

# HAPPY HOUSE

By Jane D. Abbott

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"A knock at the door saved Nancy from an answer."

"It was old Noah, the porter. He held a letter in his hand."

"It's for Mrs. Anne Leavitt and I'm blessed if I know which one of you, I see, I'll just take it to the two of you and let you toss up for it!"

It was not unusual for the two girls to find their mail confused. They generally distinguished by the handwriting or the postmarks. But now they both stared at the letter they took from Noah's hand.

It was addressed in a fine, old-fashioned hand writing.

"I can't recognize it," exclaimed one Anne Leavitt.

"I'm sure I never saw it before!" cried the other.

"Isn't this exciting? Let me see the postmark. P-r-e-e-d-o-m!" spelled Nancy. "I never heard of it," she declared.

"I believe it's mine! I have some relatives—or did have—a great aunt or something, who lived near a place like that way up on North Hero Island. I'd forgotten all about them. Open it, Claire, and let's see what it is."

"You never told us about any aunt on any North Hero Island? It sounds like a romance, Anne," accused Nancy, who thought she knew everything about her friend.

Anne laughed. "I don't wonder you think so. I just barely remember father speaking of her. Read it, Claire!"

Claire had seized the letter and opened it. "It is signed 'Your loving aunt.' Isn't it the most ridiculous mystery? Why couldn't it have been something else besides an aunt?"

"Well, I'm awfully afraid it is for me. We never could both have aunts on North Hero Island. Go on, blessed child—I'm prepared for the worst!"

Claire rose dramatically. "My dear Niece," she read, adding: "I want you to know, Anne, that she honors you by spelling that with a capital."

"Of late years it has been a matter of deep regret to me that though the same blood runs in our veins we are like strangers, and that you have been allowed to grow to womanhood without knowing the home of your forefathers on this historic island. It is for that reason that now, after considerable debate with my conscience, I am writing to you at your college address which I have obtained through a chance article in an Albany newspaper ('that was the Senior Play writeup,' interrupted Nancy, excitedly) to urge you to avail yourself of the earliest opportunity to visit me in the old home."

"I feel the burden and responsibility of my increasing years, and I know that soon I will be called to that land where our forefathers have gone before us. You are, I believe, my nearest of kin—the family, as you must know, is dying out and I would have preferred that you had been a boy—I will tell you frankly that I am considering changing my will and that upon your visit depends whether or not you will be my beneficiary. I would wish to leave the home and my worldly wealth—the wealth of the past Leavitts, to a Leavitt, but before I can do so to the satisfaction of my own conscience, I must know that you are a Leavitt and that you have been brought up with a true knowledge and respect for what being a Leavitt demands of you."

"I await your reply with anxiety. Your visit will give me pleasure and I assure you that you will learn to love the spot on which, for so many generations, your ancestors have lived."

"Your loving aunt," "Sabrina Leavitt."

"Well, I'll be— In all her college vocabulary Anne could not find a word to express her feelings."

"Isn't that rapturous? A great aunt and a fortune! And will you please tell me why she had to debate with her conscience?" cried Claire.

Nancy was gleeful over Anne's wrath.

"I'm glad she's yours, Annie darling! Dad always said the whole world was my only kin, but I never ran against anyone who wanted to look me over before she left me a fortune! Who

ever heard of North Hero Island and where in goodness is it?"

"I remember, now, that her name was awfully queer—Aunt Sa-something or other, and North Hero Island isn't utterly unknown, Nancy, to the can't even remember! I wish it had happened to Lake Champlain. I saw it once on a road-map when I was touring last fall with Professor and Mrs. Scott, and Professor Scott said it was a locality picturesquely historic—I remember."

Claire turned the letter over and over.

"I think it's all awfully thrilling! An aunt you can't even remember! I wish it had happened to me! It would be something so different. It's just like a story. But what a lot she does think of her forefathers!"

"Well, the Leavitts are a very old family and they are a New England family, too, although I was born in California," interrupted Anne with a dignity that would have gladdened the great aunt's heart.

Nancy was again provoked to merriment.

"Dad always said that the only other Leavitt he knew was a cow puncher! He could lick anyone on the plains."

Anne ignored this. She was frowning in deep thought.

"The tiresome part is that—if I don't go—if I tell her about going to Russia—she may write to my guardian!"

All three were struck dumb at the thought. Anne had not consulted her guardian before she had impulsively enlisted her services in Madame Breshkovsky's cause. Because she was three months past 21, legally he could not interfere, but being so newly of age she had not had the courage to meet his protest. So she had simply written that she was planning a long trip with friends and would tell him of the details when they had been completed. A letter lay now in her desk which she intended to mail the day before she sailed. It would be too late, then, for him to interfere. If her conscience troubled her a little about this plan, she told herself that the cause justified her action.

And now this Aunt Sa-something might upset everything!

"I wish I could remember more about those relatives up there—father and mother used to laugh whenever they mentioned the old place. I always imagined they were dreadfully poor! She must be a terrible old lady—you can sort of tell by the tone of her letter. Oh, dear!"

"What will you do?" echoed Claire, still thinking it a much more attractive adventure than Russia.

"I have it!" cried Anne. "You shall go in my place, Nancy!"

"I! I should say not! Are you stark crazy, Anne Leavitt?"

Anne seized her excitedly by the shoulder. "You could do it as easy as anything in the world, Nancy. She's never laid eyes on me and I know my father never wrote to her. You'll only have to go there for three or four weeks—"

"And pose as a real Leavitt when I'm a Leavitt that just belongs to Dad! Well, I won't do it!" replied Nancy, stubbornly.

"Nancy, please listen! You wouldn't have to do or say a thing—she'd just take it for granted. And you could always make some excuse to go away if—"

"If it looked as though I was going to be found out! Why, it'd be like living on a volcano. And I'd be sure to always say the wrong thing!"

"But you could try it," implored Anne. "It would make everything simple and you'd be doing your bit, then, for Madame Breshkovsky! Think of all she told us of the suffering in Russia. Surely you could do a little thing now to help! And if Aunt did like you and left me her money, it would really be you and we'd give it to the cause!"

"It'd be acting a lie," broke in Nancy.

"Oh, not exactly, Nancy, for you really are Anne Leavitt and, anyway, it's just as though you were my other half. Way back I know we are related. If you don't love me well enough to help me out now—well, I'm disappointed. I'll never forget it!"

Poor Nancy, mindful of the long separation that lay before

her and her friend, cried out in protest.

"Oh, Anne, don't say that!"

Claire, her eyes brilliant with excitement chimed in: "Nancy, it's a hope-to-die adventure. Maybe you could make up no end of stories and plays out of the things that happen up there! And, anyway, you can finish the 'Child' and come to Merrycliffe that much sooner!"

Claire had advanced the most appealing argument. North Hero Island certainly sounded more inspiring than a stuffy flat in Harlem with six small Finnegans one floor below. And it was an adventure.

Anne hastened to take advantage of the yielding she saw in Nancy's face.

"You can stay here with me until I have to go to New York, and we can look up trains and I can tell you all about my forefathers, though I really don't know a single thing. But she won't expect you to know—don't you remember she wrote that she regretted my being brought up without knowing the home of my forefathers. And if you just act as though you wanted more than anything else in the world to learn all about the Leavitts, she'll just love it and she'll tell you everything you have to know!"

"It's the most thrilling romance," sighed Claire, enviously.

"Sounds more to me like a conspiracy, and can't they put people in jail for doing things like that?" demanded Nancy.

"Oh, Nancy, you're so literal—as if she would, way up there on an island next to nowhere! And anyway, think of the boys who perjured themselves to get into the service. Wasn't that justified?"

Nancy, being in an unpleasant mood, started to ask what that had to do with her pretending to be an Anne Leavitt who she wasn't, when Big Anne went on in a hurt tone:

"Well, we won't talk about it anymore! I'll have to give up going to Russia and my whole life will be spoiled. And I am disappointed—I thought our friendship meant something to you, Nancy."

"Anne! There isn't a thing I wouldn't do for you! You're next dearest to Dad. For you I'll go to—Freedom or any old place. I'll do my best to be you to the dot and I'll pay homage to your forefathers and will ask not a penny of the legacy—if you get it! It shall all be for the cause!"

Anne read no irony in her tone. Her dignity flown, she caught her friend in a strangling hug. "Oh, Nancy, you darling, will you? I'll never forget it! We'll write to her right away—or you will. From this very minute you are Anne Leavitt!"

"I wish I could go, too," put in Claire. "Perhaps I can coax Barry to motor up that way."

"Don't you dare!" cried Nancy in consternation. "It would spoil it all. I'll write to you every day everything that happens. Goodness, if I'm as scared when I face your Aunt Sa-something as I am right now when I think about it, she'll know at a glance that I'm just an everyday Leavitt and not the child of her forefathers!"

"Hark!" Claire lifted a silencing finger. "The seniors are singing."

The lines they loved drifted to them.

"Lift the chorus, speed it onward, Loud her praises tell!"

"Let's join them." Suddenly Claire caught a hand of each.

"Girls, think of it—what it means—it's the last time—it's all over!" Her pretty face was tragic.

Big Anne, with a vision of Russia in her heart, set her lips resolutely.

"Don't look back—look ahead!" she cried, grandly.

But in Nancy's mind as, her arms linked with her chums', she hurried off to join the other seniors in their last sing, the troubling question echoed: "To what?"

## CHAPTER II.

Webb.

A clatter of departing hoofs, a swirl of dust—and Nancy was left alone on the hot railroad platform of North Hero. Her heart had seemed to fix itself in one painful lump in her throat. She was so very, very close to facing her adventure!

"If you please, can you tell me in what way I can reach Freedom?" Her faltering voice halted the telegraph operator as he was about to turn the corner of the station.

"Freedom? Well now, old Webb had ought 'a been here for the train. Isn't often Webb misses seein' the engine come in! Just you go in and sit down, Miss, he'll come along," and scarcely had the encouraging words passed the man's lips than a rickety, three-seated, canopied topped wagon, marked "Freedom Stage" turned the corner.

"Hey, Webb, here's a lady passenger goin' along with you to Freedom! And did you think the express would wait for you?"

Webb and his ditsy, rusty and rickety wagon was a welcome sight to poor Nancy. It had already seemed to her that her journey was endless and that Freedom must be in the farthest corner of the world. For the first few hours she had been absorbed by her grief at parting with Anne. But a night in a funny little hotel in Burlington had given her time to reflect upon her undertaking and it had assumed terrible proportions in her eyes. The courage and confidence she had felt with her chums, back in the room in the dormitory, deserted her now.

"Goin' to Freedom you say, Miss?" the man Webb asked, a great curiosity in his eyes. "Wal, you jes' come along with me! Had an order for Tobiases that set me late, but we'll git thar. Climb up here, Miss," and with a flourishing aside of his reins he made room for her on the dusty seat he occupied.

Nancy handed him her big bag and climbed easily over the wheel into the seat he had indicated. Then with a loud "get-up" and a flourish of his whip they rumbled off on the last leg of Nancy's journey.

"Ain't ever been to Freedom before?" he asked as they turned the corner of the maple shaded street of the little town, and the horses settled down into a steady trot. "Reckon not or old Webb 'ud have known ye—ain't any folks come and go on this here island that I don't know," he added with pride, dropping his reins for a better study of his passenger.

The air was fragrant with spring odors, the great trees met in a quivery archway overhead, the meadow lands they passed were richly green; Nancy's failing spirits began to soar! She threw a little smile toward the old man.

"I've never been to Freedom before—though I'm a Leavitt," she ventured.

Her words had the desired effect. The man straightened with interest.

"Wal, bless me, are ye one o' Miss Sabrinny's folks? And a goin' to Happy House when ye ain't ever seen it?"

Nancy nodded. "I'm Anne Leavitt," she answered carefully. "And I have never seen my Aunt Sabrinny. So I have come up from college for a little visit. And I think everything is lovely," she finished, drawing a long breath; "though, goodness knows, I thought I'd never get here!"

She was uncomfortably conscious that the old man was regarding her with open concern.

"Funny, no one ain't heard a word about it! So ye're Miss Sabrinny's great-niece and a-comin' to Happy House from your school for a visit!"

"Why, yes, why not?"

"Wal, I was jes' thinkin' you'd never seen Happy House. And I guess most folks in Freedom's forgotten Miss Sabrinny hed any folks much—count of the trouble!"

"Oh, what trouble, please, Mr. Webb?"

The old man shook his reins vigorously against the horses' backs.

"Webb, you're an old fool—an old, dodderin' fool! Of course this here trouble was a long spell ago, Miss, and don't belong to Leavitts young like you. I s'pose it want much, anyways, and I guess Miss Sabrinny herself's forgotten it else you wouldn't be a comin' to Happy House! I'm an old man, missy, and thar ain't been much in Freedom as I don't know about, but an old un'd ought 'a know 'nough to keep his tongue in his head. Only—you come to Webb if anything bothers you and you needn't call me Mr. Webb, either, for though I'm one of Freedom's leavin' cit-zuns and they'd never be a Memorial Day or any kind of Fourth of July doin's in Freedom without me—nobody calls me Mister Webb and you jes' come to me—"

Nancy, forgetful now of her frowned.

(To be Continued next week.)

## Gland Theory of Crime.

Elizabeth M. Heath, in New York Times.

WE HAVE discovered our glands. For many years as many as 500,000 or 1,000,000, perhaps, our endocrine organs have been with us, unobserved except by certain patient scientists. At last they are coming into their own. Led by their better-known member, thyroid, the whole endocrine family, pituitary, suprarenal et al, are marching into small talk.

In the last few months the hitherto unsuspected endocrines have answered to an appalling number of charges. A young hospital nurse declares that a malicious thyroid made her steal a friend's fur coat. A prominent scientist charges that their secretions are all that stand between our wearisome civilized state and the hairy coats, the facial contours, the prehensile toes, and, presumably, the simple customs of the apes.

There seems to be something in these glands, something to engage the attention of plain and sober citizens, a solid foundation of fact under the extravagant superstructure raised by the catchword intellectuals. It isn't hard to believe that we achieved our present intellectual pinnacle through the kind action of the thymus gland in retarding the growth of the human skull.

Murder, assault, arson, vandalism, theft, and a host of other crimes are often results of a disturbance in the ductless glands, says Dr. Max G. Schlapp. Love, hate and greed have hitherto been accepted as the motivations that fill the criminal courts, but glands! This is something else again. Moreover, continues Dr. Schlapp, the condition, and with it the tendency to crime, can be completely cured in many cases.

For most people, the horror of crime lies in the intention of the criminal. Deliberate murder, unless to avenge an intolerable injury, arouses a storm of public hatred; but the automobile driver, whose nerve fails at a critical moment, incurs only censure and the loss of his license.

Some years ago a young man named Archie Daniels went out walking with a young lady. They had formerly been engaged, but the affair was broken off by the girl's parents in favor of a more prosperous suitor. After they had covered a few blocks in silence, Archie drew a pistol, apparently purchased for the purpose, and shot the girl down without a word.

The supposition is obvious. Rather than let her find contentment, perhaps even happiness, with another man, he sacrificed her to his jealousy. His sentence, life imprisonment, seemed light for such criminal egotism.

However, to understand what happened to Archie it is necessary to know something about the machinery of the human mind. Every muscular act, from the most simple to the most complex, is caused by an explosion or a series of explosions of unstable protoplasm in the motivating centers of the brain. These explosions release the commands, or outgoing impulses, that set the muscles in motion. The explosions themselves are caused by impulses coming in from either the intellectual or emotional centers of the brain.

Perhaps the most important single element in this process is the strength that must be developed by an incoming impulse to cause the explosion which releases an outgoing impulse. This is particularly important in the case of the thyroid gland.

That is what happened to Archie Daniels. His long brooding over his unhappy love affair stimulated his ductless glands to increased secretion. His explosion point was lowered with increasing velocity, and he became not only more inclined to worry, but also more inclined to carry out the action suggested by the circumstances. His nerves put pressure upon him to end an unbearable situation by killing both himself and the girl, but the first shot relieved the tension, and the fact that he never completed the act proves that it was the result not of resolve, but of irresistible impulse. His wave of feeling wiped out all considerations of right and wrong, all inhibitions from the intellectual side of his brain, but when it had spent itself in action these reasserted their hold. His remorse was so deep that he wished to expiate his guilt in the electric chair.

## A JOKER.

RISE of Victory bonds to above par may be accounted for, in part, by the "discovery" of a large banking institution in Wall street that under the new tax law all corporation holdings of Liberty and Victory bonds, as well as other government securities, are exempt from all taxation. It is also the opinion of these bankers that there is nothing to prevent the corporations from investing as large a part of their surplus as they deem fit in such obligations, the income of which would also be exempt.

Under the revenue act of 1918, only specific issues of the war loans were exempt in this manner, along with a few other government securities, corporations holding them being obligated to pay surtaxes after reaching stated amounts, and includes income tax.

Now, because of this joker slipped into the revenue bill by the "financial bloc" in congress plans are being made by Wall street's rich to form corporations to carry government bonds, so that the individuals may claim exemption for the total amount of interest received from such holdings.

By hook or crook the average citizens are going to be forced to pay for the last war, just as they have always paid for wars. The poor, who made real sacrifices to help the government, have been forced by changing conditions to give up their bonds at losses. The burdens will rest unequally on their shoulders. And it will always fall upon them, until they wake up and take an intelligent interest in political elections, instead of being misled by catchy phrases and personal abuse levied at this or that public man.

The Paris chamber of deputies is considering a housing enactment that they hope will put a premium on large families. It is proposed to rent more cheaply to large families than to small ones. The flats to be so rented are to be constructed by the government.

In its application to impulses from the emotional center of the brain.

If the threshold of functional activity in the emotional center is normal, a percept or concept passing from the perceptive or intellectual center will not cause an emotional wave of sufficient intensity to overcome the inhibition which would naturally come to the motivating from the intellectual center. If, however, the functional threshold in the emotional center where low, the wave of feeling would release an impulse so strong that no inhibition of prudence would stop it, and all consideration of an intellectual character would be overwhelmed and the motivating center would issue its commands to the muscles.

Too high an explosion point has the effect of deadening all feeling. It produces dullness and inertia. Too low an explosion point produces the person who goes off half cocked, who yields to the slightest pressure on the trigger of his emotions. It is with this latter class that we are mainly concerned, for they contribute heavily to the total of emotional crime.

At this point the ductless glands re-enter the discussion, for it is their behavior that pushes the explosion point up or down the scale of normality, according to the following laws:

The point at which the unstable protoplasm in the motivating centers of the brain will explode is determined by the chemical content of the blood.

If there is a disproportion of hormones, as the secretions of the ductless glands are called, there is a disturbance of the balance of the explosion thresholds in the groups of cells in the nervous system, the secretions acting selectively on such cells.

Under these circumstances it is important to know what causes variation in the secretion of hormones. It has been discovered that the glands are affected by foreign toxins introduced into the system, and that they are also affected by the patient's mental condition—such emotions as fear, anxiety, anger, pain, etc. Under repeated or continued nervous strain a vicious circle is established, the patient's emotionality increases the secretion of hormones, and these secretions make his emotions still more unstable. This process frequently continues until the explosion point is far below normal, and the patient is the helpless victim of his impulses.

Perhaps most important of all discoveries about the ductless glands is that the amount of hormones in the blood can be controlled by means of therapeutics, and, while knowledge on this subject is by no means complete, remarkable results have been obtained, notably in connection with the thyroid gland.

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## "Come East, Young Man.

From the Concord Monitor.

Years ago a native of New Hampshire coined the famous phrase, "Go west young man, and grow up with the country," and thereby gave great impetus to emigration from New England.

Today the state of New Hampshire is at the head of a movement to attract settlers back to the farms of old New England. "Come east, young man," is the modern slogan.

A committee sent out by farm and civic organizations of New Hampshire is now working in Ohio, where farm lands are pretty well taken up, to encourage the overflow farm land to the east instead of west or north. The movement is to be extended to other states.

There are many reasons why the campaign should be successful. Modern methods of farm development, modern farm machinery, better methods of fruit and stock raising have changed the problem of New England farmers. Markets are many and hauls short:

The free, wide spaces of the west will tempt the man who wants to try his farming on a medium scale, but the man to whom intensive work upon a smaller acreage appeals may find success in almost any of the older sections of the country.

## Railways and Foreign Ships.

From the Boston Transcript.

Representatives of American railways who met with a joint committee of the shipping board and the Interstate Commerce commission to consider the question of exclusive and preferential contracts between the roads and foreign steamship lines, expressed themselves, with one exception, as willing to abrogate or modify such agreements if they were asked to do so by the proper authorities. The exception was the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul, which was represented as demanding some assurance that it would have business under the new order of things, and the place of that which it might lose through the ending of the old. It was stated that in the case of the Grand Trunk, a foreign system, immediate definition of the road's attitude in the matter could not be given, but there was a pretty plain suggestion of what might happen.

There can, of course, be no disagreement with the proposition stated by Commissioner Thompson of the shipping board that this country having undertaken to build up and maintain a great merchant marine, it is the duty of American enterprises, and particularly those that are beneficiaries of government support, to make every effort to contribute to the successful operation of American shipping. Mr. Thompson, in addition to laying down this general principle, called attention to the fact that an exclusive or preferential agreement between an American railroad and a foreign flag shipping concern appeared to be contrary to the intent or congress as expressed in section 28 of the shipping act.