

## THE RED CLOUD CHIEF.

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RED CLOUD, - NEBRASKA.

THE PRIEST'S PIG.

AN OLD STORY MODERNIZED.

His Reverence sat in his latticed box,  
When curtains closed in convulsions;  
To tell them sins and seek absolution.  
To tell their sins and seek absolution.

So the good priest sat on his cushioned chair  
Through the zeal for them he was born,

In order that all the parson might share  
The blessed fruits of the holy season.

Sinner and saint—  
Sinner and saint—  
Sinner and saint;

How he failed in virtue, increased in vice,  
(Seeing the good he preferred the evil),

And the pastor gave each his due,  
And bad goblins go to square the devil.

But the priest possessed a character  
Whose nobility were its only beauties,

And his daily mass and his office were  
The whole of his sacerdotal duty.

It was his custom to say Mass,  
Calm eloquence by the kind reporter;

I hazard the guess he seldom would preach,  
Except when collected lists grew shorter,

Or clerical schools

Made preaching incumbent.

At all events  
His moments were few and few in number,  
And when they lacked in eloquence  
They never failed in producing slumber.

His Revere had quite a fine estate,  
A cottage-house with numerous gables,  
Whose roof was covered with shingles of slate,

whose meadow lands and extensive stables,

The pastor's trotter was glossy and sleek;

His stylish buggy was never dirty;

It was even said that during the week

The priest's coat was always thirty;

His sheep and cows

Were allowed to browse

The clover and the vetches, the yellow arm,

Through which a reviled ran and sported;

But the greatest pride of the pastor's farm

Were Suffolk pigs he had just imported.

At a station among the hills, a little girl came into the cars, leading a feeble old man. Morrill sprang to meet them to a seat, and then he came back for his valise.

"He's blind!" he said. "Just think of it! to live in your own country, and not be able to see it! The old fellow is poor, too, I'm afraid. I'll go and sit with him."

"He sat by the old man at intervals during the whole day, helping him off and on the train when we stopped for meals, and, I fancy, paying for sumptuous repasts, to which his companions had long been strangers.

"Once he came back to me.

"A fine old gentleman," he said. "Singularly intelligent. And there's something very reverend in his simple pietism and goodness. If you had lived among heathens for 30 years, you'd appreciate it."

"At sunset, we reached C——, and Morrill assisted the feeble blind man to descend from the platform.

"This is my home," said he. "Do you stop here?"

"Yes," stammered Morrill. "I have business in C——."

"You will come to my house, then, when it is finished?" said the old man. "You have been very kind to me. I feel sure that we shall be friends. My name is Riddiman."

"Morrill's face grew first pale, then scarlet. He shook hands without a word. When we had gone down the street, he laughed aloud, like a woman in hysterics. But when I smiled, he turned on me fiercely.

"Stop!" he said. "I'm a fool, but you stop here!"

"He groaned and hid his eyes.

"An advertisement of commandment.

"He called the rascal who stole his pig, and hoped he'd choke if he made it bacon.

They said his Reverence lost his pig.

"The pig was eaten, his bones were rotten.

He may add that Time had advanced a year,

And the scandalous thief was still forgotten.

When the Lenten season of prayer and fast came in in order of due procession,

And the pastor's pig at last became a matter of right contention.

With tears and fears,

After long delays, for the dreary fast,

Had made the wight of his fatal uncertain;

But his turn has come, and he enters in the little box, and adjusts the curtain.

So far so good. We will simply state here.

The pig was eaten, his bones were rotten.

We may add that Time had advanced a year,

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When the Lenten season of prayer and fast came in in order of due procession,

And the pastor's pig at last became a matter of right contention.

With tears and fears,

After long delays, for the dreary fast,

Had made the wight of his fatal uncertain;

But his turn has come, and he enters in the little box, and adjusts the curtain.

"Father," he says, "I am guilty of theft."

The good priest covered his nose and blew it.

He was hard of hearing upon the left,

And the why railed fully knew it.

"And I brought the value of what I stole;

I am a thief; but I am a sinner,

And I crave your blessing upon my soul,

That the guilt of my theft may thereby leave it.

With that he thrust

Through the bars of rust

A broken heart; but the priest said "nay,"

With kindly smiles for penitent sorrow;

You must find the person from whom you say

You stole the goods, and restore to morrow."

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