heard that, too.

"And they say, Ben—they say that a young feller arrived to-day who's going to marry her. He's come to see her father about it. Polly Davis saw him as he drove up to the house, and she says he is slick as a button. Wears an overcoat trimmed with fur, and is rich. She says he will be a great match."

Ben had been preparing himself for the blow, but it came with stunning force after all. The letters in the book turned upside down, and he found his teeth shut hard.

"Polly says they are all going sliding down-hill this evening," continued the mother. "The hill road is as slippery as ice, and Jabez Turner has lent them his big sled and his oxen to draw it back up hill. It's about time for 'em to be at it now. Why don't you go and see the fun?"

The mother didn't know the son. She thought the past was the past with him. Nothing told her that at that very moment his love was burning more fiercely than ever. Go to join the party? Go even to see them from a distance? Not for all the money in the world. He looked at his mother in astonishment as she suggested it. And, yet, ten minutes later, he laid aside his book, put on his overcoat and left the house.

The hill was down the road; he meant to walk in the opposite direction, but he didn't. He turned down the road. He did not mean to descend the hill by the footpath to the railroad tracks running along the valley, but he did that same thing. He did not mean to walk west to where the vehicles coming down the long and winding hill crossed the tracks, but he reached it just as the sled was being drawn up again after its first flight. There were half a dozen young people, and he could hear their talk and laughter. Mary Lester seemed happiest of all.

Ben said to himself that he would go home now, but he didn't go. It was blow upon blow to know that Mary and her lover were there, and yet he would wait and get a nearer view of

them. The prisoner who realizes that his case is hopeless is relieved when the judge pronounces sentence. Ben walked a hundred feet up the hill and sat down behind a stump. When the sled came along he could see and not be seen. Ten minutes later the distant shouts warned him that the descent had begun. Then another sound struck his ears. It was the heavy rumble of an approaching freight train. The sled might cross the tracks ahead of it, or it might fall by a few seconds. At best it was running a fearful risk.

Two hundred feet above the watching man the sled suddenly shot into view, and its half dozen occupants were shouting and laughing. Then came the hoarse shriek of a locomotive. They were higher up and could better see their danger. They began jumping off, and Ben noticed that the first one to go was a man. The last one left was Mary Lester! She was on her knees with her hands over her face. There were only seconds in which to act. Even if Ben could leap upon the sled there would be no time to control it, nor yet to seize the girl and leap off. The long train was thundering up. There was only one thing to do.

The girl did not see it done, but the engineer did. In the moonlight he saw the sled and knew that it must strike the middle of his train and be ground to splinters. Those on the road above did not see it. Their eyes were open, but they were blinded by the coming horror.

From behind the stump a human body shot out on the roadway just a second ahead of the sled and the praying girl. One runner passed over it. It was meant that this should happen. As the runner rose the course of the sled was deflected and it turned to the left and ran parallel with the rails until it struck a stone and overturned with a crash.

It was days after that night that Ben opened his eyes to recognize those about his bedside. There were broken bones and bad bruises.

"Did I save Mary?" he asked his mother.

"Yes," she answered, "but don't talk now."

He had saved her for another, but even if that were so he felt a gladness in his heart and shut his eyes and slept. It was weeks before they would tell him all, and even then it was some one else who told the tale. It was Mary Lester herself. One of her arms was still in splints and she limped a bit, but there was a glad smile on her face as she stood beside his chair and said:

"Ben, dear Ben! He is a gentleman, and he was the first to jump! You are only a clodhopper, and yet you offered your life to save mine. Get well, Ben, because you know that old engagement holds good yet!"

**The Delightful Limelight Man.**  
 Forbes Robertson at a dinner praised the American critical sense.

"But," he said, sighing, "isn't your criticism in its clarity and directness too cruel sometimes?"

"I remember a brother actor who played one night in a small western town. At the climax of the third act of his play the limelight was always thrown upon him. In this town, however, the limelight man shot the light nine or ten feet to the left, and it was from the blackest shadow that my friend had to make his best speech.

"Naturally, at the end of the act he indignantly asked the limelight man why the deuce the light hadn't been thrown where it belonged.

"Fly in the way," the limelight man answered, biting a chew from a plug of tobacco.

"Why didn't you move the fly, then?" shouted my friend.

"The limelight man rolled his tobacco to the other cheek, looked at my friend dreamily and drawled, as he turned on his heel:

"If ye could act, I guess ye wouldn't want no limelight."

**Gods of the Pueblo Indian.**  
 The religions of the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico and Arizona embody a complex mythology in which a very large number of gods have part. In the sacred dances of the Indians these various deities are impersonated by men wearing masks and costumes, each peculiar to the particular god impersonated, and the details of which are rigidly adhered to year after year and generation after generation. To perpetuate the religion it is needful of course, that instruction in the character and attributes of the divinities be given to the children of the tribe; and to enable the young minds to grasp the intricacies of the study, small images of the gods are made of wood, painted and dressed in every detail just as the masked dancers are dressed who represent the same gods in the religious ceremonies.—Wide World Magazine.

**Forming of Winds.**  
 Points on the surface of the earth near the poles have a less rapid linear or circumferential velocity than points situated nearer the equator. Air, therefore, which leaves a position in a higher latitude having the velocity of the earth at that point and flows toward the equator where the earth's surface has a greater linear velocity, is apparently left behind by the more rapidly moving earth as it turns from west to east and the wind draws accordingly more and more from the east to the west, forming the north-east trades in the north latitude and the south-east trades in the south latitude. This is the general circulation of the winds on the surface of the earth, from east to west in the tropics, both north and south of the equator, and from west to east in high latitudes.

**Nuff Sed**

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