

# SLEEPY-TIME TALES THE TALE OF BENNY BADGER

BY ARTHUR SCOTT BAILEY

XVIII.

## Saving the Day.

Benny Badger kept his bright idea to himself. But his neighbors knew that he must have thought of something, because he seemed so good-natured all at once.

"He has a secret," they told one another. But they couldn't find out what it was. Though they asked Benny Badger point blank what he intended to do, he refused to tell them. He only smiled and looked very wise. And indeed he felt just as wise as he looked.

For a time a good many of his friends spied upon him. Hidden behind whatever was handy, they watched Benny Badger.

But they soon grew tired of that. So far as they could see, he did

nothing but dig holes. And certainly that was nothing new for him. So his friends went about their own affairs, leaving Benny to dig as many holes as he pleased.

Now, it pleased him to dig more holes, and bigger holes, than he had ever dug before. And he dug them all on the other side of the prairie dog village—on the side toward the rancher's home.

Benny seemed to have no fixed plan as to how he should dig the holes—whether in a straight row, or in a circle, or any other way. His one idea seemed to be to dig a plenty—to dig as many as anybody could possibly want for any purpose whatsoever.

Now and then some passer-by would stop and look at Benny for a few minutes, and snicker. "Are you looking for buried gold?" Mr. Coyote asked him.

"What's the matter—have you been digging so fast that you can't stop?" Mr. Fox inquired.

Even the prairie dogs—timid as they were—ventured to peer at Benny Badger and demanded whether he

had gone crazy. But Benny Badger never paused to answer anybody. He smiled a good deal, however, as if he knew something that nobody else suspected.

Every morning at dawn he went home to rest. And every evening at sunset he returned to the same place, just beyond the prairie dog village, to take up his work where he had left it.

The only remark Benny would make when anyone insisted on talking with him was that he couldn't waste his time gossiping, because he had to save the day.

That seemed a strange statement. No one knew exactly what Benny Badger meant by it. To be sure, he saved each day for sleeping—for he worked only at night. But it was just as true that he saved each night for working. So it was only natural that people should be puzzled.

To everybody's surprise, Benny stopped his work as suddenly as he had begun it. Exactly at midnight he paused, brushed the dirt off himself, and slipped into his coat, remarking that he thought he "had saved the day."

With a hungry look on his face he turned toward the prairie dog village. And there was a great surrushing then.

"You ought to thank me!" Benny Badger called to the prairie dogs as they dived into their holes. "I've saved the day! The rancher certainly won't try to get rid of you now."

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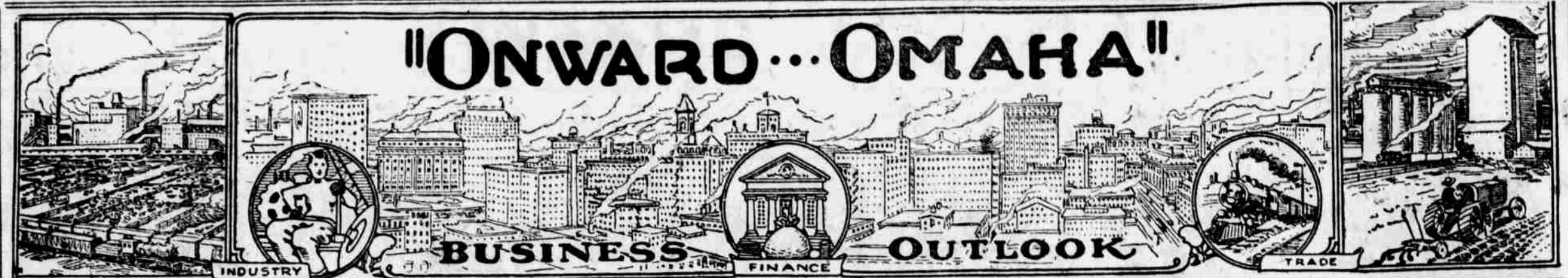
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## Now for the Auto Show

By PAUL GREER.

Merchants' weeks, bringing a large number of business men and women to Omaha from the smaller cities of this trade territory, has come and gone. These people from out in the state brought a spirit of optimism that was good to feel. Good weather, they reported, was bringing people out of their winter sleep and livening up business. All thought of hard times is disappearing, and although purchases are not as heavy as at some other times, prospects are good for the future.

Business has come back. The Omaha Automobile show which will be on the boards from Monday to Saturday will demonstrate that. It has in every other city where one has been held. The fundamental soundness of business conditions can well be judged by the popularity of these spring exhibits. The buying power is still with us, and the spring sunshine is, as those country merchants said, limbering up its muscles.

For a long time there was a slump in buying, owing to the policy of deflation. The automobile trade, one of the first to be hit, is now one of the first to recover. The energetic and wide-awake dealers of Omaha have prepared for large sales and fire their first salute at the show. The tire men, dealers in accessories, the repairers and the motorcycle agents are all out for business.

It is a rare man who is not interested in automobiles. One may own a car, plan to buy one, or be only a street car customer and yet have very definite ideas concerning the merits of the various makes. The opportunity to see them all together and compare them under the attention of the men who sell them and are familiar with all their points is one of the attractions of the show.

One who intends to buy a car during the year can scarcely afford to neglect the opportunity for judging them in this way, even though he may think he knows exactly what he wants right now.

Every person who owns a car is a potential customer for another. They do not last forever, and one who has become accustomed to driving about the city or out into the country will not readily give up the new world he has conquered. The latest improvements are to him matters of interest, and he is sure to be on hand at the yearly exhibition.

Down the Missouri river is Kansas City, which has just closed its automobile display. What happened there is thus reported by the Kansas City Star:

The motor show has been an eye-opener, not merely to automobile dealers, but to all business men. Who would have thought that a show in this winter of uncertainty would beat all records on attendance? Who would have dreamed that tens of thousands of persons day after day would pay admission to see something they wanted to buy?

Certainly not the dealers themselves. Everybody knows they undertook the show this year with misgivings. Business had been poor. When people weren't buying, would they pay their good money just to come out and see the cars they could see for nothing in the showrooms? Nobody could tell. The show might prove a flivver, but the dealers took the chance.

Then see what happened. The exhibition floors were swamped. People crowded in until they could hardly move. The records of 14 years were smashed. Even at the height of the buying frenzy of last year there were no such throngs.

Was it a mere window-shopping crowd? It was a buying crowd. Dealers who hadn't seen a real customer for days suddenly began getting orders. People had money. They were able and ready to buy when they found what they wanted.

The motor dealers are the most surprised people in Kansas City today. There isn't a headache in a barrel of them. They have tangible assurance of the beginning of that return to normalcy that everybody has been looking for.

What happened there will be repeated in Omaha. Nebraska is just as game, just as well off as Missouri or Kansas—the country merchants who have just returned home are proof of that—and the gasoline ball will furnish the final proof of the confidence and buying ability of the community.



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