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# The Prodigal Village

by Irving Bacheller



ILLUSTRATIONS BY IRWIN MYERS

## "ON WITH THE DANCE!"

Synopsis.—In the village of Bingville thirteen-year-old Robert Emmet Moran, crippled son of a poor widow, is known as the Shepherd of the Birds. His world is his mother and friends, his little room, the flower garden of Judge Crooker, and every flying thing he sees from his window. The painting of pictures is his enjoyment, and little Pauline Baker, small daughter of a neighbor, the object of his boyish affection. To him, J. Patterson Bing, the first citizen of Bingville, is the ideal of a really great man. The village becomes money mad, reflecting the great world in its state of unrest. The Bing family is a leader in the change. To them the village has become "provincial." The butcher and baker and candlestick-maker all raise their prices. Even Hiram Blenkinsop, the town drunkard, works hard for a month. The Old Spirit of Bingville is summarily fired.

## CHAPTER TWO—Continued.

The notice had been given soon after the new theater was opened in the Sneed block, and the endless flood of moving lights and shadows began to fall on its screen. The low-born, purblind intellects of Bohemian New York began to pour their lewd fancies into this great stream that flowed through every city, town and village in the land. They had no more compunction in the matter than a rattlesnake when it swallows a rabbit. To them, there were only two great, bare facts in life—male and female. The males, in their vulgar parades, were either "wise guys" or "suckers." The females were all "my dears."

Much of this mental sewage smelled to heaven. But it paid. It was cheap and entertaining. It relieved the tedium of small-town life. Judge Crooker was in the little theater that evening that the Old Spirit of Bingville received notice to quit. The sons and daughters and even the young children of the best families in the village were there. Scenes from the shady side of the great cities, bar-room adventures with pugilists and porcelain-faced women, the thin-ice skating of illicit love succeeded one another on the screen. The tender souls of the young received the impression that life in the great world was mostly drunkenness, violence, lust, and Great White Way-wardness of one kind or another.

Judge Crooker shook his head and his fist as he went out and expressed his view to Phyllis and her mother in the lobby. Going home, they called him an old brute. The knowledge that every night this false instruction was going on in the Sneed block filled the good man with sorrow and apprehension. He complained to Mr. Leak, the manager, who said that he would like to give clean shows, but that he had to take what was sent him.

Soon a curious thing happened to the family of Mr. J. Patterson Bing.



Mrs. Bing Tried a Cigarette and Got Along With It Very Well.

It acquired a new god—one that began, as the reader will have observed, with a small "g." He was a boneless, India-rubber, obedient little god. For years the need of one like that had been growing in the Bing family. Since he had become a millionaire, Mr. Bing had found it necessary to spend a good deal of time, and considerable money in New York. Certain of his banker friends in the metropolis had introduced him to the joys of the Great White Way and the card room of the Golden Age club. Always he had been ill and disgruntled for a week

after his return to the homely realities of Bingville. The shrewd intuitions of Mrs. Bing alarmed her. So Phyllis and John were packed off to private schools so that the good woman would be free to look after the imperiled welfare of the lamb of her flock—the great J. Patterson. She was really worried about him. After that, she always went with him to the city. She was pleased and delighted with the luxury of the great hotels, the costumes, the dinner parties, the theaters, the suppers, the cabaret shows. The latter shocked her a little at first.

They went out to a great country house, near the city, to spend a weekend. There was a dinner party on Saturday night. One of the ladies got very tipsy and was taken upstairs. The others repaired to the music room to drink their coffee and smoke. Mrs. Bing tried a cigarette and got along with it very well. Then there was an hour of heart to heart, central European dancing while the older men sat down for a night of bridge in the library. Sunday morning, the young people rode to hounds across country while the bridge party continued its session in the library. It was not exactly a restful week-end. J. Patterson and his wife went to bed as soon as their grips were unpacked on their return to the city and spent the day there with aching heads.

While they were eating dinner that night, the cocktail remarked, "With the lips of Mrs. Bing: 'I'm getting tired of Bingville.'"

"Oh, of course, it's a picnic place," said J. Patterson.

"It's so provincial!" the lady exclaimed.

Soon, the oysters and the entree having subdued the cocktail, she ventured: "But it does seem to me that New York is an awfully wicked place."

"What do you mean?" he asked. "Godless," she answered. "The drinking and gambling and those dances." "That's because you've been brought up in a seven-by-nine Puritan village," J. Patterson growled very decisively. "Why shouldn't people enjoy themselves? We have trouble enough at best. God gave us bodies to get what enjoyment we could out of them. It's about the only thing we're sure of, anyhow."

It was a principle of Mrs. Bing to agree with J. Patterson. And why not? He was a great man. She knew it as well as he did and that was knowing it very well indeed. His judgment had been right—triumphantly and overwhelmingly right. Besides, it was the only comfortable thing to do. She had been the type of woman who reads those weird articles written by grass widows on "How to Keep the Love of a Husband."

So it happened that the Bings began to construct a little god to suit their own tastes and habits—one about as tractable as a toy dog. They withdrew from the Congregational church and had house parties for sundry visitors from New York and Hazelmead every week-end.

Phyllis returned from school in May with a spirit quite in harmony with that of her parents. She had spent the holidays at the home of a friend in New York and had learned to love the new dances and to smoke, although that was a matter to be mentioned only in a whisper and not in the presence of her parents. She was a tall, handsome girl with blue eyes, blonde hair, perfect teeth and complexion, and almost a perfect figure. Here she was, at last, brought up to the point of a coming-out party.

It had been a curious and rather unfortunate bringing up that the girl had suffered. She had been the pride of a mother's heart and the occupier of that position is apt to achieve great success in supplying a mother's friends with topics of conversation. Phyllis had been flattered and indulged. Mrs. Bing was entitled to much credit, having been born of poor and illiterate parents in a small village on the Hudson a little south of the capital. She was pretty and grew up with a longing for better things. J. Patterson got her at a bargain in an Albany department store where she stood all day behind the notion counter. "At a bargain," it must be said, because, on the whole, there were higher values in her personality than in his. She had acquired that common Bertha Clay habit of associating with noble lords who lived in cheap romances and had a taste for poor but honest girls. The practical J. Patterson hated that kind of thing. But his wife kept a supply of these highly flavored novels hidden in the little flat and spent her leisure reading them.

One of the earliest recollections of Phyllis was the caution, "Don't tell father!" received on the hiding of a book. Mrs. Bing had bought, in those weak, pinching times of poverty, extravagant things for herself and the girl and gone in debt for them. Collectors had come at times to get their money with impatient demands.

The Bings were living in a city those days. Phyllis had been a witness of many interviews of the kind. All along the way of life, she had heard the oft-repeated injunction, "Don't tell father!" She came to regard men as creatures who were not to be told. When Phyllis got into a scrape at school, on account of a little flirtation, and Mrs. Bing went to see about it, the two agreed on keeping the salient facts from father.

A dressmaker came after Phyllis arrived to get her ready for the party. The afternoon of the event, J. Patterson brought the young people of the best families of Hazelmead by special train to Bingville. The Crookers, the Withersells, the Ameses, the Renfrews and a number of the most popular students in the Normal school were also invited. They had the famous string band from Hazelmead to furnish music, and Smith—an impressive young English butler whom they had brought from New York on their last return.

Phyllis wore a gown which Judge Crooker described as "the limit." He said to his wife after they had gone home: "Why, there was nothing on her back but a pair of velvet gulloves and when I stood in front of her my eyes were scared."

"Mrs. Bing calls it high art," said the Judge's wife. "I call it down pretty close to see level," said the Judge. "When she clinched with those young fellows and went wrestling around the room she reminded me of a grapevine growing on a tree."

The reaction on the intellect of the judge quite satisfies the need of the historian. Again the Old Spirit of Bingville had received notice. It is only necessary to add that the punch



"Don't Tell Father!"

was strong and the house party over the week-end made a good deal of talk by fast driving around the country in motorcars on Sunday and by loud singing in boats on the river and noisy play on the tennis courts. That kind of thing was new to Bingville.

When it was all over, Phyllis told her mother that Gordon King—one of the young men—had insulted her when they had been out in a boat together on Sunday. Mrs. Bing was shocked. They had a talk about it up in Phyllis' bedroom at the end of which Mrs. Bing delivered an injunction, "Don't tell father!"

It was soon after the party that Mr. J. Patterson Bing sent for William Snodgrass, the carpenter. He wanted an extension built on his house containing new bedrooms and baths and a large sun parlor. The estimate of Snodgrass was unexpectedly large. In explanation of the fact the latter said: "We work only eight hours a day now. The men demand it and they must be taken to and from their work. They can get all they want to do on those terms."

"And they demand seven dollars and a half a day at that? It's big pay for an ordinary mechanic," said J. Patterson.

"There's plenty of work to do," Snodgrass answered. "I don't care the snap of my finger whether I get your job or not. I'm forty thousand ahead of the game and I feel like layin' off for the summer and takin' a rest."

"I suppose I could get you to work overtime and hurry the job through if I'm willing to pay for it?" the millionaire inquired.

"The rate would be time an' a half for work done after the eight hours are up, but it's hard to get anyone to work overtime these days."

"Well, go ahead and get all the work you can out of these plutoerats of the saw and hammer. I'll pay the bills," said J. Patterson.

The terms created a record in Bingville. But, as Mr. Bing had agreed to them, in his haste, they were established.

## Pauline Baker Elopes.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## True Forgiveness.

Love is generous. Doing once is not enough. Real forgiveness must reach the seventy times seven mark and kindness be repeated indefinitely. Never use hard words—especially if you are unable to pronounce them.

## IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

(By REV. F. B. FITZWATER, D. D., Teacher of English Bible in the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.) (©. 1921, Western Newspaper Union.)

### LESSON FOR APRIL 10

#### BIBLE TEACHINGS ABOUT THE CHRISTIAN'S BODY (HEALTH).

LESSON TEXT—1 Cor. 6: 19, 20; 9:24-27; Gal. 6: 7, 8.

GOLDEN TEXT—Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things.—1 Cor. 9: 25.

REFERENCE MATERIAL—Prov. 23: 29-35; Isa. 23: 1-8; Gal. 5: 19-21.

PRIMARY TOPIC—Taking Care of Our Bodies.

JUNIOR TOPIC—Growing Strong.

INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR TOPIC—The Value of Health.

YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULT TOPIC—Public Health Problems.

The teachings of this lesson have an important bearing upon physical health, but the primary reference is moral. The sin with which Paul was dealing was fornication, not matters of hygiene. That physical health may be included we do not question, but sad and serious will be the blunder if that only is taught.

I.—Glorifying God in Your Body (1 Cor. 6: 19, 20).

It should be noted that the last clause of verse 20 is omitted in the Revised Version and the best manuscripts. The conclusion of Paul's argument is, "therefore glorify God in your body."

1. The Christian's body is the temple of the Holy Ghost (v. 19). God's dwelling place on earth is now the redeemed human body instead of the temple at Jerusalem. If the sinless Spirit is to dwell in the body it must be kept clean. To defile or abuse the body in any way is to insult the Spirit and commit the most awful sacrilege. This truth apprehended solves forever the problem of licentiousness, gluttony, use of tobacco, the abuse or neglect of the body in any way whatsoever.

2. The Christian's body is God's property (v. 19). Being God's temple, the proprietary right is in God and not man. Being the property of the Lord, the Christian's motto is, "Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God (1 Cor. 10: 31). 'Holiness unto the Lord' ought to be written over our bodies.

3. The Christian's body has been bought (v. 20). The price paid to redeem the body was the precious blood of Christ (1 Peter 1: 18, 19). We estimate things by what they cost. When we estimate our bodies in that light we will be very jealous of their purity. Guarding our health is part of our religion.

II.—Keeping the Body Under Control (1 Cor. 9: 24-27).

The Christian's life is more than mere existence, there is something to do—to be accomplished.

1. It is a race (vv. 24, 25). In order to win a prize there must be self-denial and definite exertion. The Christian obtains life by contact with Jesus Christ through faith (John 3: 16; 3: 36; 5: 24). This he possesses before he can begin the race. While he gets salvation (life) at the beginning, God places before him definite rewards as incentives to exertion. The Christian believes to get life, but works for rewards. In the Olympian games only one could hope to get the prize, but in the Christian race there is a reward waiting for every one who disciplines himself and runs. As the racer in these games mastered his desires and abstained from everything which might hinder him to win the prize, so the Christian will make any sacrifice to win. The prize in the Grecian games was corruptible, but the prize of the Christian is incorruptible. If the heathen would practice such self-denial regardless of its pain for a garland of pine leaves, shall not the Christian turn from bodily indulgences of every kind so as to obtain the crown of righteousness which fadeth not away?

2. It is a fight (vv. 26, 27). The Christian's efforts are not mere beatings of the air. He has a real antagonist. His fight is not a sham conflict. He should exert himself with all his energy, and strike to hit his enemy. In order to win success the body must be kept under. In this case the antagonist is the body. It should be so dealt with as to bring it under subjection. All the evil propensities of his nature should be brought under control.

III.—Reaping What You Sow (Gal. 6: 7, 8).

God has established a law in the world that whatsoever a man sows that shall he also reap. To go on sowing with the expectation of not reaping is to mock God. The world is full of examples of those who thus mocked Him. This text has primary reference to giving to the support of ministers of the gospel; its real bearing is upon the believer for his stinginess rather than upon the sinner for his meanness, but it has a bearing on all that we do.

Very Sure of God. The shepherds and the Wise Men came away from Bethlehem very sure of God. They had not been unbelievers or atheists, but the sight of the little Jesus brought to them a fresh and mighty consciousness of God's continual presence. Even the anticipation of God's coming in Jesus put a new song on the lips of Zachariah and Mary, and one sight of the Child was enough to open all the fountains of gratitude in the heart of the aged Simeon.—Congregationalist and Advance.

## TWO FAMOUS YANKEE SHIPS

Old Gunboat Marblehead and Cutter Bear, in Humble Service, Still Are "Making Good."

Trading along the west Mexican coast carrying pinocha, hides, beeswax and other freight is the fate of the once proud American gunboat Marblehead.

The vessel has been sold to Jose Delallave, a Mazatlan ship operator, by the United States government for a few thousand Mexican dollars. Delallave has renamed the Marblehead the *Agua Prieta*.

Thus passes the old "pepperbox," Capt. Bowman H. McCalla's ship of Spanish war fame, with a proud record of achievement right up to the days of the last Victory loan drive, when the Marblehead left San Francisco as the navy's "victory ship," remarks Our Navy.

The announcement of coast guard authorities that the U. S. C. G. cutter Bear probably never will sail into the North again marks a sharp turn in the history of one of the most famous adventure ships flying the American flag.

After more than two-score years of battling with ice floes and arctic gales, the Bear is under orders to make San Diego her base and serve as a training ship for coast guard recruits.

Since the Bear, in charge of Commodore Schley, later admiral, rescued the seven survivors of the Greeley arctic expedition in 1884 she has been devoted to service in the northern seas with the navy, the frontier revenue service and in recent years as part of the coast guard fleet. She was built in Scotland in 1874 as a whaler and sealer.

The full story of her career would constitute a library of stirring tales. Among her many duties she has kept watch and ward over the Eskimos, carried the law to the shores where Kipling said no law extended, protected the fur-seal herd from poachers of the "Sea Wolf" type, and given the sanction of the white man's standards to marriages beyond the arctic circle.

Natives, teachers, missionaries, traders and marines in the North have for a generation regarded the annual cruise of the Bear as a routine part of their existence.

Not a season has passed—including the present one—that the Bear has not saved lives by imperative operations performed in her sick bay, by the rescue of marooned or shipwrecked crews or by landing provisions to the inhabitants of isolated shores.

## Reforestation of the Plains.

In the state of Nebraska there are twenty thousand square miles of country that is absolutely treeless. The soil is nothing but sand on which no plant grows except a long grass that is good for grazing.

Anciently, perhaps seven million years ago, the area in question was part of the floor of a sea. Hence, of course, the sand. But within comparatively recent times the region must have been forested, for here and there are discovered stumps of trees as much as two feet in diameter.

Discovery of these old stumps led the United States forest service to believe that trees might be made to grow there again. Accordingly, the experiment was begun about eighteen years ago, and, as a result, about five thousand acres of young forest have been successfully established. Some of the trees today are as much as twenty-five feet high.

The trees planted in this area are all of them of coniferous varieties—jack pine, Norway pine and yellow pine. At Halsey, Neb., is maintained a nursery, which produces two million of these little trees each year.

For planting them, a novel method is adopted. Instead of setting each little tree in a hole by itself, a plow is run along through the sand, and the tiny trees are planted in a row in the furrow.

## Record of Sunshine.

J. B. Kincer of the weather bureau has just published in the Monthly Weather Review a valuable analysis of the available sunshine records of this country. He presents charts and graphs showing for all parts of the United States the mean solar time of sunrise and sunset, the average length of the day, sunrise to sunset, for different seasons of the year; the average for each month in the year, of the daily amounts of sunshine; in hours; the seasonal and annual amounts in percentage of the maximum possible; the yearly percentage of clear, partly cloudy and cloudy days. Data of this character is comparatively scarce, for the reason that the instruments required to make these records are very delicate and require expert attention. A great deal of meteorological observation work is done by amateurs or volunteers who are not equipped with the necessary apparatus for accurately recording the periods of sunshine.

## Big Men for a Little Job.

The doorkeeper of the European hotel is generally a big man who will becomingly fill a gorgeous livery and in addition to this requirement, he must be of more than ordinary intelligence, for he is called upon frequently to meet the guests of the house and to advise and direct them. This important post at the front door of a large Vienna hotel was recently vacated, and among the applicants were a major general, three majors and twelve captains.

## The Conspicuous Result.

"Is bolshevism constructive?" "Only in one way," replied Miss Cayenne. "It makes a great deal of conversation."

## WOMEN WHO CANNOT WORK

### Read Mrs. Corley's Letter and Benefit by Her Experience

Edmund, S. C.—"I was run down with nervousness and female trouble and suffered every month. I was not able to do any work and tried a lot of medicine, but got no relief. I saw your medicine advertised in a little book that was thrown in my door, and I had not taken two bottles of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound before I could see it was helping me. I am keeping house now and am able to do all of my work. I cannot say enough for your medicine. It has done more for me than any doctor. I have not paper enough to tell you how much it has done for me and for my friends. You may print this letter if you wish."—ELIZABETH C. CORLEY, care of A. P. Corley, Edmund, S. C.

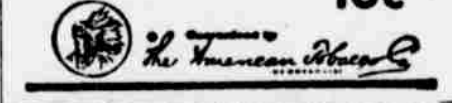


Ability to stand the strain of work is the privilege of the strong and healthy, but how our hearts ache for the weak and sickly women struggling with their daily rounds of household duties, with backaches, headaches, nervousness and almost every movement brings a new pain. Why will not the mass of letters from women all over this country, which we have been publishing, convince such women that Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound will help them just as surely as it did Mrs. Corley?

After more than two-score years of battling with ice floes and arctic gales, the Bear is under orders to make San Diego her base and serve as a training ship for coast guard recruits.



GENUINE "BULL" DURHAM tobacco makes 50 good cigarettes for 10c



Buy Fairy Sodas packed in tin to keep the dainty freshness in



## CRACKERS AND CHEESE

—always acceptable for lunches and are especially good when the crackers are Iten's Fairy Sodas.

Just try grating some cream cheese on Iten's Fairy Soda Crackers, sprinkling a little paprika or cayenne, or adding a little prepared mustard, and then heating until the cheese just melts.

A can of Fairy Sodas in the pantry helps solve the daily food question in a satisfactory and economical way. Ask your grocer for I-TEN'S FAIRY SODAS and be sure you get the genuine.

## Near Bait.

Knecker—"Does Smith still enjoy fishing?" Bocker—"Yes; he has built a pond in his cellar."

No ugly, grimy streaks on the clothes when Red Cross Blue Bait is used. Good bluing gets good results. All grocers carry it—5c.

Love may laugh at locksmiths, but it never giggles at the plumber.

## Feel All Worn Out?

Has a cold, grip, or other infectious disease sapped your strength? Do you suffer backache, lack ambition, feel dull and depressed? Look to your kidneys! Physicians agree that kidney trouble often results from infectious disease. Too often the kidneys are neglected because the sufferer doesn't realize they have broken down under the strain of filtering disease-created poisons from the blood. If your back is bad, your kidneys act irregularly, and you feel all run down, use Doan's Kidney Pills. Doan's have helped thousands. Ask your neighbor!

## A Nebraska Case

L. H. Scott, prop. blacksmith shop, Creighton, Neb., says: "My work is more or less of a strain on my kidneys. I had sharp pains in the small of my back and kidneys hurting me badly when I would bend over or lift anything. The secretions were thick-colored and passed too often, both day and night. Doan's Kidney Pills cured me so I have not had kidney trouble for the last three years."

Get Doan's at Any Store, 50c a Box  
DOAN'S KIDNEY PILLS  
FOSTER-MILBURN CO., BUFFALO, N. Y.

W. N. U., LINCOLN, NO. 14-1921.