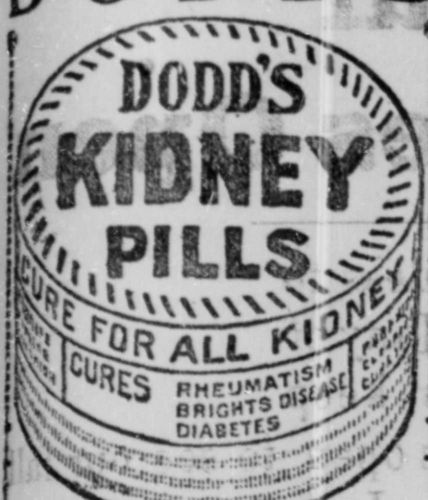
D-O-D-D-'S



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The board of Fire Wardens, Souris, offer for contract the building of 4 tanks as per specifications to be seen at the office of the secretary; also the sinking of 4 wells. Tenders to be in by Sept 15th, marked tenders for tanks, wells. Good security required.

C C CARLTON, JR.,
Secy-Treas

Souris, Aug 31, 1899

A Gathering of Lavender

Miss Caroline lifted her white face. "We must wait, Jane. The lavender is blighted. There will be very little to gather.'

Her voice failed; then courage returned. "But that is no reason why I should not gather what there is." she added with tremulous cheerfulness.

When Miss Jane, shawled and bonneted, hurried down the path. Miss Caroline was too busy over the lavender bushes to bid her hasten back.

The poor lady was still stunned by the disappointment. Her thoughts trembled like her limbs. They tottered about the subject. Life had been difficult enough before. How could she hope to meet the additional expense of the crippled child? And William had not treated Jane well in the old days. She looked despairingly at the stunted lavender sprigs. They made the future more hopeless.

She was afraid to utter her fears to Miss Jane, whose mouth, when she came back from her marketing, was set with a new firmness. Miss Caroline watched her furtively when she cut the loaf for tea. She could see Miss Jane making mental measurements of the slice. Instead of cutting it in half she divided it into three pieces, then frowned and glanced hastily at Miss Caroline who, happily, was not looking.

But Miss Caroline's knees were shaking, and she almost cried out when Miss Jane covertly helped herself to the smallest lump of sugar in the bowl. "And Jane always had a sweet tooth." thought Miss Caroline. But she said nothing, for the tightness of Miss Jane's upper lip was something new and dreadful. The rest of the day they spent rearranging their habits to suit the needs of the cripple.

"She will have to sleep in the parlor," said Miss Jane. "We are not strong enough to carry her upstairs."

"That will be pleasant company for Joseph." said Miss Caroline. She was bent on showing the cheerful side of the difficulty. "I think she will be sure to like Joseph," she added confidently But the words themselves lacked assurance.

For the first time in their lives the sisters were conscious of thoughts withheld from each other.

As the summer day drew to its close Miss Jane's sternness did not relax, but Miss Caroline's head shook with a palsy of uncertainty. The hours aged her. She crept about the parlor, touching the furniture lingeringly, and when she carried the loaf to the larder Miss Jane could hear her muttering, "Enough for two, three—enough for three, enough for two."

Her manner was odd and broken. She even omitted to give Joseph the usual last caress. With the unspoken thing between them the sisters went sadly to bed.

* * * * * * *

"Now, sister, it is daybreak. We must be rising." Miss Jane turned on her pillow when she said the words. Then she raised herself and stared blankly at Miss Caroline's empty place. She could not believe that her sister had risen without waiting for the signal to rise.

Miss Caroline stopped in her dressing to explain.

"There is so much to do." she said nervously. "The child comes at 2."

"At 3, sister," Miss Jane corrected "And you must meet the train."

"I? I had not thought of it." Miss Caroline stammered "I expected—you—you will meet her, Jane."

Miss Jane reflected a moment. "Well, I can manage it." she said, as if to herself.

Soon after 2 o'clock she made herself ready for going out By this time there was an impassable barrier between the two sisters. They could not face each other's glance.

Miss Jane took up her umbrella and stepped sharply to the door. There she stopped. "I have made enough bags for all the lavender we are likely to have.' she said, and there seemed to be whalebone ribs about her voice.

Miss Caroline, hidden behind the curtain, gazed after her, sobbing. She wiped away her tears, and love and admiration mingled with the despair in her eyes. She was proud of the strength of that unbending figure. She admired it again while she wondered what Miss Jane had forgotten that she turned at the corner and gazed so earnestly at the cottage.

When Miss Caroline could no longer persuade herself that Miss Jane was in sight, she turned slowly back into the room. "Jane is only 60," she murmured. "Her life is before her, and William's child might have been hers." A pathetic resoluteness conquered her fears. She moved quickly, though her limbs tottered. She hurried up stairs and put on her outdoor garments, tying her bonnet strings with uncertain fingers. "But I must learn to do it," she said to herself. "I must learn to do without Jane." Sternly checking her emotion she went down stairs.

"I have never before acted without her," she whispered. "But I cannot. She is so generous. She would refuse.'

She found a sheet of note paper and wrote upon it, "We have only enough for two, and the child is lame and helpless. I have acted for the best."

As she pinned the paper on the tablecloth, where it could not be missed, Joseph rubbed himself against her gown. A moan escaped her. Not trusting herself to speak to him, she staggered from the house and down the garden path.

From long use her eyes wandered toward the lavender bushes. Yes, it was true. The blight was spreading.

"I am doing right. I am quite sure I am doing right," said Miss Caroline as the gate clicked behind her.

Her lips pressed together in a firmness equal to Miss Jane's, and she trod the weary road with feet that did not fail.

* * * * * * *

The master of the workhouse was engaged. If she had come for admission, she must sit in the waiting room till he could see her.

Miss Caroline stumbled after the porter, seeing nothing of the long, dark corridor they went through. Dazed and overcome, she had barely strength enough to drop on to a chair just inside the dim room. To her excited imagination the space seemed to be crowded with witnesses of her humiliation. In effect only one other person was there, and she sat with downcast face and took no notice of the newcomer. Miss Caroline was bowed with misery and doubt and longing and regret. Suddenly the silence was broken. Three strokes rang out from the workhouse bell.

Miss Caroline started up. "Three! Three!" she cried shrilly. "Oh, there might have been enough for three! What if it is God speaking?"

She stood in the middle of the floor, her head bent a little forward, listening for a voice again.

"Sister! Sister!"

The thin, strained cry came from the other end of the room and shook Miss Caroline. She fell into her chair.

"Jane? You?" she faltered.

"Yes, sister," said Miss Jane, her mouth trembling, her voice strangely broken. "This is no place for you. You ought not to be here. It is I who must make room for William's child."

"Neither of us ought to be here," sobbed Miss Caroline. "Jane, you ought not to have come. How could I live without you?"

"I couldn't live without you," said Miss Jane, and they wept together.

By and by Miss Jane rose. "Come, sister, the poor child will find the house empty."

"But"— Miss Caroline hesitated. "The clock says 'Enough for three,' "

Miss Jane answered firmly. "We must go."

"Yes, let us go," said Miss Caroline, all eagerness. "Think of that poor child in the empty house, if indeed she has found her way, and no one at the station either!"

"I gave the busman minute directions to take her to you," said Miss Jane, meekly accepting the reproach.

At the gate the porter stopped them. "The master will see you soon."

"Thank you. We will not trouble him," said Miss Jane with sweet dignity.

She supported Miss Caroline along the road, and the silence was not broken at once.

When the cottage came in sight, "Sister, you will not do anything so foolish again," said Miss Jane sternly.

"Not unless you do it first, Jane," Miss Caroline answered. "I have always thought this a very beautiful road," said Miss Jane. And she spoke of the weather and the scenery and the crippled child.

"She will have a poor welcome—not even a fire," sighed Miss Jane

"Joseph will welcome her," said Miss Caroline cheerily. "But how pleasant it is to think that there is some one at home waiting for us!"

"It is very pleasant, sister. It feels quite like a home coming. Ah! The fire is not out! I can see the smoke rising."

They hurried on toward the gate. Before Miss Caroline's eyes could turn toward the bushes some one ran down the path to meet them. The girl came so quickly they did not notice that she limped as she ran. They had not time even to see her bright face and the merry light in her eyes before her arms were round them and her kisses on their cheeks.

"Dear aunties, you have come at last! Come right in and have tea. It is all ready I was so hungry."

Miss Caroline turned to Miss Jane, who could only gasp out, "William's lame child!"

"Not so very lame!" the girl cried gayly. "Anyway I can run your errands for you."

She laughed into their astonished eyes.

"And not a child!" exclaimed Miss Caroline, fumbling for her glasses.

"Twenty past," said the girl, laughing again.

"My dear, what do they call you?' Miss Jane smiled at her.

"Lavender," the girl answered.

Miss Caroline turned a gratified face to her sister.

"You see, William did not forget the old days, though he never wrote."

"He never forgot," said the girl. "I know all about you and the cottage."

She led them into the parlor and took off their bonnets and settled them in their chairs, enjoying the surprise that made them dumb.

Miss Caroline was looking uneasily for the note she had pinned to the table. It was hidden under the white cloth.

But the sight of Joseph lapping milk and the spread table restored speech.

"Eggs and butter! My dear, my dear!" protested Miss Jane.

"We are very, very poor," quavered Miss Caroline.

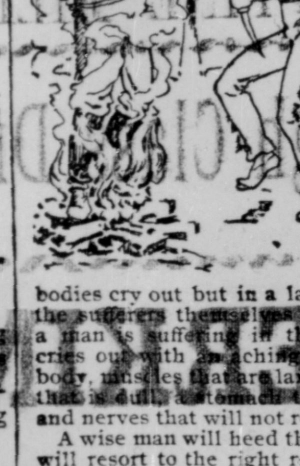
"Poor? Not a bit of it!" The girl's laugh tinkled like bells through the house. "We are quite rich. You don't know how much money my lacemaking brings in. Father used to say it was fortune enough for two."

Miss Jane glanced at Miss Caroline, and a quick thought chased the doubt and bewilderment from her face.

"Fortune?" she echoed, a smile softening her lips.

"Yes," Miss Caroline added with her tender eyes on the girl, "enough for three."

(To be Continued)



In the old frontier days hundreds of pioneers were tortured and burned at the stake by cruel Indians. The tortures endured by these martyrs must have been something horrible. There are thousands of men to-day who are being slowly tortured to death at the stake of disease. Their bodies cry out but in a language that only the sufferers themselves can hear. When a man is suffering in this way his body cries out with an aching head, a sluggish body, muscles that are lax and lazy, a brain that is dull, a stomach that disdains food and nerves that will not rest.

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