

Seasoned Timber

By Dorothy Canfield

CHAPTER ONE

Somebody was knocking at the door of the Principal's house. The humps passed in waves from the stones of the walls and to the juts inside the hall. The tones took the sound in and gave one of it out, putting it secretly away into the silence where they kept the other sounds which had thrashed against them for the last hundred years. The impressionable air passed the knocks on up the stairs to the second floor, and were borne aloft to the third story where they poured through the open door of a large plain-ceilinged room in which Mr. T. C. Hulme sat at his desk.

He was the Principal. The knocks on the door two stories below were for him, and he easily distinguished them through the much louder music throbbing from the room under his study.

He laid the magazine aside and ran all the way down the two flights of stairs to the front door. Yet there was no need for haste. Everybody in Clifford knew that old Lottie Anderson, the only hired help ever in the Principal's house, did her work between breakfast and lunch and was never there in the afternoon, that Mrs. Henry, the Professor's aunt, heard nothing — except music — that the Professor himself was the only one who came when you knocked and that he was usually in his study on the third floor. Nobody thought of going away if the door was not opened at once.

When he reached the lower hall and saw young Kemp through the leaded-glass panes at the side of the door, he stopped short. Mr. Hulme lifted the latch, opened the door. "Hello Eli, what can I do for you?"

Eli transferred his attentive gaze to the Principal's face and asked, "Have you found out yet whether that thing I sold you was gas?"

Mr. Hulme cleared his throat, leaned forward a little towards the boy in the threadbare suit — he was taller than Eli, who was not short — and explained, softening his rather harsh voice to a propitiating tone. "Well, to tell you the truth, I haven't got around to putting it on the car yet."

The boy stood silent for a moment and then said, "Professor, if that thing's no good I want to take it away and give you your money back."

"Oh no, Eli, that's not the trouble at all. I've just been too darned busy ever since I got back, getting things ready for school to open. I've been sunk in work. The accounts—the budget! Why, this very afternoon the Domestic teacher telegraphed that she's married and won't be coming back to teach. You must know there's a lot for me to do at this time of year."

"Do you know what your mileage is now?" inquired the boy searchingly. "Because if you don't, how can you tell whether this'll give you more?"

"I get fifteen to the gallon," Mr. Hulme affirmed roundly.

The grave young face before him relaxed. "Well, then I know it'll save ye something," said Eli, relieved and, without any formalities of leave-taking, went away.

The Principal shut the door, but did not at once go back up the stairs. His memory crammed, as it was always forced to be, with the details of other people's lives, set gloomily before him Eli's worthless, drunken, bee-hunting and muskrat-trapping father, his dull-witted, feeble mother, the foredoomed futility of Eli's poor efforts to educate the brains he did not have.

The tall clock behind him struck six. It was time to begin to get Aunt Lavinia started to make herself presentable enough to go out to supper.

Aunt Lavinia was poring over the music, her room silent for once, quiescent around her in its usual dust and disorder. Her head was bent so low over the tattered copy of the Mass on her knee that a straggling white lock brushed the page. She was not at all ready to go out.

"It's just Tim," he assured her. Recognition and relief flashed into her fine, deeply sunken, dark eyes. She relaxed, passed her hand over her eyes. "Oh, Oh yes, Tim. Of course. Supper-time? I'll be ready in a wink." She pronounced it "r-r-raydy" with a Scotch burr.

"They made slow work of the descent, getting both her feet on each step before going down to the next one, because of that right knee that could hardly bend at all."

"They were now approaching their destination. Miss Peck, he saw, had changed the sentence on her bulletin board. This board was such a one as churches use to announce the name of their minister and the hours of church service. She put on it all sorts of odd phrases. Today the movable alphabet had been arranged to read, "We count them happy who endure. St. James, 5 14."

To be continued

N. S. Ships Lumber B. C. By-elections To New England Are Announced

AHMERST, N. S., Oct. 8 — (CP) — Three experimental export shipments of lumber to the United States, graded to meet the requirements of the New England trade, have been well received, a Maritime lumber bureau meeting was told here Tuesday.

A Bureau delegation, on hand to study American market reaction, felt that "important progress" has been made toward a mutually satisfactory standard for lumber trading between the Maritimes and New England, it was reported.

In a discussion of United Kingdom lumber trade, members stressed the difficulty of providing lumber at present high operating costs to the available markets. Some ex-

Doubts Anyone Led Into Sin By A Book

OTTAWA, Oct. 10 — (CP) — A United States author and critic, testifying for the defence in an obscene literature trial, said Thursday he doubts "if anyone has ever been led into sin by a book."

Dr. John Bakeless, professor at New York University, also told the court:

"After all, the purpose of literature is not to improve morals but to expand our knowledge of life in many cases."

He and Prof. Alan Seager of the University of Michigan defended the novel "Tragic Ground" by Erskine Caldwell, noted for his stark pictures of life in the deep south. Tragic Ground is one of several publications involved in 11 obscene literature charges against the National News Company, a distributor of publications.

In reply to the crown's allegation that the seized books contain "lewd, base, vile and lustful" passages, Dr. Bakeless said that English literature would cease to exist if all characters of that kind were eliminated.

He conceded that the behaviour of some of the characters in "Tragic Ground" is "shocking and debauched." But without such characters and behaviour, he held, no book on the deep south could be authentic.

Are Announced

VICTORIA, Oct. 10 — (CP) — British Columbia's Social Credit Government will face its first test late in November.

Premier Bennett Tuesday announced by-elections will be held Nov. 24. "If necessary," in the ridings of Similkameen and Columbia. Nomination day will be Nov. 12.

The two seats were opened last week to allow Finance Minister Einar Gunderson and Attorney-General R. A. Bonner to seek a seat in the Legislature. They were appointed after the June 12 provincial election.

Political observers see the by-elections as a test of the pro-pressed optimism that United Kingdom prices might advance.

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REXALL DRUGGIST Announces The 1952 Fall One Cent Sale

Mr. R. H. Jenkins, local Rexall druggist, today announced plans for his semi-annual Rexall Original One Cent Sale to be held October 15-16-17 and 18 in his drugstore at the corner of Great George and Kent Streets.

"The theme of the Rexall One Cent Sale this Fall is: 'It's Your Chance to know Rexall and Save Money,'" Mr. Jenkins said. The semi-annual One Cent Sale was originated by the Rexall Drug Company in 1914, and has become an international institution, he explained.

According to Mr. Jenkins more than two hundred and fifty of Rexall's nationally advertised products will be available to the public from coast-to-coast in Canada on the money-saving "Two For The Price Of One Plus 1c" plan. The products on sale will include packaged medicines, vitamin products, oral hygiene needs, cosmetics, stationery, household needs, first aid supplies and hundreds of other Rexall items.

"This sale means that the people of Charlottetown and vicinity will be saved many hundreds of dollars on purchases of necessities for good health, good grooming and good housekeeping," Mr. Jenkins said, "and it is the Rexall druggist's major contribution towards smashing high prices and helping to bring down the high cost of living."

Warning

Citizens are reminded that there have been several serious depredations in flower, fruit and vegetable gardens, particularly in the Brighton district. These offences have been committed by children of school age. Parents are advised to make every effort to correct or check their children in this regard, as a continuance will lead to court action and adequate punishment.

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