

A CONFESSION.

I've been down to the city, an' I've seen the 'lectric lights, The twenty-story buildin's an' the other stunnin' sights; I've seen the trolley cars a-rushin' madly down the street, An' all the place a-lookin' like a fairyland complete. But I'd rather see the big trees that's a-growin' up to home, An' watch the stars a-twinklin' in the blue an' lofty dome; An' I'd rather hear the wind that goes a-singin' past the door Than the traffic of the city, with its bustle an' its roar.

I reckon I'm peculiar, an' my tastes is kind o' low, But what's the use denyin' things that certainly is so? I went up to a concert, an' I heard the music there, It sounded like angelic harps a-floatin' through the air. Yet, spite of all its glory, an' the gladness an' acclaim, If I stopped to think a minute, I was homesick jes' the same; An' I couldn't help confessin', though it seems a curious thing, That I'd rather hear a robin sweetly pipin' in the spring.

—Washington Star.

ONLY A CHILD.

Of all poor men the most to be pitied is the poor rich man. The man in absolute poverty can be helped; but for the man who is poor with his coffers full of gold there is no earthly help—none, unless something can get away down into his heart and open the way for the incoming of sunlight and warmth. Such a transformation I once knew, and I will tell you how it was wrought. It was done by only a little child.

Rufus Grote was really and truly a miser, though he had probably never acknowledged the fact to himself. At the age of sixty he lived in a close, small, shabby house, in a narrow street down town, though up town where the streets were broad, and where green trees grew, he owned a whole brick block, the rental of which yielded what might have been a magnificent income for any man. In early life Rufus Grote had been disappointed; so while yet a man he had shut himself up within his shell and through all the years of his manhood he had neither asked nor given any love nor friendship. He took his usance eye to the pound of flesh, if it was due him by the bond, and he was as ready to discharge all bonded obligations.

One evening, just at dusk, a coach stopped at Rufus Grote's door, and a lady, dressed in black, and accompanied by a child, alighted therefrom, and plied the rusty iron knocker. The miser answered the summons, and demanded the applicant's business.

"Uncle Rufus," said the woman, "I am Mary Sanford, and this is my child. Will you give me shelter until I can find work?"

Mary Sanford was the only daughter of Rufus Grote's dead sister. He had heard of her husband's death, and he had shudderingly asked himself more than once if it might not be possible that his widowed niece would call upon him for assistance. And now the dreaded blow had fallen. What was he to do? Had he followed the first impulse, he would have turned the woman and her child away with a word; but that would have been inhuman. He was caught in a trap. He had to open his door wider, and let them in. And when they were in he was forced, in common decency, to go out and buy a loaf of bread and some cheese.

Mary Sanford was thirty-five; a slight, pale-faced, pretty woman; and what of beauty she possessed was due more to the reflex action upon her face and manner of her native goodness than to any outward grace of feature.

Her child, a girl of nine years, was called Flora. She was a plump, dimpled, sunny-haired and sunny-faced child, with the light of a tender, loving heart sparkling in every feature. She was really and truly a thing of beauty and perfect joy.

After eating the bread and cheese, and drinking cold water with it, Mary Sanford told to Rufus Grote the story of her husband's death—how he had suffered long, and how he had left her in utter destitution.

"But," she concluded, as she saw a cloud upon her uncle's face, "I am not come to be a burden upon you. Mrs. Maynard will be in the city in a few days, and will give me work."

"Ugh! What kind of work?" grunted Rufus.

"I shall keep house for her."

Later in the evening, by the dim light of a single tallow candle, Flora crept to the old man's side and climbed into his lap. For the moment he had a thought of putting her away, as he would have put away an insinuating cat, but he did not do it. So she kept on until she had got both hands upon his shoulders.

"You are my Uncle Rufus?" she said, with a quivering, eager smile.

"I suppose so," answered the man, forcing out the reluctant words.

"I haven't got a papa any more. Mayn't I kiss you before I go to bed?"

The little warm arms were around his neck, and the kiss was upon his

cheek. The child waited a moment as though for a kiss in return, but she did not get it, and she slipped down and went with her mother to the little dark room where Rufus Grote had given up to their use his own hard, poor bed.

For himself the host had planned to spread a blanket upon the floor in the living room. He had slept there before, and he could sleep there again.

The soil of Rufus Grote's heart was like the soil of other hearts. A seed once forced through the crust would find root there—either good or evil. In all his manhood's life so warm a thing as that childish kiss had not touched his cheek. He did not think of it so much until he was alone in the dense darkness; and then when he could see nothing else, he could see that sunny face, and the musical chirp sounded again in his ears. At first he would have been glad to believe that the child's mother had instructed her in this, but when he looked over all the circumstances, he knew it could not have been; and before he slept he was glad the child had come to him of her own sweet impulse.

Upon the hard floor, with only a single blanket for bedding, Rufus Grote did not sleep so soundly as was his wont. He dreamed, and in his dreams he saw a cherub, and felt cherubic arms about his neck, with kisses upon his cheek. And he said to himself in his dreams:

"Surely, I cannot be such an ogre if these sweet beings can love me."

In the morning Rufus Grote was up very early. He had thought the night before that he had bread and cheese enough for breakfast; but after the night's dream—he took new thoughts. Without exactly comprehending the feeling, the sense of utter loneliness and selfishness had given place to a warmer sense of companionship and fraternity. He put his hand to the cheek where the impress of the child's kiss had fallen, and a new resolution came to his mind. He went out to a neighboring street corner and purchased tea and sugar and butter, and new warm breakfast rolls, and a small can of milk.

He had just deposited these articles upon the table when Mrs. Sanford made her appearance.

"Good-morning, Uncle Rufus."

Had the host caught that sound when he first arose it would have startled him; but it fell very softly upon his ears now. He had been exercising, and earned the salute.

"Good morning, Mary," returned Rufus; and so odd was it, that the very tones of his own voice surprised him.

"What can I do for you this morning, uncle? May I get your breakfast for you?"

"I will build a fire," said the man, "and then if you please, you may make a cup of tea."

The fire was built, and then he showed where his dishes were.

Mary Sanford was an accomplished housekeeper, and she could accommodate herself to circumstances very narrow. While she was busy a ray of fresh sunshine burst into the room, lighting up the dingy wall, and making golden with its light the atmosphere of the place. It was little Flora, bright, joyous and jubilant, thinking only of love in the first hour of her waking from refreshing sleep. Without a word—only a ripple of gladness—dropping from her lips—she went to where the old man had just sat down in the corner, and crept up again into his lap.

"I can't reach your cheek, uncle," she laughed, "without getting up—you are so big and I am so little."

And then she kissed him as she had done the night before; but not as on the night before—did Rufus Grote. With a movement almost spasmodic—so strange was it for him—he drew the child back to him, and imprinted a hearty kiss upon her round cheek.

And the words—"God bless you, lit-

tle one!" fell from his lips before he knew it.

Verily the crust was broken. But had any good seed fallen upon the heart?

What an odd scene for the miser's home! A really good breakfast—a table tastefully laid—the fumes from the teapot fresh and fragrant—and the surroundings cheerful.

After breakfast Rufus Grote was forced to go away on business. And on that day he concluded arrangements for the leasing of a building which was to return him ten thousand dollars a year; and he had meant when the business was done, that he would be poorer than ever, and live on less than heretofore, so that he might lay up more. On this same day one of his houses was vacated up town—a dwelling on one of the broad streets where the green trees grew. He saw his agent and ordered him to let the house as quickly as possible.

That evening, while Mrs. Sanford was out, Flora came to Rufus Grote's side, and looked earnestly up into his face.

"Uncle," she said, with quaint seriousness, "don't you want me to get up into your lap?"

"Why do you ask that?" demanded the old man.

"Mamma said I mustn't. She said you wouldn't like it."

"What made her think I shouldn't like it?"

"Because she said you wasn't happy; and she cried when she said that her little girl mustn't make her Uncle Rufus dislike her."

"And what did you say to that?" asked Rufus Grote, with awakening interest.

"I told mamma that I would put my arms around your neck, and hug and kiss you, and see if I couldn't make you love me. And if you loved me, I knew you would let me sit in your lap."

When Mary Sanford came in, half an hour later, she found her child in Uncle Rufus' lap, her sunny head pillowed upon his bosom, and his strong arms entwining her.

The seed had fallen, and had taken root!

Three days afterward Rufus Grote saw his agent, and told him that he need not hurry about renting the empty house up town.

On the evening of the same day Mary Sanford came in with a letter in her hand, and found Flora nestled in her uncle's arms.

"Uncle Rufus," she said, "I have received a letter from Mrs. Maynard. She will be at home day after to-morrow."

"And she wants you to take charge of her house?"

"Yes."

"Very well. Wait till she comes."

And the old man held the little child in his arms until it was time to go to bed.

On the following morning Uncle Rufus told Mary that he wanted her to take a ride with him during the forenoon.

She said she would be at his service.

And later a fine coach drew up before the door, and Uncle Rufus came in and bade Mary make ready, and to make Flora ready also.

They rode up town, and when they stopped Uncle Rufus handed them out before a house with great chestnut trees growing in the yard and upon the sidewalk. And he led them into the house. And in the broad, handsome parlor he turned and spoke, holding Flora by the hand.

"Mary," he said, "this little child has promised to make her old uncle happy, and I will not give her up. This house is mine. If you will come and help me take care of it, I will live in it. What say you?"

What could she say? She saw the new light upon her uncle's face; and when he took the child in his arms and held the sunny head close upon his bosom, she saw the blessing of the coming time. She said, with a burst of tears—

"Dear uncle, if Flora and I can make you happy, you may command us both."

There was wonder up town and there was wonder down town when Rufus Grote appeared a well dressed, smiling, happy man.

And in the mansion beneath the shade of the great chestnut trees there was peace and joy. An angel, in the shape of a little child, had touched a human heart long buried in cold darkness, and brought it forth to love and blessing.—Waverley Magazine.

Lord Strathcona.

Lord Strathcona began the career which has led him to the House of Lords and a colossal fortune as a "red-haired, freckled, rough-hewn Scotch lad" in the wilds of Labrador. He was in the employment of the Hudson Bay Company and his duty was to barter for furs with the natives and pack them off to Montreal—work which involved long and perilous journeys by canoe and on snow shoes, amid hardships which would have proved fatal to anyone less sturdy than the Scottish saddler's son.

The trouble with having a good word for everybody is that when you pay a compliment, it doesn't count.



The Darkened Stable.

Where animals are kept in the stable during the summer months, as, for example, work horses, or, in some instances, the breeding stock, nothing contributes so much to their comfort as that of protecting them from flies. Animals that are kept busy fighting flies require more food to keep them in condition, and, indeed, it is impossible with an unlimited supply of food to keep them in proper condition.

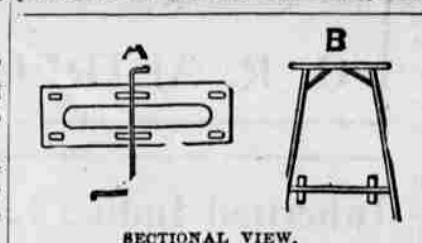
Advantage should be taken of the fact that flies constantly tend to seek the light places. A stable need not be absolutely dark in order to prevent annoyance from flies, and, in fact, we do not believe in keeping stables too dark, on account of the fact that animals are liable, if kept in such quarters for any considerable length of time, to go wrong in their eyes. Gunny sack nailed over the windows of the stable will greatly reduce the number of flies that will pester the animals. These should not be nailed down absolutely tight at the bottom, or air will be excluded and the stable will become warm and unhealthful. If the sacks are partly loose at the bottom they will still shade the stable satisfactorily and at the same time admit air. Horses placed in the stable for an hour at noon will eat better, rest better, and we cannot help but think they will work better afterward, if they are afforded some protection during the time they are in the stall. In some of our better class of stables regular window blinds are used, these being pulled down during the day and run up at night, thus freely admitting the air when no protection from flies is necessary. It is claimed by those who use such blinds that their cost is more than offset many times during a single season in the saving of feed that is effected by the protection which they afford.

Grindstone Frame. My grindstone frame is made of two-inch plank with hole cut through for the stone, and wide enough to fasten on the bearings. The legs are made of pieces of 1x4 mortised in. They are

SECTIONAL VIEW.

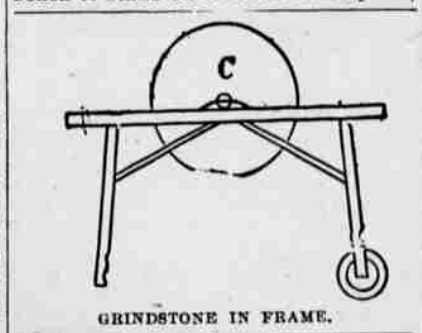
long enough so the man who does the grinding can stand upright. An axle 1 1/2 inches in diameter passes through two of the legs, and there are two wheels made of inch hardwood board about eight inches in diameter. These wheels run on the axle so the other end of the frame can be picked up and the grindstone rolled around easily wherever it is needed. The legs should be braced as required. The same idea will hold good in making a bench to stand on to drive fence posts,

only the wheels should be larger, so it will run over uneven ground easier. A hole through the top of the bench will take in the handle of the post driver, a hook and staple on one side would carry the bar and a drawer in one end could be used to put in nails, staples, hammer, pliers and staple puller. In the illustrations A shows top view of frame, B an end view, and C the complete side view.—J. B. Crookston, in St. Louis Republic.



SECTIONAL VIEW.

Incubator Don'ts. Don't use oil less than 150 test. Don't help the chick out of the shell. Don't trim the wick with scissors; scrape off the charred part with a match. Don't fail to fill the lamps every evening. Don't set the incubator near the window. Don't worry with moisture gauges or hygrometers. Don't use the same wick for more than one hatch. Don't turn nor cool the eggs after they are pipping. Don't neglect cooling the eggs; it makes strong chicks. Don't think you are smarter than the manufacturer of the incubator, for you have a lot to learn.



GRINDSTONE IN FRAME.

Farmer's Dress. Since rural people are isolated the tendency is for them to become careless in dress. I am sure that I became careless and that I was a frightful object to look upon when I was striving for a foothold upon the farm under adverse circumstances. It is well for the farmer, his wife, daughters and sons to slick up in the matter of dress after the day's work is done, so they may appear at the supper table and during the evening in clothes suitable for receiving any one who may happen to call. Very likely no one may call, but for the sake of the family it will pay to give this attention to dress.

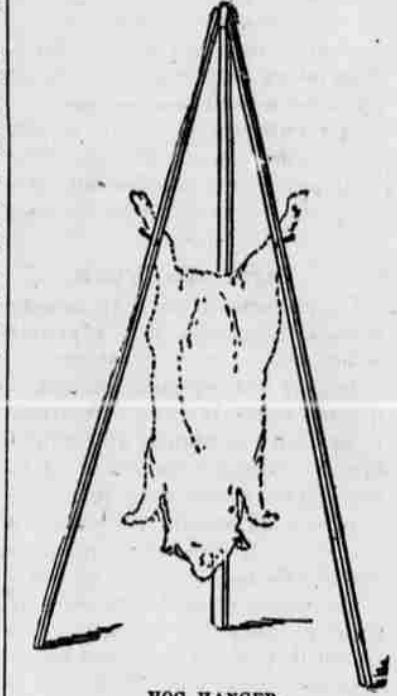
Magazines on the Table. When you visit a farmer's home and find creditable papers and magazines upon his sitting-room table you are favorably impressed with that farmer's intelligence. Shiftless farmers are not inclined to pay out money for reading matter. Ignorant farmers consider money spent for reading matter wasted. There is no better sign of prosperity than to see upon his table farm papers, church papers, magazines, etc.

Aged Dwarf Trees. Surprising results have been produced in the line of dwarf trees by Japanese growers. It is said there are pine trees that started to grow in the seventeenth century which are still not too large to be carried in one hand. The gardeners nip off the tree's roots, pinch back the branches and starve the tree in poor soil, keeping it barely alive and checking the growth almost entirely. As time goes on, the tree gains the appearance of extreme age, but is no larger than a seedling a few months old.

Don't try to hatch duck and hen eggs in the same incubator. Don't leave the large ends of the eggs pointing in different directions; have them all pointing one way.

A Simple Hog Hanger.

Here's a sketch of a hog hanger, which is a good one for the farmer. Take three 9-foot poles, 2 1/2 inches in diameter. Put a 1/2-inch bolt through the top and two 3/8-inch bolts in the outside poles, as in the cut, 18 inches from top, so that they stick out 3 inches. Lay the hog on its back, slip the little bolt under the cord, and raise



HOG HANGER.

it up. One-half of the hog can be taken down and the other half left hanging.

Stock Raising by Electricity. According to a recent issue of the Chicago Tribune, an electrical system of stock-raising has been developed on a moderate scale at the University of Michigan. Small animals, such as rabbits, have already been forced into matured size and plumpness in two-thirds of the period required by nature, showing the possibility of reducing the tedious development of larger stock, especially sheep or cows, by many months. In several rooms of the electro-therapeutic laboratory, cheap wooden pens, circular in form, have been wound to the height of two feet with electric wires. A moderate current of one-half horse power circles these electric pens. From its influence the air inside the pens is made electromagnetic, becoming a strong magnetic field, with sixty-two lines of force to the square inch. In these pens rabbits have grown to maturity in two-thirds of the time that rabbits near them have developed in non-electrical pens. These electrically nurtured animals did not become larger than normal rabbits; they merely arrived at normal size quicker. Furthermore, as is the case with hothouse flowers, they were found less hardy than their slower brothers. But, for the live-stock market, the forced animals had an unexcelled tenderness and plumpness.

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