



CHAPTER XVI—Continued.

"Go on! Good dog!" cried Mr. Stagg. "Lead the way to Hannah's Carlyn!"

He heard the little girl screaming: "Oh, Uncle Joe! Oh, Uncle Joe! Here we are!"

Cherry rattled the buckboard down to the bottom of the hollow and stopped. There was some smoke here, but not much. The man leaped to the ground when he saw a figure rise up from the foot of a tree by the spring—a figure in brown.

"Joseph! Thank God!" murmured Amanda.

The hardware dealer strode to her. She had put out both her hands to him, and he saw that they were trembling, and that tears filled her great brown eyes.

"Oh, Joe!" she said, "I feared you would come too late!"

"But I'm here, Mandy, and I'm not too late!" he cried; and, somehow—neither of them could, perhaps, have explained just how—his arms went around her and her hands rested on his shoulders, while she looked earnestly into his face.

"Oh, Joe! Joe!" It was like a sur-rendering sob.

"It's not too late, is it, Mandy? Say it isn't too late!" he pleaded.

"No, it's not too late," she whispered. "If—if we're not too old."

"Old!" almost shouted Joseph Stagg. "I don't remember of ever feeling so young as I do right now!" and suddenly he stooped and kissed her. "Bless me! what fools we've been all this time!"

"Oh, Uncle Joe! Oh, Miss Amanda!" cried Carolyn May, standing before them, and pointing with a rather grimy index finger. "You aren't mad at each other any more, are you? Oh, I am so glad! so glad!" and her face showed her pleasure.

But the situation was too difficult to allow of much but practical thoughts.

"Where's the old woman?" asked Joseph Stagg quickly.

"Her husband came with a horse and buggy late last night and took her over to the new camp," was the reply.

"The fire was coming into the camp when I left. We must get out of here in a hurry," declared Mr. Stagg.

"We aren't going to be burned up now, when Uncle Joe is here, Miss Mandy," Carolyn May declared with confidence. "See how nice he and Prince found us? Why, they are regular heroes, aren't they?"

"They are, indeed, child," agreed the woman. She turned to Joseph Stagg, happiness shining in her eyes, and looking prettier than ever before in her life, he thought.

The hollow was rapidly becoming filled with smoke. The man did not



"Oh, Uncle Joe! Oh, Miss Amanda," cried Carolyn May.

understand this, but it foreboded trouble. He turned Cherry and the buckboard around, and then he helped Amanda into the seat.

"Up you go, too, Carlyn May," he said, lifting the little girl into the rear of the buckboard.

Joseph Stagg felt very serious as he seated himself by Amanda's side and picked up the reins. The horse quickly retraced his steps up the hill to the tote road. As they came out into this broader path they saw the smoke pouring through it in a choking cloud.

"Oh, Joe," gasped Amanda, "it's coming!"

"It surely is," agreed the hardware merchant. "We're in a hot corner, my girl. But trust to me—"

"Oh, I do, Joe!" she exclaimed, squeezing his arm. "I am sure you know what is best to do."

"I'll try to prove that so," he said with a subdued chuckle.

"Oh, Uncle Joe!" cried Carolyn May suddenly. "Can't we get out of this awful smoke? It—it chokes me!"

"Wait," whispered Amanda to the man. "I'll lift her over the back of the seat. I think she had better be in my lap."

"Perhaps that's so," he agreed, and he held in the nervous Cherry for a moment till the change was accomplished.

The roaring of the fire grew louder and louder in their ears.

Suddenly Joseph Stagg dragged Cherry's head around. The horse snorted and hesitated, for the smoke was blinding him.

"I pretty near missed these forks!" exclaimed the hardware merchant. This left road takes us toward the lake."

"Oh, Joe, can we reach it?" whispered Amanda.

"We've got to!" he returned grimly. "It's three miles, if it's an inch, but Cherry has got to make it."

They were relieved after a minute or two in this new road. The smoke had not so completely filled it. But it was a rougher way, and the buckboard bounced until Carolyn May cried out in fear.

They drove over a little hillock that raised them higher than the tote road had done. Amanda clutched Mr. Stagg's arm again and uttered a half-suffled "Oh!"

He shot a glance to the left. A mass of flame broke out in the wood not far off this trail—the top of a great tree was on fire.

"The wind is carrying brands this way," muttered the man. "A dozen new fires will be started. Well, gid-up, Cherry!" and he seized the whip again.

The horse was well spent now, but he was plucky. He tried to increase his stride. A hot breath of wind came rushing through the forest, bending the branches and shaking the leafy foliage. The wind seemed fairly to scorch the fugitives.

The roaring of the fire increased. Through the more open woods which bordered this path they saw the smoke advancing in a thicker wall—and one as high as the tree tops.

"You've got to make it, old boy," muttered Joseph Stagg, and he lashed the horse again.

The spirited Cherry leaped forward, both the woman and the child screaming.

"Is it far? Is it far?" gasped Amanda in his ear.

"Too far for comfort. But keep your heart up."

As the man spoke, a blazing brand swung through the air and came down, right on Amanda's shoulders. Carolyn May shrieked. Joseph Stagg brushed off the burning stick.

Cherry mounted another small ridge and then they clattered down into a little hollow where there was a slough beside the road. The water was green and stagnant, but it was water.

The man pulled in the hard-pressed horse and leaped down, passing the reins to Amanda. He whipped off his coat and dipped it in the mudhole. He drew it out dripping with water and slime.

"Look out, here! Have to shut your eyes!" he warned his two companions on the seat of the buckboard, and threw the saturated coat over Miss Amanda's head. The dripping garment sheltered Carolyn May as well.

"Now, good horse!" he yelled to Cherry, leaping back to the seat. "Gid-up!"

The horse started up the slope. Another swirling brand came down upon them. Joseph Stagg fought it off with his bare hand. His shirt sleeve caught fire and he was painfully burned on the forearm before he could smother the blaze.

Another flaming brand fell, landing on Cherry's back. The horse squealed and leaped forward at a pace which Mr. Stagg could not control. Maddened by the burn, Cherry had taken the bit in his teeth and was running away.

The man threw down the reins. He could do nothing toward retarding the frightened horse's pace. Indeed, he did not want to stop him.

His left arm he flung around Miss Amanda and the child, and with his

right hand clung to the rocking seat of the careering buckboard.

The wet steaming coat saved the woman and the child from injury. Joseph Stagg had lost all count of time. The forest road might still extend ahead of them for a mile, for all he knew.

But suddenly they broke cover, Cherry still galloping wildly, and plunged down an open ravine to the edge of a lake of sparkling water.

"Bless me! The lake! the lake!" hoarsely shouted the man.

The walls of the ravine sheltered them from smoke and fire for a moment, but the brands still fell. Cherry had halted on the edge of the lake, but Joseph Stagg urged him on into the water, flank deep. The shore was narrow and afforded little space for refuge. He lifted Amanda and the child bodily from the seat and dropped them into the water.

"We're safe now," he said hoarsely, jumping in himself, and holding Carolyn May and Amanda. "We've got water enough here, thanks be! Hang on to me, Mandy. I'm not going to let you get away—no more, never!"

And by the way in which the woman clung to his arm it was evident that she did not propose to lose him.

"My, Uncle Joe! you are just the bravest man!" declared Carolyn May, finding her voice. "Isn't he, Miss

Rose?"

"Yes, indeed!" cried the child. "Isn't it nice? They aren't mad at each other any more."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

FRENCH GO BACK TO CANDLES

Scarcity of Materials Used for Lighting Has Led to Revival of an Ancient Art.



"Yes, isn't it nice they aren't mad at each other."

Mandy? And, see, his arm is all burned. Dear me, we must get home to Aunt Rose and let her do it up for him."

CHAPTER XVII.

"Two's Company."

Toward the east the forest tract was completely burned to the banks of Coder's creek. As the wind which had sprung up had driven the fire westward, there was little danger of the flames pressing nearer than the creek to Sunrise Cove and The Corners.

Joseph Stagg led the horse out of the water and advised Miss Amanda and Carolyn May to get into the seat of the buckboard again. Then he set forth, leading the horse along the narrow beach, while Prince followed wearily in the rear.

It was a rough route they followed, but the blackened forest was still too hot for them to pass through, had they been able to find a path. This was a lonely strip of shore and they saw no living soul but themselves.

It was a long tramp, and the horse, the dog, and the man were alike wearied. Carolyn May went fast asleep with her head pillowed in Miss Amanda's lap.

The latter and Joseph Stagg talked much. Indeed, there was much for them to say after all these years of silence.

The woman, worn and scorched of face, looked down on the smutted and sweating man with an expression in her eyes that warmed him to the marrow. She was proud of him. And the gaze of love and longing that the hardware merchant turned upon Amanda Parlow would have amazed those people that believed he had consideration and thought only for business.

In these few hours of alarm and close intimacy the man and the woman had leaped all the barriers time and pride had set up. Nothing further could keep Joseph Stagg and Amanda Parlow apart. And yet they never for one instant discussed the original cause of their estrangement. That was a dead issue.

The refugees reached The Corners about nine o'clock. Jeddiah Parlow had hobbled up to the store and was just then organizing a party of searchers to go to the rescue of the hardware dealer and those of whom he had set forth in search.

The village turned out en masse to welcome the trio who had so miraculously escaped the fire. Aunt Rose's relief knew no bounds. Mr. Parlow was undeniably glad to see his daughter safe; otherwise, he would never have overlooked the pitiable state his horse was in. Poor Cherry would never be the same unblemished animal again.

"Well, I vum!" he said to Joseph Stagg, "you done it! Better'n I could, too, I reckon. I'll take the boss home. You comin' with me, Mandy?" Then

he saw the burns on the younger man's shoulders and arms. "The good land of Jehoshaphat! here's work for you to do, Mandy. If you air any sort of a nurse, I reckon you got your hands full right here with Joe Stagg." He added, with some pride in his daughter's ability. "Phew! them's bad-lookin' burns!"

"They are indeed," agreed Aunt Rose.

It was a fact that Mr. Stagg was in a bad state. Carolyn May had suggested that Aunt Rose would dress his burns, but Miss Amanda would allow nobody to do that but herself.

When the curious and sympathetic neighbors had gone and Miss Amanda was still busy making Joseph Stagg comfortable in the sitting room, Aunt Rose came out into the kitchen, where she had already bathed and helped Carolyn May to undress, and where the little girl was now sleepily eating her supper of bread and milk.

"Well, wonders don't ever cease, I guess," she said, more to herself than to her little confidant. "Who'd have thought it!"

"Who'd have thought what, Aunt Rose?" inquired Carolyn May.

"Your uncle and Mandy Parlow have made it up," breathed the woman, evidently much impressed by the wonder of it.

"Yes, indeed!" cried the child. "Isn't it nice? They aren't mad at each other any more."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

WHAT CLUB WORK IS TO BOYS AND GIRLS

Sets Standard of Achievement in Home Activities.

Among Other Advantages It Engages Best Thought and Energy of Every Youth in the Business of Farming.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

Club work makes farm and home work, sometimes thought of as drudgery, an interesting game. Club work sets standards of achievement for boys and girls in home activities and dignifies common labor.

It is training for community leadership and farm and home co-operative work of every type and kind.

It socializes community life through the boys and girls, and gives young people a real motive in all their work.

It also teaches farm boys and girls that it is infinitely better to be a proprietor of farm land, farm animals, machinery, crops, kitchen equipment, etc., than to be a mere wage earner.

It produces and conserves food to meet local, national, and world needs on an economic basis.

It demonstrates how to make farming and home making profitable and tolerable.

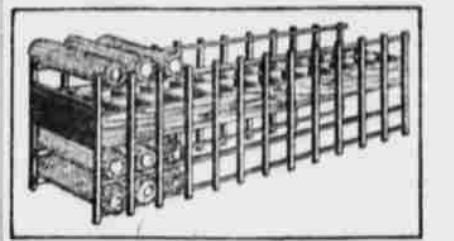
It engages the best thought, energy, and interest of every boy and girl in the business of farming and home-making. Club work is a practical back-to-the-home, "made-in-America" type of education that has for its chief aim the practical basis for extension, not provided for in the public school curricula nor in the Smith-Hughes vocational work.

Boys' and girls' club work has a permanent, year-around program of work, both for the group and the individual member, supported by permanent funds, permanent program, permanent leadership in every state in the Union, and reaches boys and girls, both in and out of school, of all ages from 9 to 21 years. In most states they are grouped in two classes—members of the boys' and girls' clubs from 9 to 15 and junior farmers and home makers from 15 to 21.

TESTING SEED CORN IN SOIL

Kernels Are Taken From Each Ear and Planted in Separate Compartments.

For the purpose of testing seed corn in soil—a method said to be more accurate than testing it in water—a



Rack for Testing Seed Corn.

3-foot open rack has been devised containing supports for three tiers of 12 ears each, says Popular Mechanics. There is also incorporated in the rack a box divided into 36 compartments. The selected ears of corn are placed in the open frame and at the same time six kernels are taken from each and planted in the soil-filled compartment corresponding in position to that of the ear in the rack.

Rust Worse Than War.

The life of your machine is determined by the care you give it. To have an implement outside during the winter months is worse on the machine than several years of severe use in the field.

DIFFICULT WINTER CHURNING

Trouble Usually Caused by Incorrect Temperature, or Because of Cream Composition.

Failure to get butter "to come" by churning is not an uncommon experience during winter. The trouble most often occurs on those farms where only a few cows are milked. If the milk of one or two animals is responsible for the difficult churning, other milk when mixed with it will overcome the trouble. Usually when the trouble occurs it is due to one of two causes; an incorrect churning temperature, or because of the peculiar composition of some milk and cream.

High-Protein Feeds.

The high-protein feeds have a greater manurial value than the low-protein feeds; therefore, farmers should feed as much of the high-protein feeds as possible.

Profit and Loss.

Good implements often represent the difference between profit and loss in farming.

Salvage.

The following letter was written by the wife of a man fighting overseas to a member of the Salvage club, an official organization for preventing war waste:

"Dear Sir: I called at your office on Wednesday at one o'clock, but was told you were engaged on salvage, and that I could not see you. I wanted to ask you about Bert's teeth what he lost at the front in the mud—do I still have to keep up the payments of them on the installment plan? I feel quite sure that your Salvage club what they talks about would have the matter put right if you would only mention it. Yours respectfully ————, London Tit-Bits.

Speed Indicators.

A useful instrument, especially in clouds, is the air speed indicator. This tells the pilot his speed through the air. It also helps him to know whether he is rising or descending. For instance, if the speed of the machine flying level is 100 miles an hour, any speed registered above that will show that the machine is coming down, and anything below it that the machine is climbing. The difference in speeds will show to what extent the craft is descending or climbing. There is also a proper fore-and-aft level to indicate climb and descend, but for various technical reasons the pilot usually depends on the air speed indicator.