

The Rosary of Mr. Nimrod Briggs

By WILLIAM DUDLEY PELLEY.

CHAPTER I.

If you are one of those rare souls who find delight in the study of your fellow man, live and work a while in the office of a little country newspaper. For in the office of a little country paper in a typical Canadian small town you will get down to the hardpan and the bedrock of human nature. All day long through the front office will filter the paths and bathos of the lives of your kind in the form of news for your columns, births and marriages and deaths, inspiring stories of success and heart-rending stories of failure, cheap snobbery, noble aspiration, unrequited sacrifice; and in the back room you will find the printer folk, perhaps not so picturesque as they were a generation ago, but still very humanly interesting, and each man and each woman with a story.

Quaint characters they were—those men who worked on newspapers in the old days. From place to place they wandered, semi-respectable vagabonds, covering a regular route across the country, working only when their money gave out, laboring long enough to gain the wherewithal to carry them on to the next job, always certain to put in an appearance when an extra hand was needed, equally certain to answer the wanderlust and take the trail again when it was suicidal to the office organization to lose them. They were fairly well educated, because the nature of their business made them so. But drink and misfortune had done its worst for many of them. They were strange, lovable souls, out of plumb with the world around them, asking only that it provide them what precarious living it was necessary to earn to keep out of the toils of the authorities, and that they be allowed to live their lives in their own unconventional way. Before we installed our linotypes in the office of our little local paper, we knew many of them.

One of these was Mr. Nimrod Briggs, the man who was always going to "make a trip around the world some time," who came to us one warm, slushy winter noon-time back in the nineties. He was a seedy little man, as bald as an egg, and he "shook" when he laughed, like a howl of jelly.

Only, Mr. Nimrod Briggs rarely laughed. All these years he has remained a sorrowful-faced mystery—grave, silent, patient, hard-working, yet withal a mystery.

Our foreman smiled when Nimrod Briggs told us his name. Somehow we had always associated the appellation with that mighty hunter before the Lord—swift, agile, dexterous. Here was a stout little man of sad countenance, named Nimrod. We took a couple of looks at his build, at the sag of his trousers, both front and rear, at the faded green coat, at the steel spectacles worn halfway down his bulbous nose, and a mighty merriment ensued in our office.

What his history had been prior to his advent among us, we have only lately learned. But this thing is certain: tramp printer though he had been, he became a fixture in our office, indeed! It was in the late nineties that he came to us; we know, because the husband of Mrs. Mathers, who keeps the boarding house on School street, was killed in the South African War. His widow opened her establishment to support herself, and Nimrod was her first boarder. He has made his home with her ever since.

Strange as it may appear, this patient, plodding, kindly old work-horse had an ambition. We heard it first the week he came among us. The day's work at last brought to a close, Nimrod laid down his pipe and removed his spectacles. He leaned against the ad stone and a faraway look came into his eyes.

"Well," said he, "this looks like a good office and a good job; I guess I'll stick. But, all the same, some day I'm going to take a trip around the world!"

How many, many times, we have heard that familiar declaration from the pursed, withered lips of Mr. Nimrod Briggs. He said it in 1899; he said it in 1908; he said it in 1912. But something seemed to prevent him from realizing that great ambition—and it was money. He was saving his money until he could take the trip like a lord. When the World War broke out in 1914, he still lacked the necessary funds, although his account in the Dominion Bank was commendable. As the war went drearily on, he finally augmented his familiar prognostication with the observation: "And yet, to think things is going to be all knocked to hell over there before I can get around to see 'em!"

A real, dyed-in-the-wool tramp printer in these electric days of linotype machines and web presses is a curiosity. Yet one day last spring we returned from dinner to find waiting around our office a young man who looked as if he had been up against all the brands of hard luck that had been let loose on the world since Pandora.

There was something about the Robbins boy's face we could never quite get over. It was a pitiful face. Aside from the lines of anxiety and hard luck, the right eye was white—going bad from cataract, if he were not half-blind already. The lad's clothes looked as if they had been slept in for a thousand nights; he needed shaving titanicly; his hair was unkempt.

His age couldn't have been twenty; his face was that of an old and life-weary man.

"Say, now, please can I have work?" he stammered to Sam Rod, our editor-owner. "I'll do anything if you'll give me money. Please can I have work?"

Drink wasn't responsible for his condition. There were no traces of that curse upon him.

"Where are you from?" asked the editor.

"I, now, come from down East," the lad replied. "I been working on and off, everywhere. But, now, I'll work faithful, I promise you I will. I'll try my hardest to stick to a steady job."

Sam withdrew and said to Fred Babcock, the real-estate man, who was in the office to advertise for a couple of lost keys:

"Something wrong with that boy, Fred; a screw loose somewhere. He doesn't look like a booze fighter. Yet a lad of his age and stamp ought not to be floating around up here so far from home looking for a job. And to refuse him," he went on, "somehow falls in the same category with assaulting a child or kicking the crutches from under a cripple."

The editor was puzzled. That meant he was interested.

"Do you know the printer's trade? Can you set ads?"

"Yes, sir," responded the boy eagerly.

"All right; we'll see. Take him into the back room, Jim. Turn him over to Mr. Nimrod Briggs."

"And, now, the wages," asked the boy—"how much money can you let me have?"

"Six dollars a week ought to be pretty good pay for a lad of your years, not worth much more than an apprentice."

The disappointment on the lad's wan features was pathetic.

"You, now, couldn't make it ten?"

"Why!" exclaimed Sam. "I can get all the boys I want of your age for six dollars a week to start. Why do you want ten?"

"I, now—well, never mind! I'd rather have six than nothing. But if I work hard I wish you'd make it ten."

"We'll see how swift you are," said Sam; "then we'll know how much you're worth."

Here's this "Lost" ad for the classified column that Mr. Babcock's just brought in. Take it along with those others. Nimrod Briggs will show you the case of six-point. Tell him I said to put you on setting the classified ads for to-day's paper."

(Continued in next issue.)

A Ride in a Pampus Coach.

If you ever take a ride in a pampus coach, your journey may be uncomfortable, but it is not likely to be monotonous. For the pampus stage driver, says a contributor to the Cornhill Magazine, uses his horses as some people use stimulating drinks.

If one hitch of four horses does not produce the effect he desires, he adds another four and then four more, and so on indefinitely. The first four horses are in harness and usually abreast; on rare occasions the second four are also in harness and abreast. All further additions are in the nature of "led" or "ridden" horses that are attached by means of a long rope or a chain to the end of the pole or to the doubletrees.

Suppose you are starting out on a morning after a hard storm of wind and rain has reduced the surface of the earth to an endless succession of sticky quagmires and hard-bottomed, steep-sided gullies. The driver rounds up all the spare horses and Gauchos in the village. He acts as superintendent while a long line of horses is attached to the stage. Any horses beyond the number deemed necessary for immediate use are herded on behind as reserves. Then off you go, and by sheer force of numbers the lumbering vehicle is hauled along at an astonishing rate of speed. There is much jolting, and the landscape dances before your eyes in a dizzy blur.

The advantage of the open-order arrangement of horses becomes apparent at the first gully. Though some of the horses may be belly-deep in mud, and others may be pawing helplessly for footing against a sharp bank, thanks to the extreme length of the formation there is always a sufficient number of animals on firm ground to pull the coach through. Over and through small sink holes and barrancos the coach rushes like a bull at a gate, finally to bring up in an arroyo, with wheels wedged by storm-felled trees. That is what the driver loves; and, with eyes that glow from the joy of combat, he leaps up on his seat and calls for more horses.

The reserves are promptly driven in, more rope and chain are brought out, and every animal directly or indirectly is attached to the stage. Then the big show begins. Some of the ropes run back to the hind axle, some of them run even to the wheels, and a number of the horses pull at right angles to the line of advance. The operation sends shivers through the body of the stage, but since it is built to withstand just such treatment it usually pops out of the mess unharmed.

The Quebec Act, passed in 1774 by the British Parliament, gave the French-Canadians the free exercise of the Roman Catholic religion, the enjoyment of their civil rights and the protection of their own civil laws and customs. It annexed large territories to the Province of Quebec, and provided for the appointment by the Crown of a Legislative Council and for the administration of the criminal law as in England.

Canada's Resources in Wild Game

Our resources in game have a double value: economic and recreational. Under the term "game" are included, in the legal sense, all valuable fur-bearing animals, on which a close season is imposed. The economic value of this class needs no argument, but minks, martens, skunks, etc., are not "game" in the commonly accepted sense of the word. What we usually understand by this term are animals which are hunted primarily for sport. What value have these animals and what claim have they on us for protection?

In the first place, game has a certain value as accessory to the meat supply. It is not of great importance in the aggregate and every true sportsman scorns to be a pot-hunter, yet it is idle to pretend that his appetite is not whetted by the prospect of a well-cooked grouse or a savory venison steak. And this is quite as it should be, for the man who leaves a carcass in the woods to rot is more guilty of wanton destruction than even he who kills for gain. If game breeding were to become as common in this country as it is in Europe, the importance of game in the food supply would be much greater than it now is.

Of more importance from an economic standpoint is the revenue derived from the non-resident sportsman. He pays for his license a fee which bears some relation to the valuable privileges conferred and puts a little money into the Provincial treasury to help defray the cost of game protection. (In Ontario a non-resident's license costs \$25, while a resident pays only \$5 for moose and caribou and \$3 for deer.) In addition, he spends a good deal of money for supplies and services and the money thus brought in by tourists is the main attraction—in the aggregate considerable. In British Columbia, it is estimated that each head of big game is worth \$1,000 to the Province in trade, due directly to the spendings of wealthy hunters. Neither are hunters the only class of tourists attracted by game. Holiday seekers love to find a bit of real wilderness where they can see wild animals, free and untrammelled, in their native haunts. Thus, the Dominion parks in Alberta, where no firearms are allowed to be carried, attract thousands of tourists annually.

Speaking of revenue from tourists leads naturally to the subject of the recreational value of game. What the alien or non-resident considers valuable enough to pay out his good money for, should certainly be preserved for the enjoyment in perpetuity of our own people. Nothing is more invigorating than close contact with nature, but what are the woods and fields, lakes and streams without wild life to lend them interest? Are we to exterminate our glorious fauna and leave posterity an earth on which no life will have survived outside of the human race, except domestic animals and pests that refuse to be exterminated?

To give the wild things a chance is clearly for our own benefit, but, apart from that, have they no right to live? Is mankind to be the most blood-thirsty tribe of all creation, extirpating all other species, wantonly and unsexually, by senseless slaughter? Surely, if an animal is doing us no harm, we can at least let it alone.

Responsibility of Hunters.

The plain fact is that many of our most valuable game animals are being headed fast towards extinction, and the people chiefly responsible are the very class who should be most interested in game preservation, namely, the hunters. Many of these are prone to regard the game laws as a nuisance, as something arbitrarily imposed by a higher authority, though, as a matter of fact, in this democratic country, the game laws are just about what the sporting fraternity will stand for. If they are not drastic enough, it is because the man with the gun is determined to shoot, even if it means that his boy will never have anything to shoot at. Yet it is certain that the health-giving sport the father so much loves will be utterly denied to the son, unless the present generation imposes more restraint upon itself. Game, if game there be, will be artificially reared and will be the monopoly of the rich who can afford to maintain game farms and private shooting preserves. Thus, Canadians who oppose game laws and their adequate enforcement are helping to bring about the undemocratic condition which exists in England, where sport with the gun is an aristocratic privilege.

As an example of a retrograde step, brought about by the pressure of public opinion—which, in the case of game, means sportsmen's opinion, as the rest of the public, unfortunately, is not interested—may be mentioned the repeal of the prohibition of the sale of game in New Brunswick. At

The personal equation is the most important factor in a business operation; that the business ability of the man at the head of any business concern, big or little, is usually the factor which fixes the gulf between striking success and hopeless failure. Each man must work for himself and unless he so works, no outside help can avail him. Theodore Roosevelt.

the National Fur Industry and Wild Life Conference in Montreal last February, Hon. E. A. Smith, in seconding a resolution of the late Dr. C. Gordon Hewitt in favor of the prohibition of the sale of game, said: "Two years ago, I had the temerity to secure the passage of an Act, prohibiting the sale of wild meat in New Brunswick. But it was repealed. I found that I had got ahead of public sentiment. However, I have every confidence that it will only be a short time before the sale of wild meat is again prohibited in New Brunswick."

At the present time, Manitoba and Saskatchewan are the only two provinces in Canada where the sale of game for food is entirely forbidden. Nova Scotia forbids the sale of deer and upland game birds and Ontario and British Columbia of all migratory birds. The last-named province only allows the sale of other game under special regulations. The general practice in all other cases is to permit the sale during the open season of all game legally killed. Unfortunately, this opens the door, in spite of bag limits, to the commercialization of wild game and its slaughter for the market. In Ontario, for instance, venison can be had in almost any hotel or restaurant during November and December. The Provincial law does not require a deer to be killed by the licensee; a group of persons hunting together may kill one deer per license. This practically means that a good shot can kill as many deer as he can get licenses for. Not only that, but they do not even take a sportsman's chance as to whether they get the deer or not. At the National Conference on Game and Wild Life Conservation, held at Ottawa in February, 1919, Mr. S. Harris, of the Essex County Wild Life Conservation Association, stated: "Books of licenses, which get into the hands of various parties, are issued indiscriminately," so that a hunt club may go to hunt with one member in possession of one of these books, and, if they are successful in obtaining game, they attach a license or tag to it and pay for it on their return, but, if they are unsuccessful, they return the book." A fine example of betting on a sure thing!

Practically every state in the Union now prohibits the sale of game. Maine, Massachusetts, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia and the District of Columbia permit the sale of venison under certain restrictions. The sale of game birds is allowed nowhere in the United States, except imported game or birds raised on game farms. Some states forbid even the sale of rabbits and squirrels, animals that we scarcely consider as game at all.

If there is a demand for the flesh of game mammals and birds as delicacies, this market should be supplied by animals raised on farms, as sheep and poultry are. It is the height of folly to exterminate our wild game merely to gratify the taste of epicures. It is not difficult to tag game artificially reared so as to render it easy of identification.

Remedy in Hands of the Public.

The great remedy for the serious game situation in this country is an awakened public conscience. To this end, associations consisting of sportsmen, naturalists, and others interested in wild life, should be formed in every district. These associations would pledge their members to abide by the spirit as well as the letter of the game laws, to secure their better enforcement, to inculcate the best traditions of real sportsmanship, to study the natural history of their neighborhood, to influence public opinion in favor of wild life conservation and to press their views upon the government as to ways in which the game laws may be improved. Some very successful and enthusiastic associations of this character are already in existence, but more are needed.

If you love the wild things and the great outdoors, do something to preserve their life and beauty. Find some neighbors who are like-minded and form a Wild Life Conservation Association. Sportsmen, it is up to you. Dr. W. T. Hornaday, of the New York Zoological Park, says: "If our sportsmen can endure the extinction of sport, I can."

There are all sorts of ways in which the game of Canada can be not only saved but greatly increased, if the sporting public really wants to know about them. But it is useless to give advice that falls on deaf ears. The Dominion and Provincial Governments have their experts, who are ready to help, if their help is requested. For general information, covering the whole country, probably the best official to consult is James White, who is Deputy Head of the Commission of Conservation and Chairman of the Advisory Board on Wild Life Protection, Ottawa.

Taking a Chance.

The fussy aunt was accompanied to the train by her nephew.

"Are you sure this is the right train?" she asked again and again.

"Well, returned the young man, 'I've consulted five porters, two ticket sellers, the bulletin board, the conductor, and the engineer. They all say it is, so I think you might risk it.'"

The North Sea is estimated to contain 1,500 million plaice.

Minard's Liniment Relieves Colds, etc.



Woman's Interests



Diet Suggestions for Indoor Folks.

Probably a large per cent. of the ordinary ills are traceable to indigestion. Eating hastily, eating at irregular hours, eating between meals, a poorly balanced ration, any or all tend to upset digestion and start a train of bad consequences which result in no more than a headache, but is as likely to end up in Bright's disease. Indeed, so important do many physicians consider a proper diet that one has gone so far as to say that if we start the infant right, and see to it that the growing child and adult never sins against his digestive tract, he will never be sick. That is probably carrying the matter beyond the limits of possibility but it would certainly do no harm to experiment along his line of reasoning.

Man is essentially an out-door animal. Probably that is why the folks who are outdoors a great deal engaged in active work do not suffer so much from indigestion as those who work inside. At any rate, the men and women engaged in sedentary occupations are usually the ones who betray symptoms of indigestion in some form. Such persons should make a special study of their food requirements and of all the factors which go to make for good digestion.

Aside from the food itself, many points must be considered. First is thorough chewing to break the food into small pieces and thoroughly mix the starches with saliva. Regular hours for meals is as important as the right selection of food. Growing children and convalescents often need more than three meals a day, but the mid-meal lunches should always be taken at the same hour each day and should be a light food which does not require a long time to digest, as cocoa or milk and a couple of crackers, or an egg beaten with grape juice or orange juice. Plain bread and butter sandwiches for growing children, preferably whole wheat bread, are to be chosen rather than cake, doughnuts, bananas or candy.

Food taken when one is over-tired, angry or excited is as good as wasted, as digestion is retarded under these conditions. If you must eat, choose warm, fluid foods, as soup, gruel, corn meal or oat meal—cocoa, egg noggs, or a custardy pudding.

A wise selection of foods is, of course, essential. Persons engaged in sedentary occupations usually do well to avoid rich, greasy foods, much cream, and concentrated foods, such as cheese, candy and nuts. Such persons should choose roast beef and mutton rather than pork, sausage and fried ham, light puddings rather than pastry, and partake only sparingly of cakes and candy. They should never eat candy except at the close of a meal, and then only a small piece.

Breakfast starting with half a grape fruit or an orange, a not too acid orange or a peach or pear, followed by a small serving of cereal, two small pieces of toast or a muffin, an egg or three or four slices of bacon and coffee, is a good start for the day. If dinner comes at noon, beef or mutton, not too liberal a portion, a medium-sized potato, a cooked vegetable and a raw vegetable as lettuce, endive, celery, celery cabbage, bread and butter and a light dessert, is sufficient. For supper, or lunch, cream soup, or macaroni and cheese, rolls and butter, stewed fruit and a plain cookie, and

coffee or tea with cream should offer no difficulty to digestion.

Below are suggested menus for a day:

Breakfast—Baked apple with two tablespoons of light cream, cup of farina, or cream of wheat with rich milk, two small pieces of toast, one poached egg, coffee with cream.

Dinner—Beef broth and crackers, roast beef and gravy, one cup mashed potatoes, one serving of carrots, lettuce with French dressing, rice pudding, tea or coffee with cream.

Supper or Lunch—One cup cream of tomato soup, two slices of whole wheat bread and butter, stewed peaches, sugar cookie or small piece sponge cake, tea with cream.

Making Good Lard.

To make good lard that will keep well, the following suggestions should be observed:

1. All scraps of lean meat should be removed, as lean strips are almost sure to cling to the cooking vessel and get scorched giving an unpleasant odor to the lard.

2. The fat should be cut into small blocks or strips, from one to one and one-half inches square, so they will "fry out" (try out, the dictionary says) in about the same time.

3. A clean vessel should be filled about three-fourths full of fat and a quart of water poured in. The small amount of water is used to prevent the fat from burning when the heat is first applied.

4. The kettle should be kept over a moderate fire until the cracklings are brown and light enough to float. It is necessary to stir frequently, else the fat will burn.

5. When done, remove from fire, allow it to cool slightly, and then strain through a muslin cloth into a suitable vessel, a large earthen jar probably being the most suitable.

6. To whiten the product and develop smoothness or "grain," it should be stirred constantly while cooling.

7. When solidified cover the vessel carefully and place in a clean, cool, darkened place.

8. Leaf fat makes the highest-class lard. Fat taken from the back, the ham and the shoulders also yields good lard. Gut fat, on the other hand, makes a product that is strong-smelling and off-color. This fat should never be mixed with that obtained from the other parts of the body.

My Laddie's Calls.

A hundred times he calls me
Dear little lad of mine,
Sometimes with face all teary
Sometimes with eyes ashine.
Each grief that needs a solace
Brings closer yet my boy,
And always, first, comes mother
To share each passing joy.

A hundred times he calls me
"Twixt morn and night to see
A blossom in the garden
A bird's nest in a tree.
A bump on cheek or forehead
Where wee feet tripped and fell
A rose thorn scratch that nothing
But mother's kiss makes well.

A hundred times he calls me,
Dear little lad, and so
I miss the lonely moments
So many women know.
For sweeter than the voices
Of all the singing spheres
The calls of little children
That gladden mother's ears.

Edison's Early Struggles.

Fifty years ago Mr. Thomas Edison was so "stranded financially in New York that he hadn't a coin with which to buy food. He was almost starving, and begged his breakfast in the city. Three days later he was watching the tape machine in a certain telegraph office during a big stock exchange rush, when the machine broke down. Edison calmly told the "boss" that he thought he could fix it, and proceeded to do so.

The grateful and astonished "boss" asked the stranger his name and next day put him in charge of the repair business at a salary of \$300 a month.

When the hungry, penniless, out-of-work operator heard the amount he nearly fainted.

A Costly Coat.

In his recent book on helmets and body armor in modern warfare, Dr. Bashford Dean says:

"A shirt of mail in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art contains a quarter of a million handmade and tempered rings, each carefully formed and each separately riveted. If you estimate that a skillful armorer might make and weave together two hundred and fifty of these links in a day, you can see that this mail would have cost its maker, working every day, almost three years' work—a low estimate for making this particular mail. If you allow the maker six dollars a day for a thousand days, such a shirt would therefore have cost its purchaser in round figures, at modern prices, six thousand dollars!"

Minard's Liniment For Burns, Etc.

Boot Heels From Persia.

Boot heels are of Persian origin, and were originally attached to sandals in order that the wearers might keep their feet above the burning sands.

COARSE SALT LAND SALT
Bulk Carlots
TORONTO SALT WORKS
C. J. CLIFF TORONTO