

# SUSPENDED SENTENCE

Mercy Byrne met Nigel McLeod at the corner of Front and Prins street running into him with her umbrella at full tilt, all beset as she was by bundles, wind, rain, and a hat that needed a second hat-pin to skewer it to her dark hair. Nigel had no umbrella, but then he did not need any, for his old coat and cap were weatherproof from much exposure anyway.

"Whither away, Mercy?" he demanded. "Home," Mercy paused, panting. "I've been to the glove factory."

"How many dozen this time?" "Eight. Oh, I'm getting along splendidly, Nigel. I earned \$2.70 last week."

Nigel looked at her with compressed lips and frowning brows. Yet behind the scowling expression was a tenderness that made Mercy's pale cheek flush. "Two dollars and seventy cents," he said. "Why, I earn that in one day, and, Mercy, you know, I'm saving the most of it for you." Mercy caught her breath. "I must go, Nigel," she murmured, and, led past him, only guessing at his last muttered speech. Her heart pounded painfully as she hurried home. Even these occasional meetings with Nigel, rare though they were, kept her happy with hope. He was so true, so dependable. Why, she could not live without the thought of him. He was saving and waiting for her! Nothing else mattered in the whole wide world. So she entered the house with a smile on her lips and a singing in her heart that even the sight of Aunt Avery's sour, dark face could not still.

Aunt Avery sat wrapped in her shawl, nursing a chill. "Shut the door quick as you can," the old lady commanded. "I'm freezing." As Mercy obeyed, she added: "Why don't you stay all day? Here it is past noon. Don't tell me it takes you three-quarters of an hour to walk to the factory and back again. You're been gabbing with that Nigel McLeod."

Mercy did not speak. She swung away her things and opened her bundle of gloves.

Aunt Avery rose and scrutinized the work. "More of these tan ones," she said. "You don't get as much for these. Well, get me some dinner. I've had the tea kettle over this good while."

Dinner was soon ready. They were just sitting down when a knock came at the door. Mercy opened it. A woman stood there with a covered dish in her hand.

"It's a bit of steamed pudding for your dinner—your dinner, mind Mercy," she said in a low voice. "Though you may profligate her with a small portion of it, if you choose," she added, smiling.

"Mercy!" Aunt Avery spoke sharply. "If that's Alice Ordway, have her come in; I want to see her."

"Here I am, Mrs. Avery," the woman said. She entered and stood close to the old woman's chair.

"Yes, I see you. You're big enough to be seen," Aunt Avery's caustic allusion to size made Alice Ordway, who was large, flush. "Now, what I want to say to you is this, Alice, and I want you should heed me. I'll have no more of your ailing and abetting Nigel McLeod and Mercy here in their foolish notion for each other."

"But it isn't a foolish notion," Alice spoke earnestly. "It's the real thing. Think how long it has lasted! Ever since we all three were kids at school. And Nigel is one of the best fellows living. My husband says there is none better. He would make Mercy happy. Don't you want Mercy to be happy?"

"Mercy will be happy if she behaves herself and does her duty by me. Now I know right well what you'd all like to have me do. You'd like to have me shut up shop here and go off to my son's in Ohio. Of course he'd do well by me, as is his duty, but I can't bear his wife, so I shan't go there to please anybody. When I took Mercy in that time her mother died. I did it so I could have some one to look after in my old age. Mercy knows that, and she ought to be willing to repay me for all I did for her. Anyway, I know what her duty is, if she does not."

"Well," Alice laughed in exasperation, "it's a good thing that you've got meek little Mercy there to deal with. Instead of me, Mrs. Avery, I would run away with Nigel some fine day and leave you to make the best of it." She laughed again as she went out the door, but her voice shook with anger.

Across the little round table Aunt Avery shook her teaspoon at Mercy. "Next time she goes setting you up

against your duty, Mercy, and you let her," she said, "I shall speak a great deal plainer than I did. I never did like the blood she comes from and if you're sensible you'll have naught to do with her."

As usual Mercy kept silence, but tears of despair dimmed her big, bright eyes. Alice, with the best of intentions, had only made matters worse by intervention. She felt as though she were doomed to gloves for the rest of her life. Soon after dinner she sat down to work while Aunt Avery slipped away to her room for a comfortable nap. The meagre little room grew still. Eight dozen gloves! And she was not swift-handed. Nature had intended her for nothing more complicated than gentle domesticity. She lived to work and scrub and sweep and it agreed with her, but two months of this work was narrowing her shoulders and bringing a wan look to her young face. Yet Aunt Avery expected her to earn enough for them both. And all the time she was earning, Nigel wanted to give her happiness. Would he not grow weary of proffering the precious gift of his love and bestow it upon somebody more appreciative? She wasn't the only girl who liked him, but she was the only girl thus far that he had ever liked.

Thinking such thoughts it was not to be wondered at that the editors in Mercy's hand should slip and cut the glove. She sat staring at the disaster, realizing that she would have to pay for the pair. What would Aunt Avery say to that?

Then it came to her that if she went to the factory at the factory at once and told her of the accident she might receive more lenient treatment than otherwise. Aunt Avery was sure to sleep an hour and she would be back long before the end of that time. Catching up her hat and umbrella and the damaged glove she hurried softly from the house.

Alice Ordway ran out as she was going by bareheaded in the rain. "I'm sorry I said anything to your aunt, Mercy," she said. "It didn't do any good. She's determined to keep you with her and spoil your happiness. And she will, for you're just the kind to let her. You give up too easy, and that makes Nigel give up, too."

Mercy shifted her umbrella over Alice. "Well, she did take me in and do for me, whatever her motive. And duty is duty. She has brought me up to respect that first of all, and I do. I suppose she has two reasons for not wanting to go to Ezra's home though he says he'd be good to her, and I know he would. But Aunt Avery wouldn't be as independent there as here—Oh, I mustn't stand talking another minute, Alice. I'm on an errand and I must hurry," said Mercy.

"If I were Nigel—" Alice began and then gave a start. "Who's going into your house, Mercy? I believe it's Tom Appleby, and he's got a telegram! What do you suppose?"

"I don't know," Mercy turned pale. Her first thought was of Nigel, then reason overcame that fear. She thrust the umbrella into Alice's hand and ran toward home as fast as she could.

When she reached the door she found that the loud knocking had aroused Aunt Avery. She already had the telegram in her hand and was staring at it in amazement.

"Read this, Mercy," she said. "Can't make head or tail of it."

Mercy read. "It's from Ezra!" she exclaimed. He's sick and his wife has sent for you."

Aunt Avery pondered for a moment. "Well, if he's sick I suppose I'll have to go," she said, reluctantly.

Alice came over and helped her pack and saw her to the station. Then she took Mercy home with her. "And don't you ever mention gloves shan't go there to please anybody. When I took Mercy in that time her mother died. I did it so I could have some one to look after in my old age. Mercy knows that, and she ought to be willing to repay me for all I did for her. Anyway, I know what her duty is, if she does not."

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## Questions and Answers

Q. What provision is made for soldiers not sufficiently recovered from wounds or other sickness on their return to Canada?

A. The are treated by the Medical Department of the Militia, special treatment being given to special cases as required, until normal health is restored.

Q. In cases where a long course of treatment is required to ensure recovery, where can it be obtained, and who pays for it?

A. In cases which do not yield to the treatment given in the military hospitals, a man is given his discharge and is taken over by the Medical Branch of the Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment Commission, which does everything possible to cure him, regardless of time or cost. This includes free surgical treatment where such is required.

Q. What about disabled soldiers requiring artificial limbs?

A. These are also provided by the Department and in addition the man is given the necessary preliminary treatment before the artificial limb or other appliance is fitted.

Q. If a limb or other device requires repair or alteration, will the Department provide for that too?

A. Yes, all alterations, repairs or replacements necessary from time to time are made free by the Department.

Q. Can a man get any other free treatment?

A. Yes. Free treatment of eyes and teeth is provided, as well as glasses, special boots for deformities, braces, etc.—in short, everything that science and ingenuity can devise to mitigate as far as possible the disability a man has suffered in the service of his country.

Q. Suppose a man discharged as well should, some time later, suffer a recurrence of his old trouble, can he get any medical assistance from the Government?

A. Yes. If his illness is caused by war-time injuries, whether from wounds or disease, he is entitled to free treatment of such ailments as often as they recur, for the rest of his life.

Q. If a man returns so disabled or enfeebled by army life as to be unable to resume his former occupation, what is to become of him?

A. The greatest care has been taken to meet this contingency, and a special department, known as the "Vocational Re-Training Branch," organized to give such men the opportunity of learning, under the most favorable conditions, some other trade or line of work suited to their present physical capacity, which will enable them to take their places once more as self-supporting, self-respecting citizens, and to render their disabilities as little of a handicap in the social and industrial life as possible.

Q. When a man is in hospital undergoing treatment, do his dependents receive any assistance from the Government?

A. Yes. Both the man and his dependents are provided for. He receives his regular army pay, and his dependents an allowance sufficient for their needs.

Q. Even though the man has received his discharge?

A. After demobilization, when a man is at a loose end as far as civilian life goes, can he get any reliable information or advice as to the best and quickest means of finding his place again in the life of the community, getting a job, re-establishing his home, etc.?

A. He certainly can.

Q. Where, and from whom?

A. The Information & Service Branch of the Re-establishment Commission has been established for this special purpose.

Q. Where can a man get in touch with this branch?

A. He can't get away from it.

Q. Why?

A. Because the Branch makes it its business to get into touch with all soldiers even before they leave England and France, finds out their qualifications and experience, what they wish to do on their return, and where they wish to locate.

Q. That's all right as far as it goes, but is that all that the Branch does for the men?

A. By no means. It keeps in touch with them from the time of its first introduction to them. It is at all in close touch with the Government and is therefore in a position to give first-hand information as to what the country is doing and is prepared to do for the returned men.

Q. What about the kind of employment and prospects for the future?

Q. Where is this Branch located?

A. It is not confined to one centre, but is being extended throughout the Dominion. It will place men in every Government Employment Office, of which sixty-four are being opened from coast to coast, and where the needs of returned men are of first consideration.

Q. How do the men in this Department know what a returned man needs?

A. For the best of all reasons: They are themselves returned men, up against the same problems, with the same desire to resume their place in decent society and forget the horrors of war, which no civilian can fully appreciate, and lastly, in many cases, with the same disabilities.

## Rev. Capt. Clarke Writes

The Bowmanville Statesman publishes the following letter from Rev. Capt. Clarke, who was at one time stationed here as pastor in Tabernacle Church, afterwards of Bowmanville.

Germany, Dec. 29, 1918.

Dear Brother Sellery:—

I have just closed my first full day's Sunday work with my new battalion and it has been a busy one. My day's program began with a communion service at 9 a.m. for my own battalion, 2nd, Battn. Canadian Machine Gun Corps, and the 14th Field Ambulance, whom I also serve. At 9.45 a.m. I had a church parade of the above units. At 10.30 a.m. I had a church parade of the 4th and 5th Battalions of Canadian Engineers, who are quartered in the same city and whom I also serve. At 11.15 a.m. I had a communion service for these latter units. At 1.45 p.m. I held a Bible Class, which already has a membership of 20. We have elected to call ourselves the "Victory Bible Class." We have also elected to study the general course of subjects to which we have given the title "Victories of the New Testament," beginning the series next Sunday with the first victory, "victory over temptation," Jesus in the wilderness.

—Matt. 4. At 6 p.m. I held a song service. We had slides prepared with the hymns and threw the hymns on the screen. We also had a very effective film put on. At the close of this last service four young men came forward of their own accord to me to say how much the services of the day and evening benefited them. One of them is an R.C. I took the home addresses of their parents and have concluded the duties of the day of the decision to which their boys have come in the service of the blessed Master.

My own battalion and the 14th Field Ambulance as well, are quartered in the commodious buildings which up till November were a vast plant for the manufacture of powder and war munitions. Among other provisions for the entertainment of the employees of this great munition plant, the Germans had erected a large cinema theatre fully equipped. This as the right of an army of occupation we have taken over for our own use, plant, cinema and all. The Y.M.C.A. use the cinema every evening of the week, putting on free movies for the men. I have it all day Sunday for my chaplain duties. I also turn in with the Y.M.C.A. on the week evenings at the close of the evening's program and conduct a closing "good night" service of song and prayer for all those who tarry for the service.

The 4th and 5th Battalions, Canadian Engineers, are quartered in other parts of the city. They parade to the cinema headed by their band. So my duties in serving all the Canadian corps quartered here in this city leave me but few idle moments either on weekday or Lord's Day.

Centrally located among the many buildings of the great powder works is one vast building in which are immense kitchens, messrooms for officers and N.C.O.'s, canteens and men's dining hall. The latter is big enough in itself to seat comfortably and commodiously 6,000 men. This dining room is about 300 feet square.

Here on Wednesday last, Christmas Day, we served a plentiful Xmas dinner to the men of the 2nd Battn. The Field Ambulance occupied one corner of the great space, and then there was plenty of room left if we had so chosen to have a football or cricket field, one or both, in other parts of the enormous room.

Choice meats, oranges, nuts and raisins, candies, plum pudding, etc., were provided in abundance for all. Right here I may say how much the generosity of the Girls' Patriotic Society of Bowmanville is helping on the holiday cheer among our soldiers, and the kind of employment and prospects for the future.

Q. Where is this Branch located?

A. It is not confined to one centre, but is being extended throughout the Dominion. It will place men in every Government Employment Office, of which sixty-four are being opened from coast to coast, and where the needs of returned men are of first consideration.

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In addition to the good things of Xmas cheer, but in purchasing good literature, books, games, etc. The 10 pounds which they sent me has reached me here in the right season and I am deeply grateful to the Girls' Patriotic Society.

There are three branches of the army which have been specially stimulated by the contingencies of this war: one line is in the developments in the air service, another is in the invention and extensive use of the tanks, while a third is the enormous multiplication and use of machine guns. One can readily see that no service has made greater demands upon the courage and physical fitness of the individual soldier than the service of the machine guns. This has been very generally recognized, so much so that the machine gun section has received the somewhat gruesome but significant nickname of the "suicide club." As one might conclude, they are all young men. Not only of the ranks, but the officers as well. They are a splendid aggregation. I do not think any finer can be found, not even among our flying men.

Such are the changes occasioned by rapid advance and the, at that time, disorganized condition of the lines of communication, that it took me over a week to reach my new unit after I had left my former post with the 12th Battn. C.R.T. To this time was added another four days during which time I was hunting my baggage which had got lost or stolen—I am strongly inclined to think it was stolen. I am glad to say that I finally received all my belongings. But this episode of my journeyings necessitated my sojourn at the great army base at Etaples for three days, in prosecution of the hunt.

During my stay at Etaples I went one day to the great cemetery where lie our heroes whose last earthly journey was from the near-by hospitals that are here located. The plots and crosses are arranged with beautiful military precision. The soil is very sandy and dry. The graves are carefully tended and the most exact record of each is kept. Among the many names none stirred me more than the crosses which mark the last resting places of those three noble Canadian nursing sisters whose lives were a forfeit to the Hun barbarity in the cruel bombing raids on Etaples and its hospitals last summer. At the time of these heinous crimes I was with my battalion located just a few miles away. But even at distance of several miles the roar and shock of the dreadful explosions were nerve-racking and terrifying. And these noble but doomed Canadian girls were in the midst of it, bravely doing their duty by the wounded and dying wounded Canadians. There were their crosses, and names—Nurses Lowe, MacDonald and Wake. Whether surging grief or fierce anger was uppermost in my soul, I cannot say. But both struggled for mastery over me. It will take a long time before these events can be considered with any degree of calmness. If sometimes our fellows here go beyond bounds: one cannot wonder.

We are well over the Rhine into Germany—in the great Cologne bridgehead occupied by the British Army. The day I "crossed the Rhine" I was not in circumstances that conduce to sentimentality. As I marched over the great tower bridge at Bonn the day was mild. I wore upon my person, besides my usual clothing, a sweater wool vest and a heavy Jaeger wool sweater coat under my tunic, my leathern jerkin over my tunic, and over all my waterproof. On my back a full haversack, water bottle, gas mask and steel helmet. Over my arm was thrown my British warm—and I was warm. Nevertheless to consider that it was only four months since our British and French armies with the Canadians as a spear-head, on Aug. 8th had decided in front of Aミア to stake all in the great adventure and challenge to the final decision the victorious German hosts, and that day to find myself marching unchallenged across the Rhine into far Germany—well it seemed like the stuff of which dreams are made.

Events are moving swiftly here, and now there seems every probability that all of the Canadian corps will be safely back in Canada before May flowers bloom again.

There is not an evening when I bow before my Maker that I do not remember you all of our congregation in Bowmanville in heartfelt petition. I beseech an interest in all your prayers that I may be enabled in some measure to serve our splendid lads here in the things of God. Yours lovingly,

W. G. Clarke, Capt. 2nd Canadian Div., B.E.F.

DIED

ROSEVEAR.—In Sidney on Thursday, Feb. 6, 1919, William Rosevear, aged 76 years 10 months.

The man who makes a statement and then adds, "I can prove it," rather gives one the impression that his unsupported word is not to be credited.

## Snake is Friend of Agriculturist

President of Reptile Study Society Says it Destroys Farm Pests.

New York, The pretensions of the snake, as a domestic animal of great value, were advanced by Allen S. Williams, President of the Reptile Study Society of America, at a dinner at the Chinese Delmonico's in 201 St.

The society of which Mr. Williams is the head, middle and end, has undertaken a campaign of education on behalf of the snake, claiming that as a destroyer of rodents and other small pests on the farm he is the friend and benefactor of man. For the poison-bearing snakes, Mr. Williams holds no brief, and concedes the necessity for their extermination from the earth, but of the non-poisonous ones he had this to say at the banquet while you could have heard a pin drop:

"To the lay mind the idea of the black, or the quarter, or