

THE GOOD OLD FARM.

BY REV. LEANDER S. COAN.

"There's got to be a revival. Up good sound sense among men, Do the days go by prosperly? With the world in a bust, The boys must learn that lesson! Men's minds are not to be stoned; The world must learn that beauty Consists in more'n their looks."

"Ef the boys all grow up savants, Stud'yin' rocks 'n' bugs, At the schoolhouse, the stockin's Or experts in kisses 'n' hugs— Who'll keep the old plow in order, Or the old mule? Who'll sweep the floor up yon kitchen, Or weep up the carpets' rags?—"

"Before we can steer clear of failures, Ef a big financial's a' comin', The boys must learn to be clerkin'! An' git back onto the farms, I know it ain't quite so nice, But the old mule's a' comin' in, Ez patin' y' hair in the middle, An' settin' up a show."

"But there's more hard долю in it, An' more real power and contentment, An' heath that is ruddy 'n' true, That takes a man to the bone, But you've got to hang on 'n' store. Before you can earn a good livin', An' clothes, but with little more."

"An' you stand tall clearin' the temptation To be a' comin' on the farm, A' thousand ways 'n' fashions That only brings ye to harm, Runnin' wild, with a handle with safety of other men's cash."

"An' the fave u' many who try It out, an' then come back again, 'sick, when the road is sti'se's prison Lays by the good old farm! An' the man sees a tollin' brother, Well out u' the way of harm, He must learn to be a' comin' in, Ez patin' the soil in peace."

"Where he'd y' see a lack in dishonesty, An' after a hard day's work."

"What heuds we 'm go back broken In health, in mind, 'n' purse, To die in the sly u' clover, On finger a' ring, which is a curse! An' how the world is a' comin' in, useless That they didn't see the charm, The suds, the 'nd'pendence, The suds, the 'nd'pendence, The suds, the 'nd'pendence."

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"A NOBLE GENTLEMAN.

The Story of an Old Lady.

I sat spinning at my little wheel in the sun, for the autumn day was cold, when I heard some one whistling, and, looking up, there was young 'Squire Turner, with his arms folded on the gate, looking over. When he caught my eye he laughed and blushed; and I rose and made him a courtesy.

He was a handsome gentleman, the 'Squire, and the hand from which he pulled his coat over him, in the sun with pearls and diamonds; and he was bonny to look at, with his hair like spun gold in the October sunlight.

When I courted, he bowed, making his curls dance over his shoulders, and, said he, "I've spoiled one pretty picture that I could have looked at all day, but I've made another as pretty, so I'll not grumble. May I come in?"

"And you, sir," said I; and I sat a chair for him, for he was grandfather's landlord; but for all that I felt comfortable, for I was not used to fine company.

He talked away, paying me more compliments than I was used to, for grandmother, who brought me up, always said, "Handsome is as handsome does," and "Beauty is but skin deep."

"So come I'll tell the story I'll tell the truth, but don't mind me, for one thing. Neither of the old folks know that I wore Evan Locke's ring in my bosom, or that we'd taken a vow to each other under the hawthorn that grew in the church lane. I never meant to deceive, but granmie was old and a little hard of hearing, and that love of mine was such a sweet secret. Besides, money to enough all else when people have to beg, and when I had to turn a penny, and they knew Evan was a poor, struggling surgeon, I thought I'd wait a while until I could sweeten the news with the fact that he'd begun to make his fortune.

Granmie came in from the dairy five minutes after the 'Squire was gone, and heard he had been there. I didn't tell her of the fine speeches, but I did tell her of the half-pint she came through, and I have a guess she heard it.

That night I had something else to think of. Misfortunes had come open to grandfather; but I didn't foresee that when the half-year's rent should come due not a penny to pay it with would be found.

All this time Evan Locke and I had been fond as of each other, and he came as often as before to talk with granmie, on the winter nights; and still come like a brother. The 'Squire, Turner, would drop in and sit in his easy chair by the fire, while I was in my easy chair, watching me knit or spin. Once or twice he was flushed with wine, and over bold, for he tried to kiss me. But, 'Squire or no, I boxed his ears for his pains, and my softer than his.

I could not help his coming, nor help going when he came, and I did not dare that Evan should be angry with me. But he was. Eh, so high and mighty, and spoke as though one like the 'Squire could mean no good by coming to so poor a place as the schoolmaster's.

He made me angry, and I spoke up.

"For that matter, the 'Squire would be glad to have me promise to marry him," said I. "He thinks more of me than you do just now."

"Maybe you like him better," said I.

He looked at her as she sobbed, and I found strength to say:

"Give me to whom you will, then, since my own love does not want me."

And she crept up stairs and sat down on my bed, weak as though I had fainted. I would have thought Heaven for forgetfulness just then, but it wouldn't come.

The next day 'Squire Turner was in the parlor as my accepted lover. How pleased he was, and how the color came back into grandfather's old face! And granmie grew so proud and kind, and all the time was aglow, and only I said,

"It's true," said I.

"And for the sake of a few la'd, you'll see your grandfather ruined, and break his heart, and leave me, that have nursed you from a biddy, widow."

I looked at her as she sobbed, and I found strength to say:

"I told you rightfully," said I.

"They'd sold the house, and gone to Liverpool to take ship; and you may find them in the port of New York to take the trouble," said Dame Coombs.

"I'm no trouble, to tell falsehoods about my neighbors," said I.

And who was it that sent old grandfather the deed of gift that made the old man his own, and who spoke a kind word to the doctor for young Dr. Locke that helped him into practice? Some one but 'Squire Turner, who had taught our children to pray for every night. For we were married, and in a few years had boys and girls at our knees; and, when the eldest was nigh 2, the thing I needed to make me quite happy happened—and from far over the sea, where he had been three good, twelve-months, came our bonniest and the bonniest lady that ever blushed beside him, and she had a mistress at last, and a few years who loved the 'Squire as I loved Evan.

Eh! but it's an old story. She that I remembered a girl I saw in my coffin, withered and old. And then they opened the vault where the 'Squire had slept ten years to put her beside him; and I've nothing left of Evan, my life and my love, but his memory, and it seems as though he had dream of joy I ever had were to be made tombstones. And even the Golden George the great strong ship that would have borne him down to me, had long ago—sailing away from me without a word.

I suppose they all saw I looked sad, 'Squire talked of my health, and would make me ride with him over the moors for strength.

The old folks said nothing. They knew what ailed me; only our little Scotch maid seemed to think there was anything. Once she said to me:

"What's this, ye, ye? Your eye is dull and you're weak in pat, and your brav' grand lover cannae make yo' smile; ye are na that ill, either."

"No; I'm well enough," said I.

She looked at her as she sobbed, and I found strength to say:

"Give ye tell me your ail, I might tell you a' cure," she said.

But there was no cure for me in this world, and I couldn't open my heart to the old folks. So the days rolled by, and I was close on my marriage eve, and granmie and Dorothy Flume were busy with my wedding robes. I wished it had long ago—sailing away from me without a word.

I suppose they all saw I looked sad, 'Squire talked of my health, and would make me ride with him over the moors for strength.

Unless something is done very soon to prevent it, Washington's will and the accompanying notes will soon be lost in the office of the Clerk if the Court in Fairfax county, Va. It is kept in a glass case, and, from appearances, the writing has almost all faded away. Once its old age it will not bear handling. The Clerk of the Court, some years ago, had it copyrighted, so that, now, under the copyright law, he is the only person who has a right to publish it. In the spring of 1876, this Clerk published the will in pamphlet form, and sold a great number of copies at the Centennial, and also of a speculation and as a means of having an exact copy, in case the original faded away entirely, or was lost by fire—the building in which it is now kept not being fire-proof—made a proposition to the Clerk of the Court to have the will and accompanying notes, as well as the will of Martha Washington, photo-lithographed, but the Clerk refused on the ground that this case was done it would prevent the sale of the complete pamphlet which he had issued, and which does not purport to give a fac-simile except one page of the will. Application was then made to the Librarian of the Congressional Library, Mr. Spofford, for the purpose of testing the right of this Clerk of the Court, of Fairfax county, under the copyright, to hold the exclusive right of control over the will. Mr. Spofford answered that, as far as he knew, the Clerk of that court being obtained a copyright, there was no way under the law to get it away from him to have it photo-lithographed, although it was very desirable that a fac-simile should be obtained for preservation as well as for distribution. It seems strange that the law should put in control one man, and his heirs or assigns the possessors of this more than a speculation, and as a means of having an exact copy, in case the original faded away entirely, or was lost by fire—the building in which it is now kept not being fire-proof—made a proposition to the Clerk of the Court to have the will and accompanying notes, as well as the will of Martha Washington, photo-lithographed, but the Clerk refused on the ground that this case was done it would prevent the sale of the complete pamphlet which he had issued, and which does not purport to give a fac-simile except one page of the will. 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