



MORALS and manners must be sown like spring wheat.—Capt. J. W. Gambler.

When to Lock the Stable

By HOMER CROY

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(Continued from last week)

THEY stood awkwardly a moment, while Brassy stepped over to speak to Hulda and the judge.

Just the sight of Clem brought up Mary's pulse. A few hours before she had thought that he had passed out of her life forever. Now the familiar square face with its myriads of lines running into the corners of his eyes brought a new feeling over her. She thought of the many things the people of Curryville had said about him after his disappearance. He had stolen into their hearts more than they had realized. Once Mrs. Kiggins, when she wasn't telling about her remarkable psychic powers, had said that he could be of more comfort than anybody in the world when a person had the toothache. And one time Marshall Jukes had said that there was some comfort even in Clem's beating a person at checkers. Slowly all this dawned on her, and though her heart tingled at Clem's presence she still hesitated—a feminine something still held her back. As she looked at him she could not help remembering how he had carried her out of the flaming house in his arms, saving her life, and how she never thanked him. She wished to tell him this, but still something kept her quiet.

Clem looked at her solemnly a moment. "Have they had any good fires since I have been away?"

Mary laughed and the feminine something was wiped away. "No, we haven't had anything good since you went away."

They started down the street together.

"I ran away to enjoy myself," said Clem, "and nearly every hour of it has been misery. I am so glad to get back that I don't know what to do. You couldn't run me out of Curryville now with a prod. But an hour ago I didn't think that way. An hour ago I was sorry that I had come back. Can you guess why?"

Mary knew that he meant the way she had turned aside at the hall. "Yes," she whispered, "I think I can. I don't know how it is that people have that stubborn thing in them that makes them fight back when they know that they are wrong. Tell me about everything."

"Well, I left, and the rest of the time I have been trying to get back. But that ain't what I want to talk about. Did you really miss me, Mary?"

Mary reached over for answer and did what women have done for so many ages: she patted him on the arm. And he understood, as men have for so many ages.

Before they knew it they were at

her house and had turned in and seated themselves on the porch. They sat in silence for a few minutes, then Clem leaned toward her, and as the light from the window cut across his face Mary could read a new expression in the lines. Suddenly Clem spoke, so suddenly as to startle her. "I am a fool. That's what I am—a plain unvarnished fool. Nobody but a fool like me would have run away from Curryville trying to find happiness. I learned a lot of things

had you to help me I could be another man—something. Now I am going to say something else that may make me a bigger fool than ever. It is this: Mary, I love you, and I want you to marry me!"

Mary's mind went tumbling off into space. She wanted to give herself to him at once; to say, "I am here—take me. I am yours." But instead, out crept a hand that glided into his. That was her answer. That was all that was needed. Not a word was spoken.

Just then two figures appeared on the lawn. One was stout and swung along with joyful abandon; the other was slim and came noiselessly by the back of the porch. The stout one was Brassy.

As the steps of Brassy and Rencie crunched on the lawn there was a stir on the porch, and when the two came up Clem's flushed face was in shadow, while Mary sat at the end of the bench demurely fingering the end of a ribbon. But her father's eye had not been deceived.

"Jumping crickets, but I never saw

two people get acquainted the way you two have," breezed Brassy. "I won't bother you, don't worry."

"My, my, do you know I am real dippy about Curryville? One thing, it's got Clem, and another thing it won't have Fordyce much longer. Don't you think your mother would like to live here—in a little vine-covered cottage with a cat sleeping in the sun on the front porch?"

"She would love it!" exclaimed Mary, and the three drew together to

You couldn't get me away again if you tied my feet."

Hulda's hand crept up to the yellow crack, and Clem's slipped across to meet it.

"I'm not a fit sister for you to come back to, but I'm going to be. And I'm not going to be so piteous and faultfinding any more and I'm not going to wait till you're dead to let you know that I love you, either. This thing of waiting till the horse is stolen is to—"

A step sounded on the porch and knuckles rattled at the door.

"You answer it, Hulda," said Clem, having an idea who was coming.

Hulda gave her skin a strangle-tensing shake and opened the door.

It was Rick Oddy with one shoulder sagging down. "It's a present for you, Miss Pointer," he said, and backed off the porch without a look at anyone.

"Land sakes alive, what can it be? And who'd be givin' me a present this time of night?"

Eagerly she pulled off the wrapper, revealing a camel-coal smoothing iron.

"Clem Pointer, ain't that just like you head!" she exclaimed, turning her head away and raising the hem of her dress to her eyes. "You just stay your eyes!"

Clem closed his eyes, Hulda tiptoed around the table and bent over him.

"Now," she said, "you take this in the kitchen. It won't look at any more till morning. If I was any happier I'd—" but she could say no more.

Clem rose and started for the kitchen. At the door he stumbled and

gaped in astonishment. With a shrill cry of delight Garibaldi had leaped on his shoulder.

THE END.

Common Birds Useful to Farmers

HOW many of us are familiar with the various bird families which are most common around the farm? As a rule we do not consider these birds of much value; in fact, we think of them more frequently as destroyers of property. Much valuable information to the contrary, however, is contained in Farmers' Bulletin 630 of the United States Department of Agriculture. In order that Our Folks may become more familiar with the subject, we intend publishing from week to week a brief description of various birds as gleaned from this bulletin.

Whether a bird is beneficial or injurious, depends almost entirely upon what it eats. Within certain limits birds eat the kind of food that is most accessible, especially when their natural food is scarce or wanting. Thus they sometimes injure the crops of the farmer who has unintentionally destroyed their natural food in his improvement of swamp or pasture. Many species live almost entirely upon insects. It is thus evident that in the course of a year, birds destroy an incalculable number of insects and it is difficult to over-estimate the value of their services in restraining the great tide of insect life. Many, too, maintain life practically upon weed seeds, and here again is another useful function of birds.

The Bluebird

The first species we shall study is the bluebird. The eastern bluebird, one of the most familiar and welcome of our feathered visitors, is a common inhabitant of all the States east of the Rocky Mountains from the Gulf of Mexico to the Canadian border. In the Mississippi Valley it winters as far north as southern Illinois, and in the east as far as Pennsylvania. It is one of the earliest northern migrants, and spends a large part of its life in habits, it frequents orchards and gardens, and builds its nests in cav-



Where the Near East and the Far West Meet.

An immigrant from Galicia, the scene of some of the fiercest fighting of the war, in his peaceful surroundings on the prairie.

"I found out that a fellow can't go out and hunt for happiness. When he swabs out his gun and goes out he won't ever get a shot at it; but if he will hang his gun over the door and be patient happiness will come and settle down on his gate-post."

"I was a fool for running away, and I suppose I will be a blither one in another minute. I am going to tell you something that will surprise you. This is it: I love you!"

Mary looked properly surprised. "From the day I showed you through the fire house I have loved you." At mention of the fire house Clem straightened up with pride.

"But you seemed so far away that I did not dare hope for anything better than just a smile now and then. I ain't much on education—I ain't going to say that I never had a chance, be-

cause that's no excuse for a man to make—but I am studying and trying to be somebody. It's mighty hard trying to be somebody alone. If I had some one to help me—if I just

make plans. But Brassy had feeling enough not to stay long.

In a few minutes after Brassy left Clem got ready to start home. That is, it seemed like a few minutes. Before he got up to his own house he realized how late it was and he approached in fear and trembling, for he knew Hulda of old.

At the door Clem paused in surprise, for Judge Woodbridge was just leaving.

Hulda was smiling all over. "Come over and set down," said she after the door had closed on the judge, "and let's have a good talk. I feel barrels of it comin'."

She drew Clem's rocker up to his side of the table and freshened the cushion with a shake. Then she leaned back in her own chair and folded her hands across her waist.

Clem placed the lamp squarely over the yellow crack and sank back in peace and contentment. "By jooks! there I'm saying it, too—but anyway I'm mighty glad to get home."

ties of trees, crickets, or boxes of bluebirds. So far as known, the number of preying upon grasshoppers 22, various other number of spiders about six per cent remainder of the are more or less few predaceous to nine per cent large consumption and caterpillars is done this offense called. The de hoppers is very and September, make up about 53 So far as its vernal the blue



harmless. The on ful product in the of a few blackberries these probably rather than cultivated loving is a list of berry, juniperberry, triageberry, gre creeper, bittersweet berry bush, false sarsaparilla, sun rose haws, sorrel, asparagus. This the bluebird depends on garden to supply easily or encourage some of these plants are highly ornamental be induced to make premises.

OUR HOME

Why Girls D

I LIVE on a farm of a country town. I am a young man. I will not give the me because I would be this neighborhood if to become known or published. That is, I am good enough to give Home Club.

I am a young man, but necessity of a young man are many young men in the same boat are found on the farm and in the factories. myself, I will give all.

Many of these young as I have intimated, lied. There are many young ladies who want to get married are right. The stand damsels was expressed one of them: "I have got to get married and I don't want to marry until my husband is as good as a home as leaving."

This stand does not able us. Our lady only want to start in