

homestead almost up to the limit, the ever increasing demand for war foods— for wheat and beef and bacon—drove the price of these commodities to a point never before dreamed of. The selling value was multiplied by two, and then by three and the fields gave off a yield that was phenomenal.

The three month's war prolonged itself to years and still May's soldier saw no prospect of seeing home. Through all the hardships of three years of war he had been spared as by a miracle. With scarce a set back he had worked his way, first to one stripe, then to two and so on up the scale whose price is paid in blood until, awakening from a period of seething, searing hell he found himself a hero, decorated, and with one leg almost shot away.

All through the years of their separation he had heard from May with every arrival of the mail and always favors, sweaters, socks, tobacco and candy came filtering through from the wee home overseas but always of herself she had been reticent. She was getting on fine, she wrote, everyone was kind, she just couldn't think of going home, for she must stay and oversee their farm; part of the time she spent in town and part of the time with a girl friend on the Ribstone, and, yes, she was able to get returns from the homestead, not much of course, but something, and didn't he think that was just fine.

Poor Billy, sick and suffering drew his own conclusions. A shack, or perhaps a shaky cottage in the little, dust ravaged village, with flying visits in the wobbly old buckboard between the home shack and the farm. A life of ennui and loneliness with petty strivings to make ends meet and always the need of keeping up a glad sweet spirit to hearten him, her Billy boy. Lying crippled there in hospital he thought it out in every pitiful detail and his heart shrank within him at the thought of going home to her a cripple after all she had endured. And so he wrote to her as soon as he was strong again, bitter suffering throbbing in every line, and a month later when her answer came his eyes filled with tears at the tone of cheerful courage it conveyed.

As soon as he was in condition to be moved he was taken to an old English home away back amid billows of green garbed hills where, while awaiting the opening of the submarine blockade and the opportunity for the trip back home, he was taken into the bosom of the old world family and made to feel the welcome that was in their hearts. Being a soldier they put him under discipline at once the only rule of which was that several times daily he have his wounded leg massaged and exercised and soon he was surprised to find that, in response to their continued efforts it was growing well and strong. All this he kept from May, meaning his improved condition to come as a surprise.

Finally, at a moment's notice he was hustled to the coast and given passage on a departing liner on which he commenced the weary journey home with shattered wrecks and parts of men for company. When he arrived among his own people in New Brunswick he paused a week to rest, then started on the last lap of his journey, the trip across the continent. He wired to May from Winnipeg and then gave himself up to sweet anticipation.

When he alighted from the train at the little, squatly depot on the prairie he looked in vain for the old-time buckboard, or the thin, pale cheeks of May among the little crowd of loafers on the platform, never recognizing her in the fair young goddess who swept toward him until a supple arm slipped around his neck and a tear wet cheek was pressed against his own.

After a moment he held her off at arm's length that he might get a good look at her, and his first words were:

"Heavens, May, how well you look. You are positively lovely." "The same to you, and many of them," she laughed. "But you should feel ashamed of yourself for coming home to me looking so big, and strong, and manly in your uniform when you must have known that I was looking forward to cuddling you."

"Well, in the name of goodness cuddle me then I am just in shape for it," and he slipped his arm about her again, laughingly, but she drew away from him, blushing and said:

"Here, come back to earth. Let me introduce you to Kate," and she drew the other girl forward.

After a moment of jolly banter they started up the platform and at last he asked:

"Where in Sam Hill is that old buckboard, anyway?"

"That old buckboard has been repainted," May replied. "I just knew you wouldn't know it. Here it is," and she pulled open the door of a big, low touring car.

"Here," he protested, "whose car are you stealing? Do you want to get us all arrested?"

"We won't be arrested," May laughed. "We have a right to use this car whenever we care to," and she slipped gracefully in under the wheel and started up the engine. The crowd around the depot started to mill around as though they contemplated a reception or something of that kind, but May eased in the clutch and the big car rolled out of town along the trail for home.

May, nursing the purring engine down the winding prairie trail would answer no questions until they crossed the Ribstone and came in sight of home, but such a different home to the one that Billy remembered. For, perched upon the hill above the creek was a cosy looking bungalow and overtopping it a big red barn. The fenced field beside the trail was alive with their growing herd—big fat horses and cattle—and when a moment

later they came upon the drove of pigs his hands went up in wonder. As the car stopped at the door he turned to May and said: "But what does it all mean, dear, how has it come about?"

"We did it, Billy Boy," she laughed, nestling close against him, and for the second time within the hour his arm was slipped about her.

"But do you mean to say, dear, that you've been actually running this farm since I've been away?"

"Every hour of the time, Billy Boy," she answered. For a moment he was silent, gazing around at the wonderful improvements and evidence of thrift that was apparent on every side—the house, the barn, the fields of waving grain, the herds and herds of stock—then he fumbled a moment in the pocket of his tunic and, turning pinned upon her breast the emblem that had well nigh cost his life.

"You are more deserving, far, than I," he said. "This is the award of merit."

The cheapness of Mother Graves' Worm Exterminator puts it within reach of all, and it can be got at any druggist's.

The Pundit's Pun

A very distinguished British man of science had the foible, says Prof. Brander Matthews in the Century Magazine, of inventing thrilling episodes, and pretending that they were of his own experience.

On one occasion, after he had spun a marvelous yarn, with himself in the center of the coil, a skeptical friend looked him in the eye, and asked, sternly. "Clifford, do you mean to say that this really occurred to you?" Whereupon the imaginative man of science replied, with a twinkle: "Yes—it just occurred to me!"

An "ad" of unusual interest to our readers, especially ladies, is found on page 47 Mrs. Lydia W. Ladd, of Windsor, Ont., offers a trial of her preparation, Blush of Roses, which gives an instant and better effect than any face powder, and removes all facial blemishes. Anyone who wishes may obtain free advice on any complexion or skin troubles by writing Mrs. Ladd. In Winnipeg, Blush of Roses is sold by The T. Eaton Co., Ltd., and in Vancouver by The Woodward Department Stores, Ltd.

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