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## The Rosary of Mr. Nimrod Briggs

By WILLIAM DUDLEY PELLEY.

### PART III.

The sun went down around forty-three. A wind blew up and overcast the sky with clouds. Outside was a cold, raw, slushy spring night. Six o'clock came. The boys and girls laid down their work; the motor on the hynotype was shut off; there was usual jostling, jostling crowd washing up around the sink. Only, this night, all the talk was about the robbery and the whereabouts of the Robbins and the possibility of his ever being caught. Mr. Nimrod Briggs did not join the crowd. He bent over his type case, his face a troubled study.

Finally he went over to his board. The ing place and got his supper. The clouds gave down a cold, raw spring rain. Underfoot it was slushy and disagreeable. It was excellent pneumonia weather.

Nevertheless, after a supper, having appeared to reach a decision, he buttoned his coat around him, fortified himself with a pipe of fresh tobacco, took an umbrella, and started forth.

Down School street he went, across Mill, over the flats—until he had left the town behind him. There were no street lights out on the North Foxboro road. The going was very bad. Yet, the worse conditions grew, the more resolute Mr. Nimrod Briggs seemed to become.

It was an eerie place—that old Stevens house—as Nimrod Briggs drew near to it in the murky darkness. He knew his location fairly well from memory—from Sunday afternoon walks when he had passed it. But to come upon it at night in the search for a young thief—it was a job for a full-sized man with strong nerves.

Mr. Nimrod Briggs entered the yard. He went up to the creaky verandah. He fumbled in his vest, found a match, struck it.

By its light he saw only the naked verandah, the closed storm doors, the drawn and fastened blinds. Leaves from the previous autumn, packed down by the winter's snows, still lay in the corners. An empty skeleton woodbine blew in the raw wind and tapped against the woodwork.

Nimrod tried the door. It was locked. Quaking inside, the little man went to the front windows opening on the piazza, and tried them. Both windows were locked too. He was about to leave the piazza to try the back door, when a hull came in the wind washing through the naked limbs of the maples out by the stone wall of Nimrod Briggs ran cold. For he had heard a sound—a weird wild cry. More than that, the cry came from inside the tenanted, forbidding pile above him. With teeth a-chatter, knees quaking, the old printer waited.

It came again. It was a human voice. It was crying out a name!

Mr. Briggs waited. Then came another lull, and again the cry—clear, agonizing, hysterical:

"Mary!"

Mr. Briggs' fright abated in that moment. He picked up his hat and umbrella, and, despite the darkness and the puddles, he went down over the steps and began to feel his way around to the rear of the house.

At length he found a kitchen window that responded to his upward push, and in the dark he crawled up somehow, and went over the sill inside.

He lowered the window behind him, and listened, fearing to strike a match. "Mary!" came a moan again—a cry of anguish, the whole trailing off into senseless babble.

"I'm right!" exclaimed the printer.

Mr. Briggs struck a match. The kitchen in which he stood was furnished for summer occupancy. On the shelf above the dry and rusted sink he saw a small brass lamp. He lifted it down and shook it. There was oil inside. He dabbed the flame to the wick, and with shaky hands got on the glass chimney.

Then through the strange house Mr. Briggs started on tiptoe, nervously himself before opening each door.

Outside one particular door, at last, he listened—listened to senseless, pitiful babble going on within, in the cold and the dark, and the ghostly abandonment of the place and the hour.

"Georgie!" he cried. "It's only me—Nimrod Briggs from the printing office. Don't be scared, Georgie; it's only Nimrod Briggs!"

Pushing open the door into a small bedroom, the printer peered within. The boy lay on a sheetless bed. There were a couple of smelly old horse blankets for covering. He rolled over when Nimrod Briggs entered the spiky place, and his eyes were hard and glassy.

"It's only Nimrod Briggs," commented the boy, as if there was nothing unusual about his being there. "Good old Nimrod Briggs. Oh, I know you, Mr. Briggs. You gave me

two dollars to get some food last week . . . Mary, this is Nimrod Briggs from the printing office."

The printer was startled. For a moment he thought there was a third person in the room. Then he went into the room and closed the door. Curtain and blinds were drawn—no one could see the light from the street; so he set down the lamp.

"I see you found Fred Babcock's keys," remarked Nimrod sociably.

"No, I didn't find 'em. Someone answered the ad and brought 'em in that next noontime, when I was in the office alone," the boy told him.

"They left 'em with me to give to the bookkeeper. But I had an idea I could save money, and—Mary, this is Mr. Nimrod Briggs of the printing office—Nimrod Briggs I wrote you about."

"Yes, yes!" cried Nimrod nervously, striving to soothe the boy in the delirium of his fever.

Nimrod Briggs sat down by the sick boy's stolen bed. For a long time he sat there, only the smoky oil lamp lighting the scene.

"Was you ever in love, Mr. Briggs—in love with a girl that was sweet and pretty and good and loved you like hell in return?" demanded the boy.

Mr. Nimrod Briggs said nothing, but his withered lips closed hard.

"We was all alone in the world, Mr. Briggs, she and I," the boy went on. "I was only seventeen; she was twenty, going on twenty-one."

"And probably twice as old and wise, for all that!" thought Mr. Nimrod Briggs to himself.

"But the difference in our ages wasn't nothin', Mr. Briggs. She loved me and I loved her. She worked in a news-candy factory; I worked in a newspaper office. That was while I was learning my trade. After I'd learned my trade I was going to take a job somewhere at man's wages, and send for her."

Mr. Nimrod Briggs nodded.

"The night before I came to go away, we took a long walk, Mr. Briggs. We took to the edge of the bay across from the city. It was a sort of misty evening, Mr. Briggs. The whole world was raw and cold and lonesome; and we looked at the lights of the city across the water, and it seemed as if it was us two against the whole world. There was nobody to mind, nobody to care. I was afraid of the morning, and the weeks that were coming. I said, 'Mary, let's get married to-night; and when I've landed that job up in Bruce County that's advertised in the trade paper, I'll send for you.'"

"You didn't have the money to take her with you then?" asked Nimrod.

"No; I didn't have the money, only to pay the minister and the license, and my railroad fare to the job. And I married her that night—oh, Gawd, it seems years ago, and it was all over so soon, I was frightened!"

"And yet, it was bindin'—bindin' for life, bindin' as they make 'em, son."

(Continued in next issue.)

### Dangers of Celluloid.

Celluloid is being used to a greater extent than formerly for the manufacture of toilet articles, including combs and backs of hair brushes, and for children's toys. The very inflammable nature of this material represents a serious fire hazard, and one which has received much attention from insurance and fire protection associations. Stringent regulations are laid down for safety of employees and property during processes of manufacture, while very little attention is paid to the dangerous nature of celluloid in the hands of the public.

The Professional Fire Brigades Association of England at a meeting recently dealt with this subject. It was suggested that legislation should be passed prohibiting the use of celluloid for children's toys, owing to its inflammability. The National Fire Protection Association in its quarterly bulletin refers to the ignition of a celluloid comb through friction while combing hair.

Owing to processes of manufacture many products are placed on sale which are imitations of non-hazardous materials, such as tortoise shell, ivory, etc. These should be distinctly marked, to prevent accidents. It is of the utmost importance that care be exercised in the use of celluloid or similar inflammable substances under a variety of names.

Practically all of the electric power used in the Italian city of Milan is obtained from hydro-electric plants in the Alps.

## A PARADISE FOR SKI-MEN



Preparations are already being made for the annual carnival to be held at Banff amidst the glories of the Canadian Pacific Rockies. Banff is ideally situated for winter sports and this season the dates have been fixed from January 29th to February 5th inclusive. The Secretary writes that the programme is to be considerably extended. He says:

"Our Ski Hill has now been completed in accordance with the suggestions made by the world's champion, Anders Haugen, of Brooten, Minn., and we are confident that a new world's record will be established on our Hill this Carnival. We have decided to offer a substantial cash prize to the man who can beat the present world's record and to supplement this cash prize with a further prize of \$10.00 for every foot or portion of a foot by which the record is broken on our hill. We will also follow the same principle in connection with the amateur championship only in that case the inducement or reward will be in the shape of an especially attractive prize. We have at the present time four different jumps, so that we will be in a position to stage competitions in all classes of this very spectacular and hair-raising sport.

"We expect that ladies hockey will be a very important factor in our sports this season. We have already been advised that the ladies of Vancouver, under the leadership of Mr. Frank Patrick, of professional hockey fame, expect to compete. The Regents, the Champions of Western



Canada, of Calgary, the Patricia's, also of Calgary, a team from Edmonton, a team from Vulcan, Alberta, and perhaps teams from Winnipeg and Ottawa are all expected to be on hand and compete with Vancouver and Ottawa for the Championship of Canada. A very elaborate trophy, together with ten very attractive and costly prizes, will in all probability be announced a little later in connection with this event.

"An ice palace will be constructed on a basis far more extensive than anything heretofore attempted and the resident engineer of the Dominion Government is now at work preparing the plans for same. We expect this palace, when illuminated, will be a view that will long live in the memories of those who will be fortunate enough to visit us and see it. The palace will be stormed at different times during the Carnival, by representatives of all the

different sports indulged in, and it is expected that the fireworks display on these occasions will be most interesting.

"Special attention will again be given to art and fancy skating, and competition in these items on our programme promise to be very interesting. The Connaught Skating Club of Vancouver, with a membership of almost three hundred, has written saying that the Club will be well represented, and if we could be assured of some entries from Eastern Canada and the States, together with the assured entries we will have from Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton and Saskatoon, this feature of our programme would be one of the biggest events ever attempted in Canada. Application will be made to the Amateur Athletic Union of Canada to have all these contests representative of the Canadian Championships."

keeping their feet so close together that the heel of one foot touches the toes of the other. Each player must notice which square the toe of his foot is in when he steps off the stick for that number contains his fortune. Those who step off in the first third marked off by the colored line have to pay a forfeit or do some special stunt. Those who reach the end without stepping off are allowed put their hands into a box and draw out a fortune; they also win as a prize a doughnut or an apple. The game makes plenty of fun, for everyone can play it, and it is not too boisterous for the house.

### Feed the Winter Birds.

If you want to have some birds around to protect your garden in the spring, feed them a little in the winter. It does not take much. A piece of suet tied to a tree, a little grain or weed seed in an open box nailed to its side to a tree or post will cost you nothing and will pull many a bird through some rough places in the winter. They will soon learn about it and you will have lots of friends. Put the box where you can see it from the window, and you will enjoy the company. They are not beggars; they will pay their board.

### Household Hints.

Peanut butter can be made at home. Put freshly roasted peanuts through the food chopper, first removing the red skins. Grind as finely as possible and add salt.

Bathe a bruise with vinegar as soon as accident happens if possible; lay a cloth soaked in vinegar on the bruise, renewing when dry, and there will be little discoloration.

Olive oil will not become rancid after opening can if two lumps of sugar are put into it.

Bacon will be crisp if the fat is poured off while it is cooking.

Seeded raisins may take the place of sugar in cornbread. It is delicious.

Left over cocoa can be used in making gingerbread in place of milk.

Ants will keep away from pantry shelves where a few cloves have been strewn.

A strip of asbestos or an asbestos mat nailed to the ironing board is convenient and useful.

A ten cent dish mop is very handy to use where the floor mop will not reach. Oil and use under pianos, bookcases, etc.

Long handles on brooms, brushes and dustpans save the back. Put them away clean.

Avoid using strong soaps and powders when washing fine decorated china.

Keep empty spoons and slip them over the nails in the hookless closet. They are a great protection to the clothes.

When through using oven the door should be left open until oven is cold. This prevents sweating and consequently rust.

A teaspoon full of vinegar and granulated sugar will stop hiccoughs. Repeat if necessary.

Pour vinegar over fresh paint that has been accidentally spilled. It can then be wiped up with a soft cloth.

## The Latest in Knitting

The Corticelli Wool Book, entitled "Fall and Winter Sports, No. 1," is a chunk full of the newest and most up-to-date color illustrations and knitting directions for winter wear. Caps, vests, scarfs, sweaters, stockings, trouses, etc.

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## Run Over by a Ship.

Many men have been run over by a wagon or a carriage and survived, some men have been run over by an automobile, and lived to tell the tale, and one man has been run over by a man-of-war. That is what happened to Mr. Harry C. Johnson when he fell from the jib boom of the U. S. S. Annapolis.

The next thing I remember after falling, he says, is striking the water on my back with my hands and feet in the air. The great curving cutwater, striking me on the top of the head, rolled over me and passed on.

Up to that time I had literally no time to think. Opening my eyes under the water, I found myself directly beneath the ship, half on my back and half on my side, with that black hulk above me moving as express-train speed.

My first thought was to swim clear. In spite of my efforts, however, the suction drew me back against the ship, from the bottom of which I bounced off like a cork.

For what seemed hours I lay beneath the ship, striving to escape the powerful suction. All the time the swish of the propeller, drawing nearer and nearer, and the thumping of the propeller shaft, turning over and over in the shaft-ally, drummed in my ears and considerably increased my apprehensions. At last I reached the stern and was sucked helplessly toward that whirling propeller! My body was wrenched from head to toe. Everything grew black before my eyes, and I felt myself going down—down!

Hitherto I had not thought of breathing. Now the effort to hold my breath and the desire to exhale maddened me, and I tore at the water frantically in a desperate effort to reach the surface. My vision cleared somewhat but my bursting lungs seemed to lose all their power, and I exhaled. A million bubbles rolled over my face and eyes on their way to the surface. I did not dare to inhale. I held my breath through sheer will power, but it was torture.

But there is a limit even to will power, and at length almost involuntarily I inhaled deeply. Instead of the choking salt water, a rush of sweet, fresh air filled my lungs. I opened my eyes, afraid that I was suffering from a delusion. My head was above the water!

After the first shock of the blow from the propeller, my wounds did not bother me; in fact, but for a dull ache I should not have known that I was injured. Having breathed my fill of air, I glanced about me. Straight ahead, about a hundred yards away, floated a copper life buoy—one of those big affairs, lighted up with phosphorus, that are carried by all men-of-war. Being a good swimmer, I immediately set out for it. When I got to it I was quite exhausted, owing to the shock and to the amount of blood that I had lost. But I clung desperately to the life buoy, until I was picked up by one of the lifeboats that had set out from the ship shortly after I had fallen overboard.

### Mine Dangers.

Coal mining is a more dangerous occupation in winter than in summer, because explosions of coal-dust are more liable to occur.

Ventilating fans at the mouth of the mine force fresh air into the underground workings. It is laden with moisture; but it comes out dry. Experiments made at one mine in Pennsylvania showed that there was loss of fifty tons of moisture from the air each twenty-four hours.

In summer the air is relatively humid; it carries more moisture. In cold weather it tends to be dry. The dryness of the air, if the latter holds coal dust in suspension, increases liability of explosion.

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