

The Homesteader

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"ALLAN."

Synopsis.—Disatisfied because of the seemingly barren outlook of his position as a school teacher in Canadian town, John Harris determines to leave it, take up land in Manitoba and become a "homesteader." Mary, the girl whom he loves, declares she will accompany him. They are married and set out for the unknown country. Alec McCrae, pioneer settler and adviser of newcomers, proves an invaluable friend. Leaving his wife with the family of a fellow settler, Fred Arturs, Harris and McCrae journey over the prairie and select a homestead. Mary insists on accompanying him when he takes possession. They build a shack and put in a crop.

CHAPTER III—Continued.

It was not dreadfully cold, but the sky seemed only a vast turmoil of snow. Darkness came down very early, but at last Harris began to recognize familiar landmarks close by the trail, and just as night was settling in he drew into the partial shelter of the bench on the bank of the coulee. The horses pulled on their reins persistently for the stable, but Harris forced them up to the house. His loud shout was whipped away by the wind and strangled in a moment, so he climbed stiffly from the wagon and pulled with numbed hands at the double thickness of carpet that did service for a door. He fancied he heard a sound, but could be sure of nothing; he called her name again and again, but could distinguish no answer. But at last the fastenings which help the carpet gave way, and he half walked, half fell, into the house.

The lantern burned dimly, but it was not at the lantern he looked. In the farthest corner, scarcely visible in the feeble light, stood his wife, and at her shoulder was the gun, trained steadily upon him.

"Mary Mary, don't you know me?" he cried.

She dropped her weapon to the floor, where it went off, harmlessly burying its charge in the sod wall.

"Thank God, oh, thank God!" she exclaimed.

He threw off his wet overcoat and rushed to her side. But she sat silent on the bed, staring absently at the light flickering uncertainly in the wind from the open door.

He hastily rearranged the carpet, then, returning to her, he took her hands in his and rubbed them briskly. But she still stared vaguely at the light.

Suddenly a thought came to him. He rushed outside, to find that the horses, of their own accord, had taken

places. With a great joy he watched the color returning as her set face relaxed in a smile of ineffable tenderness. She raised her face to his and slipped her arms about his neck, and he knew that for the moment he had snatched her out of the valley of the shadow.

Harris made no more attempts to market his wheat that winter. His wife's health now became his first consideration, but, even had there been no such problem, experience had shown that nothing was to be gained by making the long and expensive trip to Emerson. The cost of subsistence of man and team on the way devoured all the proceeds of the wheat; indeed, there were instances on record in the settlement where men who attempted such trips during the winter actually came back poorer than they left, while those who could show a gain of a bag of sugar, a sack of flour, or a box of groceries were considered fortunate indeed.

"What shall we eat?" said Harris to his wife, when, after a full discussion, it was decided that no more grain could be marketed until spring.

"Oh, we shall not suffer," was her calm reply. "We have over 500 bushels of wheat."

"But we can't eat wheat!" "I'm not so sure of that. I heard Mr. McCrae say that lots of families had wintered on wheat. Indeed, boiled wheat is something of a delicacy. Even the best city families rarely have it, although it is more nutritious than flour and much easier to prepare."

Harris thrilled with joy over his wife's vivacity. The strange gloom that oppressed her so much of late had cost him many anxious hours.

So, in high spirits, they planned for their winter. There were long hours, and little diversion, and the desolation of bleak, snow-bound prairies on every side, but through it all they kept up their courage and their hopefulness. Mary spent much time with her needle, from which John, when he felt she was applying herself too closely, beguiled her to a game of checkers or an hour with one of their few but valued books. And there were frequent visits and long evenings spent about a cozy fire, when the Morrisons, or the Grants, or the Blises, dropped in to while away the time. The little sod house was warm and snug, and as the men played checkers while the women sewed, what cared the pioneers for the snow and the cold and the wind whistling across the plains?

At last came the crisis. At 4 in the afternoon Harris kissed his wife an affectionate farewell, hitched his horses to the sleigh, and started out post-haste for Plainville. He drove by way of the Morrisons, where a few low words sent Tom to the stable at a trot to hitch his own team, while the good wife bustled about in the "room," almost overwhelmed with the importance of her mission.

"I will go for the doctor, Jack, and you go back and take the wife with you," was Morrison's kindly offer, but Harris would not agree. It was dark by this time, and he felt that he could trust no one else to make the journey to Plainville. Besides, there was more than a chance that Dr. Blain might be incapable, and in that case it meant a drive of 30 miles farther.

"It's good of you, Morrison," he said, "but you are more used to your wife's bidding than I am, and you can be of good service there, if you will." And without waiting to argue he sprang into his sleigh again and was whipping his team into the darkness.

"Night, Harris," said the landlord, who had a speaking acquaintance with every settler within 20 miles. "Ye're drivin' late. Ye'll have a bite of supper an' stable the team?"

"No, Hank, not tonight, thanking you the same. But I'm after Dr. Blain, and I'm in a hurry. Is he here, and—is he fit?" There was an anxiety in the last words that did not escape the host.

"Nothin' ser'ous, I hope? Frost, or somethin'?" Then, without waiting for reply, he continued: "Yes, doctor's here. Upstairs, bed to the right as ye go up. Just got in a little back. As for fit—dig 'im out an' judge for yourself."

Harris lost no time scaling the ladder which led to the upper half-story of the building. It was a garret-looking better—where the cold stars looked through knot holes in the poplar shingles, and the ends of the shingle nails were tipped with frost. Another wall lamp burned uncertainly here, flickering in the wind that whistled through the cracks in the gables, and by its light Harris found "the bed to the right." The form of a man lay

diagonally across it, face downward, with arms extended above the head, and so still that Harris paused for a moment in a strange alarm. Then he slipped his hand on the doctor's neck and found it warm.

"Come, Doctor," he said, "I want you with me." But the sleeping man answered with not so much as a groan.

"Come, Dr. Blain," Harris repeated, shaking him soundly. "I want you to go home with me." He might have been speaking to the dead.

In sudden exasperation he seized the doctor by the shoulders, and with one



"Wachte Doing, Harris!"

heave of his mighty arms set him upright on the floor and shook him vigorously.

Dr. Blain opened his eyes and blinked uncertainly at the light. "Wachte doing, Harris?" he said at length, and the recognition brought a thrill of hope. "S no use . . . Gotta sleep it off. S no use, Harris. S no use." And he crumpled up in the bed.

But Harris was desperate. "Now I'm not going to fool with you," he said. "You get up and come with me or I'll take you. Which is it?"

But the doctor only mumbled "S no use," and fell heavily to sleep. Throwing open his coat to get free motion for his arms, Harris in a moment wrapped the sleeping man in a couple of blankets from the bed, threw him over his shoulder, carried him down the rickety ladder, and deposited him, none too gently, in the sleigh. There was a mild cheer from the men

LIKE RAINBOW IN THE SEA

Gloriously Tinted Water That Washes Bermuda's Shores Is an Ever-Fascinating Marvel.

Hundreds of miles from any coast, surrounded on every side by the restless surges of the great Atlantic—a mere speck in a waste of sea—lies Bermuda. While not strictly one of the West Indies, yet its fauna and flora, its products and its formation, are so similar to many of the Antilles that we may well consider it as a West Indian island gone astray, and set down—or rather pushed up—a thousand miles and more from its fellows.

If the ship arrives at Bermuda by daylight there is ample opportunity for the visitor to view the island as the vessel steams slowly along the northern shores and threads her way through the tortuous channel between sharp-fanged reefs toward Hamilton.

Perhaps nowhere else in all the world is there such gloriously tinted water. Indigo where deep, azure and sapphire nearer shore, opalescent turquoise in the shallows, and marbled with royal purple and amethyst where reefs and corals dot the white sand of its bed, the sea that laps Bermuda's shores is an ever-changing, ever-fascinating marvel; a thing of wondrous beauty impossible to describe in words or to reproduce in pigments.—A. Hyatt Verrill in "The Book of the West Indies."

Rollers for Flat Feet.

A Chicago doctor says that flat feet should be rolled regularly, and he has devised rollers of different forms on which the foot is exercised.

about the stove over these herote measures, and one of them thoughtfully threw the doctor's satchel into the sleigh. The next moment all were lost in the darkness.

Harris drove for an hour, watching the trail keenly in the whitish mist of the winter's night, and urging the horses to the limit of their exertions. He had almost forgotten his passenger when he felt a stir in the bottom of the sleigh. Looking down closely he found the doctor trying to extricate a flask from one of his pockets. With a quick wrench he took it from him, and would have thrown it into the snow, but the thought struck him that it might be needed, and he put it into his own pocket.

The doctor struggled to his feet. "Say, Harris, you're friend o' mine, but don't take too many liberties, see? S no use tryin' without it. Jush give me that bottle now, or I'll get out an' go home."

Harris was so pleased at the signs of returning coherence that he could have hugged the doctor, but he only said, "You've had enough for tonight. And you won't get out, because if you try to I'll knock you senseless in the bottom of the sleigh."

After that the doctor remained silent for some time. Then suddenly he demanded: "Shay, Harris, where you takin' me to, anyway?"

"I'm taking you to my home." "Wha' for? You're all right, I guess . . ." Suddenly the doctor stood erect.

"Harris, is your wife sick?" "That's why I came for you."

"Well, why the devil didn't you say so? Here, give me that whip, Harris, Harris, what did you waste time arguin' for?"

"I didn't waste much. The argument was mostly on your side."

"Harris," said the doctor, after a long silence, "you think I'm a fool, you're right. It isn't as though I didn't know. I know the road I'm going, and the end thereof. . . . And yet, in a pinch, I can pull myself together. I'm all right now. But it'll get me again as soon as this is over. . . . Any good I am, any good I do, is just a bit of salvage out of the wreck. The wreck—yes, it's a good word that—wreck."

Just as the dawn was breaking he knelt beside her. Her eyes were very large and quiet, and her face was pale and still. But she raised one white hand, and the thin fingers fondled in his hair. She drew his face very gently down, and big silent tears stood in his eyes.

"We will call him Allan," he said.

The changes of a quarter of a century.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Black Hole of Calcutta.

This name was given to an apartment in Calcutta in which a party of English were confined on the night of June 20, 1756. The garrison of the fort connected with the English factory at Calcutta was captured by the Nawab Siraj-ud-Daula, who caused all the prisoners taken to be confined in a room 15 by 14 feet 10 inches. This cell had only two windows, obstructed by a veranda. Of the 150 people who spent the night in a horror of thirst, heat and agony from pressure, only 23 survived the experience.

FORCED REMOVAL OF EDICT

Londoners in Riotous Mood When Monarch Threatened to Close City's Coffee Houses.

All England was up in riotous defiance of the right to pursue happiness and coffee when, in 1675, Charles tried to close the coffee-houses as "the great resort of idle and disaffected persons," hot beds of political intrigue. So loud were the protests against the prohibition that the king was forced to revoke his proclamation. To save his dignity, he said that "out of his princely consideration and royal compassion all and every retailer of the liquor aforesaid shall be allowed to keep open until the four and twentieth day of June next." The arid date came and went—and the lid didn't go on. The London coffee houses still flourished, champions of free speech when the press was controlled and parliament unreliable.

Of all the literary and political meeting places, the most influential was one popularized by the patronage of the poet Dryden. Literary aspirants of the day paid dearly merely for the privilege of entering the room the great man usually occupied. There it was that Pepys saw him, center of an admiring throng, having "very witty and pleasant discourse." Dryden's chair always was placed by the fire in the winter and on the balcony in summer.

Stop Up Mouse Holes.

Take a plug of common washing soap, stop the hole with it, and you may rest assured you will have no further trouble from that quarter. It is also good for rats and ants.

BOY SCOUTS

(Conducted by National Council of the Boy Scouts of America.)

A SCOUT LEADER'S PLEA

By Wilfred A. Peterson.

There's a heap o' tasks before us
And it somehow sort o' seems
That the men who make great nations
Are the men who follow dreams.
We've been dreaming of world brother-
hood,
Of universal peace,
And chaos would be certain
If the dreaming we should cease.

There's a dream somewhere within me
Of a nation strong and great;
Of a manhood good and noble,
With the pluck instead of "fate."
It's a dream of love in action,
Men who'll lead the nations far,
With the Golden Rule before them
As their leading, guiding star.

We cannot stop at dreaming,
We have got to form a plan.
For the boy of today, tomorrow
Will be the Nation's man.
In our boyhood lies tomorrow,
In our boyhood lies our dreams,
Boys will be MEN if we'll help 'em.
It is up to us, it seems!

Oh, life is full of battles to me
But the greatest one to me
Is to help our future manhood
Better citizens to be.
Here's the secret we are searching,
Here's the mighty LIGHT we need,
HELP! THE BOY UPGRADE TO
MANHOOD.
BE A MAN, STEP UP AND LEAD!

SCOUTS AS FOREST GUIDES.

The plan for making scouts' agents in the conservation movement in the state of Pennsylvania, has met with more than the anticipated success. At present more than 6,000 Pennsylvania boy scouts are enrolled as forest guides, the proud possessors of certificates of service signed by Gifford Pinchot, the state commissioner of forestry.

According to Solan L. Parkes, scout commissioner of Reading, chief forest guide and originator of the forest guide plan, the movement has two objects: one, the preservation and conservation of the forests and the bird and other wild life in them, and second, the development of good scouting, with a distinct new feature added in the responsibility for wild life and a greater interest in trees, birds and wild life generally which is strictly in line with the scout plan of outdoor life and interests. It is believed that the plan will be of great value wherever it is tried. The scouts of Berks county, Pa., have saved, it is claimed, during the year, over one hundred thousand dollars' worth of forest growth from destruction by fire, and this is only one of the 67 counties which are benefited by this splendid movement.

DOUBLE EAGLE VETERAN SCOUT.

In Topeka, Kan., they are proud of William Menninger. William joined a troop of scouts as a tenderfoot in March, 1913. By July of the same year he was a first class scout, with his eye on merit badge achievement. He qualified for 53 of the badges, thus making himself more than a "double eagle." He is one of the six veteran scouts of Topeka, an assistant scoutmaster, an expert examiner in bird study, a member of the special court of honor, has been an editor of the Topeka Boy Scouts' Trail and served as assistant scout executive in the absence of the executive. At present he is studying medicine at Cornell.

SCOUTS, PROPERTY GUARDIANS

Boy scouts of Louisville, Ky., are enrolled in the local membership of "The Guardians of Property" and take a special pledge to safeguard property, especially at home, school or church. The same boys are called upon to assist in handling crowds at parades, the verdict being that they are just as efficient as the police in this difficult job—some change from the old days when the small boy and the policeman used to be sworn enemies. "Cheese it the cop!" now reads "Glory be! A boy scout!"

HERE'S A BUSY SCOUT TROOP.

In its annual report Troop Sixteen of San Diego, Cal., says through its scoutmaster: "My troop assisted in extinguishing five fires; James Lankeley, first class, rescued a woman who fell under a street car; the scoutmaster applied first aid to three accident victims and also saved two people from drowning."



"Mary, Mary, Don't You Know Me?" He Cried.

shelter beside the stable. Here from the wagon he drew a little bundle and hurried back to the house.

She was sitting where he left her, shivering slightly and watching the play of the light as it flickered up and down the wall. He tore the package open and spread its contents before her.

At first she took no notice, but gradually her eyes found the outline of soft cloth and dainty feminine de-