

THE STORY OF AN AFRICAN FARM

BY OLIVE SCHREINER

A TALE OF LIFE IN THE BOER REPUBLIC.

(Continued From Last Week.)

In truth, nothing matters. This dirty little world full of confusion...

Existence is a great pit, and the old fate who stirs it round cares nothing...

In the gray dawn the sheep are let out to work. All day while the young ones...

At night, alone in a cabin, we sit no more brooding over life. What should we think of...

And now we try Nature. All these years we have beside her, and we have never her...

The rocks have to us a blur of brown. We bend them, and the disorganized massiveness...

the beautiful skeleton of a fish. We have often tried to picture in our mind...

The flat plain has been to us a reach of monotonous red. We look at it, and every bandful of sand starts into life...

We are not satisfied with what Nature shows us and will see something for ourselves. Under the white ben we put a dozen eggs...

We look into the dead ducks and lambs. In the evening we carry them home, spread newspapers on the floor...

symmetrically arranged. We are struck by its singular beauty. And, moreover (and here we drop from our kneeling into a sitting posture)...

This thing we call existence, is it not a something which has its roots far down below in the dark...

We nod over the gander, then start up suddenly, look into the blue sky, throw the dead gander and the refuse into the dam...

CHAPTER XV. WALDO'S STRANGER.

Waldo lay on his stomach on the red sand. The small ostriches he herded wandered about him, pecking at the food he had cut...

Presently, at the corner of the camp, Em appeared, bearing a covered saucer in one hand and in the other a jug with a cup on the top...

"The new man was an Englishman to whom the Boer woman had hired half the farm." "Hum!" said Waldo.

"He is quite young," said Em, holding her side. "and he has brown hair and beard curling close to his face...

She tripped off again, and Waldo carved on at his post. Doss lay with his nose close to the covered saucer and sniffed that some one had made nice little fat cakes that afternoon...

In an uncommonly melodious voice he inquired whether he might be allowed to remain there for an hour. Waldo directed him to the farmhouse...

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was a drowsy afternoon, and he objected to travel in these out of the world parts. He liked better civilized life...

The stranger looked from beneath his sleepy eyelids at the brown earth that stretched away, beautiful in spite of itself...

"Your father's place, I presume," he inquired sleepily. "No; I am only a servant."

"What had that creature, so coarse clad and clownish, to do with the subtle joys of the weather? Himself, white handed and delicate, he might hear the music which shimmering sunshine and solitude play on the finely strung chords of nature...

"What all his him? said his comrades. "He is mad," said one. "No; but he is worse," said another.

"The hunter looked down at him—the huge, unweirdy figure, in size a man's, in right of its childlike features and curling hair a child's—and it hurt him. It was something between pity and sympathy.

"Will you take this for your carrying?" The boy glanced at the 25 note and shook his head. "No; I cannot."

"No; it is for him." "And who is there?" asked the stranger. "My father."

freshly legs with which they went to sleep? Then why say, 'He sleeps forever? You believe he will stand up again?'

"Do you?" asked the boy, lifting for an instant his heavy eyes to the stranger's face.

"Yes, I will tell you," he muttered; "I will tell you all about it."

He touched the grotesque little figure at the bottom. "Day by day he went to hunt for wild fowl in the woods, and it chanced that once he stood on the shores of a large lake. While he stood waiting in the rushes for the coming of the birds a great shadow fell on him...

"I have seen today," he said, that which I never saw before—a vast white bird, with silver wings outstretched, sailing in the everlasting blue.

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he sat by to see what would happen. The first that came into the net was a snow white bird, with dove's eyes, and he sang a beautiful song.

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