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He Didn't Fit

By OSCAR COX

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Billy Burton was the son of a well to do merchant in the east. When a boy Billy showed predilections for a wild life and when he was fifteen ran away from home. He was gone several years before he was heard from and then wrote his father that he was in New Mexico earning a living as a cowboy.

This was something of a relief—both the hearing from him and his assurance that he was at least earning an honest living. His father had dreaded lest he had been hanged and his mother lest he had slept out on damp ground and caught his death of cold. His father secured a correspondent in the region where Billy punched cows and paid a man to go over and see what kind of record the boy had behind him. The reply was favorable, and Billy was invited to come home on a visit. He accepted.

"Oh, Billy," cried his mother, "how could you leave us all this while without a word?"

"Heckon I've got a live wire in me somewhere, mummy."

"Oh, he's all right," said the father. "Time enough yet to polish him up. How old are you, Bill?"

"Twenty."

"But you don't know anything," sighed the mother. "You've not been to school."

"I was all right for schooling when I ran away."

"He's got something better than advanced education—splendid health," said the father.

Mr. Burton tried to induce his son to leave his business and take his place, but Billy said that he would wreck the concern. His father insisted, and his mother begged. So Billy agreed to try. He started in, but he didn't enjoy the work. The walls of the building inclosing him were too narrow for him.

One day Billy met a man on the street that he had supposed was in jail out in New Mexico. Accosting him, he said:

"Hello, Pete! When did you get out?"

The man looked at Billy sharply. "When did you get out?" he asked.

"Oh, I?" Billy replied, taking notice that the man had mistaken him for one of his prison mates. "I broke jail some time ago."

"Must 'a' brought a lot o' swag with you, seen't the fine clothes you got on?"

"Fine clothes are lying around loose in this country for those who can keep out of jail."

"Say," said the man in a whisper, "I'm lookin' for a crib to crack. Can you put me on to one dead easy?"

"Sure!" replied Billy. "I'm going to try one myself tonight. I'll take you in for half the plunder. I know all about the people. I got a room there myself. What I want is some feller for me to let in and carry off the swag. Are you with me?"

"You bet! I'm awful down at the heel. Haven't had a bite since yesterday."

"Very well. You come to No. 308 Center street tonight. Fine house, rich people. You'll find the front door unhooked. Strike it about 1 in the morning. Have a cart two doors away to carry the silt."

And so it was arranged. That night Billy sat up reading till after 12 o'clock, then switched off the electric light and waited. He had left the front door unlatched for Pete and felt no doubt that he would turn up. Sure enough, a few minutes after the clock had struck 1 Billy heard steps below. Going down softly, he heard a movement in the dining room and saw the flash of a dark lantern on the sideboard. Then he saw Pete pull out a drawer where he doubtless expected to find silver.

Billy switched on the light for the whole floor. Pete turned toward him and saw his pat covering him with a revolver.

"What's it mean?" asked Pete, agast.

"It means that I've got you where you once thought you had me. Do you remember the kid you tried to swear away for a horse thief? I'm that boy five years older. I'm glad of a chance to get even. Put your revolver on the table. That's all right. Any more? Got a wagon outside? Glad you brought it. Walk out and we'll take a drive to the police station."

Billy landed his man and went home and to bed.

The next morning he was awakened by a scream below. Running downstairs, he found his mother, who had gone early to wake the servant, looking with horror at Pete's revolver lying on the dining table.

"Oh, my boy," she cried, "the house has been robbed! Look what they left! It's a wonder we haven't all been murdered."

Billy looked at the revolver he had forgotten to remove the night before and cursed himself for a fool. He knew that his mother would never sleep serenely again if he didn't explain. So he confessed his part in the transaction.

"Oh, Billy," she cried, "How did you dare expose your poor father and mother to such a danger?"

"Danger! Just think, mummy, how dead easy it was for me to get even with a man who once came near hanging me!"

After a conference with his wife Mr. Burton concluded to set his son up as a rancher in New Mexico. Billy wasn't considered quite safe.

THIS YEAR'S CONVENTIONS.

May —, Cincinnati, Ohio, Tin Plate Workers' International Protective Association.

May 11, Cincinnati, Ohio, American Federation of Musicians.

May 23, Buffalo, N. Y., National Print Cutters' Association of America.

June 6, Chicago, Ill., International Association of Marble Workers.

June 13, St. Louis, Mo., International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Ship Builders, and Helpers.

June 13-19, Omaha, Neb., International Stereotypers and Electrotypers Union of North America.

June 13, New York, N. Y., International Brotherhood of Tip Printers.

June 13, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, International Brotherhood of Bookbinders.

June, third week, Columbus, Ohio, International Printing Pressmen and Assistants' Union of North America.

June 27, St. Louis, Mo., International Union of Pavers, Rammermen, Lagers, Bridge and Stone Curb Setters.

June —, Kansas City, Mo., International Journeymen Hoeshoers' Union.

July 4, not decided as to place, amalgamated Leather Workers' Union of America.

July 11, New York, N. Y., International Longshoremen's Association.

July 11, Pittsburgh, Pa., International Jewelry Workers' Union of America.

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July 11, New York, N. Y., International Longshoremen's Association.

July 11, Atlantic City, N. J., Glass Bottle Blowers' Association of the United States and Canada.

July 11, Washington, D. C., Theatrical Stage Employees' International Alliance.

July 12, Dover, N. J., Stove Mounters and Steel Range Workers' International Union.

July 16, Springfield, Mass., American Wire Weavers' Protection Association.

July 18, Ottawa, Ont., International Steel and Copper Plate Printers' Union.

July —, Atlantic City, N. J., National Brotherhood of Operative Workers.

August 1, Peoria, Ill., International Brotherhood of Teamsters.

August 3, Minneapolis, Minn., International Typographical Union.

August 22, Detroit, Mich., United Garment Workers of America.

September 5-6-7, Chicago, Ill., National Federation of Post Office Clerks.

September 5, Chicago, Ill., International Slate and Tile Roofers of America.

September 5, Boston, Mass., International Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employes.

September 6-10, Louisville, Ky., International Photo-Engravers' Union of North America.

September 6, Bangor, Pa., International Union of Slate Workers.

September 8, Boston Mass., International Spinners' Union.

September 12, Kansas City, Kansas, Coopers' International Union.

September 12, Denver, Colo., International Union of United Brewers Workmen of America.

September 12, Philadelphia, Pa., International Union of Elevator Constructors.

September 12, Streator, Ill., International Brick, Tile and Terra Cotta Workers' Alliance.

September 13, New York, N. Y., American Brotherhood of Cement Workers.

September 19, Des Moines, Iowa, United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America.

September 19, Rochester, N. Y., International Association of Bridge and Structural Iron Workers.

September 21, St. Paul, Minn., Brotherhood of Railroad Freight Handlers.

September 26, Columbus, Ohio, Operative Plasterers' International Association of the United States and Canada.

October 18, New York, N. Y., United Textile Workers of America.

October 18, Detroit, Mich., International Association of Car Workers.

The Supreme Court of the United States has decided the case of the Southwestern Oil Company versus the State of Texas in favor of the state, thus upholding the constitutionality of the Texas law, which fixes a tax of 2 per cent on the gross receipts from the sale of oil, naphtha, etc.

A special convention of the Electrical Workers' International Union, regulars and seceders, is to be held in Binghampton during the early part of May, to confer with the American Federation of Labor arbitrators looking to a settlement of the differences between the two factions.

The Rivals

By DOROTHEA HALE

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The new curate passed down the street. He was a handsome, spic and span young man with cameo features, clean shaven face, immaculate white collar, buttoned, of course, in the clerical style—wrong side before—his only ornament a gold cross dangling over a black waistcoat that covered up every speck of his shirt bosom.

"He's just too lovely for anything."

Had any one heard the voice he would have looked about in vain for the speaker. It came from between the slats of a window blind and belonged to Diana Parker, a young lady member of the church at which the curate officiated. A dozen yards down the street a sash was thrown up just as he passed and a face appeared at the window.

"Good morning, Mr. Meeks."

"Good morning, Miss Dinsmore."

"Pleasant morning."

"Very."

"Are you on your way to the hospital?"

"No; I am going to see old Mrs. Waters. I have heard she's very poorly."

"Dear me, and I haven't been to see her. If you don't mind waiting a few minutes till I get on my hat I'll go with you. I am ashamed at having been so neglectful."

The curate waited, and Miss Diana Parker watched.

"Well, if that doesn't beat anything," she muttered. "It's the brazenest plan to make a catch I ever saw. What does she care for old Mrs. Waters?"

Mr. Meeks went regularly on week day mornings on a round of charitable visits and returned about the same hour in the afternoon. The next morning Miss Parker left her parlor hatted, gloved and a parasol in one hand and a lady's bag in the other, just as Mr. Meeks was passing.

"Why, Mr. Meeks," she exclaimed, "what are you doing out so early?"

"Oh, I always begin my visits at this hour."

"I'm going visiting myself this morning. I was so impressed with your remarks last Sunday evening about our duties to the sick that I resolved to turn over a new leaf. Are you going to the hospital?"

"Not at once. I'm first going to a poor woman whose husband has been sent to jail. She's left to take care of the children while he rests from labor."

By this time the speakers had passed out of the hearing of Miss Dinsmore, who, ready for a walk, had stood behind a curtain at her window waiting for the curate to go by.

"Well, I declare!" she exclaimed. "Did any one ever see such effrontery? I wonder if he thinks the meeting accidental!"

The strategy developed during the next few months on the part of the young ladies was all screened behind slats or curtains, so that the unconscious clergyman never dreamed that he was the point d'appui, as the generals would call it, or under an enfilading fire, as the artilleryists would describe it, of two batteries, each bent on mowing him down. Miss Dinsmore's position being commanded by her enemy, she was constantly seeing the prize captured as he marched out upon his parochial duties. Therefore, having a cousin living a block nearer the church property, she frequently availed herself of the more advantageous position and carried off the curate before he reached the home of her rival.

One morning Mr. Meeks failed to pass down the street at the accustomed hour, and later an ambulance bearing a trained nurse was seen going in the direction of his apartments. Each of the young ladies who had been trying to outwit the other in order to catch him was waiting at her window, and each pined. For a time he would be removed from the machinations of both. Miss Dinsmore hurried out to go the rounds of the parishioners to learn the news. Miss Parker, whose tactics were bolder, went straight to the rectory and asked if any one was ill there. Both young ladies learned that Mr. Meeks was ill at his rooms and would be taken during the day to a hospital to be operated on for appendicitis.

As soon as the curate was out of danger flowers poured in upon him, mainly from the young ladies of the congregation. He was literally bombarded with roses, carnations, pansies and violets. Miss Dinsmore sent an anchor of lilies. Miss Parker, adhering to her aggressive tactics, offered a heart of American Beauties.

Mr. Meeks recovered. Again Miss Parker watched every morning for him to resume his walks past her house on his way to his parochial duties. Miss Dinsmore was thinking of stationing herself at her cousin's window in order to intercept him and offer the first congratulations upon his recovery.

At last the clergyman appeared, pale but even handsomer from his pallor. But, alas for the rivals, he was protected from both—he was in the rector's carriage.

The first time the rivals got near him was at a church soiree. A young woman with marks of character in her face, but of modest appearance, was present there for the first time. She was recognized as the nurse who had taken care of Mr. Meeks at the hospital. He introduced her as his fiancée.

GOOD MR. GOODENOUGH

By M. QUAD.

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Silas Goodenough, a bachelor farmer and an excellent man, concluded he would like to marry the Widow Spicer.

When Silas went courting the widow he very soon found out that he was handicapped. She had a good education, and he had none.

"Mornin', widder!"

"Widow, if you please," she would answer.

"Yes, I meant widder. Horses and cows and sheep and pigs all well?"

"Very well, thank you. Won't you sit down?"

"I-I guess so."

"Widder, I don't believe there's going to be any circus in Brownsville this year."

"No?"

"And I shouldn't wonder if hog cholera broke out."

"No?"

"And I've got three hens a-settin' and expect as many as twenty chicks."

"Yes?"

"And—and they say I'm courtin' you."

"Do they? Well, I didn't know it."

"Neither did I, but I s'pose it's so. Well, I've got to be movin' along. Glad I've seen you, widder."

"Widow, Mr. Goodenough."

"Yes? I allus git 'em mixed."

When this sort of courtship had been going on for several months Silas determined on a desperate deed. He rehearsed it for a week and then tied his team to the widow's hitching post and walked around by the kitchen path to find her feeding the chickens. He just gave her time to nod and then started in with:

"Widder Spicer, I've been lovin' you for years and years, and I want you for a wife. I'll be good to you. You needn't make soft soap nor rag carpets, and if they hold a camp meetin' anywhere within three miles of us we'll drive over and stay three days."

"I couldn't think of it, Mr. Goodenough," was the reply.

"Don't care for me, eh?"

"Not enough to marry you."

"I thought maybe you did, but if you don't I might as well move on. Them geese o' yours are lookin' remarkably well for this time o' year."

"Yes."

"Well, so long. Oh, say, widder, they say that next year is goin' to be a buster of a year for grasshoppers! Hope they won't eat us up here."

Silas Goodenough didn't drive home to commit suicide. He didn't even think of it. He simply thought the Widow Spicer a bit odd that she didn't jump at his offer, and after three days he was all over it. Then came a neighbor who said:

"Silas, I hear that you popped the question to the Widow Spicer and got thrown down?"

"Why, yes, I asked her if she'd have me."

"And she said no."

"That's about it. Maybe she didn't mean it, but I took it that way."

"I guess you took it right enough. She turned you down because Jim Wheeler is courting her. She's in love with him, but I don't think he cares much about her. If she had more property he'd marry her, but as it is I think he's only fooling."

"So you think the widder cares for him?" asked Silas after a moment's thought.

"All the women folks say so."

"And she'd be disappointed if he didn't marry her?"

"Naturally."

"Then Jim orter do it. Yes, he orter. The widder's a mighty nice woman, and it would be too bad to make a fool of her. I must see if I can't do somethin' for her."

The neighbor laughed and left him, and Silas began to think. If he wasn't good at courting he was very fair at thinking. If Jim Wheeler was holding off because the Widow Spicer wasn't a catch financially, why, something must be done. It took him just a fortnight to figure out what that something was to be, and he brought it home in his wagon after a drive of thirty miles. At the back end of the widow's farm was a rocky dell and a spring and a rivulet. When Silas Goodenough had made three midnight trips to that dell, carrying a jug of crude oil each time, the people for a mile around began sniffing the air. When he had made three more they began hunting for coal oil. They found it. It was floating from that spring and oozing up through the rocks around it. There was excitement at once. The widow had scarcely received the first offer for her farm when Jim Wheeler proposed marriage and was accepted. Then he had something to say about the succeeding offers. And after marriage he had all to say.

Men came and looked and investigated and either shook their heads or made cash offers, and Silas saw to it that the supply of oil was kept up. The day after the Spicer farm had been sold for \$10,000 the same neighbor who had interviewed Silas before came sauntering over to say:

"Well, Silas, Jim's got the widow and \$10,000 in cash."

"Glad to hear it," replied the rejected.

"But she threw you down."

"Oh, yes, but she's a mighty nice woman—mighty nice! Mustn't hold such triflin' things as that again 'em, you know. Jim's got her, and she's got Jim, and both of 'em have got \$10,000, and, say, it's mighty nice, ain't it?"

HE STUDIED TOO HARD

By HARRIET L. GEDDES

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After the death of Professor Koopman, one of the most remarkable scientists of Germany, the following manuscript was found among his papers:

Holding the chair of chemistry in the university, all the work of my brain has been devoted to the decomposition and reconstruction of matter. I have long been convinced that we must pass through matter to get at spirit—in other words our medium instead of being a person must be science. Now, by chemical agents we photograph matter which we can see. More than this, we photograph objects we cannot see except by the aid of the telescope. Still more, we photograph objects beyond the range of our vision even assisted by the telescope. Ergo, may we not by the extension of the process at last get a picture of beings existing in spirit form?

This dry scientific preface is but preliminary to the story I have to tell and is essential to its understanding. Ten years ago I married Louisa Markham. Five years ago she died. Since then my scientific studies have run in but one view, to bring her within the sight of my mortal eyes.

The discovery of radium gave a new impulse to my investigations. Radium is the first substance known to exert power without exhausting itself. The steam engine must have coal, the body food. As soon as I heard of radium it struck me that here was a substance akin to spirit, neither requiring fuel. But since radium is matter, reasoning from analogy, spirit may also be matter. We may photograph matter even though invisible. Therefore may we not photograph spirit?

I will not ask you to follow me in my studies of photographic processes. I tried to penetrate the realm of soul. I will only say that I at last discovered a substance which I converted into a plate—hard, rather, laid upon a plate—a hundred times more sensitive than any known form of matter. It was one of many I had tried in making ordinary photographs and failed. But on one occasion while experimenting with it I was called away. On returning several days later I took the plate from the camera, and it occurred to me to develop it.

To assign a reason for this impulse—I had no object of which I was conscious—would be to leave the scientific field and enter that of psychology. I am convinced that I was impelled by one in the spirit world to develop the plate. Such direction given to human thought is very common. I developed my plate—not with the usual agents, but others I had proved by experiment to be far more delicate—and what was my astonishment to see the semblance of human forms. The difference between them and living persons I cannot explain. To get an idea of them they must be seen.

Why these figures had appeared before my camera I do not know. I could never get them again. If they were spirits they had happened to be where they would be photographed.

I pondered long on how I might photograph my wife, provided she was accustomed to frequent places she had been used to frequenting in life. There is a window of her bedroom at which she used to sit and look over a view of rolling ground on which were scattered several of the college buildings. It occurred to me to keep a plate constantly exposed bearing on the chair she had used in this window in the hope that she would come there.

A week's exposure failed to show any impression on the plate. Possibly, I thought, ordinary light is not strong enough for the purpose. I determined to use the strongest light available.

The room faced south, the sun being on it in summer from 8 o'clock in the morning till about 5 in the evening. I rigged a lens—on the principle of the common sunglass—outside the window, throwing a light on the chair composed of the converging rays of the sun. My lens was arranged to turn by clockwork so that the light thrown on the chair would continue irrespective of the sun's apparent motion.

I exposed my plate all one very clear day, but found nothing on it when developed. For five successive days the sun shone brightly. I continued the exposure. After the fifth exposure a faint figure appeared on the plate. A print showed a woman sitting in the chair.

The figure was not distinct enough for me to tell whether or no it was that of my wife. I mourned the imperfection of my materials and sighed that I had none more delicate. I caught the figure at the window several times, but the impression was always blurred. How I longed to produce a picture that would give the features of the face! Doubtless I would then see my wife looking at me as she had often done while sitting in that chair.

Soon after this I changed the basis of my investigations. I laid out a series of experiments at taking pictures with the light of radium. I worked and thought so incessantly that at last my friends interfered, thinking I would break down. They interrupted me, however, just as I had succeeded. I have made a number of photographs of my wife holding out her arms to me and wearing that smile.

(On the day this last paragraph was written Professor Koopman was taken to a sanitarium, where he died.)