



## That Calf A Domestic Tragedy

The calf was brown. He was a large calf. He was very big and strong for a mere calf. He was what we called "wicked," though he was only a calf. He chewed the shirt-sleeves, which dangled from my wife's clothesline. They were my shirts. He appreciated the stiff, starched fronts. He had a very great desire to taste those starched fronts. He would have a taste of those starched fronts. And he would stand in the July sun gazing at those stiff-starched fronts till his mouth literally watered.

He was a greedy calf. He was an ill-bred calf. He would drink his milk to the last drop and then lick out the pail. Then he would chew my wife's skirt. It was a blue gingham, or a blue and white cotton, or a pale-blue lustre skirt. But he liked it, whether it was gingham or lustre or cotton was all one to him. He liked to chew that skirt and he would chew that skirt; and every meal, three times a day, every day, he did chew that skirt. And before a week was past my wife's skirt and my stiff-starched white shirts looked so much alike that we might have disagreed, had we wished to distinguish between them. To say the least, they were both distinctly calfy. They were quite distinctly calfy. They were undeniably calfy. They were so very calfy that my wife threw them out in the yard, and sat down in the parlor and had a good cry. It is very seldom my wife cries. She is like a sunbeam with never a cloud in the sky. She is like a cloudless July morning. She is merry as a rosebud at noon. She is happy as a wren that has filled up every pump in the country with sticks and is telling his achievements to every other wren who may or may not listen. And she is especially merry when she has starched my white shirts to suit her. She is very hard to suit. In fact, she is never suited. She never does anything to satisfy herself. Her husband satisfies her least of all. But she just puts up with unsatisfactory things and never lets them worry her. And so she is perpetually like a sunbeam after a hailstorm. So it is a very extraordinary thing for her to cry. But when she had finished my white shirt to suit her, which meant she had brought it to the seventh heaven of perfection, and that ill-mannerly, ungrateful brown calf found it and left it much the same as a billygoat would; and when her new blue gingham, or blue cotton with white spots, or pale-blue lustre, was chewed and discoloured by that same calf, why then, I say, the merriest wife of the least concerned husband in the world may sit down and cry as though her heart was dissolving in tears, and no one who has ever raised a pail-fed calf will deny her the privilege of crying from breakfast till next milking time.

My wife did cry till dinner-time, and when I came in at twelve-thirty with an appetite as large as myself, she was still crying. To say I was astonished is putting it about as mild as I can. I gazed in undeniable astonishment. My face showed my astonishment. My manner showed my astonishment. My mouth and my eyes showed my astonishment. My feet showed my astonishment. The only part of me which was so astonished it could not express its astonishment, was my tongue. It was quite quiet with astonishment. It was absolutely silent with astonishment.

A long time ago when I was young I was cook for a railroad gang. I was a good cook then; I made puddings, made them—modesty requires that I do not add I cooked them. They were good, substantial puddings. No one could eat them. They saved me the necessity of making a new one each day. One would last for many meals.

So then, while my wife was drowning her sorrow in floods of good salt water, I was making ready to prepare my dinner. There was nothing cooked, and no time to cook anything—and the clock struck one. I struck a posture.



THE NEW PUPPIES

I was dismayed. I was undoubtedly dismayed. I was moreover very hungry. My wife was still dropping tears like a watering-can. I was still more dismayed. The scene was tragic. What could I do? Puddings were out of the question. I had no time to make one. Still less, I reflected, had I time to eat one.

But in the garden were some lettuce and radishes. Most of the lettuce was going to seed, and the radishes were six weeks old. "Before I eat them," said I, "I will rummage in the pantry." The pantry, like Mother Hubbard's, was bare, and I was in the same fix as Mother Hubbard's dog. There was nothing for it; I would have to eat lettuce and radishes. There were no onions, for my wife won't think of growing them. She says they remind her of her old uncle, a miser, who died and left all his goods to the poor, of whom she was not one. He used garlic; so she detests onions.

I would go to the garden. I must have something to eat, and I must get it right away. So I sallied forth, armed with a butcher knife and the dishpan. I would eat all the lettuce there was if I had to, but I would also have some kind of a dinner even if my wife had cried all morning, and that brown calf had spoiled my white, starched shirt-fronts. There was only one thing to be done in that emergency—eat all I could as quickly as I could. So I would eat

lettuce and radishes for dinner, even if the lettuce had gone to seed and the radishes were six weeks old; so I struck for the garden.

The garden is not large; in fact, the garden is quite small. It is surrounded by a ring of hazel-brush and stunted poplar. When I knew it first it had a fence around it, but long years have quite settled that fence and it now clings quite pathetically to the ground. A grasshopper could get over that fence without hopping. I could step over without the slightest trouble. So could that calf. In fact, he had stepped over it. He had stepped over it some time before I had. He had made himself quite at home. He had also quite evidently enjoyed himself. He liked lettuce. He thought it was good to eat if it was going to seed. He had tasted it to see if it really was good. He rather thought it was. He tasted some more to make sure. The last mouthful was undeniably good. He wanted more. He took more. He took more and more. He took all there was of that lettuce and he even pawed out most of the roots. They were good but he couldn't get much of them. He thought that alto-

I gritted my teeth; I bit my tongue. I would teach him to behave himself; oh, yes, I would teach him!

I left him there. I went into the house. I put the dishpan on the table. I put the butcher-knife in the cupboard. I made a cup of tea for myself. I made one for my wife. She stopped crying. She drank her tea. It was good. She would take more. She took more. I took more. She wiped her eyes with my handkerchief; I told her about that calf. She jumped. She seemed startled. She seemed quite startled. She gurgled; she stuttered. The tea went down the wrong way. She coughed. She couldn't stop coughing. She gasped: "The calf!" I laughed grimly. "That calf," I growled; "I'll settle him!" She stopped coughing. She seemed frightened. Her eyes grew round and large. They filled up with tears. She told me things—she called me things—she asked me questions. I was lazy. Why didn't I put up my fence? Why didn't I watch that calf? Poor young thing! She had put Paris green on that lettuce. She had put a pound of Paris green on that lettuce. I turned pale. The calf had eaten that lettuce. He must be feeling rather bad. I thought he would feel rather bad. We went out to him. He seemed dozing. I touched him. He didn't move. My wife felt his heart. She screamed. I pricked him with a fork. He didn't move. He seemed dead. I thought likely he would be dead. He was dead. That calf would bother me no more. He had fallen a victim to his greediness. But he would eat no more. He was past eating now. He would chew no more of my white shirt-fronts, and he wouldn't chew my wife's skirts. I was glad. I was quite happy. I think I laughed.

My wife was angry—"Poor dear thing! You've killed him! Oh, you've killed him. Wretch!" She went into the house. She dressed up, she went out. She went to her mother's. She stayed there.

I am baching now, and all on account of that calf's greedy appetite for stiff-starched white shirt-fronts, and for blue gingham, blue cotton with white spots, or pale-blue lustre skirts, and a desire to top off his meal with lettuce and radishes.

I never look at a calf now. I couldn't contain my feelings if I ever saw a calf. I would sorely injure that calf. I will never raise another.

OVIN OSWALD.

### CAME FROM BRISTOL

Dear Editor:—This is my first letter to your club and I hope I shall receive a button for I should like to belong to your club. I think the FARMER'S ADVOCATE is very interesting. My father does not buy the FARMER'S ADVOCATE, but a friend of his gives them to him and I read them. We have not been in this country very long. I came from England from a town called Bristol. I am nine years and six months old and in the 4th grade. I am not able to go to school because it is too far to go. I live five miles from the town of Grayson, and on a farm which my father looks after.

Sask.

IVOR EVANS.

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Above the football field of Clancarmichael, skimmed Sandy M'Tavish in his latest scaroplane. The few spectators who had banged their saxes for the matches, stood with upgazing eyes in wonderment.

Like a bird Sandy circled in the skies. He darted, he turned, he glided, he glode, he—Havers and hoots! Something had gone wrong, and he was falling!

Down, down, down! In one moment all was over. Sandy and his scaroplane lay in a tangled heap upon the field. The secretary of the Clancarmichael F. C. rushed up excitedly.

"Is he dead, or just fainted?" he cried. "Worrk his arms, lads! Worrk his legs! Bring some whisky! We'll fetch him round."

For fifteen minutes all worked hard in endeavoring to restore Sandy's consciousness. Then, slowly, Sandy opened an eye.

"Aha!" cried the Clancarmichael secretary, the light of triumph in his eyes. "Sandy, mon, I'll trouble ye for your saxpence entrance fee!"