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ARRANGE BOOK REVIEW IN ACADEMY LIBRARY

The Parent Association of the Convent of the Sacred Heart will sponsor a book review on Wednesday morning, Dec. 16, at 10:15 o'clock in the Library of the Convent at 8 Prince St.

Miss Mary MacCarthy will review "Heads and Tales" by Melvina Hoffman. This book promises to be as popular as "Gone with the Wind," the committee states.

This review is open to the public.

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Playing Santa Claus On Chistmas Eve

By Michael V. Simko

What Mr. Pillbank Found At His Journey's End In the Snowstorm

A [illegible] sign squeaked in the [illegible] wind. A [illegible] dusk made it [illegible] to [illegible] the faded letters [illegible] informed the passer-by simply, "PILLBANK'S FEED [illegible]." Behind the small snow [illegible] Tibbal's [illegible] ledger.

[illegible] on the light [illegible] to give the stove an extra ration of coal. His [illegible] the big grey-bearded proprietor.

"[illegible] in to do, boy?" Pillbank asked frowning.

"Gettin' cold in here," [illegible] explained shrugging his shoulders [illegible] the cold. "I thought the stove—"

"There [illegible] wrong with the [illegible]. But I guess it's near quittin' time, things is dull. Always dull this day o' the year."

"Tomorrow's Christmas, Mr Pillbank."

"What difference does that make [illegible] to be fed Christmas day as well as any other time?" [illegible] Christmas Him Pillbank grunted and brushed the back of a broad palm across his mouth as if the word were distasteful to him. "Sweep up a bit and never mind the stove, do you hear?"

That Furriner's Place

Pillbank [illegible] he banged shut a red ledger. He thrust his long arms into a sheepskin coat that reached nearly to his knees. While the windows rattled in the cold wind Pillbank tucked a home-knitted scarf around his collar. When he came to the door he drew his threadbare cap well down over his ears and called to Tibbals.

"Henry, I'm goin' up to that furriner's place, you know, he calls himself Andro."

"You mean Andrew Kosarnicky?"

"Taint right to give a man such a tongue-twister for a name. Wal, he ain't been in to settle has he? I mean while I been out away from the store?"

"No, he hasn't [illegible] but you know it's Christmas Eve."

"What in thunder has that got to do with collectin' a bill?" the proprietor roared. "He owes me two hundred dollars."

"But [illegible] these Slovak farmers around here sorta celebrate on Christmas Eve. Kosarnicky might [illegible] well [illegible]."

"Oh, he might, eh?" Stiles Pillbank drew himself to his full six feet and expanded his barrel of a chest. "An' what if I get cantankerous myself? [illegible] I don't aim to [illegible] feelin' cattle any longer [illegible] to be Santy Claus to anyone, at least to a furriner. Hand me that there bill."

"My, my gosh it's for two hundred and sixty nine dollars."

Every Penny Of It

"By Judas I'm goin' to collect it, every penny of it," Pillbank thundered above the rattling windows and the squeaking sign. He drew up the collar of his sheepskin coat as he turned the knob with his right hand. "Better lock up Henry. No tellin' when I'll get back. And let that stove be understand."

"Yes sir," Tibbals returned, then hesitantly and all at once quite suddenly "Merry Christmas, Mr Pillbank."

"Eh, what say?" the grey proprietor [illegible] the wind howled.

"I said Merry Christmas. It's Christmas Eve, you know."

Pillbank piloted his little ark over the smooth pavement of the State road. At times it seemed as if the gale would sweep the doughty machine off the road. But the old skipper kept his craft steadily on her course.

Trees along the road began to loom up in the settling darkness. He could scarcely discern the black outline in the west of the low Berkshires. Lights began to appear in the squat rambling homes of the farmers. Laurel wreathes showed against hollow backgrounds of light while candles on the sills pronounced the holiday spirit.

To all this Pillbank grunted disdainfully. The clerk's words started him ranting anew.

"Merry Christmas, [illegible] this fuss for? Mighty queer ideas folks has about Christmas. If people'd pay their bills instead o' spendin' good money on such can foolery we'd be better off. Merry Christmas to me. Humph. That's a good one," says I.

For emphasis stressing his disapproval Stiles Pillbank [illegible] gas into the laboring engine. The little car fairly leaned into the wind. It pushed belligerently into the northeasterly gale as if eager to meet the first snow flakes that began to stick to the windshield.

Might Have Waited

As he left the main road and proceeded westward toward Andro's place the snow began to thicken. Before he [illegible] he was compelled to get out to remove the snow from the windshield. The wheels began to spin [illegible] a grade Pillbank began to [illegible] a number of things.

He might have started earlier this afternoon. He should have had Tibbals [illegible] on the skid chains. [illegible] he could have waited for another day [illegible] the wind shield [illegible] should have been put on or for long before now. [illegible] than [illegible] hadn't Tibbals seen to all this?

Pillbank grumbled and said "Thunderation" again and again. He tapped his fingers against the wheel. They were growing numb. His face was stiff and parched from the stinging wind. Perhaps Tibbals was right; this was not the time to collect a bill.

Yet he derived small solace from the thought. He was out of patience with people who stretched their credit to the breaking point.

"Selfish thoughtless squandering wasteful furriners, no idea about money and business," Pillbank censured everyone in general. "Just waitin' for someone to feed 'em. I'll show 'em. Stiles Pillbank doesn't aim to be Santy Claus for anyone."

Three candles in each window of a small house seemed to touch some secret recess in the crabbed store keeper. He began to concede the comfort and contentment folks derived from enjoying holiday festivities. In contrast his squalid home was dark and dismal and dreary and bare and uninviting. If Abigail had been spared perhaps today there would be a light in the window, burning logs in the fireplace and Stiles would have been—well let me see doesn't seem possible but it's right, yes, little Stiles would be nigh onto twenty-five, how the years fly.

Car Leaves Road

"Then, some folks say Merry Christmas," Pillbank muttered, and vengefully jerked the wheel so that the Ford slid off the crown of the road, one rear wheel finding a snow drift. The gray store keeper fed his car more gas. Still more. The wheels spun noisily, but the car remained in the edge of the drift.

"Thunderation!" fumed Pillbank. He said it loudly. The snow swept into his bearded face. He said, "Well, I'll be gol darned."

In the driving snow Pillbank trudged over the road seeking assistance. At the first gate he picked up his head and said, "Thunderation," only this time it was something of a gasp not a resentful exclamation.

Still he had no choice. After all why shouldn't he call on Andro to tow him out of a snow bank. For a moment he hesitated. [illegible] laughter and happy screams of children within seemed to transfix him. He beat the snow of his boots and knocked.

A thankful warmth enveloped him as he stood in the spacious hallway while the aroma of hot food awakened his appetite. But there was nothing aggressive or wrathful in his demeanor. Three tiny children stood staring at the stranger while a middle-sized man with high cheek bones and small smiling eyes welcomed him.

"Ah, Merry Christmas, Meester Pillbank." Andro's teeth showed beneath a thick black moustache. "Hey mamma, Alzbeta, come here quick. Ah tha's ver' good. You mus' [illegible] in. Here, sit down. Stevey, bring for Meester Pillbank little wine."

II Becomes Docile

The lonely miserly crabbed storekeeper was bewildered. No one had ever treated him so cordially with such [illegible] hospitality. Big blustering fuming Stiles Pillbank became docile and inarticulate.

"You see Andrew," Pillbank tried to regain his customary austerity. "I [illegible] my car is stuck in the snow just below and perhaps you could—"

"Ah, my friend don' worry 'bout little thing like that." Andro assured old Stiles as he pressed tobacco into a corn cob pipe. "First we goin' have nice big supper. He Alzbeta, everythin' ready pretty soon?"

Pillbank yielded, somewhat reluctantly. The bill in his pocket seemed to be sweeping out of his reach on the wings of the blizzard. This was something unheard of. In his seventy-one years he had never gazed upon such a festive board. How do these foreigners do it? With wide eyes Pillbank observed the long table overwhelmed with cabbage cakes, pot cheese rolls, poppy seed biscuits, fried cakes frosted with sugar and stuffed with prune jelly, a surprising loaf of beautiful brown bread which Alzbeta called "pasca" and between the candles in the center a tiny crib of straw upon which reposed a little wax figure of the Infant.

"You mus' have more, plenty more," Alzbeta insisted as she added more "bobalki" on the guest's plate. Her full round face was flushed, her thick black hair combed smoothly back into a small knot, a white apron edged with gay embroidery encompassed her plump figure. She appeared efficient, neat, generous and indulgent.

The tots were laughing and talking boisterously. Stevey, a lad of fourteen, attended the clamoring demands of a baby in the high chair while little Elizabeth kept feeding a three-year old. A five-year old boy and a girl two years older were eating fried cakes until the prune jelly smudged their rosy cheeks.

Pillbank loosened his belt surreptitiously and leaned back, almost gasping. Andrew Kosarnicky offered him another glass of wine.

"You betcha my life is good wine.

Yuletide in Old New York

© Yale University Press

There was a hot time in old New York when Christmas rolled around. The Dutch were a merry people and the streets rang with joy to commemorate the birth of Christ. In '654, for instance, the city fathers declared themselves a Christmas holiday that began December 14 and lasted until three weeks after New Year's day. That was a real Christmas vacation!

Modern 'Scrooge' Learns Meaning of Christmas Spirit

Alzbeta, she make it six years now .... Drink with me. We say what how you say something like 'God give us health' .... Hey Stevey, what's mater, where is your fiddle, come on, play for Meester Pillbank. Liska and Elska, hurry up, help mamma and come sing for us."

While Stevey drew an uncertain bow across the squeaking E string the girls stood before the roaring hearth and sang hymns that were new to Pillbank. Mrs. Andro held the restless baby and sang with her daughters. The bill in Pillbank's pocket was gone with the blizzard. He moved contentedly in the deep chair although he could not relieve himself of the uncomfortable sensation in his throat.

Presently the children filed past their father, clasped his thick hand, kissed the back of it and bid him good night in Slovak. They moved to a tiny receptacle on the wall, dipped their fingers into the holy water and blessed themselves. Then at the foot of the stairs they waved to the guest: "Good night, Mr. Pillbank, and Merry Christmas."

This performance perturbed Pillbank. He blew vigorously into a handkerchief and turned his head away from Kosarnicky. These foreigners he had believed were selfish, thoughtless, wasteful. He surveyed the broad room and found everything orderly, spotlessly neat, glistening with scrubbing even to the big picture of the Holy Family in a wide guilt frame.

Alzbeta and little Liska were doing the dishes and singing. Pillbank recalled one of the airs. Liska had learned it in school. It did something to his heart, that organ somewhere inside him that natives referred to as stone-like.

Who Spoke Of Bill?

Andro was speaking, but Pillbank heard only the small girl's sweet soprano until one or two words penetrated his hearing.

".... pretty soon now we pay .... we pay every penny .... Andro Kosarnicky never forget .... thank you for wait so long ...."

"Say, Andrew, this is Christmas Eve, ain't it? Who said anything about a bill?" Pillbank's wrinkled face was actually wreathed in smiles, the heat of the fire-place after his journey in the cold brought a sparkling ruddiness to his broad face. The severe wrinkles had somehow been lost in the flushed, beaming countenance which Tibbals would never recognize. His short grey beard covered

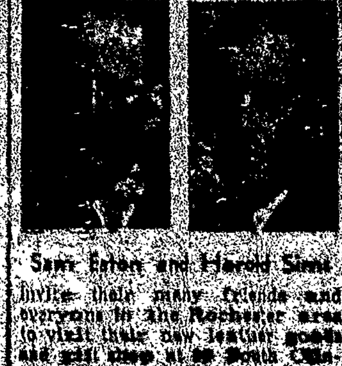
(Continued on Page 8)

BURY MARYKNOLL STUDENT WHO SAVED FELLOW NOVICE

SAN FRANCISCO—A Solemn Mass of Requiem in his parish church here preceded the interment of the body of William E. Engler, 21, a student at the Maryknoll Novitiate, Bedford, Mass., who met his death by drowning in the act of saving the life of a fellow novice, while both were skating.

The tragedy was the outcome of the first skating this year of the foreign mission novices on the Concord River, which runs past the novitiate property. About a half mile up the river the ice broke under one of the group, Francis J. Sheehan, of Boston. Mr. Engler went to Mr. Sheehan's assistance, and while drawing the latter to safety was plunged into the icy water and carried under.

Other novices succeeded in dragging Mr. Sheehan to shore with an emergency rope made of their outer clothes, but Mr. Engler sank. His body was not recovered until some hours later.



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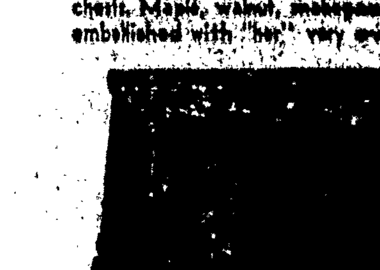

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