

The Family That Kissed The Cow.

She was the most winsome little lassie, and she lived in a tiny village in the very heart of the Blue Ridge. The sunshine had crept into the dancing brown curls on her head, and had tinged her there.

Her eyes reflected the blue of the tender skies that bent over her.

It was such an event in her life to go with her auntie to the big, fat-away city. There were so many things that her little country bred eyes had never seen. And, oh, the letter that she wrote!

Elizabeth's family were so impatient that morning for little black Mizzell to return from the village post-office! They knew the letter would be there, for Elizabeth had promised.

Elizabeth's father, the village doctor, walked back and forth the length of the sitting room; her big sister had a sewing girl waiting for her in the sewing-room; her mother—but mothers always have their hands full; even her big brother put down his newspaper, looked from the window, and said he must be going; but he did not budge.

Wasn't it strange that the letter of such a tiny girl could hold them there? Wasn't it strange that not one of them acknowledged to the other why he stayed? When little Mizzell came running in, bringing the papers and the letters, they all drew a little nearer to Elizabeth's mamma.

It was a sweet letter that told of the girl's joy at her first peep at the great world. There were loving messages to her home people, and it ended, "and kiss the cow."

"What a child!" her father said, picking up the letter that had been written with such care.

"What a baby!" her brother said.

"To think of kissing Beauty!" said the big sister, as she swept from the room.

But her mother said softly, "The dear child!"

And then they separated, going to their delayed work.

Out in the meadow Beauty looked up from the tender grass she was cropping to find the doctor standing near her.

"I don't like to do it," he muttered "but"—He stooped over and laid his mustached lips on Beauty's polished horn. He chose the horn because it looked so clean.

Not many minutes later a young man came hurriedly through the gate, casting many looks behind, to be sure he was unobserved.

"Kwe!" but he planted a gingerly kiss right on Beauty's back and beat a retreat.

It was some hours later when the big sister slipped out to the meadow, gave Beauty a hurried kiss and ran back.

When Elizabeth's mamma came out to give Beauty her kiss, she threw her arms about her neck and kissed her right on the forehead; and two great tears rolled down her cheeks—her dear little girl was so far away!

It isn't on record, but Beauty must have wondered why the family had suddenly grown so affectionate, for at milking time they all, on one excuse or another, came to the milking bars.

The little colored girl stood at Beauty's head, thinking of the message she had heard in the morning, and when the cow lifted her head and looked around on them with mildly wondering eyes, she kissed her right on her mealy nose.

"Child," Elizabeth's mother asked, "what are you doing?"

"She said kiss her, an' I jes' natchally noved white folks wouldn't kiss a cow," e little negro said.

Elizabeth's family looked at each other guiltily, and then how they laughed!—The Presbyterian.

Commercial Value of the Missionary.

Under this heading the North China Herald, of Shanghai, the leading secular paper of China, has an admirable editorial, which in turn had been suggested by Mrs. Bishop's interesting book. "The Yangtse Valley and Beyond," in which this distinguished lady traveller had said, "It has been remarked by consuls that missionaries unconsciously help British trade by introducing articles for their own use which commend themselves to the Chinese." The Shanghai paper adds: "This is an interesting side view of the good which, as Mrs. Bishop says, the missionary unconsciously does the trader of his native land. But it is a view which many self-constituted, and as a rule ignorant, critics of missions overlook. We do not wish to claim for missionaries any additional consideration because they unintentionally foster trade." The editor then, in a most interesting way, goes on to illustrate the point he has made, showing how the missionary's glass windows lead to the introduction of glass, and in like manner his stove, his American flour, sugar, lamp, etc. As it is, the missionary who penetrates the whole country, it is he who unconsciously introduces the foreign articles that ere long pave the way for a large import of these very goods, and thus the trader's interests are promoted, as well as those of the producers in a far off land, and in this way the missionary has a 'commercial value' that the critics have never even dreamed of.

The Home Light.

The light of home's a wondrous light,
So tender in its shining,
So soft it follows through the night,
Our weary road outlining,
Though lonely and for years we roam,
Far from the ones who love us,
Yet ever shines the light of home,
Like God's grace spread above us.

The light of home's a wondrous light;
Through life it follows, seeming,
Yet when with age the hair is white,
Clear in the front's gleaming,
It shines from where our loved ones are—
O, this is love's divining!
And through the gates of heaven ajar
At last we see it shining!
—Ripley D. Saunders.

For Those Outside of Your Own Family.

It has always been customary in England, and it is becoming customary here, to remember at Christmas time all the people with whom one has come in contact during the year—as, for instance, the postman, the street-car conductor, the janitor, the office boy, the ice man, the charwoman, the laundress, the waiter at the restaurant where the noonday meal is taken, the night watchman and the newsboy. To these persons money is the most appreciated of all Christmas gifts. Do not forget, when administering your Christmas bounties, the sick in the hospitals. Send toys, books, fruit and scrapbooks to the children's wards, and flowers and fruit, jellies and delicacies to those other invalids who are not too ill to appreciate them. To any sick people whom you may know let your gifts take the form of a surprise, something which shall for the moment make them forget that they have not been able to share in the Christmas shopping. Let your present go with the cheeriest of holiday greetings and tied up with the brightest of ribbons.

CHRISTMAS PRESENTS.**What the Father Will Like.**

For the fathers provide a comfortable lounge, some sofa-cushions, one of the new pocket-knives, a travelling satchel, a photograph case which will hold as many photographs as he has children and one more for his wife. Put all the photographs in, and be sure he will carry it away with him whenever he has to leave home. If his sleeve-buttons are old in design give him a new-style pair, and a new-style key-ring, and anything new which is in his particular line.

Subscribe for his favorite periodicals, give him a new house coat, and if he smokes give him the very latest device for smokers. A new umbrella, a new cane or a new pen-knife will also be in order. The new cases of safety razors, holding one for each day of the week, are also useful presents for men.

Gifts for the Grandmother and Grandfather.

Almost every family has a grandmother, many families have great grandparents, and when Christmas comes they should be thought of even before the babies. For them provide nothing which suggests old age: the newest books; subscriptions to the best of the periodicals; generous-sized china cups and saucers; pretty traveling accessories; bright sofa cushions and footstools; the newest things in carriage robes, traveling clocks or book-rests—something which will make them feel quite sure that you are counting upon having them with you for very many more Christmas Days.

Some dear old great grandmothers seem made for the pretty lace fichus and caps which are seen in great profusion this year. Other pretty gifts are silver-topped shopping bags, cut-glass vinaigrettes and the new lorgnettes. For both grandparents bureau silver is appropriate, and the new traveling rugs, satchel and shawl straps, as well as the new-style easy-chair with book rest, and soft silk-cushions, are particularly suitable.

For Those Who Have Served You Faithfully.

For the servants of the family provide gifts which will not in any way suggest work. Where money can be afforded it is almost always the best way of remembering those who have served faithfully; with it may go boxes of candy and pretty boxes of stationery. For the nurse who has helped to keep your child well and happy through the year provide some special gift—a watch if you feel that you can afford to be so generous, or some gift which shall appeal particularly to her. For the household where many servants are kept, and where there is a sitting-room reserved for their use, a Christmas present that will please all alike will be the addition to their room of a new picture, or a chair, or a table, a new carpet, if that is possible—no matter what, so that it is new, and not something which has done duty elsewhere. Catholic servants are always pleased with prayer books, religious pictures, or a year's subscription to one of their religious papers.

There are 1,100 hospitals connected with Protestant missions in foreign lands, treating over 2,500,000 patients yearly. This ministry of healing is a most effective and practically irresistible means of gaining entrance into the homes and hearts of the heathen. It removes prejudice, inspires confidence and hope, and reveals the true genius of Christianity as perhaps nothing else can.