

## A CAR LOAD OF "AID."

Needy Farmers Disport Themselves in Dressing Gowns and "Swallow Tails."

WHEN western Nebraska and Kansas called for aid responses came from every part of the United States. The sufferers needed almost everything that men and women and particularly children, of which the frontier has always more than its share, can need to sustain life. The farmers were, and are yet, in need of the bare necessities of life, plain food, fuel and clothes but the aid sent to them illustrates the different ideas of what constitutes necessities. The supplies sent from nearby points came almost entirely from farmers who knew exactly what the conditions required. What they sent, either in food or clothes, was plain and substantial.

The *Christian Herald* of New York gathered a large number of car loads of food and clothing, particularly the latter. When one of its cars would reach a town which was to be made a center of distribution, the first day was set aside for unpacking. The next day the farmers would come for the supplies. The unpacking occupied the attention of the whole town and usually half the men in town turned out to help. One car loaded in New York and distributed in a county seat town is a fair sample of them all. The goods came packed in boxes and barrels. The first half dozen boxes opened contained nothing unusual, but when a big box from a fashionable New York church was opened the first article found was a silk dressing gown. It would have reached to the heels of a tall man. The outside trimmings were hand painted and indicated that much time and skilled work had been spent in making it. The gown was apparently almost, if not quite, new, and a half dozen men who were looking on fell to discussing its probable history. A young man of 30, who has never taken to himself a wife, suggested that it was the work of a girl who gave it as a present to her lover. His argument was that the fancy painting proved its origin. He thought perhaps they had quarreled and the return of presents which usually follows such events had taken place. He is wearing it now in his sod house. While he fries his side meat for supper he cogitates on financial problems from a standpoint directly opposite to that taken by its original owner.

There were three or four fancy smoking jackets of silk or other fine fabrics whose present owners smoke cob pipes and doubtless wish they had chosen more serviceable garments.

A little crowd that had gathered to inspect the goods was still debating when attention was called to a woman's opera cloak, apparently new, which had been found in the bottom of a box together with some shoes which might have been serviceable enough on Fifth avenue, but which would not last a day on the well developed foot of a western girl romping about on the buffalo grass. Some of them showed that they had been worn perhaps a half dozen times on dainty feet. The cloak was an expensive one and quite as fashionable and handsome as any that can be seen in the best stores in the large cities.

From another box about this time the material for a black dress with plenty of silk for trimming and a note stating the address of the giver was taken. Then came a dress suit slightly worn and the editor of the local paper at once proclaimed that a dress ball would follow the distribution. Several such suits were found before the car was unpacked and it was soberly argued that the pattern of the coats was designed so that the farmer might the more conveniently reach into his hip pocket for the long plug of "horse shoe" without ruffling his coat tails. A dozen or more overcoats such as only a rich man or a spendthrift could buy were envied by the few present who for one reason or another could not ask for charity. Summer coats and vests most of them highly expensive and none of them showing signs of wear, and light trousers good enough for a book-keeper, but so easily torn that they would not last a week on a sturdy, farmer, were numerous.

There were several silk dresses which were given the next day to the wives of populist farmers who had never worn that kind of clothing before in their lives. White dresses covered with lace caused the eyes of the young girls to sparkle. An old farmer who inspected them said: "Them 'ere's good enough in their place, but they ain't much 'count out here an' wouldn't do no good in a blizzard." Some of the boxes contained religious books and periodicals, and one very fine Oxford bible was found in a box which contained summer

underwear, something which the average western farmer scorns and is never known to wear.

The barrels which contained food were stocked with canned pineapple, cocoa and delicatessen of which the farmers knew not the use.

Altogether the stock received showed that the givers meant to clothe the naked and feed the hungry, and if their choice of the things necessary for that purpose was not the best the settlers made the most of what they got and doubtless appreciated it.

## DR. FRANK S. BILLINGS AS PICTURESQUE AS EVER.

Dr. Frank S. Billings writes the editor of THE COURIER a characteristic note concerning the notice of his book, "How Shall the Rich Escape?" which recently appeared in these columns. He thinks such notices "are far more favorable to the its sale than appreciative ones" and seeks to disprove our "prophecy" that the book would fall flat by stating that 5000 copies have already been sold and a second edition of 10,000 copies is now being struck off. We congratulate the erstwhile disputant on the diseases of hogs on the success of his entry into the field of socialistic literature. He seems to be even more successful in handling rich men than he was in looking after the hogs. For it will be remembered that most of the hogs died, and we have yet to hear of any wholesale taking off of rich men as the result of the doctor's efforts. If any reader of THE COURIER has not read Dr. Billings' book we commend it as an interesting showing of the progress of the patho-biological expert's insanity.

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Dr. Billings suggests that THE COURIER announce the forthcoming publication of four additional books from his pen, viz: "How Shall the Poor Escape?" or Poverty, etc., "How Shall Women Escape?" "How Shall We All Escape?" "Ethics and Natural Law." These the doctor will no doubt dash off in the next few weeks, as he is an extraordinarily rapid writer, and when these projected works are completed we would suggest that the doctor write a few more—just to keep his hand in. He seems to have a marked predilection for having somebody or something escape, and following his lead we append a short list of titles that may be of use to him:

"How Shall the Fire Escape?"

"How Shall the Criminals Escape?"

"How Shall the Gas Escape?"

"How Shall the Cranks Escape?"

And then in the finishing book of the series Dr. Billings might tell how, when and where he, himself, escaped.

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There is a footnote in Dr. Billings' communication which, by the way, is dated at Grafton, Mass., as follows: "No man was ever more delighted than I to get out of Nebraska." It can be said with entire propriety that the delight experienced by the doctor was nothing to the rejoicing among the hogs and people of Nebraska. In his departure the former saw deliverance from wholesale slaughter, and all the people breathed easier at getting rid of a crazy incubus that was becoming annoyingly tiresome.

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Dr. Billings, it may be remarked, was very willing to remain in Nebraska so long as he continued to receive a lucrative salary as chief hog killer. He didn't find out that there was anything the matter with Nebraska until his salary suddenly stopped.

## LITERARY NEWS.

Trilby's Ben Bolted with  
The Green Carnation red,  
The Duchess was too indiscreet,  
And Sherlock Holmes is dead. —Life.

## A TASTE FOR HOME.

Mrs. Uptodate—What makes you think Mrs. Nuwoman is so very domestic in her tastes?

Mrs. Lately—Well, for one thing, she never goes out anywhere. Why, she scarcely ever leaves the club.