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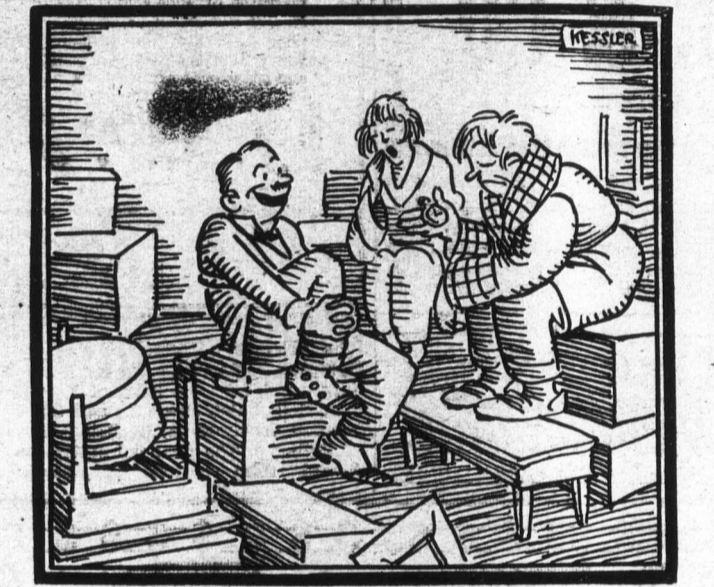
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## Stephen Leacock

### MR. BUTT LIVES FOR HIS FRIENDS

A Man Who Tirelessly Sacrifices Himself to Advice and Assistance.

It is the hallucination of Mr. Butt's life that he lives to do good. At whatever cost of time or trouble to himself, he does it. Whether people appear to desire it or not, he insists on helping them along. His time, his company and his advice are at the service not only of those who seek them but of those who, in the mere appearance of things, are not asking for them. You may see the beaming face of Mr. Butt appear at the door of all those of his friends who are stricken with the minor troubles of life. Whenever Mr. Butt learns that any of his friends are moving house, buying furniture, selling furniture, looking for a maid, dismissing a maid, seeking a chauffeur, suing a plumber,



"EVERY LITTLE WHILE JONES WOULD SAY, 'BY JOVE, IT'S HALF PAST TWELVE,' OR 'IT'S ONE O'CLOCK,' AND SO ON"

or buying a piano,—he is at their side in a moment. So when I met him one night in the cloak room of the club putting on his raincoat and his galoshes with a peculiar beaming look on his face, I knew he was up to some sort of benevolence. "Where are you off to?" I asked, for I knew he wanted to say it. "I'm going out to see the Everleigh-Joneses,—you know them? no?—just come to the city, you know, moving into their new house, out on Seldom Avenue." "But," I said, "that's away out in the suburbs, is it not, a mile or so beyond the car tracks?" "Something like that," answered Mr. Butt.

"And it's going on for ten o'clock and it's starting to rain—" "Pooh, pooh," said Mr. Butt, cheerfully, adjusting his galoshes. "I never mind the rain,—does one good. As to their house, I've not been there yet but I can easily find it. I've a very simple system for finding a house at night by merely knocking at the doors in the neighborhood till I get it." "Isn't it rather late to go there?" I protested. "My dear fellow," said Mr. Butt warmly, "I don't mind that a bit. The way I look at it is, here are these two young people, only married a few weeks, just moving into their new house, everything probably upside down, no one there but themselves,—no one to cheer them up,—he was wriggling into his rain coat as he spoke and working himself into a frenzy of benevolence—"good gracious, I only learned at dinner time that they had come to town, or I'd have been out there days ago,—days ago—"

**Mr. Butt Sets Forth**  
And with that Mr. Butt went forth into the rain, his face shining with good will under the street lamps. The next day I saw him again at the club at lunch time. "Well," I asked "did you find the Joneses?" "I did," said Mr. Butt, and by George I was glad that I'd gone—quite a lot of trouble to find the house (though I didn't mind that; I expected it)—had to knock at twenty houses at least to get it,—very dark and wet out there,—no street lights yet,—however I simply pounded at the doors until some one showed a light—at every house I called out

get the right one I shall move him. I like an apartment far better than a house."

So the Joneses in due course of time were moved. After that Mr. Butt was very busy selecting a piano, and advising them on wall paper and woodwork.

They were hardly settled in their new home when fresh trouble came to them.

"Have you heard about Everleigh-Jones?" said Mr. Butt one day with an anxious face.

"No," I answered.

"He's ill—some sort of fever—poor chap—been ill three days, and they never told me or sent for me—just like their grit—meant to fight it out alone. I'm going out there at once."

From day to day I had reports from Mr. Butt of the progress of Jones' illness.

"I sit with him every day," he said. "Poor chap,—he was very bad yesterday for a while,—mind wandered—quite delirious—I could hear him from the next room—seemed to think some one was hunting him—'Is that damn old fool gone,' I heard him say."

"I went in and soothed him. There is no one here, my dear boy," I said, "no one, only Butt." He turned over and groaned. Mrs. Jones begged me to leave him. You look quite used up," she said. "Go out into the open air." "My dear Mrs. Jones," I said, "what does it matter about me?"

Eventually, thanks no doubt to Mr. Butt's assiduous care, Everleigh-Jones got well.

"Yes," said Mr. Butt to me a few weeks later, "Jones is all right again now, but his illness has been a long hard pull. I haven't had an evening to myself since it began. But I'm paid sir, now, more than paid for anything I've done,—the gratitude of those two people—it's unbelievable—you ought to see it. Why do you know that dear little woman is so worried for fear that my strength has been overtaxed that she wants me to take a complete rest and go on a long trip somewhere—suggested first that I should go south."

"My dear Mrs. Jones," I said laughing, "that's the one place I will not go. Heat is the one thing I can't stand."

"She wasn't nonplussed for a moment. 'Then go north,' she said. 'Go up to Canada, or better still go to Labrador,'—and in a minute that kind little woman was hunting up railway maps to see how far north I could get by rail. 'After that,' she said, 'you can go on snowshoes.'"

She found that there's a steamer to Ungava every spring and she wants me to run up there on one steamer and come back on the next."

**Gratitude of Friends**  
"It must be very gratifying," I said.

"Oh, it is, it is," said Mr. Butt warmly. "It's well worth anything I do. It more than repays me. I'm alone in the world and my friends are all I have. I can't tell you how it goes to my heart when I think of all my friends, here in the club and in town, always glad to see me, always protesting against my little kindnesses and yet never quite satisfied about anything unless they can get my advice and hear what I have to say."

"Take Jones for instance," he continued—"do you know, really now as a fact,—the hall porter assures me of it,—every time Everleigh-Jones enters the club here the first thing he does is to sing out, 'Is Mr. Butt in the club?' It warms me to think of it." Mr. Butt paused, one would have said there were tears in his eyes. But if so the kindly beam of his spectacles shone through them like the sun through April rain. He left me and passed into the cloak room.

He had just left the hall when a stranger entered, a narrow, hunch man with a hunted face. He came in with a furtive step and looked about him apprehensively.

"Is Mr. Butt in the club?" he whispered to the hall porter.

"Yes, sir, he's just gone into the cloak room, sir, shall I—"

But the man had turned and made a dive for the front door and had vanished.

"Who is that?" I asked.

"That's a new member, sir, Mr. Everleigh-Jones," said the hall porter.

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Chicago Express, 9.11 p.m.  
GOING EAST  
Ontario Limited, 8.0.7.48 a.m.  
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