

## OUR FARM HOMES



COMRADESHIP is one of the finest facts and one of the strongest forces in life.—Hugh Black.

### God's Country and the Woman

(Continued from last week.)

IN the same breath Jean had told him that he could never possess Josephine, and that Josephine loved him. This in itself, Jean's assurance of her love, was sufficient to arouse a spirit like his with new hope. At last he went to bed, and in spite of his mental and physical excitement of the night, he fell asleep.

John Adare did not fail in his promise to arouse Philip early in the day. When Philip jumped out of bed in response to Adare's heavy knock at the door, he judged that it was not later than seven o'clock, and the room was still dark. Adare's voice came booming through the thick panels in reply to Philip's assurance that he was getting up.

"This is the third time," he cried. "I've cracked the door trying to rouse you. And we've got a caribou porthouse, two inches thick, waiting for you."

The giant was walking back and forth in the big living-room when Philip joined him a few minutes later. He wore an Indian-made jacket and was smoking a big pipe. That he had been up for some time was evident from the logs fully ablaze in the fireplace. He rubbed his hands briskly as Philip entered. Every atom of him disseminated good cheer.

"You don't know how good it seems to get back home," he exclaimed, as they shook hands. "I feel like a boy—actually like a boy, Philip. Didn't sleep two winks after I went to bed, and Miriam scolded me for keeping her awake. Bless my soul, I wouldn't live in Montreal if they'd make me a present of the whole Hudson's Bay Company."

"Nor I," said Philip. "I love the North."

"How long?"

"Four years—without a break."

"One can live a long time in the North in four years," mused the Master of Adare. "But Josephine said she met you in Montreal."

"True," laughed Philip, catching himself. "That was a break—and I thank God for it. Outside of that I spent all of the four years north of the High Land. For eighteen months I lived along the edges of the Arctic trying to take an impossible census of the Eskimo for the Government."

"I knew something of the sort when I first looked at you," said Adare. "I can tell an Arctic man, just as I can pick a Herschel dog or an Athabasca country malemute from a pack of fifty. We have much to talk about, my boy. We will be great friends. Just now we are going to that caribou steak. Out in the hall, through another door, and down a short corridor, he led Philip. Here a third door was open, and Adare stood aside while Philip entered.

"This is my private sanctuary," he said proudly. "What do you think of it?"

Philip looked about him. He was in

a room almost as large as the one from which they had come. In a huge fireplace a pile of logs were blazing. One end of the room was given up almost entirely to shelves and weighted down with books. Philip was amazed at their number. The other end was still partially hidden in gloom, but he could make out that it was fitted up as a laboratory, and on shelves he caught the white gleam of scores of wild beast skulls. Comfortably near to the fire was a large table scattered with books, papers, and piles of manuscripts, and behind this was a small iron safe. Here, Philip thought, was the adytum of an ordinary man; it was the study of a scholar and scientist. He marked the absence of mounted heads from the walls, but in spite of that the very atmosphere of the room breathed of the forests and the beast. Here and there he saw the articulated skeletons of wild animals. From among the



A Modest Home, Made Beautiful by Trees. The Farm House of Mr. Chas. R. White, Ontario Co., Ont.

—Photo by an Editor of Farm and Dairy.

books themselves the jaws and ivory fangs of skulls gleamed out at him. Before he had finished his wondering survey of the strange room, John Adare stepped to the table and picked up a skull.

"This is my latest specimen," he said, his voice eager with enthusiasm. "It is perfect. Jean secured it from me while I was away. It is the skull of a beaver, and shows in three distinct and remarkable gradations how nature replaces the soft enamel as it is worn from the beaver's teeth. You see, I am a hobbyist. For twenty years I have been studying wild animals. And there—"

He replaced the skull on the table to point to an isolated shelf filled with books and magazines. "—there is my most remarkable collection," he added, a gleam of humor in his eyes. "They are the books and magazine stories of nature fakirs, the

'works' of naturalists who have never heard the howl of a wolf or the cry of a loon; the wild dreams of fictionists, the rot of writers who spend two weeks or a month each year on some biased trail and return to the cities to call themselves students of nature. When I feel in bad humor I read some of that stuff and laugh."

He leaned over to press a button under the table.

"One of my little electrical arrangements," he explained. "That will bring our breakfast. To use a popular expression of the uninformed, I'm as hungry as a bear. As a matter of fact, you know, a bear is the lightest eater of all brute creation for his size, strength, and fat supply. That row of naturalists over there have made him out a pig. The bear's a genius, for it takes a genius to grow fat on poplar boughs!"

Then he laughed good humoredly. "I suppose you are tired of this already. Josephine has probably been filling you with a lot of my foolishness. She says I must be silly or I would have my stuff published in books. But I am waiting, waiting until I have come down to the last facts, I am experimenting now with the black and the silver fox. And there are many other experiments to come, many of them. But you are tired of this."

"Tired?" Philip had listened to him without speaking. In this room John Adare had changed. In him he saw now the living, breathing soul of the wild. His own face was flushed with a new enthusiasm as he replied:

"Such things could never tire me. I only ask that I may be your companion in your researches, and learn something of the wonders which you must already have discovered. You have studied wild animals—for twenty years!"

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"Such things could never tire me. I only ask that I may be your companion in your researches, and learn something of the wonders which you must already have discovered. You have studied wild animals—for twenty years!"

"Nor I want to hear about you," said Josephine told me very little, said that she wanted me to get impressions first hand. We'll smile and talk. These cigars are from Havana. I have the tobacco imported by the bale and we make our cigars ourselves. Reduces the cost a minimum, and we always have supply. Go on, Philip, I'm listening."

Philip remained silent for a moment, words telling him to narrate the events of his own life to her father, except that he was to leave open, it were, the interval in which he supposed he had known her in Montreal. It was not difficult for him to slip over this. He described his coming into the North, and Adare's eyes glowed sympathetically.

Philip quoted the parting words of Prince Albert and Jasper's up at the Lac. He listened with tense interest to his experiences along the Arctic, his descriptions of the death of MacTavish and the passing of Reddickson. But what struck deep with him was Philip's physical and mental fight for new life, and his splendid way in which the wilderness had responded.

"And you wouldn't go back now," said, a tone of triumph in his voice. "When the forests once claim you they hold."

"Not alone the forests, Mon Peux" (Continued next week.)

is not well. I had hoped that the doctors in Montreal would help her, but they have failed. They say she possesses no malady, no sickness, but they can discover and cure what she does not. The old Miriam, God bless her, hope the tonic of the snows will bring her back to health this winter.

"It will," declared Philip. "It signs point to a glorious winter, and dry—the snow will do the work when you can hear the crack of whiplash half a mile away."

"You will hear that frequently enough if you follow Josephine," chuckled Adare. "Not a trail in the forests for a hundred miles and you do not know. She trains all the dogs and they are wonderful."

It was on the point of Philip's tongue to ask a reason for the silence of the fierce pack he had seen the night before, when he caught himself. At the same moment the woman appeared through the door with a laden tray. Adare helped her arrange their breakfast on a small table near the fire.

"I thought we would be more general here than alone in the dining room," Philip explained. "I am mistaken the ladies won't be until dinner time. Did you ever see a caribou head? I have one. Marie, you are a treasure. You motioned Philip to a seat, and he served. "Nothing in the world is better than a caribou porthouse, when it is served. It is a good roast it, but broil it. An inch and a half is the proper thickness, and enough to hold the heart of it with juice. See it come from that side."

"Can you beat it? I have been along the Arctic," confessed Philip. "A steak from the cheek of a walrus is about the best thing I've found up in the 'Big Bear'—that is, first. Later, when the walrus bones have got into his marrow, you can seal blubber and narwhal fat and call it good. As for me, I'd pickles to anything else in the world, so with your permission I'll help myself. Just now I'd eat pickles with ice cream."

It was a pleasant meal, but Philip could not remember when he had known a more agreeable host. But until they had finished, and Adare produced cigars of a curious hue and aliveness, did the older man ask the question for which Philip had been carefully preparing himself.

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