

SURELY MAN'S GOLDEN AGE
As W. D. Howells Writes of It, the
Best Years Are Between Fifty
and Sixty.

After 61 one must not take too many chances with oneself, but I should say that the golden age of man is between 50 and 60, when one may safely take them. One has peace then from the different passions; if one has been tolerably industrious one is tolerably prosperous; one has fairly learned one's trade or has mastered one's art; age seems as far off as youth; one is not so much afraid of death as earlier; one likes joking as much as ever and loves beauty and truth as much; family affairs are well out of the way; if one has married timely one no longer nightly walks the floor with even the youngest child; the marriage ring is then a circle half rounded in eternity. It is a blessed time; it is, indeed, the golden age, and no age after it is more than silver, writes W. D. Howells in Harper's.

The best age after it may be that between 80 and 90, but one cannot make so sure of 90 as of 70 in the procession of years, and that is where the gold turns silver. But silver is one of the precious metals, too, and it need not have any alloy of the baser ones. I do not say how it will be in the years between 90 and 100. I am not yet confronted with that question. Still, all is not gold between 80 and 90, as it is between 50 and 60.

In that time, if one has made one self wanted in the world, one is still wanted; but between 80 and 90, if one is still wanted, is one wanted as much as ever? It is a painful question, but one must not shirk it, and in trying for the answer one must not do less than one's utmost, at a time when one's utmost will cost more effort than before. This is a disadvantage of living so long, but we cannot change the conditioning if we wish to live.

There is always the question whether one does wish to live, but for the averagely happy or unhappy man, I should say yes, yes. We would ignore the fact that there are some men so unhappy beyond the vast average that they cannot wish to live. These kill themselves but speaking without statistics, I do not believe these are often people of 80 and after. Apparently life is seldom so unbearable with these that one almost never hears of their suicide.

Wanted Help.

Little Bobby had been learning his Sunday school lesson and was very much impressed with the idea of the omnipresence of God. A few nights after his mother asked him to bring her a bottle of milk from the back porch.

"I can't," Bobby demurred. "All work out there."

"But you're not afraid to go anywhere, Bobby," she reasoned. "You know God won't let anything hurt you."

"Is God out there on the porch in the dark?" queried Bobby.

"Certainly he is. Didn't you learn that God was everywhere?"

Cautiously Bobby opened the door a few inches and peering out, called: "God, will you please hand me that milk bottle out there?"—Everybody's Magazine.

Excess of Oil Production.

Conditions in Oklahoma when the great Cushing pool came in illustrated another aspect of the oil situation. The lush production, for a time was far in excess of storage and transportation facilities, so that oil was stored on the ground, behind earthen dikes, and run into dry creeks that were dammed up to form reservoirs. From sheer excess of production over local demand, the price fell to 40 cents a barrel, not because that was the value of the oil to the refinery at Cushing or Bayonne, but because there was no way at the time to get it there, and new wells were coming in by the dozen day after day.—Ray Morris in the World's Work.

How Strange!

Mrs. Jenkins was reading the daily paper. Presently she exclaimed, "What strange things these society people do, Jeremiah!"

"What's up now?" asked Jeremiah, who was half asleep.

"Well, it says here about the launching of a ship. 'With graceful ease the huge vessel slid into the water, just after the duchess of Dumbshire had cracked a bottle of champagne on her nose.' It must have hurt her! Why should she mutilate her face like that, Jeremiah?"

Hard-Boiled Philosopher.

"Fire water was the ruin of the man," remarked the stranger in Mason Gulch.

"So it was," replied Three Finger. "Maybe it's just as well we waited for prohibition. If there had ever been anything but total abstinence the pesky Injuns might have got right on the bussin' the in-tire conti-—Washington Star.

Plenty of Hope.

Seems to be big run to the movies," commented Yorick Hamm. "I wonder if I could make good?"

"Don't see why not," declared Hamm. "Hire a litter of puppies and a pick mule, and with your acting ability you're bound to make good."—Louisville Courier-Journal

No Lighsome Exercise.

"I am told you are playing politics," I don't like that word 'playing,'" protested Senator Sorghum. "You might as well use the word 'dancing' to describe the way a man gets over the field when an irascible bull is after him."

The Scrap Book

"MEMORY" TREES GOOD IDEA

Many Are Being Planted to Commemorate the War Services of Americans in the Great War.

A good many trees have been planted here and there over the country by way of memorializing American soldiers who gave up their lives in the war. Mostly they are for individuals—a single tree set in a place somehow associated in his lifetime with the one who is gone. A number of groves or parks and stretches of roadway are planned, however, where trees are to be planted in groups or in rows in honor of the fallen ones of certain communities. They call them "memory trees," which is a good name.

Of the single trees an illustration is one planted by pupils of the Force school in Washington, which was attended by Quentin Roosevelt when he was a young boy. He was the only former pupil to lose his life in the world war. A committee of 12, formed by appointment of a member from each class, will have the care of the tree; as each member graduates from his class he appoints a member from the incoming class to take his place. Thus there will always be a committee at the school to look after this tree.

WHEN MULE WAS A NOVELTY

Sent as a Present to George Washington, It Created Something of a Sensation Here.

The first mule seen in this country was sent to George Washington by the king of Spain. The mule measured 15 hands high, and his ears were 14 inches long. His disposition was so ungrateful that General Washington remarked on the beast's inability to appreciate "republican enjoyment."

The mule was given much publicity. Washington sent him out on a tour of the South, where his long ears, peculiar voice and strange appearance drew large crowds and created much excitement. The attention lavished upon the mule forced the keeper to hurry him from place to place at such a pace that the animal reduced considerably. Washington having been shocked with his condition upon his reappearance in Mount Vernon.

It is said that Washington looked forward to producing a breed of mules suitable to draw the family carriage, but history does not record whether the first president carried out this plan. He was, however, at all times very enthusiastic over mules, and commented upon them in glowing terms as an excellent race of animals.

Woman Good Trapper.

Trapping predatory animals is scarcely the kind of occupation in which a woman might be expected to distinguish herself, even with the great extension of the range of feminine activity to which we have been accustomed lately. Mrs. Ada Tingley of Idaho is reported, however, by the Northwestern division of the United States biological survey to be so successful in this employment that her male rivals are finding it hard to keep up with her records. Her victims are mainly coyotes, bobcats, wolves, lynxes and mountain lions. At 8:30 every morning Mrs. Tingley mounts her cayuse and rides off to her traps, of which she runs six lines, of 50 each. She uses a fish bait prepared by a secret formula.



A GREAT CHANGE.

"Did your war article get by the News Censor?"

"I believe it did, only I didn't recognize it after it passed."

Burglar-Proof Glass.

There is a glass of French invention which is intended to be proof against burglars. So many cases of burglary have been committed by the breaking of show-windows and snatching of valuables on exhibition that a special effort has been made to end this particular form of theft.

The French glass, it appears, is produced by a secret process, but the makers admit that thickness and care in its manufacture are its principal essentials. It is made about three-quarters of an inch thick and on test has resisted the blow of a ten-pound iron disk. The same blow would have shattered ordinary plate glass completely.

Eats Any Old Thing.

A wood-boring beetle in California, undismayed by lead or even by alloys that are harder than lead, has put hundreds of telephones out of use. The beetle bores into the cables that carry the wires, then water gets in and makes the wire useless until the damage is repaired. As yet no one has found a way to keep the beetles out. Perhaps some entomological Burbank will train wireworms to plug holes or tapeworms to wrap them.—Youth's Companion.

THE GUIDING SPIRIT

By VICTOR REDCLIFFE

(Copyright, 1920, Western Newspaper Union)

The little suburb of Grassmere was so near to the city that the street cars ran out to it. Adrian and Cora Mills felt both proud and pleased when they signed a lease "for the loveliest little house in the place."

"We are the luckiest people in the world," declared Adrian. "Surely there is one landlord who is not a high-rent vampire. We were to be raised 80 per cent on our city flat if we stayed."

"Double the space, with all the glories of country life at less than our old rent!" added Cora.

The owner, a rich widow, was not of the profit-seeking kind, and little Daisy, four years old, acted so prettily and her parents were so grateful, that Mrs. Deane felt it a pleasure to help on their happiness.

They were to move to Grassmere the following week. One evening Adrian came home with news that somewhat marred the radiant future.

"I was out measuring the rooms," he observed, "and I got talking with the man living opposite. Did you notice the home just next to ours, Cora?"

"You mean the cement two story that met my fancy?"

"Just that—our nearest neighbor. His name is Jonas Price and he lives all alone. My informant says he isn't a very pleasant kind of a man—rich, grasping, a regular misanthrope. The former tenants left because they couldn't stand him. He complained of the noise their children made; he poisoned their dog."

"Now don't go spoiling our paradise by borrowing trouble," said Cora, always optimistic. "Maybe the old tenants were obtrusive, perhaps their children were insolent and mischievous, not like our own dear little angel, whom everybody must love. Maybe, too, the old man is ostracized because of ways his neighbors don't understand. Why, Adrian, perhaps we are about to have a special mission to humanize this lonely man."

Little Daisy, wise and observant for her years, listened attentively. In her childish way she seemed to get the idea that they were describing some kind of an untamed ogre. The next morning she astonished her parents with a remark that showed a deep impression on her mind.

"I said 'bless Mr. Price' in my prayers," she announced. "I'm going to, every night. Isn't that right, mamma?"

"Why, surely," announced Mrs. Mills, "what made you think of that, darling?"

"Because, if he is lonely, with no little child to love, I feel sorry for him, and I'm going to be good to him for fear he'll steal my dollar or kill Major."

"We will see that Major doesn't annoy him, dear," said her father.

They moved. Little Daisy had their neighbor on her mind, and when souffled Jonas Price was pointed out to her she looked a little awed, but said: "Mamma, he looks as if he was thinking all the time. Maybe it's about his two little dead children."

The next day Mrs. Mills missed Daisy. Seeking her, to her astonishment she observed her neighbor lifting her over the hedge.

"I borrowed your little daughter to show her some early flowers in my hot beds," explained Mr. Price. "Madam, I hope you will allow her to come over and see me once in a while."

"Oh, surely," acceded the delighted Cora.

"Oh, mamma," prattled Daisy later. "I told Mr. Price how I put him in my prayers every night. And he showed me the pictures of his two little girls, and when I kissed him and said I felt sorry for him, he just cried out loud."

It was a few evenings after that Adrian was disturbed by the loud barking of Major. He noticed lights flitting about next door, dressed, thought of burglars, armed himself, and started to investigate just in time to find a man rushing from the back door of the Price home, valise in his hand.

Then as Adrian heard the voice of Price shouting for help he halted the man at the point of his weapon, backed him into the house and found its owner tied to a chair, the victim of a bold robbery. Adrian held the burglar until the police arrived, and learned that but for his timely assistance the marauder would have escaped with valuable bonds and money.

Jonas Price ceased to hate animals after that. The true friendship of the new neighbors caused him to emerge from his shell of surliness and suspicion. Then came the climax in the affairs of the Mills family. Their house caught fire one night and only a part of their furniture was saved. They were invited over to their neighbor's house, for there was not a vacant place they could rent.

"I am going away for my health," said Jonas Price, "and you people had better settle here permanently."

"I don't know what we would have done if your roof had not sheltered us," said Adrian. "If we could remain your tenants for a time—"

Jonas Price fondly kissed Daisy, clasped in his arms. "Tenants," he repeated. "You saved me a fortune, and this little angel has brought the first sunlight of years into my dreary old heart. As to the home here, with the agreement that I can come once in a while and pass a few happy hours with you—I give it to you."

STRANGE CLIENTS

By ALDEN CHAPMAN

(Copyright, 1920, Western Newspaper Union)

It was a good deal of satisfaction to Lucius Mangold to reckon up profits and prospects at the end of two years' practice of the law. There had been a progress that was gratifying and encouraging.

"It is a reward for good hard work, faithfulness and self denial," he complimented himself.

Mangold looked up, as a step echoed at the office threshold. The doorway framed a modestly dressed young girl of about nineteen. She had a face that showed character and true womanliness. At a glance he noted that her attire, while neat, was somewhat worn. Her gloves were mended and the handbag she carried was old and faded. To his analytical mind here was a young lady of quite superior mold, but with certain traces of care in the shadowed eyes.

"I come as a client," she spoke. "I noticed your name as a lawyer, but I have no money to pay for your services."

"Be seated, please," invited Mangold, settling a chair for this plain-speaking visitor, and they faced one another, she slightly embarrassed, he endeavoring to set her at her ease.

"I am an Elite Vayre," she spoke, "and need advice. I have to work for a living as a stenographer and live with an invalid aunt. About a month since I was born, Captain Moultrie was absent until noon. I returned to the Neptune about noon. The captain was there, received me cordially and I asked about Brierly.

"You call him Brierly," he said. "We know him as Matson, assistant to the cook. But he gave up his job two hours ago. Said a dying relative had sent for him. Paid him off, and that's all."

I doubted not now that Brierly had recognized me and had been scared away by my appearance. I wondered at his being in the humble employment of a cook, for he was not given to hard work. As an expert collier he had always been able to secure plenty of money.

"We are to carry to the island of Baranta, in the South Pacific, a new coinage for its king, amounting to something over a million," Captain Moultrie told me. "It has been beads and shells for current money there heretofore. The coin is a thin silver one of small denomination, and while they have no metals at Baranta they have plenty of diamonds, and we are to deliver the boxes of coins and receive back for The Goldsmiths Company the pay in the sparklers."

Although the suspicion that Brierly was up to something was strong in my mind, I could not connect him up in a tangible way with the same. I was considerably put out, however, in losing sight of a man who in time might aid me in finding Lyman Britt. I was gratified the following day to run across Brierly entering a drinking place. I had assumed a disguise and felt safe in mixing in with the crowd, keeping a close eye upon him.

When he left the place I shadowed him cautiously. He took a round-about course to the waterside and went aboard a trim little craft there. I hung about the dock and observed two men finally leave the vessel. They passed me without paying any particular attention to me, but, turning quickly, knocked me senseless.

I awoke a close prisoner in a room in the hold. The craft was afloat. Water and food were brought to me for ten days. I was fed, but left to my own devices. One night I heard voices beyond my prison door. They belonged to Britt and Brierly and I was fully enlightened as to their purposes from what I caught of their conversation.

It seemed that Brierly had been a spy aboard of the Neptune to learn the details of the coin shipment. He and his confederates saw a clever opportunity to profit by what he had learned. Expert colliers that they were, they had duplicated the ordered coinage, except that they had employed a cheap base metal, and with it boxed in their hold were on their way to get first to Barata, impose themselves as agents of The Goldsmiths Company upon its king, receive their pay, divide, and disappear. There was not the slightest prospect of escape for me. For five weeks I was kept a close prisoner. I could trace the arrival of the craft at Barata, the unloading, a departure, and one morning was apprised by the overhead talk of two of the crew in the hold that we were at anchor at Proda, a town on the Chilean coast. The men were under the influence of liquor and one of them, unlocking the doors of several below-deck apartments, by mistake turned a key in the door of my own.

I waited until they had disappeared, and then stole forth. After some cautious wanderings finding myself at an entrance of the cabin, there, regaling themselves with liquor and gloating over a snakeskin bag before them which held the diamonds paid for the streets, studied his lessons conscientiously, and at the end of the first week Norma said:

"Now, Jerry, we've worked hard and will enjoy a little pleasure. There is a fine movie down at the Orpheum. There is my pocketbook. Please pay for the tickets. And we must have some soda after the entertainment."

"All right, and some of these fine days when I get working I'll pay you back by taking you to a swell opera."

They had a very enjoyable time, and Norma was quite proud of her well-behaved escort. He bade her good night as she reached her room.

"Oh, Jerry!" she called down the stairs after him as she opened her pocketbook, "the key to my room—it is gone."

"Then I must have lost it," Jerry chided himself. "Say, I'm awful sorry. Look here," and he returned to her side. "It's a catch