

acquisition. William worked harder and his wife began to scrimp the table. Millie boasted of her rich and fashionable friends. Poor Reuben ceased coming to the house and was silently heartbroken.

Then one day Caleb noticed that the old heavy gold watch that his brother wore, a family heirloom, was missing. The annual taxes went unpaid. Millie intimated that they ought to sell old Bill. Then Caleb rebelled.

"I'm going to dig out," he determined, and straightway Caleb proceeded to place his plans in execution. "I'm going to run away from home," he resolved. "It has got to come."

So, one still moonlight night after the household had gone to rest, Caleb stole out of the house, a bundle of clothes under his arm. He had got the light wagon out of the stable and behind the barn with straw and blankets in its box, and old Bill neighed and rubbed his friendly nose against him and seemed to understand that a change was on the books, and was glad of it.

"Good-by!" murmured Caleb softly as he drove out into the road. "I don't know exactly where I'm headed for, but I'm not too old to work, nor too blind to grab an opportunity if it comes along."

Caleb traveled all that night. At daybreak he drove into a stretch of timber, turned Bill loose, gave him some oats and proceeded to search in the straw under the seat for some lunch he had placed there. His hand met an unfamiliar and then a squirming object.

"Let go!" cried a lively juvenile voice, and up rose a boy in the hay.

"Well! What in the world are you doing there?" challenged Caleb.

The boy was reticent. All he would say was that he was tramping it and had crawled into the wagon the previous evening and was hungry, and so Caleb fed him. Then in the kindness of his heart he "adopted" him—for the lad stayed with him.

Now there came dark days on the family at home. Mrs. Stone got sick from worry. Her husband was fairly discouraged. Some of Millie's fair weather friends snubbed her. An attractive lover neglected her. One day the automobile was wrecked in a collision. The company who had sold it to William took it back because of nonpayment of instalments.

They had to face practical issues. Millie, disenchanted of her fickle society friends, showed the true mettle that was in her. She nursed her mother, she helped her father, she went back to Reuben, and so, at the end of a year, with harmony and economy restored, poor old William saw bright skies and possible clear sailing ahead.

One day a big circus came to town. There was a procession. Catching sight of a gilded chariot in which sat a white-whiskered clown and an undersized harlequin, Millie uttered a little scream and clutched Reuben's arm hysterically.

"Oh!" she cried, "there is old Bill!" Old Bill it was, gayly caparisoned. Uncle Caleb it was, an august sort of Santa Claus clown, and his agile harlequin companion was the boy tramp.

Uncaparisoned, the man and boy in civilized costumes, old Bill sniffed the air of the home stable delightedly as he arrived at the farm that evening.

"Cured, eh?" smiled Uncle Caleb as he kissed Millie, pretty and sensible-looking in her neat dimity gown. "And Reuben back? Say, this is some home coming!"

Then he told his wandering brother of "a job with the circus and good pay." He had earned enough to clear off the balance of the mortgage. "And there'll be a wedding?" chuckled old Caleb, tremendously glad to rest once more under the home roof.

There was an after glow, rare and radiant, to the supreme satisfaction of Caleb Stone. The boy, Wilfred, whom he had taught to work, had