

PRUDENCE OF THE PARSONAGE

by
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ILLUSTRATED BY
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MR. STARR, a widower Methodist minister, has been assigned to the congregation at Mount Mark, Iowa. He and his daughter, Prudence—she is nineteen, and the eldest of five girls—have come on ahead to get the new parsonage ready for the younger members of the family. Of course the whole town, especially the Methodists, is throbbing with curiosity about the newcomers. Mrs. Adams, a member of the Ladies Aid society, hurried over to call on Prudence, and nosing around found the girl on her knees praying in the barn. So she began at once to "pump" the girl for all she was worth—it would be great stuff to tell the neighbors—and is still at it.

CHAPTER I—Continued.

But to return to the Ladies—the parsonage girls always capitalized the Ladies of their father's church—"One of us should go and help the dear child," said Mrs. Scott, the president of the Aids, when they assembled for their business meeting, "help her, and welcome her, and advise her."

"I was thinking of going over," said one, and another, and several others.

"Oh, that will not do at all," said the president. "I think in a case like this the president herself should represent the society. Therefore, I will undertake this duty for you."

But this called forth a storm of protest and it became so clamorous that it was unofficially decided to draw cuts! Which was done, and in consequence of that drawing of cuts, Mrs. Adams now sat on the front porch of the old gray parsonage, cheered by the knowledge that every other Lady of the Aid was envying her!

"Now, just be real sociable and tell me all about yourself, and the others, too," urged Mrs. Adams. "I want to know all about every one of you. Tell me everything."

"There isn't much to tell," said Prudence, smiling. "There are five of us; I am the oldest—I am nineteen. Then comes Fairy, then the twins, and then the baby."

"Are the twins boys, or a boy and a girl?"

"Neither," said Prudence, "they are both girls."

"More girls?" gasped Mrs. Adams. "And the baby?"

"She is a girl, too." And Prudence laughed. "In short, we are all girls except father. He couldn't be, of course—or I suppose he would, for our family does seem to run to girls."

"Prudence is a very nice name for a minister's daughter," said Mrs. Adams suggestively.

"Yes—for some ministers' daughters," assented Prudence. "But is sadly unsuitable for me."

Mrs. Adams looked critically at this young daughter of the parsonage. Then her eyes wandered down to her clothes, and lingered, in silent questioning, on Prudence's dress. It was a very peculiar color. In fact, it was no color at all—no named color. Prudence's eyes had followed Mrs. Adams' glance, and she spoke frankly.

"I suppose you're wondering if this dress is any color! Well, I think it really is, but it isn't any of the regular shades. It is my own invention, but I've never named it. Fairy grew up and out and around, and one day when I was so nearly out of clothes I hardly felt I could attend church any more, she suggested that I cut an old one of hers down for me! At first I laughed, and then I was insulted. Fairy is three years younger than I, and before then she had got my hand-downs. But now the tables were turned. From that time on Fairy's clothes were cut down for me. I still feel bitter about it. Fairy is dark, and dark blues are becoming to her. She handed down this dress—it was dark blue then. But I was not wanting a dark blue, and I thought it would be less recognizable if I gave it a contrasting color. I chose lavender. I dyed it four times, and this was the result."

"Do the twins dress alike?" inquired Mrs. Adams, when she could control her voice.

"Yes—unfortunately for Connie. They do it on purpose to escape the hand-downs! They won't even have hair ribbons different. And the result is that poor Connie never gets one new thing except shoes. She says she cannot help thanking the Lord in her prayers that all of us outwear our shoes before we can outgrow them.—Connie is only nine. Fairy is sixteen, and the twins are thirteen. They are a very clever lot of girls."

"And what are you going to do?" inquired Mrs. Adams, looking with real affection at the bright, sweet face. "You ought to go to school. You're just a girl yourself."

"I don't want to go to school," laughed Prudence. "Not any more. I like it, just taking care of father and

the girls—with Fairy to keep me balanced! I read, but I do not like to study.—No, you'll have to get along with me just the way I am, Mrs. Adams. It's all I can do to keep things going now, without spending half the time dreaming of big things to do in the future."

"Don't you have dreams?" gasped Mrs. Adams. "Don't you have dreams of the future? Girl's in books nowadays dream—"

"Yes, I dream," interrupted Prudence. "I dream lots—but it's mostly of what Fairy and others will do when I get them properly raised. You'll like the girls, Mrs. Adams, I know you will. They really are a gifted little bunch—except me, I'm just common little Prudence of the Parsonage—but the others!" And Prudence flung out her hands dramatically.

CHAPTER II.

The Rest of the Family.

It was Saturday morning when the four young parsonage girls arrived in Mount Mark. The elderly Misses Avery, next door, looked out of their windows, pending their appearance on Main street, with interest and concern. They were Episcopalians themselves, and in all their long lives they had never so much as heard of a widower-rector with five daughters and no housekeeper. There was something blood-curdling in the bare idea.

The Misses Avery considered Prudence herself rather a sweet, silly little thing.

"You have some real nice people in the Methodist church," Miss Dora had told her. "I dare say you will find a few of them very likable."

"Oh, I will like them all," said Prudence quickly and seriously.

"Like them all," echoed Miss Dora. "Oh, impossible!"

"Not for us," said Prudence. "We are used to it, you know. When we dislike people at first sight, we visit them, and talk to them, and invite them to the parsonage, and entertain them with our best linen and silverware, and keep on getting friendlier and friendlier, and—first thing you know, we like them fine!"

So the Misses Avery concluded that Prudence was not entirely responsible. And they wondered, with something akin to an agony of fear, if the younger girls "had it, too?" and when Miss Alice cried excitedly, "Quick! Quick! They are coming!" they trooped to Miss Alice's window with a speed that would have done credit to the parsonage girls themselves.

First came the minister, whom they knew very well by this time, and considered quite respectable. He was lively, as was to be expected of a Methodist minister, and told jokes, and laughed at them! Now, a comical rector—oh, a very different matter—it wasn't done, that's all! At any rate, here came the Methodist minister, laughing, and on one side of him tripped a small, earnest-looking maiden, clasping his hand, and gazing alternately up into his face and down at the stylish cement sidewalk beneath her feet. On the other side was Fairy. The Misses Avery knew the girls by name already—having talked much with Prudence.

"Such a Fairy!" gasped Miss Millicent, and the others echoed the gasp but wordlessly.

For Fairy was very nearly as tall as her father, built upon generous lines, rather commanding in appearance, a little splendid-looking. Even from their windows they could discern something distinctly Junolike in this sixteen-year-old girl, with the easy, elastic stride that matched her father's, and the graceful head, well carried. A young goddess—named Fairy!

Behind them, laughing and chattering, like three children, as they were—came the twins with Prudence, each with an arm around her waist. And Prudence was a very little taller than they. When they reached the fence that bordered the parsonage, the scene for a moment resembled a miniature riot. The smaller girls jumped and exclaimed, and clasped their hands. Fairy leaned over the fence, and stared intently at this, their parsonage sister. Then the serious little girl scrambled under the fence, followed closely by the lithe-limbed twins. A pause, a very short one—and then Prudence, too, was wriggling beneath the fence.

"Hold the wire up for me, papa!" cried Fairy. "I'm too fat." And a second later she was running gracefully across the lawn toward the parsonage. The Methodist minister laughed boyishly, and placing his hands on the fence post, he vaulted lightly over, and reached the house with his daughters. Then the Misses Avery, school-teachers and elderly, looked at one another.

"Did you ever?" gasped the oldest Miss Avery, and the others slowly shook their heads.

Now, think! Did you ever see a rector jumping a three-wire fence, and running full speed across his front yard in pursuit of a flying family? It

may possibly have occurred—we have never seen it. Neither had the three Misses Avery. Nor did they ever expect to. And if they had seen it, it is quite likely they would have joined the backsliders at that instant.

But without wasting much time on this gruesome thought, they hurried to a window commanding the best view of the parsonage, and raised it. Then they clustered behind the curtains, and watched and listened. There was plenty to hear! From the parsonage windows came the sound of scampering feet and banging doors. Once there was the unmistakable clatter of a chair overturned. With it all there was a constant chorus of "Oh, look!" "Oh! Oh!" "Oh, how sweet!" "Oh, papa!" "Oh, Prudence!" "Look, Larkie, look at this!"

Then the eldest Miss Avery closed the window overlooking the parsonage and confronted her sisters.

"We must just make the best of it," she said quietly.

But next door the gray old parsonage was full to overflowing with satisfaction and happiness and love. Everyone has experienced the ecstatic, creepy sensation of sleeping in a brand-new home. The parsonage girls reveled in the memory of that first night for many days. "It may be haunted for all we know," cried Carol deliriously. "Just think, Connie, there may be seven ghosts camped on the head of your bed, waiting—"

"Carol!"

When the family gathered for worship on that first Sabbath morning, Mr. Starr said, as he turned the leaves of his well-worn Bible, "I think it would be well for you to help with the morning worship now. When I finish reading the chapter, Connie, you will make the first prayer. Just pray for whatever you wish as you do at night for yourself. I will follow you."

Connie's eyes were wide with responsibility during the reading of the chap-



"Quick! They Are Coming!"

ter, but when she began to speak her voice did not falter. Connie had nine years of good Methodist experience back of her!

"Our Father, who art in heaven, we bow ourselves before thy footstool in humility and reverence. Thou art our God, our Creator, our Savior. Bless us this day, and cause thy face to shine upon us. Blot out our transgressions, pardon our trespasses. Wash us, that we may be whiter than snow. Hide not thy face from the eyes of thy children, turn not upon us in wrath. Pity us, Lord, as we kneel here prostrate before thy majesty and glory. Let the words of our mouths and the judgments of our hearts be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, our strength and our Redeemer. And finally save us, an unbroken family around thy throne in heaven, for Jesus' sake. Amen."

This was followed by an electric silence. Prudence was biting her lips painfully, and counting by tens as fast as she could. Fairy was mentally going over the prayer, sentence by sentence, and attributing each petition to the individual member in the old church at Esplanter to whom it belonged. The twins were a little amazed, and quite proud. Connie was an honor to the parsonage—but they were concerned lest they themselves should not do quite so well when their days came.

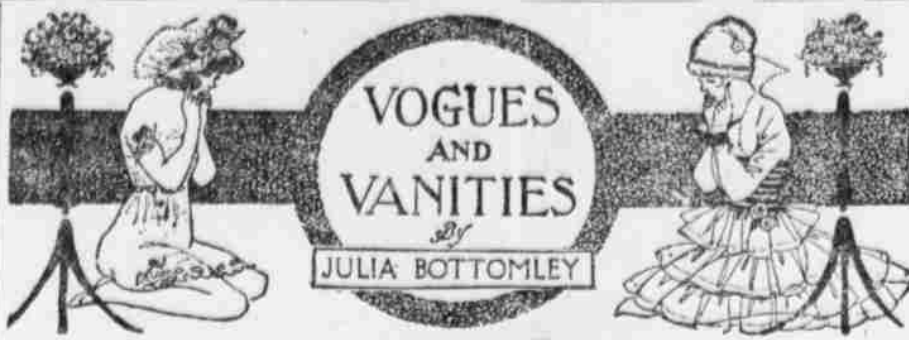
But in less than a moment the minister-father began his prayer. When he said "Amen," Prudence was on her feet and half-way upstairs before the others were fairly risen. Fairy stood gazing intently out of the window for a moment, and then went out to the barn to see if the horse was through eating. Mr. Starr walked gravely and soberly out the front door, and around the house. He ran into Fairy coming out the kitchen door, and they glanced quickly at each other.

"Hurry, papa," she whispered; "you can't hold in much longer! Neither can I!"

And together, choking with laughter, they hurried into the barn and gave full vent to their feelings.

Doesn't it seem that the happy-go-lucky houseful of parsonage girls will win the friendship of the Avery spinsters and tear away the barrier of snobbishness and reserve which hedges them in?

(TO BE CONTINUED.)



Made for Youthful Wearers

The style-wise mannik is busy parading the newest thing in one-piece gowns before the practiced eyes of buyers of ready-made dresses. First, he wonders how she gets into them; next, he wonders why she ever wears anything different, and finally he buys. Shortly you will be doing likewise, for the one-piece frock has made a hit with matron and maid.

The model shown here is designed for a miss who has arrived at the dignity of sixteen years, at least, or progressed somewhat beyond. It may be successfully made of any of the light-weight woolen fabrics, as serge, gabardine, broadcloth, and other weaves. It is very effective made in small black-and-white shepherd's check, and trimmed with black braid instead of embroidery.

This dress looks too simple to need description, and it is simple, but less so than a glance conveys. It has a fitted lining under the waist, which supports the skirt and holds the waist in position.

A plaited and shirred panel is let into the plain, straight-hanging skirt at each side.

The bodice is gathered into a belt and fastens along the shoulder and under arms with snap fasteners. The sleeves are large and gathered at the wrists into a narrow band. The easy turnover collar, faced with white, is of exactly the right character for a frock of this design.

Embroidery in rich colors brightens the bodice, girdle, and sleeves, and a little band of it appears on the panels in the skirt.



When She Goes Bicycling

Clothes exactly suited to their use are sure to possess distinction, because this is one of the elements of good style. Now that everybody goes bicycling, costumers have bent their fertile minds upon togs for the wheel, and have turned out such altogether fetching creations that the sportswoman loves upon them. It is enough to tempt one to live out of doors all the time, when comfort and beauty are combined as they are in sports clothes.

From top to toe the lady who smiles at life in the accompanying picture, is dressed as she should be. Her suit comprises three pieces, knickerbockers, coat, and skirt. She wears golf stockings and low-heeled, broad-toed calfskin shoes. Her hat is close fitting, a smart shape with brim enough to shade the eyes. It is of a light-colored velour, trimmed with a scarf of soft silk.

While on the subject of sports hats a new, rainproof fabric which is double faced merits mention. It looks like a thin-leather on one side and a

sat-in on the other. It is used in hats intended for motoring, or any other sport. Then there are hats crocheted of a patented braid. They are beautiful and comfortable, clinging to the head like a glove to the hand.

The wheel suit shown in the picture is made of serge in shepherd's check, and depends upon bone buttons for its decoration. The coat is made with a sat-in bit of the material, and is provided with patch pockets. The wide sailor collar is faced with satin. Plain coatsleeves are finished with deep cuffs with a pointed turned-back flap at the top fastened down with a button. The knickers are just plain knickers, with nothing to distinguish them from any others. The skirt is perfectly plain, fits smoothly about the hips, and is just full enough to allow a comfortable stride. When the fair bicyclist abandons her wheel to walk, take tea, or otherwise disport herself, she may fasten it at the front, for it is furnished with buttons and button-holes for that purpose.

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Gently cleanse your liver and sluggish bowels while you sleep.

Get a 10-cent box. Sick headache, biliousness, dizziness, coated tongue, foul taste and foul breath—always trace them to torpid liver; delayed, fermenting food in the bowels or sour, gassy stomach.

Poisonous matter clogged in the intestines, instead of being cast out of the system is re-absorbed into the blood. When this poison reaches the delicate brain tissue it causes congestion and that dull, throbbing, sickening headache.

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Woman Soldier Lived to Be 108.

There is a tombstone in St. Nicholas' churchyard, Brighton, to a woman soldier. It is erected to the memory of Phoebe Hessel, who was born in Stepeny in the year 1713, and states:

"She served for many years as a private soldier in the Fifth Regiment of Foot in different parts of Europe, and in the year 1754 fought under the command of the duke of Cumberland at the battle of Fontenoy, where she received a bayonet wound in the arm. Her long life, which commenced in the time of Queen Anne, extended to the reign of George IV, by whose munificence she received comfort and support in her last years. She died at Brighton, where she had long resided, December 12, 1821, aged one hundred and eight years."

No Precaution Neglected.

The little son of a clergyman recently appeared at breakfast with distinct evidences of a hastily made toilet.

"Why, Edmund," his mother remonstrated, "I believe you forgot to brush your hair!"

"I was in such a hurry to get to school," he explained.

"I hope you didn't forget to say your prayers?" she asked anxiously.

"No, sirree!" was the emphatic assurance; "that's one thing I never forget. Safety first!"—Harper's Magazine.

Contrary Methods.

"How are you going to learn to drive your motor car?"

"I am going to employ a coach."

Before Drinking Coffee, You Should Consider Whether Or Not It Is Harmful

"There's a Reason" for

POSTUM