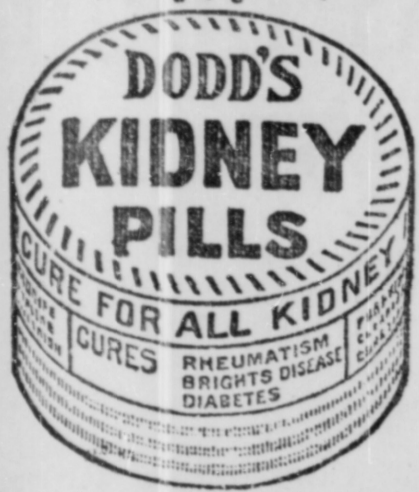


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The Telegraph Message.

By ROBERT BARR

(Continued.)

One evening as Elinor was walking home young Howard met her at a street corner and expressed great surprise at the coincidence. He told her he was on his way to see a sick friend who lived on Sixteenth street, and was quite taken aback when he learned that she also lived on Sixteenth street. He made the brilliantly original remark that this was a small world after all, and asked if he might walk with her, as their paths lay in the same direction. He was further amazed to hear that she rarely took a street car even when it rained, for she was fond of walking, and it turned out that he, too, was a devoted pedestrian. She believed what he said, as women will when they have a liking for a man, and if his conscience did not check him for his mendacity it must be remembered that his was a conscience nurtured in the wheat pit and perhaps somewhat out of working order because of the jars received there. And before he, who is happily perfect, blame him overmuch it is well to take into account the fact that he was already deeply in love with the girl, and much may be forgiven a young man in that disturbing but delightful condition.

The illness of Howard's friend proved to be a case that apparently baffled the medical skill of Disopolis, for the young man was compelled often to visit him, and, of course, as the hours when he was free to do so coincided with those when Miss Elinor was on her way home it is not surprising that the two often met and walked toward Sixteenth street together. At first the girl was seriously alarmed about the illness of the ill-fated friend, but her memory was better than Howard's, and she was astonished when the invalid developed several new maladies each week, bidding fair to become the most complicated instance of human misfortunes that ever appealed to harassed physicians in vain. But at last the hapless patient became no longer necessary and was allowed to depart to the oblivion from which he had been conjured, the pleasure of meeting and walking together forming its own excuse for doing so. Once they encountered old Grimwood taking his shuffling constitutional stroll, ordered by his medical advisers, and he leered at them, lifting his hat as they passed with polite ostentation, but nothing he could do seemed acceptable to Stillson Howard, who scowled at Grimwood's perpetual wink and neglected to return his salutation.

"I suppose it is wicked of me," said Elinor, "but I cannot help disliking that man. Perhaps it is because I know it was his opposition that caused the bankruptcy of my father, although that should be no excuse for me."

Howard replied in a rhapsody which need not be here recorded, for he was prejudiced against Grimwood and made no real effort to do justice to the distinguished talents of the shrewd old man, talking instead of the impossibility of angels having anything but loathing for beings of an exactly opposite nature whom it would not be polite to specify.

One day there appeared to be a little flurry in the wheat market, and Elinor was kept more than usually busy in the receiving and sending of telegrams. Most of them were in cipher, and the others might as well have been so for all the impression they made on the mind of the fair operator. But once, when excitement on the board was at



Many of the North American Indians were magnificent specimens of physical manhood. This was due, largely, to their active out-door life. Nevertheless, they had the wisdom to know that an active life in the open air alone, would not keep a man healthy. They had their medicine-men, who gathered herbs from field and forest and brewed decoctions to assist the natural processes of the various vital organs.

Modern civilized men do not as a usual thing recognize the same necessity until it is too late. They ignore medicine until they are within the grasp of some serious or fatal disease. The time for a man to begin taking medicine is when he begins to feel out of sorts. If a man is thoroughly well and healthy he does not feel that way. If he does feel that way he may be pretty sure that he is half sick. When he is half sick it does not take long before he is "whole-sick." Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery is the best medicine for a man when he is sick or getting sick. It puts him all right all round. It puts his stomach right to begin with, and that is the most important point. It puts his liver right, and that is the second most important point. It purifies his blood and fills it with the life-giving elements of the food he eats, and that is the third important point. It drives out all disease germs and impurities of every description. It makes the appetite keen and hearty. It is the greatest blood-maker and flesh-builder. It cures 98 per cent. of all cases of consumption, weak lungs, spitting of blood, obstinate coughs and kindred ailments. Thousands who were given up to die have testified to their recovery under this marvelous medicine. An honest dealer will not urge a substitute for the sake of a little extra profit. He gives you what you ask for.

two words caught her attention as an obtruding mail arrests a trailing garment. She found herself writing the words "Stillson Howard" as the instrument clicked off the letters. Then she read the finished dispatch, and for a moment her breathing stopped.

C. T. Grimwood, Board Trade, Disopolis. Induce Stillson Howard to buy wheat in large quantities. Then we have him fast.

The signature was that of Grimwood's agent in Chicago, from which city the message came. Many times every day since she had been there the same signature had come over the wires.

For one brief instant arose the temptation to suppress the dispatch, but with trembling hands she quickly folded it, put it in an envelope and wrote the name of Grimwood. She stood and watched the telegraph boy threading his way through the excited throng to give the message to the old man, who read it, crushed the paper in his hand and thrust it into his pocket. Then his malign eye rested on young Howard with an expression of such intense hatred that Elinor shivered as she saw it. Howard, the center of a seething mob, a head taller than his fellows, had his right hand upraised, and he shouted in a triumphant voice that rang through the hall:

"I'll take 10,000 bushels."

He was buying then—the girl knew that much—and he needed little inducing. Old Grimwood watched him, keeping aloof and taking no part in the struggle, and many others watched Grimwood, whose immobile face told them nothing.

"You look a little tired, Miss McClintock," said a member, coming up to the counter. "Does the hubbub worry you?"

"Oh, no; I'm used to that. What is it all about?"

"There's a little flutter in the wheat market—some queer rumors floating about. I've thrown up my hand myself. Somebody's going to get nipped, and I think it's a first rate time to go fishing."

"I don't understand these operations. Which side is Mr. Grimwood on?"

"Well, now, for a person who hasn't learned the game that's not bad. You've turned up the right bower first time. We'd all like to know where the old man stands. Grimwood seems to be 'lyin low and sayin nuffin.' I don't think it will be much of a shower myself, but that's what the other fellow said to Noah, and authorities now are convinced he was wrong."

The insistent electrical machine called to the girl and she turned to it, but all the while the abhorrent phrase kept tapping at her mind. "Then we'll have him foul." If she could, without telling what she knew, give him a hint—but that would merely be doing indirectly what she had promised not to do directly, yes, or indirectly either, for Sandys had trusted her completely. Even if she resigned immediately and warned her lover it would be a breach of confidence to reveal what she learned while in the employ of the telegraph company. There was nothing she could honestly do but resolutely hold her peace and let the lightning strike where it would. She had foreseen no such test as this when she gave her promise to the manager. Old Grimwood himself came to the corner with a message, and his baleful eye seemed to search her conscience as it fell upon her. He made no remark and turned away as she took the telegram. It was to his Chicago agent and was terse enough. "Everything going our way," it said. She sighed as she sent the four words flying over the wire.

Elinor hoped her strength would not be put to a strain it could not stand, and on leaving the building she went up the avenue and across the town, walking rapidly and avoiding her accustomed route that she might not meet her lover. As she turned out of the wide avenue into a bystreet she heard quick steps following her and was greeted by a well known voice that sent a tremor through her frame.

"Hello, Elinor! What is the meaning of this? Are you trying to escape me? I could hardly believe my eyes when I saw you go up the avenue."

"I—I thought," murmured the girl breathlessly, "that you had such an exciting day you might not—might not be at the corner."

"The 'corner!'" he cried, his eyes opening wide, and she thought she saw a trace of alarm in them, but the next moment they danced again, and he laughed. "Oh, yes, of course, the street corner. I wouldn't miss that spot for all the wheat in America—unless you went the other way round, as you have done. But I tell you it was a day to be remembered and yet nothing to what tomorrow will be. Wheat! I'll fairly bristle with wheat tomorrow. I'm going to buy all in sight and out of sight. You can hear the rattle of wheat in my pockets now, but just wait till tomorrow! It's make or break with me; in fact, I'm up to the neck as it is, but there's a plunge coming that will astonish the natives, especially my Christian friend, old Grimwood."

The girl drew a long, quivering sigh as the jubilant, enthusiastic young man, the excitement of the day still upon him, gesticulated and poured forth the torrent of words.

"Warn him! Warn him!" said her heart.

"Remember your promise," said her conscience.

"I would rather," she spoke slowly and with effort—"I would rather be the poorest laborer in the poorest cottage on

this street than live such a life." "So would I, but I'm not going to live it. I quit tomorrow night—a rich man or dead broke. No half measure for me, no hanging on year by year to be smashed at the last. Elinor!"—his voice lowered—"I don't care that for riches on their own account!"—he raised his hand and snapped his fingers, the gesture she had seen when he bid for the 10,000 bushels—"but I want them to bring comfort and luxury to—some one else."

"Tell him! Tell him!" said her heart. "What is all the world to you compared to this man?"

"You gave your word of honor!" said her conscience.

They stopped at a cross street to let the rocking, bounding car go swiftly past. "Secrecy, secrecy, secrecy!" hissed the runner on the overhead wire, spasmodically spurring electricity. Elinor spoke, not daring to raise her eyes to his:

"Please don't come any farther. I want to go home alone."

"Why, Elinor! My dear girl, you're looking white! What's the matter?"

"I am a little tired. It has been a hard day for me too."

(To be Continued)

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