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What He Forgot to Feed.

(By Rev. J. F. Cowan.)

'The minister's sermon was very good for those who can take it; but as for me, I'm too busy to read the Bible every day as he said.'

As he finished this speech, John Marsh happened to glance over his shoulder, and there stood the minister within hearing distance. He expected an immediate reproof, and was somewhat surprised and relieved when Mr. Brown walked away without saying anything.

Next day he was still more surprised at receiving an early call from his pastor.

'Good-morning, Brother Marsh,' was the salutation.

'Good-morning, Mr. Brown,' replied the puzzled man.

'I have come on a very serious business, began the pastor; 'it may seem like meddling interference, but I believe it is my duty. I have been told there is starvation on this farm and I have come to see about it.'

'Starvation!' exclaimed John Marsh in amazed tones, 'who in the world has been putting you up to such nonsense as that? If there is anything that goes hungry on this farm, I can assure you that I do not know anything about it. Why, even the grasshoppers and potato bugs are well fed.'

'Nevertheless,' said Mr. Brown, 'I shall be compelled to believe that the report is true, as I got it at first-hand, unless I am allowed to investigate and satisfy myself to the contrary.'

'Oh, certainly, investigate all you please, replied Mr. Marsh. 'Come along with me and I will show you.'

With long angry strides he led his pastor to the stable, where his plump, sleek horses stood with their mangers full of hay and a look of lazy contentment in their eyes. 'There,' he said, pointing to his row of handsome steeds, 'is there anything like a starved look about them? You'll not find brighter, cleaner hay or better oats in the county than they get.'

'You are right,' replied Mr. Brown, 'I am satisfied that whatever else starves on this farm, the horses do not.'

'Well, come along and see the cattle, then.' So saying Mr. Marsh led his pastor to the large shed where the cattle stood contentedly chewing the cud over piles of fragrant timothy.

'I see it is not the cows either,' said Mr. Brown with a smile.

'Then we will go and visit the sheep,' said Mr. Marsh a smile of satisfaction beginning to show itself upon his face.

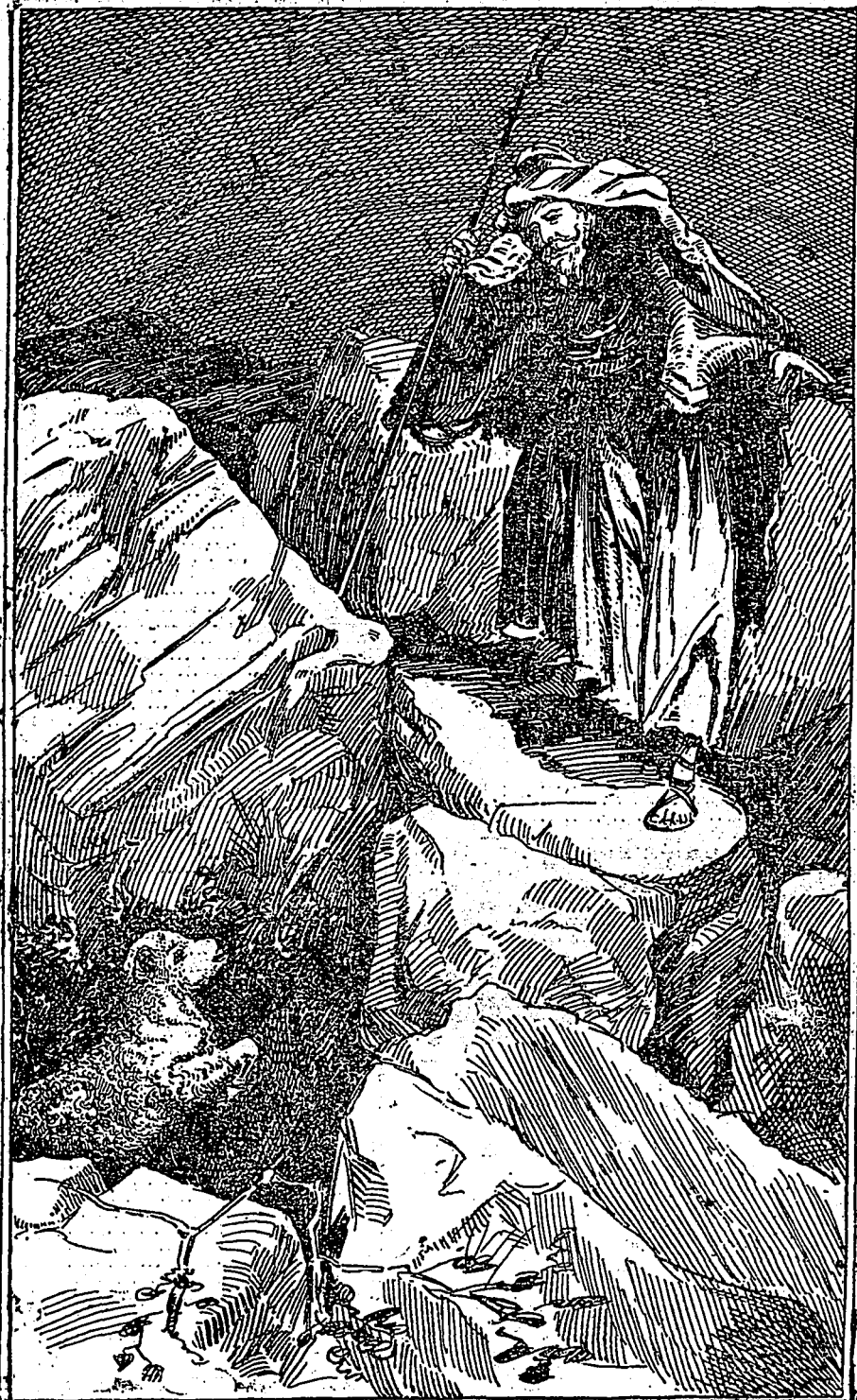
In the sheep-pen as elsewhere the long rack was filled with the very best of fodder, and the sheep were as well-fed and sleek-looking as the cattle and horses had been.

'Now come along and see my hogs,' continued Mr. Marsh, 'and then we'll go into the house, where breakfast is ready, and you shall see how the rest of us fare.'

Fatter than any of the stock were the hogs, some of them being hardly able to stand because of their great weight.

'No bones to rattle there,' said Mr. Marsh, with a grim smile. 'Now come in to breakfast.'

The breakfast which Mrs. Marsh brought



THE LOST SHEEP.

There were ninety and nine that safely lay in the shelter of the fold;
But one was out on the hills away, far off from the gates of gold:
Away on the mountains wild and bare, away from the tender Shepherd's care.
—E. C. Clephane, in 'Day of Days.'

steaming on the table was bountiful and appetizing. The half a dozen hired men, together with Mr. Marsh and his sons, who partook of it, certainly relished it, and none of them had a sickly or starved look.

'Now, boys, all ready for your day's work!' exclaimed Mr. Marsh, after they had finished their meal. Then turning to his guest he added, 'You are satisfied, I suppose, pastor, that somebody has been lying about me.'

'Pretty nearly,' was the answer, 'but wait a moment. I suppose you read a portion of God's Word and had prayers before I came this morning.'

'No,' acknowledged Mr. Marsh, quite taken by surprise again.

'Then I suppose you intend to do it this evening after your busy day is over,' persisted the pastor.

'No,' Mr. Marsh was again compelled to answer. 'We haven't been in the habit of doing that.'

'Then I suppose,' resumed the pastor, 'that each one has been given an opportunity and encouraged to read and pray for himself.'

'Not that I know of,' replied the farmer, 'It takes considerable hustling to get the chores done up in the morning ready for the day's work.'

'Then,' said the pastor, the serious look upon his face deepening, 'I think I have discovered where the starvation is. 'You