

THE GOSPEL OF THRIFT

Or How Much Money Did Johnny Save

Now, I am going to tell a story and ask a question.

Once upon a time there lived a Connecticut Yankee who was a very smart man. Any of you who have known any Connecticut Yankees will not doubt their smartness. This particular Yank had a son, and like a dutiful parent he did his best to bring up his son in the way he should go. It was his desire that his boy should grow into another very smart man like himself, so that as he went along life's journey he might be able to get a shade the best of every other man's son—of course, none of the other Connecticut Yankees were teaching their sons to get the best of his son.

Among other virtues the Yank sought to develop in his son was that of thrift—he desired that the boy should be frugal and saving. One evening just before supper the old Yank said to his boy, said he:

"Johnny, Johnny, why don't you save your money?"

"Save my money?" replied Johnny. "How can I save my money when I haven't got no money?"

"Well, Johnny, I'll give you some money, and then you can save it," said the old man.

"All right, pop, you give me the dough, and I'll save it all right."

"Well, I'll give it to you, Johnny. But you'll first have to do something for it; that is, you'll have to earn it."

"All right, pop. What'll I have to do?"

"Well, now, Johnny, I'll tell you. You go without your supper to-night, and I'll give you a nickel, and you can save the nickel."

Johnny was mighty hungry, but he wanted the nickel badly, thinking of the fun he would have spending it, and so he spoke up bravely: "All right, pop. Gimme the nick, and I'll save it."

So Johnny went without his supper, went to bed hungry, but he had the nickel safely put away, and the unpleasant dreams caused by the painful knots in his empty little insides were from time to time relieved by visions of himself spending his hard-earned money.

At last morning came, and Johnny, with his nickel in his pocket, and with an awful gnawing in his middle, came downstairs to breakfast.

"Good morning, Johnny," said his father.

"Morning, dad," said Johnny.

"Hungry, Johnny?"

"You bet."

"Want breakfast?"

"Yep."

"Did you save your nickel, Johnny?"

"Yep."

"Well, I'll tell ye, Johnny, you can eat breakfast if you like, but there's something you'll have to do first."

"What's that, pop?"

"Well, you see, Johnny, times have changed since last night. You see, you've got money now, and you'll have to pay board."

"What'll I have to pay, pop?" said Johnny, weakly, feeling very faint in the stomach.

"Well, son, you give me your nickel that you saved, and you can sit down and eat all the breakfast that you want to."

And with sorrow, but without hesitation, Johnny paid over his nickel for breakfast.

That's my story.

Now for my question.

If Johnny got a nickel for going without his supper, and had to pay a nickel for his breakfast, How Much Money Did Johnny Save?

No. Don't you dare to laugh. Not if you are a workman.

If you will think for a moment you will see that Johnny saved just exactly the same amount that you workmen can save out of your wages. How much is that? How much wages do you get? I can tell you to the cent. Not perhaps just what some particular workman gets, but just exactly what we all of us get for our life's work.

Yesterday we got just enough in wages to support us in such a way that we could work to-day.

Last week we received just enough in wages so that we could work this week.

This month we will receive just enough so that we can work next month.

This year we will receive just enough in wages so that we can keep ourselves in condition to work next year.

In our lifetime we shall get enough wages so that we can do the master's

work and bring sufficient children into the world to take up our task and do our master's work after we are gone.

As a class, we workers get what economists call the "living wage"—neither more nor less.

Ah! say you, you know some workmen who get \$5 a day! Surely that is more than the living wage.

Yes, my friends, there are a few workmen who get five dollars a day. But it is sometimes the case that a man with a high money wage does not receive more than enough to enable him to do his work. And remember, that for every man who receives above the living wage there are whole groups who receive below it—who get a subsistence or a starvation wage.

And think of those who have no work and get no wage.

Now, why is it that at this time, when those who do the world's work can produce more wealth with less labor than ever before in the world's history, why is it that a man who by his labor in a day can produce an amount of wealth equal in value to from two to twenty times the living wage, why is it that under these conditions a man, a woman, or a child works for the "living wage?" There is just one reason, my friends. It is because the workers do not own the means to employ themselves. In order to live they must work. In order to work they must sell themselves to those who own the things with which work is done.

We Socialists want those who do the world's work to own the things with which their work is done. When those who work own the things with which they work they will own the wealth produced by their work. Then those who work will be rich and have all the wealth they are willing to work for and produce—which will be just enough for them. And then those who do no work will have no wealth—and that will be just enough for them.

—BEN HANFORD in "Fight For Your Life."

Capitalism is its own grave-digger. —Karl Marx in 1858.

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That certain piece of land with all improvements thereon described as follows, to wit:

That piece of land now known on the official plan and book of reference of the township of Stanbridge, District of Bedford, as number four hundred and sixteen (416); bounded north-east by No. 1164, south by Main street, west by number 417, and containing eight hundred and twenty-eight superficial feet.

2. That piece of land now known on the official plan and book of reference of the township of Stanbridge, District of Bedford, as number four hundred and seventeen (417); bounded north-east by number 1164, south by Main street, east by number 416, and west by number 418, and containing five thousand two hundred and eighty superficial feet.

To be sold at the registry office for the county of Missisquoi, in the town of Bedford and district of Bedford, on the TWENTY-SEVENTH day of APRIL next, at the hour of TEN of the clock in the forenoon.

CHAS. S. COTTON, Sheriff's Office. Sweetsburg, 11th March, 1909.

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PHONE NO. 47

....The.... Conspirators

By VIRGINIA BLAIR.

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"Of course I can understand my wife's position in the case," the judge said. "She wants her only daughter to marry a man with money, and you haven't any. So this is my plan; I'll settle a good round sum on you, and you can say it came from a rich relative. Then my wife will be satisfied. You can marry Roxane and live happily ever after."

"Oh—Oliver's face was bright with hope—"you are very good, sir!"

"But you mustn't tell Roxane where you got the money," the judge pursued. "She couldn't keep it from her mother."

"But I ought not to deceive my future wife."

The judge banged a heavy fist on his desk. "Don't be foolish," he said sternly. "It's the only way."

"But—Then before Oliver could proceed with his objection a clear voice asked, 'May I come in?'"

"Roxane!" exclaimed the two men. She stood hesitating on the threshold, a slender little thing, with her fair hair pulled out under a plumed hat.

"Mother is waiting in the motor," she said breathlessly. "We are on our way to the charity bazaar, and I want some money."

The judge kissed her. "Now it's Oliver's turn," he teased.

"Oh, father," she reproached him, with a sob, "you know Oliver and I have had to break our engagement because mother won't hear of it!" And she hid her face on the judge's shoulder.

The judge glanced at Oliver. "Tell her," he commanded, and the boy began a halting tale.

As he proceeded Roxane interrupted. "You mean that some one has left you a fortune?"

Oliver nodded. "Where did he live?"

"I'm not sure," the boy stammered. "I wouldn't inquire too closely into it, Roxane," the judge advised hurriedly. "The less said about that relative of Oliver's the better."

With her face shining, the girl went swiftly to her lover. "Oh, Oliver, Oliver," she said, "how happy I am!"

For a moment he hesitated; then he gathered her into his arms. "It's worth everything to know that you are mine, Roxane," he said huskily.

The rustle of silk skirts in the hall brought him out of his rhapsody.

"It's your mother," warned the judge, and when the rather stout lady in mauve entered she found two solemn young people on each side of the judge's desk. That Roxane's plumed hat was slightly over one ear and that a golden hair strayed across Oliver's coat collar were details which escaped her.

"I thought Roxane was never coming down," she panted.

"I found Oliver here," Roxane explained, "and, oh, mother, a rich relative has left him a fortune."

"A fortune—Oliver!" scoffed the stout lady. "Why, he hasn't a rich relative in the world."

"The fact remains, my dear," the judge asserted blandly, "that he has had a fortune left him by a distant cousin."

"What cousin?" was the demand. "You needn't tell me, James."

"Tut, tut," the judge cautioned. "Don't accuse the boy of lying."

"I'm not accusing anybody," Mrs. Vandiver stated. "I merely asked you what cousin, James."

The judge mopped his forehead. The sudden arrival of the ladies of his household had not given him time to perfect details.

"I'm not sure of the name, Abbie," he stammered. "Perhaps Oliver can satisfy you."

But Oliver weakened. "I think Mrs. Vandiver is right," he said unsteadily. "Until I can offer satisfactory proof of my good fortune it will be well for me to give up Roxane."

"Oliver!" The wail was from his betrothed, but he went on. "There may be some mistake."

"Of course," said Mrs. Vandiver, with aggravating sureness. "Come on, Roxane." And she dragged her unwilling captive from the room.

Left alone, the conspirators stared at each other.

"Now you've done it," said the judge disgustedly. "Why couldn't you bluff it out?"

"Not with Roxane's trusting eyes on me," said Roxane's lover.

"Well, if you knew Roxane's mother as well as I do," the judge growled, "you would know that it's the only hope."

After a depressing silence Oliver ventured, "Perhaps if you approached her differently you might get better results."

The judge smiled. "How do you mean?"

Oliver blushed. "Oh, well, I've sometimes thought, sir, that if you appealed to your wife's sense of romance—"

"Abbie's sense of romance!" the judge ejaculated.

"You must have some memories that would make her feel tenderly toward you—toward us—"

"It has been so long," the judge murmured and found himself suddenly curious as to when he had ceased to think of Abbie as the princess in his fairy tale. When had he ceased to write sonnets to her ringlets, odes to her eyebrows?

"You see, I'm afraid we're beyond

romance," he murmured. "She wouldn't understand."

"It seems to me," said the wise young Daniel, "that a woman is never too old to resist an appeal to her heart."

The judge pondered. "I asked her to marry me on Oct. 15 twenty-two years ago."

"There," Oliver exclaimed, "and today is the 14th, and tomorrow is an anniversary. Oh, you've got to take advantage of that, judge."

"I took her to ride in my buggy," the judge rambled on sheepishly. "There was a big round moon!"

He stopped suddenly. "But of course we've grown sensible since then," he said wistfully.

"Well, you just ask her to go to-morrow," Oliver recommended, and then the judge gave in.

The next evening he presented himself at the dinner table armed with a long paper box.

"For you, my dear," he said to his wife as she came in with Roxane, heavy eyed and pensive.

The box, being opened, showed rosy carnations.

"The nearest thing I could get to pinks," the judge explained.

"Why pinks?" his wife demanded.

"Abbie," he reproached, "have you forgotten that twenty-two years ago you wore pinks?"

Mrs. Vandiver's expansive features expressed a blank surprise. "What happened twenty-two years ago?"

"I know," Roxane interrupted. There's the picture on father's desk—you have on a blue dress and a bunch of pinks—you said you looked that way when he asked you to marry him."

The blush that stole up toward Mrs. Vandiver's gray curls gave her a curious look of youth. "Why, James," she faltered, "did you really remember?"

"Yes," said the judge, feeling that had he never forgotten life would have held deeper meanings.

Mrs. Vandiver came around and kissed her husband. "Thank you, dear," she said, with a gentleness that made Roxane stare.

After that it was not hard to propose a ride by moonlight, and Mrs. Vandiver, consenting, came down in a blue gown that became her elderly plumpness almost as well as that other blue gown had set off her girlish figure.

The judge's electric runabout replaced the buggy of long ago, and as they went quickly through the city and out into the country roads that astute gentleman refrained from any mention of Oliver and Roxane. All his talk was of things of the past.

"How happy we were, Abbie," he said at last, and his wife responded wistfully. "Very happy, James."

A golden moon hung above the dark line of the hills. The air was sweet with the spiciness of the pines. The judge was thrilled with bygone emotions, and his arm was comfortably about his wife's waist.

Then in the rapture of the restoration to her place of romance of the Abbie of long ago he forgot Oliver—forgot Roxane.

He was brought back with a shock when Mrs. Vandiver said as they turned toward home: "I've been thinking of Roxane. If she really loves Oliver I don't know but I ought—"

"Of course you ought," said the judge promptly. "Give them your blessing, and let them be as happy as we are."

"I am afraid that Oliver has been fooled by some of those firms who hunt up lost heirs," the lady pursued. "Of course Oliver was sincere, but I don't think much of the fortune story."

"No," mendaciously, "it didn't seem probable."

"You can settle something on them after they are married," said Mrs. Vandiver. "We haven't any one to leave it to but Roxane—and—and it would be nice to have them engaged on the same day that we were, Jimmie."

Jimmie! The magic of the youthful appellation made the judge feel like a colt.

"Let's get them married and you and I will go off and have another honeymoon," he proposed jubilantly.

"We will have the time of our lives."

The ripple that came from his wife's lips was a silver echo of the golden laughter of other days.

"We will," she said and lifted her face to him in the moonlight, "and now let's go right home and tell the children, Jimmie."

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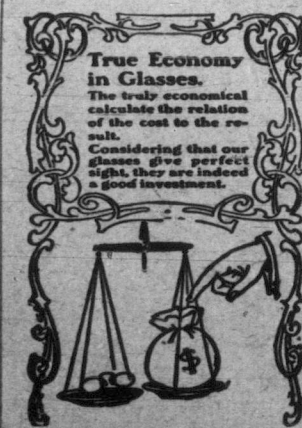
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