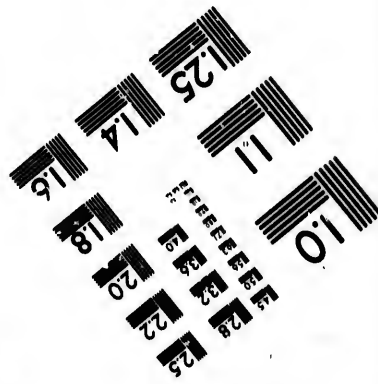
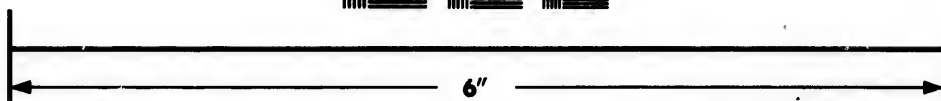
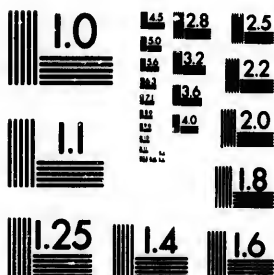


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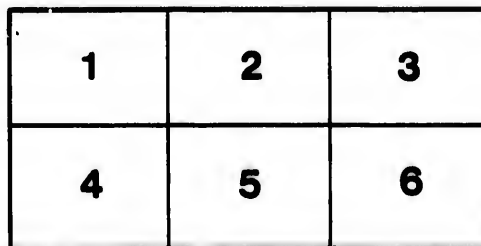
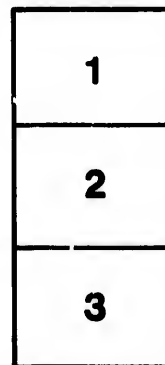
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208 Horticulture no 6

BUY

Your Own Cherries!

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Le Séminaire de Québec

BY J. W. HAMMOND.
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Québec 4, QUEBEC

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1869.

Buy Your Own Cherries!

BY J. W. KIRTON.

IT was about three o'clock on a scorching hot Saturday afternoon in July, when John Lewis the carpenter laid down his hammer, and putting his hand in his pocket drew out a few coppers, 'Just the price of a pint,' as he said to himself, and he resolved thereupon to step across to the 'Golden Eagle,' and have some ale to allay his thirst. Just as he opened the door which led to the 'Bar,' what should he see on the polished counter but a plate of beautiful ripe cherries, the sight of which made John's mouth water so freely that, ere he knew exact-

ly what he was doing, his hand was stretched out to take a few, when the shrill voice of the landlady from behind called out,

‘You touch them if you dare, sir!’

John was startled, but before he could reply, the landlady added,

‘The idea of your taking such liberty! I should like to know what you are thinking about?’

‘Well, missus, I was only going to take one or two to wet ny whistle.’

‘You had better not try it on,’ she said with warmth.

‘Why you won’t mind my having a few. I was so thirsty, and they look so tempting,’ said John, thinking she was joking.

‘No, sir, not one, I have just bought them as a treat for my children; they are

a peculiar sort and very expensive.'

'Well, just let me try one.'

'No,' she answered, with determination in every look, 'not one, if you want any, "buy your own cherries!"'

'Well,' replied John, 'I was going to have a pint of your best, (?) but I think I'll take your advice, and go and buy some cherries instead,' and turning round, he walked out of the shop.

The landlady saw in a moment that she had committed a mistake, and called loudly for John to come back, but this only made him quicken his steps and get away as fast as possible.

'Well, I've done it,' she said, as taking up her plate of cherries, she passed into the bar parlour; 'what a stupid I was not to let him have one or two, he is too good a customer to lose. I must look

out, however, when he comes to pay his score and coax him; he must be won over again if possible.' And with such reflections she tried to calm down her disturbed feelings.

Meantime John hastened down the street looking out for the first shop where fruit was displayed, and as soon as he caught sight of the things he wanted, he called out,

'Here, master, let me have threepen'orth of those cherries, will you?'

'Yes, sir,' said the man, and quickly placed in his hands a small bag containing the cherries, which when John received he returned again to the workshop.

All this had taken place in a few minutes, and the events had crowded so quickly one upon the other, that when

he laid the bag of cherries on the bench and put one in his mouth, its sweetness aroused vividly within him the treatment of the landlady even with additional force, and her words seemed so to 'stick in his throat,' that as he swallowed the juicy fruit, each seemed to give birth to the landlady's words, 'Buy your own cherries.'

'Yes,' said John, 'and this is the way you serve a fellow, is it, after spending many a pound with you? and now to begrudge even a paltry cherry!' and striking his hammer on the nail as he muttered the words—itsecho seemed to answer back to him, yes, 'Buy your own cherries.'

All the rest of that afternoon the words haunted him, and do what he would even the saw and plane echoed

the same advice, and at times he appeared to grow desperate, and from his lips would rush the words, 'Buy your own cherries.' 'Ah, yes,' said he, his wounded conscience galling him, I have bought them too long for her and her children; I will take care of number one for the future, and soon can have not only cherries, but many other sweet things beside.'

At length the bell rang for leaving work, and John walked to the counting house and received his wages, which amounted generally to about thirty shillings; for although he was in the habit of paying frequent visits to the public house, yet he was not by any means what the people would call a drunkard; indeed, he would have felt insulted if any one had dared to apply such a term

to him, and no doubt would have been prepared in *his way* to prove that he only took what he considered did him good, and if he did on a Saturday night sometimes get over the score, while the friendly glass went round more freely than usual, and the cheerful song caused the time to fly fast so that he went home later than usual, it was simply because he was a good fellow, who must do as others do; but if, at such times, the wife complained that the money left was barely sufficient to purchase the needful things for the coming week, he was apt to tell her to 'mind her own business,' and a few sharp words between them would be the result. But, alas! such scenes are too well known to need description, and Mary, like many others, had grown weary with complain-

ing, but nevertheless she determined to do her best to keep the house as comfortable as her limited means would allow, and by kind words and looks to make the house as attractive as possible, feeling assured that by such means she was more likely to draw him *from* the public house,—the opposite course would most likely *drive* and keep him there.

However, our friend John is standing at yonder gate, with his wages in his hand, evidently hesitating what he shall do. Let us draw near, and by doing so we shall hear what he has to say.

‘Well, what shall I do? I must go and pay my score, I don’t wish to be dishonest; if I knew how much it was I would send it; but never mind, I’ll go and pay her and have done with her,’ and away he went.

The moment the landlady caught sight of John, she put on her best smiles, and without giving him time to utter a word, she said, 'I am so glad to see you, John; we have just tapped a fresh barrel of our best,' so drawing a glass and holding it to him she said, 'I wish your opinion of it.'

'No, thank you, I don't wish any,' said John; 'I want to pay what I owe you,—how much is it?'

'Come,' said Mrs. Boniface, 'it's all stuff, take a glass, man! what's your hurry?'

'No, not a drop,' said John, 'I want to be off.'

'Well, will you have a glass of something short?' said the landlady.

'No, nor long either,' said John.

'But,' said the landlady, 'Tom Smith

is in the parlour, and Dick Bates will be here directly, you won't go just yet!

'Will you let me know how much I owe you?' said John, getting impatient, 'or I shall go without settling.'

'Ah! I see now,' said the landlady, 'that I put my foot in it this afternoon and offended you, but I hope you won't mind a few words spoken in haste: come, let us be friends once more.'

'Not a dram will I take here or anywhere else if I know it,' said John, 'and as to offending me, that don't matter that I see, so long as you get your money.'

'But,' said the landlady, while she was looking after the P's and Q's, (pints and quarts) 'I don't like to quarrel with anyone, especially with you; now do let us make it up, and as for the cherries, I have kept them for you; see, (fetching

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them out of the bar parlour) here they are.'

'No thank you,' said John with a smile, 'I took your advice, and went and bought some which were very delicious, and now take what I owe you out of this sovereign, I want to be off.'

'I don't like,' said the landlady, 'really to change this without your tasting something; what *will* you take?' (throwing a sprat to catch a mackerel!)

'Nothing, I say again,' said John, speaking impatiently, and taking up his change, he walked out and soon found his way home.

'Well, I have made a nice mess this time!' thought the landlady, 'and if ever I get caught again losing my temper, I'll be bound it shall not be over such a good customer; if it had been one

of those noisy fellows I shouldn't have cared a bit, but a nice quiet fellow like John, who takes his glasses so regularly and pays up every week; however, I'll look out, and the first chance I get to set him going again I will. He is not going to slip in this way, I can assure him; he is too good to lose without an effort, and when once again I have him right, I'll keep him, I warrant.'

While she was thus scheming John's future capture, he was hurrying home, and reached it much to the surprise of his wife, long before his usual time; she however had only to put the kettle on and while preparing the tea-things, the water boiled.

John sat almost in silence, and took his tea. Mary was on the point of asking him how it was that he was home

so soon, when all at once he put his hand in his pocket, and taking out some money, threw it in her lap saying, 'I suppose you will be going to the market soon, Mary.'

'Yes,' said Mary, and she would have added, and I shall be glad to go soon; but she had learned by past experience, that she must not say too much on Saturday night; so taking up the money she went into the bed-room to get her bonnet and shawl, and looking to see how much he had given her, was surprised to find some three or four shillings more than she usually received.

'I wonder whether he knows how much he has given me,' said Mary; but fearing if she returned to ask, he might want it back, she quickly passed down stairs, and out into the street, afraid

every moment he would be after her for the extra shillings. She had not gone far before she heard some one running fast behind her, and in a moment looked round, thinking it was him, but it was only a little boy playing; so on she went, and quickly visited the different shops, and being a thrifty body spent her money as wise as possible, and the extra amount enabled her to add to the comforts of the family during the next week. When she returned laden from market, she found from what the children told her, that father had been out almost all the time, and feared lest after all, he had gone in search of her. However when he came in soon after, nothing was said on either side, and thus the night was ended. (It is strange how the drink chills the intercourse between man and

wife ; is it not ?)

Sunday was spent in John's usual manner ; in the morning he went out for a walk, and after dinner staid at home to read the paper ; when the shades of evening gathered around, he strolled out and did not return until after 10 o'clock. (How many thus waste God's holy day through the cursed drink !) This being a regular thing with him, no notice was taken of it, yet Mary thought John quiet and dull, and once asked him kindly whether he was well, but he said he was all right, so she did not venture to question him again. All the next week passed off at home without any perceptible change ; but John not liking to return home sooner than usual, went on the Monday night to a Temperance meeting, and was so much interested that when

another meeting was announced to be held not far from there next evening, he decided to go, and from what the speakers said of the good it had done them, he signed the pledge.

On the Saturday when the bell rung and John went to the office for his wages a thrill of joy ran through him, and after receiving them, retired to a quiet corner of the workshop, and looking at the sovereign and a half which lay in his hand, said, 'It is many a long day since I could say that ye both belonged to me; and now I have got ye I'll take good care I don't part with ye unless I get a plenty out of ye,' and clasping his hand and putting it and its contents into his pocket, you might have heard him say, 'I'll buy my own cherries, that I will.'

Mary was much pleased to see him re-

turn even sooner than the week before, (for reasons known to our reader) and soon placed the tea before him, and while bustling about the room, and doing her best to keep the children quiet, she felt almost inclined to say how pleased she was, but checked herself, lest he might when giving her the money stop some for the last week's mistake.

When he had nearly finished his meal, he said 'Here, Mary, you'll be wanting to go a-marketing directly I suppose, there's the money,' throwing it into her lap.

Her heart was ready to sink when she felt the money fall into her hand. 'Ah,' she thought, he has soon topped the overplus of last week; but, thinking by the light of the fire, it looked rather yellow, she went to the window (for it was a narrow court in which they lived,

where the daylight never fairly entered the room except by accident or when a streak of light shot its ray down among them.) 'Can it be possible?' she thought, 'a sovereign and a half!' and an utterance of surprise escaped from her, and she said in a whisper, 'Is all this for me John?' 'Yes,' said John, 'and I hope you'll spend it well.'

'I hope,' said Mary trembling, 'you haven't done any thing wrong to get so much, John.'

'No, my lass,' said John, while his heart trembled with emotion, 'I have done wrong long enough, and I'm going to do right for the future.'

'But,' said Mary,—

'Never mind now,' said John, 'get your bonnet and shawl, and let us both go to market.'

Mary did not need a second order to get ready, all the while wondering how it was to be accounted for; resolving however, while she was tying her strings, that she would wait until John thought proper to give her an explanation; and after bidding Sally and Tommy take care of the other children and the house they went on their way. John then briefly told her the decision he had come to, and hoped she would forgive him for the past, and help him to do better in the time to come; to all of which Mary listened with trembling yet joyful interest. Their conversation was soon interrupted by their approaching the first place that they should call at, which was the butcher's; who when he saw them coming together, ceased crying 'what will you buy?' for thought he, they went

want much, a small joint that everybody else leaves, or some pieces in yonder corner at 4d. a lb., so he continued looking at his stock of meat with his back towards John and Mary.

He was aroused from his reverie by hearing John's voice, 'I say guv'nor, what's this leg of mutton a pound?' and looking round he saw John in the act of handling a piece of meat of that description.

'The idea of your asking such a question!' thought the butcher; but in a moment he said eight-pence!

'Take it down and see what it weighs,' said John.

'Yes,' said the butcher, thinking to himself, 'I'll weigh it, and that will be enough for you, I know.'

'It weighs just 8 lbs., and comes to 5s.

and 4d.' Now you are done, he thinks
'I'll have it,' says John.

'Yes,' thinks the butcher, 'when
you've paid for it.'

'Here, Mary,' said John, 'give him the
money.'

And Mary pushed her finger inside
her old glove, brought out the sovereign,
and laid it on the butcher's block so
carefully, as if she was afraid of rubbing
the gold dust off.

The butcher watched every move-
ment, and thought that all this care was
to be regarded as a sign of deception,
and that the money was bad; so taking
it up quickly, he bounced it hard upon
the block to test its quality, but when its
ring assured him that all was right, in a
moment his face changed its expression
and his voice its tone, while he said with

great politeness,

'Can I send it home for you, sir? and is there any other article, beef, pork, &c., while the change rested between his fingers.

'No,' said John, feeling rather vexed, 'nothing else to-night.'

'Thank you sir—let me see, you live at No. 20 Broad St., don't you?'

'Yes,' said John, and upon Mary taking up the change, they passed out from the shop.

It is not necessary for us to follow them round to the other places; it is only right to say that each shopkeeper was surprised and pleased to receive larger orders and more money, and as a matter of course, showed an extra amount of politeness.

Meanwhile the children at home had their talk about the matter.

'How funny,' said Tommy, 'to see father and mother go out to market together!'

'Yes,' said Sally, 'isn't it?'

'I wonder,' said Tommy, 'whether anybody that father knows has died and left him some money.' And with similar childlike talk they were engaged when

a sharp rap at the door disturbed them.

Sally went to the door, and there stood a butcher boy with a basket and a leg of mutton in it.

'Does Mister Lewis live here?' said the boy.

'No,' said Sally, 'there is no one of that name lives here.'

'It's strange,' said the boy! 'I was told this was the house, isn't this No. 20?'

'Yes,' said Sally, 'this is No. 20, but no one of that name lives here.'

'Well, who does live here?' said the boy.

'My father, and mother, and us,' said Sally.

'And what's *your* father's name?' said the boy.

'They call him Jack Lewis,' said Sally.

'Well, that's the same man, Mister and Jack's all the same,' said the boy, 'and here's a leg of mutton for him.'

'Oh, I'm sure you're wrong,' said Sally, 'we never have such things as them come to our house.'

'But I tell you it's all right,' said the boy, 'and it's paid for.'

'Well, if it's paid for I'll take it in, but I'm sure you'll have to come and fetch it back again,' said Sally.

'Oh, it will be all right,' said the boy, and away he went.

'My word,' said Tommy, 'isn't it a whopper? only fancy if this was our'n

wouldn't we have a tuck in for dinner?'
And the little fellow danced about for joy
—and while he was cutting his capers
(not for the mutton sauce) in this manner,
another knock was heard at the door.

'Here he comes,' said Tommy. But
on opening the door a baker's boy
presented himself with three large loaves.

'Does Mr. Lewis live here?' said the boy.

'Well,' said Sally, thinking it strange,
'My father's called Jack Lewis, if that's
him.'

'All right, here's these loaves for him.'

'Are they paid for?' said Sally.

'Yes,' said the boy, 'come, make haste.'

'Well I'll take 'em in, being as how
they are paid for, but we never have
such big loaves as them, and I am sure
you'll have to fetch 'em back again,
there's a mistake somewhere.'

'There, that's all fudge,' said the boy, and off he went.

'My word,' said Tommy, 'ain't them busters? see sister, they are new, and well baked too, ain't they? only fancy if they *was* ours, wouldn't we make a hole in them soon?'

And again he started off with a dance and a shout, in the midst of which another rap at the door was heard.

'Here they are,' he said, 'I'll bring them to the door.'

But on the door being opened there was a lad with parcels of tea, sugar, coffee, &c.—and the same question was asked. But Sally by this time had decided to take all in that was paid for, at the same time telling each one, 'they musn't be surprised if they had to fetch them back again.'

The greengrocer sent potatoes and cabbages; the butter man, eggs, bacon, and butter, and a few other articles from different shops arrived, until the table began to be quite full.

'I do wish father and mother would come home,' said Sally; 'suppose a policeman was to come and find all these things here, what could we do?'

'I wonder,' said Tommy, 'whether father's going to keep a shop?'

'Don't be silly, Tommy; it would make you still, I know, if we were all to go to prison,' said Sally.

In the midst of this dialogue, much to the joy of the children, father and mother returned, and soon told them that the things on the table, were for the coming week, and that all of them would have a share if they were good;

and giving them a piece each of the new loaf and a bit of cheese, off they were sent to bed and told to be very quiet; but quietness was out of the question, no sooner were they upstairs than they began to talk of the morrow's feasting, and their tongues made such a noise that it awoke the other children, and then Tommy had to tell them that down stairs there was such a wopping leg of mutton, and such big loaves, and lots of other things; and they soon set up a shout which brought the mother to the foot of the stairs, and she said, 'If you children don't be quiet, you shan't have any pudding to-morrow.'

'Pudden, pudden,' said the little ones, 'what's that?' And again the voice of Tommy was heard telling the others that down stairs there was flour and

currants, and that on the morrow mother had promised to make them a plum pudding. Of course, with this additional piece of news, was it any wonder that their eyes were not much troubled with sleepiness, and that long before the time for getting up had arrived, Tommy was showing them by aid of the pillows how big the loaves were, and how mother would make the pudding, and then they wished for the time to arrive when they might be able to experience in reality that the 'proof of the pudding is in the eating.'

However the day was at length fairly ushered in, and to the astonished eyes of the children, the whole of the articles displayed. And it is more easily to be imagined than described how the day passed away with so much to talk about

and so many things to enjoy. And when in the afternoon, while all were seated around the table, mother brought out a plate of nice rosy ripe cherries, was it any wonder that when the children set up such a shout of joy, that Mary's heart was too full to contain its emotion? and while the children were making earrings of the cherries, she drew close to John, and kissing him quietly, the tears trickling down her cheeks the meanwhile she whispered in his ear, 'we may be happy yet.'

And so it was, for in a short time John found that he could buy clothes for his children, and then for himself and wife; and somehow it began to be whispered that he was getting proud, for he moved into a better neighbourhood where he only had to pay about the same rent

nevertheless. And soon after he began to put by his savings in the Building Society, and this enabled him to build a house for himself. Meantime the master finding him more than ever attentive to his work, appointed him as foreman, at an advanced rate of wages, and somehow John used to say, that 'He found it vastly more pleasantly to receive £2 10s. a week for looking after men doing the work, than 30s. for doing it.' And step by step he arose, until he became a master himself; and instead of working he had men to look after it and do it for him. He has built a nice row of houses, from which he can receive sufficient to keep him without work the remainder of his days. His son Tommy is now practising as a physician with a good connection; and the rest of the children

are being well educated, with all the modern advantages of music, &c., and added to this, he and his wife have by the blessing of God, become consistent members of a Christian church; and as far as practicable, hearty supporters of the 'Grand Alliance,' and the Temperance cause.

Working men, the moral is soon told; —It is not how much money a week you earn, but what you do with it when you get it. How many a home comfort in the shape of carpets, sofas, chairs, books, &c., are lost, by the simple fact that the money goes in the wrong way. If you learn nothing else by this sketch, you may learn this, that if you would have a 'Home, sweet home,' you must 'Buy your own cherries.'

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