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# SAVE

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## Vernon Pope

By JANE OSBORN

Whenever Hester Fey had ten cents left in her purse after she had bought her luncheon, paid her carfare and bought her evening paper out of the 45 cents she allowed herself for "spending money" every day, she went to a little basement flower shop and exchanged that silver piece for a rose or a couple of carnations, a few daffodils or pansies, or any other bloom that that small sum would secure.

"Don't you ever buy candy?" the girls in the office would say to her when she steadfastly refused to share with them a little bag of licorice drops or chocolates that they brought back with them after luncheon. "Every girl has a sweet tooth; it's funny you haven't."

"Well, maybe I do like sweets," Hester would say. "But to me flowers are so much sweeter than candy. And a rose on your desk will stay sweet for days, and the candy is all gone in an afternoon."

On her way from business she used to walk up the avenue past the big florists' windows, and there look eagerly in to see the flowers, whose names she did not know, that were arranged to tempt the folk who could afford to pay as much for a box of flowers as Hester received for working a whole week.

Then Hester read in the paper that a great flower show was to be held early in the spring. The tickets were 50 cents, and that meant that five dimes would have to be saved, and that five times when she might have bought a little nosegay she would have to go without. To spend 50 cents for a single evening's entertainment seemed like extravagance to Hester, so she determined to go to the flower show, on the day that it opened, as soon as she was through work at her office and remain there with the flowers till the doors closed. She would have from half-past five till eleven o'clock, if she chose just to wander about and smell the sweetness and revel in the color of the flowers that the paper said were to be even more gorgeous than in previous years. To be sure, this would mean going without dinner; but she bought a sandwich, which she ate rapidly at a lunch-counter on her way to the show, and this satisfied her craving for food.

At first Hester wandered about the great hall in a daze, now standing transfixed before a table on which nothing but roses were placed, and then hurrying from one rock garden to another, searching out in each new and hidden beauties, till she knew the characteristics, but not the names, of all the plants that ever found place in rock gardens. If any one stopped to notice the enthusiastic young girl as she stood with hands clasped and eyes gleaming before one of the exhibits, Hester did not know it, for she was too intent on enjoying the flowers every minute of the hours she had to spend to notice the other spectators at all.

After she had wandered about for over an hour, she finally stood lost in admiration and almost perfect content before the tulip exhibition that had been awarded the first prize. It was the exhibition of the millionaire, L. K. Pope, whose world-famous tulip hot-houses and gardens made certain his taking the first prize for this class of flowers every year. Hester had not read her evening paper every day without knowing the reputation that Mr. Pope and his family had gained in fields other than tulip raising. Mr. Pope himself, as every one knew, was at the time seeking a divorce from his third wife, and his only son, young Vernon Pope, had given interesting

reading recently in the evening papers because of his elopement with a musical comedy star of considerable reputation.

Hester didn't in the least approve of the Pops, but she did love their tulips, and when she heard one woman who stood for a while beside her say to her companion, "I can't even admire the exhibition when I think what kind of people the Pops are," Hester wondered for a brief minute whether she were weakening in her very rigid standard, because she could admire the Pope's tulips as much as she did. It seemed to her, as she stood there feasting her eyes on the sea of golden tulips, as they were as morning sunlight, that just to grow flowers like that would make people want to be good and decent.

The exhibit, as every one said, was the most attractive of any shown, for tulips, in beds of red and yellow, pink, white, and of that rich dark red characteristic of the "black" tulip, were arranged about a little Dutch cottage that had a real little door and two windows with white muslin curtains. If Hester had any well-defined idea of heavenly mansions it was of some such little white-curtained Dutch cottage as this, surrounded by beds of glorious poppies and paths of pure white pebbles like those she now gazed upon.

A young man came out of the cottage, and Hester watched him eagerly. Of course, it was young Vernon Pope, and as he opened the door she looked to see if there was a girl in the cottage; if there was a girl, of course it was the dancing girl he had eloped with. For a moment Hester

envied the dancing girl, just because she might claim admittance to the white-curtained cottage. But no girl followed Vernon, and there appeared to be no one left in the cottage. Vernon crunched his way down the white-pebbled path to the white-painted fence that hemmed in the exhibit. A young man that stood on the outside of the fence appeared to be a friend of Vernon.

"Congratulations!" said the man on the outside of the fence. "I knew you would get the first prize for tulips, but you've taken the prize for the best show of any sort in the exhibition. I got it straight from the judges just now."

The smooth-shaven young Vernon showed supreme satisfaction. "You don't say!" he commented. "That certainly will make Pop happy. He was so keen about this cottage effect, and he spent so much importing those Dutch bulbs this year."

"It's sure a slick show," commented the bringer of good news. "Couldn't be better."

"Yes, it could," corrected Vernon, and Hester permitted herself still to overhear the conversation. "We were going to get some nice little blonde-haired girl to dress in Dutch costume and add local color to the cottage. Pop got the costume straight from Holland, and we were going to get one of the maids to dress up; but the only blonde one got huffed at the last minute, and the brunette ones wouldn't do. I'm going to start out tomorrow and get one. The trouble is we don't want the kind of show girl you'd get from a theatrical agency. We want a nice, fresh-looking girl, that looks as if she had grown up in a tulip bed."

Just then the young man's eyes shifted, and for the first time he saw Hester. There was a slight start in his manner, and Hester somehow became aware that she had flaxen hair and that she certainly did not look like a show girl. The young heir to the Pope millions lowered his voice and drew the young man he was talking to aside. Hester would have followed them to hear their conversation, but it was obviously impossible. However, she still stood there by the white fence drinking in the beauty of the color, and waiting to hear what she might when the young man returned to the fence.

It was only a few minutes later when young Vernon returned, and, coming very respectfully to her, asked her with considerable embarrassment if she would be willing to be the Dutch girl. She was just the type, he said, and if she didn't need the money she could contribute it to the Red Cross. He said that he was very anxious to have some one by the next afternoon—Saturday, because his father was coming in to see the show for the first time, and he had so wanted a Dutch girl in the cottage. Hester thought a minute. Saturday afternoon was a half holiday. She could "give notice" the first thing in the morning. She was only a cog in the wheel at her office; another girl would do as well as she on Monday morning. For a whole week she could spend her days there in that wonderful tulip garden. She accepted, and before long she found herself alone in a little dressing room donning the Dutch peasant costume that was apparently made just to fit her small, plump figure.

Of course, the young man fell in

love with her, and, of course, was at the end of the week he told her so. Hester, who was a very strict principled little girl, was as troubled as she had ever been in her life before. She really did like him; she felt that she could not let him go. Still—

"But, what about that beautiful dancing lady you eloped with?" she asked him naively. And the young man laughed and laid his hands on her shoulders tenderly. They were inside the little Dutch cottage a few minutes before the afternoon session of the exhibition began.

"You didn't think I was Vernon Pope, did you, little girl? Bless your heart, you thought that, did you? Why, I'm only the head gardener's son. But father and I get more out of the Pope millions than the Pops do, for we are lords of the estate that young Vernon is too sophisticated to enjoy. They don't know one tulip from another. They just 'go in' for them because every millionaire has to go in for something. So you'll marry me, won't you? Even if I am Tom Dawkins, gardener, instead of Vernon Pope, millionaire!"

And Hester honestly could not see why any girl would not a hundred times rather have married Tom Dawkins than Vernon Pope, with all his millions.

**Opaki Hard to Capture.**

The home of the opaki, in the western half of equatorial Africa, is a forest cloister 600 miles long, 180 miles wide and 700 miles from the coast—a dismal and inhospitable region of unbroken wilderness. Into this retreat, inhabited by cannibals, strewn with the graves of thousands of white men and visited almost daily with terrific tropical thunderstorms, with intervals of intense and humid heat from a torrid sun, the Lang-Chapin expedition ventured in 1909.

For six years its members stalked the opaki, a mysterious creature, nocturnal in its habits, with a sense of hearing inconceivably acute, and so wary that only one specimen had ever been obtained. Few white men had ever seen an opaki, but, thanks to the determined efforts of Sir Harry Johnston, the gifted explorer and colonial administrator, the British museum was in possession of the remains of one of these animal recluses.

## Children Cry FOR FLETCHER'S CASTORIA

The Canada Food Board says:—

Great Britain and her Allies have been short of butter for several months, and the Canada Food Board have been asked to take steps to relieve the condition which has borne heavily upon the people of Great Britain, France, Italy and Belgium. The pressure upon cargo space has been heavier than ever, since the United States has entered the war, and began moving her troops across the Atlantic. Ships are needed for soldiers and munitions of war, as well as for foodstuffs. The main staple food stuffs naturally receive the first consideration.

To-day in Great Britain one-half pound butter or margarine per month per person, is all that the supply allows, as compared to the creamery butter consumption of two pounds per person, per month in Canada.

The Canadian Government on the recommendation of the Minister of Agriculture and the Canada Food Board, at the request of the British Ministry of Food for increased shipments, has commandeered all the creamery butter made between September 30th, and November 9th, inclusive, in the Provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec for export to Great Britain and Allies.

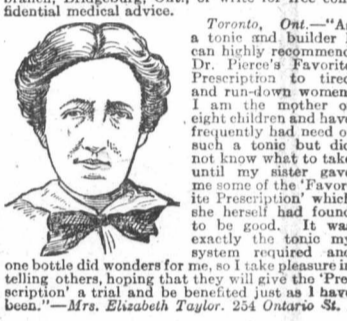
This does not mean, however, that Canadians need be panic-stricken, nor does it mean that there is the least justification for the hoarding or profiteering. There are in store, unaffected by this commandeering Order, 20,000,000 pounds of creamery butter made before September 30th. Dairy butter is not affected by the Order. The average cost to cold storage Companies for butter now in store is about 4 1/2 cents a pound. The profits of Storage Companies selling to wholesalers are limited by the Canada Food Board Order No. 45 of June 5th., to 4 per cent, and of wholesalers selling to retailers to 10 per cent over cost delivered to warehouse.

The present supply of creamery butter in storage, together with dairy butter produced during the next six weeks will be quite sufficient to fill the ordinary demands of the Canadian public.

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