

ORIGINAL STORY

Written For the Monitor Sentinel Prize Competition

Too Obedient

(By "Lillian.")

Mrs. Hannington experienced all those troubles that most housekeepers have with what they are pleased to term their "bird help."

Her husband, into whose unsympathetic ears were daily poured all her household trials, was sometimes unfeeling enough to hint that a part of the blame perhaps laid at her own door. This was an insinuation that good Mrs. Hannington indignantly repelled.

"There isn't a woman on the face of the earth easier to get along with than I am as you ought to know very well by this time."

Mr. Hannington very rudely made no verbal comment to this assertion, whatever his private opinion might have been.

However lax Mrs. Hannington might be in regard to her own, she certainly had very decided ideas as to the duties owed her by those in her employ, and which, as stated in her own words, consisted in "doing as they were told, and asking no questions."

But it was not always easy finding help combining those two essential requisites, as the frequent changes in her household testified.

It was not until she secured Bridget Maloney that there was any prospect of her obtaining the treasure she had been so long searching for; then her hopes revived. Bridget was a tidy-looking Irish girl, whose rosy, good-natured face and large blue eyes seemed to be in a state of continual wonderment.

With a grim, don't-question-me look on her face, Mrs. Hannington began her usual catechism.

"I suppose you understand general housework and plain cooking?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Now, Bridget, I have two rules which I require to be strictly kept by all those who work for me."

"Yes, ma'am."

"One of the rules is, that you are to do as you are told and ask no questions. That is, when I tell you to do a thing, you are to do it without any whys or wherefores."

"Yes, ma'am."

"The second rule, that you are to make yourself useful. That is, if you see anything that ought to be done, you are not to wait for me to tell you, but go and do it. Do you understand?"

"Yes, ma'am; I'll be sure to remember, ma'am."

For some time everything went on nicely. Mrs. Hannington was delighted with Bridget; it was "yes, ma'am" to all she was told to do, and that was the end of it, so far as talking was concerned.

"She is going to prove a real treasure," was Mrs. Hannington's emphatic assertion to her husband.

"I hope so, my dear," he replied, a little dubiously. "It strikes me you have had real treasures before, that turned out to be anything but such."

"Oh! But Bridget is different; she does exactly as I tell her, without replying a word."

"Oh!"

And here the conversation ended.

One day Mr. Hannington sent home some tomatoes, the first of the season. Mrs. Hannington carried them to Bridget, telling her they were "to be served for tea," who responded with her constant "Yes, ma'am."

A few hours later, Bridget and the tomatoes made their appearance in the parlor, the former wearing a very puzzled look.

"Ye said these were to be for tea, ma'am. Did ye mean—?"

Mr. Hannington was present at the time, and being desirous of impressing him with a good idea of the discipline she maintained, Mrs. Hannington replied with no little dignity:

"I meant exactly what I said; go and do as I told you, and make no further ado over it."

Mrs. Hannington had company for tea.

"Where are the tomatoes I sent home?" inquired her husband, as he looked around the well-spread table.

"Bridget must have forgotten them," said Mrs. Hannington, giving the bell an impatient ring.

She had been bragging about the obedience and fidelity of her "new help" to her friends, and was not a little provoked that the omission occurred.

Then taking up the teapot she proceeded, passing the usually fragrant beverage around.

"What is the matter with the tea, I wonder?" asked Mr. Hannington, seriously regarding the contents of his cup. "It looks and smells mighty queer."

At this moment Bridget made her appearance.

"Where are the tomatoes?" asked

her mistress.

"Sure, ma'am, an' they're in the teapot; you said they were for tea."

At this Mr. Hannington, who was eagerly listening, made a bolt for the door, to indulge in a fit of irrelative laughter.

On his return to the table he found his wife had vanished to the kitchen to make fresh tea.

When she came back, no mention was made of Bridget's too obedient mistake. But it was ever a standing joke with Mr. Hannington.

"She has not her equal on the two continents for making tomato tea," he would say very gravely, whenever his wife alluded to the treasure she possessed in Bridget. But Mrs. Hannington did not care for this; indeed, she seemed to be proud of what she considered proof of her faithfulness in her instructions.

She soon, however, had convincing proof that one may have too much even of a good thing.

"I am going out," she said to Bridget, one morning, "and while I am gone I want you to make a clean sweep of the parlor and sitting-room. Be sure and move all the furniture, so as to get the dirt out of the corners."

Mrs. Hannington had no sooner disappeared than Bridget set herself at the task, for which she had an especial aptitude and liking. So active and smart was she that, when three hours later Mrs. Hannington returned, it was with difficulty she could get into the hall on account of the various articles of furniture that blocked up the way.

"What does all this mean?" she inquired, aghast, as Bridget made her appearance, her face beaming with satisfaction, and her arms full of books, vases, etc., which she deposited on the stairs.

"I've moved everything excepting the stove, ma'am," she said, with an air of triumph.

Mrs. Hannington looked in despair around the room that was so pleasant and cosy when she left it.

Bridget had obeyed her orders with great exactness, making "a clean sweep" of everything, the carpet was taken up, and even the pictures taken down and piled in a corner of the hall.

And the worst of all was she could not complain, for had not Bridget done "exactly as she was told, and asked no questions?"

If Mr. Hannington would only remain away until things were placed in order, as the joke was almost more than she wished to bear, at her expense.

Mrs. Hannington had a dog named Fido, a beautiful little creature with long, silky hair, for whom she had an especial pride and affection.

Fido was also very fond of his mistress, following her wherever she went, even to church, if care was not taken to prevent it.

One Sunday morning he followed her to the gate. Mrs. Hannington took him back to the house, saying to Bridget: "Take Fido, and shut him up in some safe place where he can do no mischief."

After dinner, as Mr. and Mrs. Hannington were sitting in the parlor, they heard a stifled sound of barking and scratching, which seemed to come from below. Mrs. Hannington rang the bell.

"What is that noise, Bridget?"

"It's Fido, ma'am. You told me to put him in some safe place, so I put him in the coal cellar."

"How could you do such a thing? He'll be completely ruined! Go let him out instantly!"

Fido rushed in, black as soot, his fine, long hair thoroughly filled with coal dust. Delighted to see his mistress, he sprang into her lap.

Flinging him down, she flew to the further side of the room, screaming: "Take him away! Take him out of the room before he ruins everything in it!"

"Where to, ma'am?"

"Anywhere! Stay, fill the bath-tub with water, and put him into it."

An hour later Mrs. Hannington, having recovered something of her usual serenity, bethought herself of her pet. Summoning Bridget, she said:

"If Fido is sufficiently clean, bring him in and let him dry himself by the fire."

Bridget stared at her mistress in blank amazement. "Sure, ma'am, an' didn't I put him in the bath-tub, an' isn't it drowned he is?"

"Drowned!" screamed Mrs. Hannington; "do you mean to say that you've drowned him?"

"An' didn't you tell me to do it, ma'am?"

"You stupid wretch! I told you to do no such thing!" cried Mrs. Hannington, bursting into tears of grief and vexation. "My poor, little dog-

gie! What have you done with him?"

"I flung him out into the garden, ma'am."

"I won't have him lying there, you unfeeling thing!" sobbed Mrs. Hannington. "Go, finish your work and bury him."

Bridget disappeared, to return at most immediately.

"If you please, ma'am, I can't bury him."

"Don't tell me that you can't do it!" stamped Mrs. Hannington, now fairly beside herself with anger. "Go and bury him instantly! Don't let me see you again until it's done."

Bridget vanished again.

A few moments later, Mrs. Hannington heard furious barks, which ended in a prolonged howl, and her youngest boy rushed in crying:

"Oh, mamma, Bridget is trying to kill Fido! She half-drowned him in the bath-tub and now she is trying to cover him in a hole!"

Mrs. Hannington was not long in reaching the spot and rescuing her pet from the hands of the astonished Bridget, whose Celtic blood began to rise at the indignation and, as she considered, unfeeling reproaches that were lavished upon her.

"You said I was to do exactly as I was bid, an' ask no questions. Sure an' it's hard pleasing you, anyway. Give me my wages, an' let me go."

Having thus discharged herself, Bridget departed, her only fault, (like many of us) as briefly summed up by Mrs. Hannington—"being too obedient."

Whatever perfections were required of her successor, we may be sure that Mrs. Hannington did not stipulate that she was "to do exactly as she was told, and ask no questions."

ILL HEALTH IS MORE EXPENSIVE THAN ANY CURE.

This country is now filled with people who migrate across the continent in all directions seeking relief, and gold cannot buy. Nine-tenths of them are suffering from throat and lung trouble or chronic catarrh resulting from neglected colds, and spending fortunes vainly trying to regain lost health. Could every sufferer but undo the past and cure their first neglected cold, all this sorrow, pain, anxiety and expense could have been avoided. Chamberlain's Cough Remedy is famous for its cures of colds, and can always be depended upon. Use it and the more serious diseases may be avoided. For sale by W. A. WARREN, BRIDGETOWN; A. E. ATLEE, ANNAPOLIS ROYAL; and BEAR RIVER DRUG STORE.

MUNICIPAL OWNERSHIP.

At the present time when the subject of municipal ownership is attracting so much attention everywhere, it would be wise to consider the opinion freely expressed of such persons as Robert P. Porter, financial editor of the London Times. He is strongly opposed to the idea, and quotes facts and figures, and makes comparisons between private contracts with municipalities and cities and the city ownership itself, all against the latter. He sums it up thus:

"If you will make a careful and impartial investigation, you will ascertain that taxes are higher and the municipal debt much larger in the cities that go in strongly for municipal trading, than the cost of service is no lower and the quality and condition no better."

"My advice to the taxpayers of American cities would be: Insist on a stringent supervision and control of the public utility companies by the municipality. But do not hamper them with any restrictions that will prevent their extending and improving their service, and except for your water and sewerage systems, steer clear of municipal ownership. The service is bound to cost more if performed by the city. You will build up a political machine to throttle your own taxpayers and you will reap no corresponding benefits."

BABY SWALLOWED CARBOLIC ACID.

The only child of A. J. Morton, post-master of Ashby, C. B., swallowed carbolic acid on Monday night and died soon afterward. The father had the acid for a toothache, and the child, a boy of fifteen months, took the bottle from a window-sill and drank the contents.

McKENZIE AND MANN PURCHASE NEW RAILWAY.

Toronto, December 14.—D. D. Mann Vice-President of the Canadian Northern railroad, stated today that his company had purchased from the Virginia lumber company, the Duluth, Rainy River and Winnipeg railway which extends 95 miles through the state of Minnesota from Fort Frances to Virginia. It is intended after a time to extend the road 60 miles farther to Duluth. Mr. Mann said the main object of the C. N. R. in purchasing the road was to get connections with Chicago for the main line to Winnipeg. With the acquisition of this line, which will shortly be taken over, the C. N. R. will cover nearly 15,000 miles in all, of which all but 250 miles is now in operation. The new line, it is understood, will pay from the first, as Virginia Lumber company, the Edward Hines Lumber company, of Chicago, and the Meyerhausers, of St. Paul, the biggest holders of limits in United States, have all had a hand in engineering the deal, and have guaranteed it sufficient traffic to ensure its success. The Meyerhausers have agreed to use the C. N. R. exclusively in shipping lumber to Duluth. In addition to timber carrying the C. N. R. will get its share of the enormous output of iron ore in the Minnesota iron district which it taps.

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EXAGGERATED.

A fire on steamer Boston on her last passage from Boston to Yarmouth on Friday evening, 4th, caused a little commotion on board for a few minutes. It started in an oil locker at the extreme end of the boat and considerable smoke poured from the compartment. The flames were quickly put out. Some damage to the carpet in the saloon resulted from water. The telegrams sent from Boston to the St. John and Halifax papers that the fire was in the hold among a cargo of oil, and was so bad that Capt. Simms made ready to abandon the ship were all unbecome. Every precaution was being made, but the crew had the flames under control from the outset, and the steamer was but little damaged. She took her place on the route on Saturday evening.—Yarmouth Herald.

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16.46	* Clarence	20.24
17.03	Bridgetown	20.00
17.30	* Grandville Centre	19.37
17.46	Grandville Ferry	19.20
18.04	* Karadele	19.04
18.22	Ar. Port Wade Lv.	18.40

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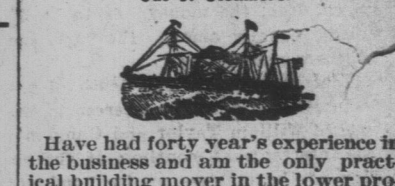
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