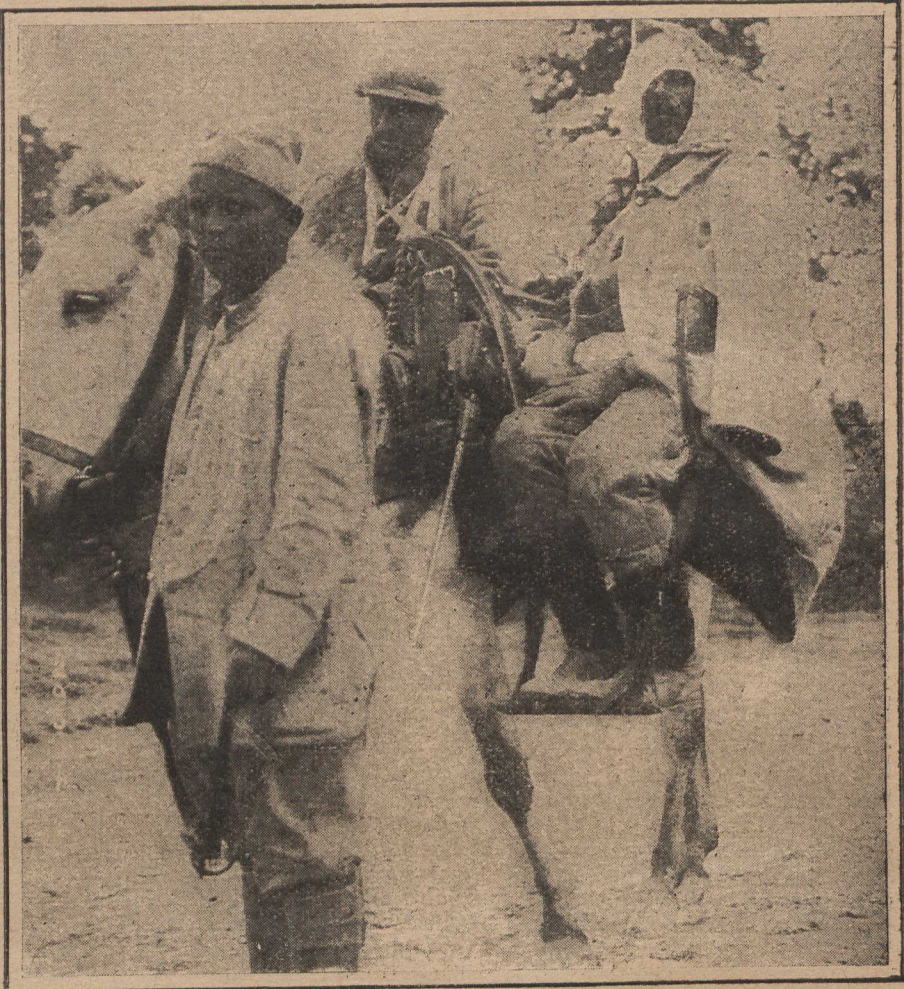


PHOTOGRAPHIC STORIETTES:



THE whole world is upside down to this man who is walking on his hands up Sixth Avenue, New York, because he bet on Hughes. The lateness of the picture is explained by the fact that he wanted to be dead sure Wilson was elected before undertaking to amuse New York in this way.



AMBULANCING IN SERBIA.

THERE are no limousine ambulances in Serbia, so this wounded subject of King Peter was loaded on to an army mule. As he was not strong enough to bestride the beast, he was put into something of a first cousin to a punka, or what might be taken as the nearest thing they have in Serbia to a family motorcycle. The other end of the ambulance extraordinary is kept from flying up by the weight of another man on the opposite side of the mule. No doubt both of them have their ideas about a Kaiser peace that doesn't guarantee the restoration of Serbia.

COMFORTING THE COMFORTER

WHEREVER he went the great boyish figure seemed to radiate new strength, fresh confidence in the goodness and the beauty of life—hope where hope had seemed dead.

Head down, shoulders hunched, so as to keep his coat collar high about his ears, he forged his way through the snow storm. The countless legions of white, swirling flakes swept in from the east, unseen till they came within the yellow circle of a street lamp or the arc of golden light spilled from the window of some house where the blinds had not been drawn. In this north Saskatchewan town men were used to such snow-storms. They did not even trouble to clear a path along the narrow plank sidewalk of the town's main street. And the preacher was as used to it as any. Though the wind beat viciously against him and the flakes dashed themselves impotently against his cheeks, and clung to his eyelashes, he went doggedly ahead from light to light, from house to house, from rich man to poor man. It was his Christmas Eve round.

He had already called at the home of the richest man in the town. There the blinds had been drawn. When he knocked a frightened servant girl had opened the door cautiously so as not to let in too much of the besieging wind, and had ushered him in in silence. He had found the rich man in his dining room with his arms spread on the table before him and his face in his arms—there had been no dinner that night. And to one side on the table was the telegram that had brought the news of the rich man's bereavement, the death of his son through illness while in training for the western front, in England.

The rich man, looking up, had sneered in the face of the preacher. Then, clutching the telegram, had leapt to his feet, and thrust it menacingly under the gaze of the visitor.

"There!" he had shouted. "There! What Justice is there in that? What mercy in that? Where's

A story of Christmas Eve written from the Experience Memoirs of a Canadian Clergyman

By JAMES GRANT

the —" and his voice took on a sneering accent. "where's the loving kindness in THAT!"

The preacher had lifted his hand protestingly, but the rich man swept it aside.

"Now what can the church do? Now what can you say?" He was beside himself with bitter rage. "Is that what I get for 'putting my trust in the Lord?' Is that —"

The preacher tried once more to interrupt, but the other went on:

"Have you lost a son—a son grown to manhood? Have you gone through what I've gone through? Can YOU speak to ME of grief? And comfort?"

And then the preacher had answered him: quietly, calmly and with very few words. His tone had not been that of the priest, but that of a heroic comrade in arms. And in spite of his youth, his lean face, his tired eyes, he had effect. The rich man presently regained his self-control, listening with a growing light in his face as the preacher uttered his simple sentences. Then he seized the boy's hand, squared his shoulders as the boy unconsciously seemed to square his shoulders. And he had said brokenly:

"You're right, Dick. You're right. You've brought me back—to myself. You've made me see—as I had not seen before."

So, leaving that house comforted, the preacher had passed on from one to another where he knew there was trouble. He had entered next the house of a sick man who was afraid of Death, who cowered in his bed, clutching at the counterpane, staring with

hollow eyes at the ceiling of the room. Every attention, every delicacy had been given to this man, every hope—save his hope of a longer life—had been fulfilled. Yet he dreaded death and, figuratively speaking, whimpered because he feared its approach.

There, too, the preacher had spoken only a few quiet sentences—not eloquent, not rhetorical, not wonderful in anything save their quiet, convincing clearness—and the sick man had quieted. His face, like the face of the rich man, was suddenly lighted by some of the glow that lay in the preacher's eyes, and when the preacher had risen to go, there was a new peace, and a new courage in that house.

Here was a woman whose husband had deserted her. Here was a man whose sons were breaking his heart. Here was an old woman who had lived to see shame brought on the last of her children. Here was sickness, and bereavement and affliction in varied forms. Into each the preacher seemed to have brought a new element of courage. Folk who had told him their troubles, heard his quiet words, looked into his grave eyes and had shaken his big, steady hand—felt somehow braced even for misfortune. Where he found misery he left determination—and trudged doggedly ahead.

Far down toward the end of the town he made his way to a big, dark house set in grounds of its own, with bare bushes along the edge of the sidewalk to form a sort of hedge, and a pretentious hitching post at the side of the road just where the walk to the front door of the house debouched. Stamping the snow from his feet and shaking it from his shoulders, the preacher stepped up on the stoop and rang the bell. There was no light in any window and yet, though his first ring and his second and third brought no response, he waited and rang again.

At length a voice could be heard issuing mysteriously from the side of the door, from a speaking tube.