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A WINTER NIGHT ON THE FARM.

Is there naught in life we prize Like the light of home that lies Over us, when winter slinkes From the north his frosty flukes...

THE MAJOR'S STORY.

You see, there's no harm in tellin' on Bill, now that Bill is dead and gone. As a professin' member I feel it almost a duty.

Yes, Bill would swear. I don't deny it. He swore right in the presence of...

THE ELDER LAID HIS THIN, OLD HAND ON BILL'S BIG BRAWNY SHOULDERS AND SAID "AMEN."

Elder Preswick the day Sumter was fired on. Deacon Stebbins—he sent a substitute—left the grocery, but the Elder laid his thin, old hand on Bill's big, brawny shoulder and said, just as reverently as the parson ever did in his big church on the hill, "Amen!"

When we came back from the war there was a pert young fellow from Boston in Elder Preswick's pulpit. He was smart enough as boys go.

Anyhow, Bill took it harder than any one else, and after his sister's husband, Henry Foster, died in his arms before Petersburg, he swore that there was no God.

Every Sunday we called by for Elsie, and she went to Sunday school with our Patience, who was just her age lackin' nine days.

Martha will tell you to this day that she knew it would come out all right in the end. Martha is a shrewd woman, but she didn't know Bill as I did.

"Bill," said Cap'n Jim White, "if you drag that field-piece to the top of that 'ere knoll you're a dead man."

After the second mule was down the Cap'n said: "Corp. Coombs, I command you to return to your company."

"Jim White," said Bill, his eyes kinder shinin' out bright from his powder-blackened face, "I refuse to obey!"

It was summer when Elsie came to him, which was the savin' of Bill.

He got softer and softer and tenderer and tenderer, so that by the time the fall huskin' was over that little tot with her big blue eyes could twist him round her finger as easy as nothin'.



"OH, DOD, I WANT TO SAY A LITTLE PRAYER FOR MY UNCLE BILL."

Elsie and my Patience did nothin' but talk 'bout Santa Claus and a saw-dust doll with a real china head in Uncle Wick's store-window at the Corners.

That's what Bill asked me one mornin', as he was puttin' a new pole in his hole. I knew Bill was gettin' unsettled, and that when Elsie got up in his lap and whispered in his ear, "I des Santa Claus is doin' to bring Uncle Bill a new pair of wristlets," it was more than a barrel of words from me.

I ran over to Bill's Christmas night, to ask Bill and Elsie over to eat popcorn, hickory nuts, and such like, and found Bill puttin' Elsie to bed.

I stood still for a moment, and took off my muffler to change the wet spot from my mouth. Elsie didn't notice, and knelt down by the side of her crib in her white nightgown, and prayed, "Now I lay me—"

"O Dod, I want to say a little prayer for my Uncle Bill. I des he forgets to pray sometimes. Uncle is a dood man, Dod. He loves me, and set the leg of my little chicken, Bright. Now it is all well, Dod. Of course you don't know Uncle Bill, Dod, as well as Elsie, so I want to tell you, so Santa Claus won't forget him. Dood night."

Then she kissed her Uncle Bill, and snuggled in between the sheets. I guess that finished Bill Coomb's stubbornness. Martha said the next day, when Elsie rushed into the house with her arms full of presents, that Bill would spoil the child; but I knew that could Bill have got over to Boston that night and back in time, Elsie would have had that doll with the rollin' eyes and talkin' mouth. Bill was always that way—he never did things by halves.

Bill was ailing all the winter. We hoped he would pick up in the spring. Martha used to send him boneset tea, and twice he had the doctor, but it didn't seem to do him much good. He liked best to sit up by the arch, and watch Elsie and my little Patience play "keepin' house," or take Elsie in his arms and lean to her prattle.

He didn't go to church, but he used to talk with Martha off and on, an' he seemed to remember a powerful number of things Elder Preswick said down there in Virginia. I never gave Bill much credit for memory before.

It was 'long during the spring plowin' that Bill took to his bed, complainin' of that old saber cut. We didn't think much of it, until one day his hired man, John, came runnin' over just as we was doin' the early milkin', and said Bill was dyin'. Martha rolled down her sleeves and took off 'cross lots.

Bill was a sleep when we came in, so we tipped to his room and stood at the foot of the bed. Martha said after wards that Bill looked almost beautiful as he lay there. The window was open and the smell of the apple blossoms on the gilly-flower tree that Bill and Jane planted when they were children came into the room and kinder carried me back to the days when we were boys together, and Jane and old Squire Coombs were alive. I must have been dreamin', for my lids got wet and Martha pulled my arm. Bill had his eyes open; he saw us and smiled, and then put up his hand for Elsie.

The mornin' sun kinder come in through the apple trees and fell on Elsie's yellow hair. He drew Elsie up closer and closer and whispered low, so the doctor couldn't hear and tell the folks at the grocery, but Martha and I heard and I always thought the doctor

did, leastwise he never says anything against Bill. "Jane," he sometimes forgot and called her Jane; that was her mother, Henry Foster's wife that was, "tell God what—you—told—him—Christmas—that your uncle Bill ain't—a bad man—"

Then Elsie prayed, while Martha sobbed softly like in her sunbonnet and I looked hard out into the apple tree. Bill went right on smilin', but when we spoke he never answered.

A PRIEST'S NOBLE WORK.

Jim Root Not the Only Hero of the Forest Fires. The exploit of the brave engineer who piloted his train through the tornado of flame in the Minnesota forest fires and rescued swarms of terror-stricken refugees has made him famous; but, says the Youth's Companion, the self-sacrifice of a poor parish priest in Hinckley has hardly been mentioned, although there was in it much of the finest quality of heroism.

From the moment when the destruction of the town was menaced by the rapidly advancing wave of flame he ceased to think of himself, and devoted himself and all his energies of mind and body to the protection and rescue of others.

He went from house to house, warning the inmates of their peril, and begging them to take refuge in sand-pits where there was water. While panic-stricken men were harnessing horses and frantically seeking to escape into the burning woods, he was calm and collected, reassuring everyone whom he met, yet pointing out the only chance of safety.

He led one group after another to the sand-pits when they were beside themselves from fear and excitement. When one place of refuge was over-crowded, he found another, and begged the stragglers to follow him.

The woods were flaming on every side, and the refugees standing in the water felt in their faces the scorching breath of the storm of fire. The good priest had words of encouragement for all. He held children in his arms, he supported fainting women when they were falling from fright and fatigue; he put the stoutest-hearted man to shame by his coolness, cheerfulness and energy.

With his hat he poured water on the heads of women and children in that fiery furnace. He took the coat from his back and tore it in half. One fragment he dipped in water, and bandaged the forehead of a woman with a child clinging to her. The other half he wound around the heads of two helpless children whose faces were scorched with the heat of the burning forest.

Rareheaded and in shirt-sleeves he stood among the dying, and ministered to them while he had strength to stand, eyes to see, and a voice to utter words of comfort and hope. His was the spirit of self-sacrifice and of ministry to the needy, and whether shown in Catholic or in Protestant it is worthy of high commendation.

The flight of the train through the burning forest was the more stirring story in print, but what could have been nobler or more heroic than this devoted man's work among his flock!

There were deeds of valor and chivalry before the walls of Zathphen inlanders, but one act of self-sacrifice alone is remembered. Sir Philip Sidney, wounded, dying and burning with thirst, put away from his own lips the bottle of water which had been brought to him in his agony, and gave it to a common soldier covered with gore who had glanced at him wistfully.

A WONDERFUL LIGHT.

It Will Give Illumination of About 250,000,000 Candle Power. The idea of an electric light which, fed by a current from a dynamo actuated by a forty horse power engine, and giving 7,000 candle power, can have its illuminating power intensified 35,000 times, is not easy to grasp. It means the projection of a stream of light of about 250,000,000 candle power, and it is no wonder that the announcement that such a light is about to be used in this country has been received with some incredulity in Europe. Yet this is the efficiency of the light which will be shortly erected at Fire Island for the illumination of the adjacent coast and the protection of the fleet of ships entering New York harbor.

A remote suggestion of the power of this lamp may be arrived at by bearing in mind that an ordinary oil lamp is about thirty-eight or forty candle power, and then trying to imagine the combined beam of 3,000,000 lamps. The ordinary electric street light may be put down at 100 candle power, and 250,000 of these would about represent the strength of the Fire Island light.

The most powerful oil lamp yet made is supposed to shine out on a clear night for a distance of thirty-five or forty miles, but the new light will flash its welcome rays to the incoming European liners when they are 120 miles away. The light revolves rapidly and throws out its beams with the intensity of speed of lightning. The motive power which actuates it is a simple clock-work arrangement contained in a box two feet square, and although the revolving portion of the light weighs fifteen tons, the mechanism controlling it is so delicate that the pressure of two fingers will turn it. The value of this marvelous lamp can only be determined by practical working, but it promises to represent an immense stride in the science of coast lighthouse illumination.—Philadelphia Press.

Luck in Fairy Stones.

Fairy stones are the latest and a young woman from the South has set her friends sending around for them. They are said to bring their owners luck, "but if you let any one touch it," continued this believer in fairy pieces, "you spoil the charm." This fairy stone seems to be a bit of petrified earth with what looks like a cross marked upon it and is said to come from St. Patrick, in Virginia, where there is a mountain full of them. Suppose you have been planted there by the fairies, as far back as the days of the crucifixion. Believers in such things or folks who love to pick up fads are having these fairy stones mounted as pins, watch charms, etc.

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