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no. 4
May 1929

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THE

FRONTIER

A Magazine of the Northwest

VOL. IX, NO. 4

MAY, 1929

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Manuscripts should be sent to the Editor; business communications to Gertrude White, Business Manager; subscriptions to Ernest Lake, Circulation Manager—all at The State University of Montana, Missoula.

Contributions are welcomed at any time of the year. Any type of writing—verse, story, essay, article, drama, sketch—is acceptable, provided it has sincerity and interest. Preference is given to material reflecting Northwest life.

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**The next number of *The Frontier* will be
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Evan Reynolds, formerly of Missoula, is now doing art work in New York City.

Joe Hare, who lives at Evergreen, Colorado; **Helen Maring**, editor of *Muse and Mirror*, Seattle; **John Richard Moreland**, of Norfolk, Virginia; **Joan Prosper**, Kirkland, Washington, are new to *The Frontier*, but their verse is well known among lovers of poetry. **Howard Corning**, **Ethel Fuller**, **Walter Kidd**, **Queene Lister**, and **Borghild Lee** are Oregon writers whose writing is welcomed by *Frontier* readers.

Raymond Kresensky, Newburgh, Indiana, writes for many magazines.

Merle Haines is a student at the State University of Montana, as are also **Betty Dixon**, **Eizabeth McKenzie**, and **Isabel Orchard**. This is the first appearance in print of all except **Merle Haines**, whose story, *Mike*, won recognition in *Best Short Stories of 1928*. **Violet Crain** teaches at Roslyn, Washington.

It is with pleasure that the distinctive writing of **Roland English Hartley**, San Francisco, is presented to *Frontier* readers. **May Vontver's** *The Kiskis*, in the March issue, brought many appreciative letters to the editor's desk. **Nina Crow** teaches at Sixteen, Montana.

Brassil Fitzgerald, assistant editor *The Frontier*, contributes his first *Frontier* story. He has published many stories and essays in other magazines. **Gr Stone Coates**, also an assistant editor needs no introduction. **Edmund L. Frman** is a professor at the State University of Montana. **Mary Bremman Clapp** published much verse.

Lillian White Spencer, Denver poet writes of the Indian picture, "Copy of picture in water color, painted by a Navajo artist, from the sand-painting of an uncle, a famous shaman of the Navajo which the shaman makes at the time of the birth of a Navajo child."

Israel Newman, Augusta, Maine, is alienist, psycho-analyst and poet. **J. Co son Miller**, Buffalo, New York, and **Arth T. Merrill**, Glendale, California, both former contributors, have published volumes of verse. **Norman Macleod** is editor *Palo Verde*, Holbrook, Arizona.

Both **Bill Adams** and **Harry G. Hu** are established writers, especially among readers of *Adventure*. **D'Arcy Dahlber** formerly a Montanan, sends his sympathetic study of young life from New York City. **Luke Sweetman**, Billings, Montana and **Pat Tucker**, Livingston, are both "old timers."

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Illustration for THE RECORDERS by Evan Reynolds

THE FRONTIER

A MAGAZINE OF THE NORTHWEST

"The frontiers are not east or west, north or south, but wherever a man fronts a fact."—THOREAU.

The Recorders

By Joe Hare

Some are black and some are gray, and all
Are dead. They line the ridges, erect or bent
Above successors unaware that seed
Of pines, mislaid in soil that's rich enough
To germinate and nourish, will start young trees
Susceptible to three—the sun, the rain
And air. Three which, combining, will inveigle
Them to growths the soil cannot support.

All are dead, but death is versatile.
As fire in fall will scorch a sapless bark
And leave black stumps of pitch. And these outlast
The gray ones killed in spring when fire dries out
The sap, to leave one peeling in the sun
And rain and air—three which, combining, start
Disintegration to enrich the soil—
Soil rich enough to germinate new seed.

North-Going Geese

By Arthur T. Merrill

Do you know what the wild geese, north-going, cry
As they, instinct-driven, fly
In starry duskings over leafing trees?
Greening, the grain spears hear in fertile fields
And the yearly whitening of the pear yields
A gift of drifting pollen to the enterprising breeze.

Do you know what the wild geese, north-going, cry
As they, instinct-driven, fly
In crisp-edged dawns over up-sprung pasturelands?
The Hereford heifer, lowing, understands,
And where the wild grouse berries grow
The feathered groundlings hear and know.

Windfalls

By Raymond Kresensky

The wind blows East and West.
From day to day the apple trees
Are bent. The limbs reach down
And touch the grass.

The rain beats down upon them
And hail cuts deep.
Afterwards there are windfalls.

What is that idiot boy of the Hopkinses,
And the useless son of the Russells?
Windfalls.

Old lady Poesy's son left home years ago
And has not been heard from since.
(How the wind blows the apples down!)
Those young men sunning themselves
Before the barber shop
And the old maids peering from behind
The parlor curtains, gossiping
About the passers-by, the giddy girls—
(The wind blows East and West
And the rotten apples fall.)

What is the girl keeping house on the Booneville Road,
And beckoning the miners in?
And the nervous wreck of a Doctor?
And the holy minister of God—perverted?
Windfalls, windfalls.

It seems the wind blew hard this year.
It seems the rain beat down.

Potatoes

By Merle Haines

MRS. BELTON was driving the milk cows to pasture in the early morning. They walked up the trail in single file, the three cowbells flooding the air with their clatter; to the woman on the white horse it was singing music, as pleasant as the spring sunshine.

The trail sloped up from the barn, thru a patch of timber and out onto the flats. Along the trail-edge young grass stood in scattered bunches and the cows made hasty reaches for the green blades, licking them in with long tongues.

"Hiya, there, Crescent. Nig! Move along," Mrs. Belton shouted, to keep them moving, then sat easy in the saddle, looking over the backs of her milkers or searching the trail-side for early flowers.

She drove the cows thru the pasture fence, shut the bars and let Bess run back to the corrals. At the barn Bess slid to a halt as Mrs. Belton swung off.

Between the house and the creek Dan, her husband, and Pete, the hired man, were plowing. The smell of damp, fresh earth filled the atmosphere. She breathed deeply of it, stopping a moment to watch the sod twist over and lie in shiny black ribbons, and then went on to the house.

In the kitchen it was different. Egg-smear'd breakfast dishes were piled on the table and the floor was

littered with boots, socks, Dick's clothing and an ax handle Dan had been shaping. With a last look outside she began the housework.

At eleven o'clock she went to the root house after meat for dinner. Groping thru the darkness for the pork barrel, she found it and stuck her hand into the cold brine. Her fingers touched bottom and she slid her hand around, weaving it back and forth. The brine slopped emptily.

"Oh, goodness," she exclaimed. The salt pork was gone and only yesterday Dick had said there was more. But she had told Dan to kill a pig a week ago.

Angrily kicking a potato from underfoot, she went outside. A clear, sweet whistle quivered thru the air. She stopped there, biting her lip, and glared at Dan. If it were the middle of July he would still whistle "Annie Laurie" and still believe he could raise crops before winter.

As she went to the wood place Mrs. Belton noticed the pile of logs Dan had got out two winters ago for a new barn. They were rotting. Dan was that way—start something with great energy, work himself out in a few days, and drop it. Disgusting.

She picked up the ax and chopped viciously at a cottonwood log. Dan always kept a sharp ax, but that was because a woman couldn't do anything with a dull one. When out of

breath she gathered a bucket of chips, picked up the wood and went in to renew the fire.

Dick would be home from school for dinner, so she would have to have it on time. When it was ready she went to the door and sent a long *who-o-we-e-e* echoing across the field. She looked up the road and saw Dick coming. He left his pony at the barn and ran to the house—a husky youngster of thirteen, quiet.

“Ma, is dinner ready? I got to be back.”

“Yes. Hurry and wash before the men get here.”

Pete took the team to the barn; Dan came in, his face damp and dirty.

“Well, my love, have you got lots to eat?” he shouted boisterously. “I’m ravenous.”

“Dan! Quit—your dirty hands. How can I when I haven’t anything to cook?”

“What? Pork, chickens, eggs, beef! Woman, talk sense.”

“I told you to kill a pig.” She slapped a big spoonful of potatoes into a serving dish. “The salt pork’s gone.” She slid the dish onto the table. “Next winter you’ll want eggs—don’t wash your face on that towel—where would we be without egg money? *You* talk sense!”

“Oh, that’s all right.” Dan held up the towel. “It’s dirty anyway.”

“I told you to kill a pig.”

“Ho, never mind,” he squeezed her arm. “Next fall we’ll be well fixed. Bushels and bushels of potatoes. We have rich ground, woman, rich

ground: best in Montana. We’ll keep Dick home tomorrow.”

She knocked his hand away. “Yes, that’s the way. You should have planted Saturday so he wouldn’t miss school. You never plan things. You’re planting too many potatoes. Everybody is putting in acres of them. . . . I don’t see why you didn’t kill that pig when I told you to.”

Mrs. Belton poured the tea. “Dan, I *want* those raisins!”

Dan filled his hand and set the raisins back in the pantry. “Now you keep still. You don’t know anything about it. You always run everything I do into the ground.”

“If you’d take my advice once in a while. . . . I told you to kill a pig. Dinner’s cold. Dinner’s getting cold, I said.”

“Oh, damn the pig.”

Dan slammed the raisins to the floor and started out kicking a chair out of the way. It crashed against the table, narrowly missing his wife. Almost running, he dashed thru the door, grabbed the ax as he went by the wood place and headed for the pig pen. He leapt inside and Mrs. Belton saw the ax flash up and down. A pig squealed. Dan threw the ax out and a young shoat after it.

Dick had been eating but laid down his fork. “Ma—I—I ain’t hungry.”

“Now, Dick, eat your dinner and run to school. Don’t say a word and he’ll be all right.”

Dick took a piece of pie in his fists

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and went out to his pony. Mrs. Belton swept up the raisins.

Pete came from the barn and helped Dan butcher the pig. They hung it up.

"Aren't you going to scrape it?" Pete asked.

Dan jerked up the ax and started for the house. "Let her skin it herself, or feed it to the chickens—I don't give a rap."

Dan came in. "There's your darned old pig," he said gruffly, and without looking at his wife washed the blood from his hands. He rapidly consumed eggs, potatoes and pie and when filled snatched his hat off the hook and left. Pete followed his example.

Mrs. Belton did the baking and went out to cut seed potatoes. Dan would never get thru if she didn't help. The knife slipped rapidly, steadily thru the potatoes, one live eye in each piece.

At four-thirty Dick came home from school.

"Ma, can I have a cookie?" he said, sniffing the odor of fresh baking.

"Dear, this is tiresome," Mrs. Belton straightened up and scratched her back. "Yes, just one, and then get the cows."

Dick ran to the pantry.

An hour later the two men came in for supper. Dan was humming to himself as his wife hurried supper.

"You and Pete eat and then cut seed potatoes. Dick and I will do the chores. I did two sacks."

"Just as you say, my love, just as you say."

Pete washed and began eating. Dan absently trimmed his finger-nails with a jackknife. He smiled.

"I thot of a little jingle," he said, reaching on the shelf for a pencil and paper. He sat down to write.

Pete finished his supper and went out.

Mrs. Belton stood by the stove, one hand grasping the lifter. Her face was red. He was impossible!—writing silly jingles and keeping the work back.

"You're the most aggravatin' person!" she exploded, and slammed the door as she went out on the back porch. Leaning against the corner post she let her eyes follow the milk cows as they came down the pasture trail.

Seven years ago Dan had quit school teaching to file on the homestead. "In a few years we'll be well enough off to send Dick to college, then he can run the ranch while we enjoy ourselves," he had said enthusiastically.

She had entered the plan with high hopes, too, but things hadn't worked out right. Somehow their small herd of cattle didn't grow much; their cayuses were poor work horses; and Dan wouldn't do things right.

The cows filed into the corral. Mrs. Belton took the milk pans from the porch table and went back to the kitchen. Dan was still lingering over his supper.

Mrs. Belton started clearing off the table.

"Here, one little piece of bread yet."

"Dan! How do you expect me to get my work done! You won't be ready to plant tomorrow."

Dan swallowed his tea and jumped up. "I'm going now. Darn fool that I am. Here I sit, wasting time. Now I'll have to work by lantern light."

"And get up late in the morning," she retorted.

"Never mind, Duckie, we'll be rich someday," he encouraged her, grabbing his hat and rushing out.

Mrs. Belton picked up the piece of paper he left on the table.

*"You may ride, shoot or sing a song,
And if you'll only come along,
You'll grow both well and strong,
In this life so wild and free.
Over the prairie, this life's so free
and merry*

*The only place I care to be is riding
on the range."*

There was only the one verse. Mrs. Belton smiled pridefully, everybody didn't have a husband who could write like that. After reading it again she laid it on the shelf and picked up the milk buckets.

The milk hissed against the bottom of the pail.

"We need a separator the worst way. We're losing money every day—so-o-o Nig—I could sell enough cream to pay for it in no time. Dan's so stubborn. It would be easy, taking care of the milk."

Thick foam crawled along the sides

of the pail and bulged up in the middle.

"Yeah," said Dick. "I can turn it, Ma. It's fun. I turned Tony's." His tiny streams of milk didn't make foam.

Eight o'clock the next morning they were in the field. Dan and Dick plowed, Mrs. Belton and Pete planted. At ten o'clock Mrs. Belton went to the house and got a jug of buttermilk and a bucket of cookies. They lunched in the field, a happy bunch. Dick threw rocks at gophers. When no one was looking and he ran out of rocks he used seed potatoes.

Dan sat on the plow handles, one hand and his mouth full of cookies, the other holding a glass of buttermilk to wash them down.

"That ground," he said—"Here. I'll whip you, Dick, if you don't stop throwing potatoes—"

"Aw." Dick protested but quickly dropped the potatoes from his hand.

"—Black and damp. There's no end to what it'll raise."

"Yes, but I wish they had been in a week ago," said his wife. "If we have a dry spring they won't get started."

"Ho, they'll grow in *that* ground," Dan laughed at her. "Well, this will never do. Come on, Dick."

When the first crop of alfalfa was stacked and the potatoes were cultivated for the second time, Dan got restless. He had been working pretty steady.

"The timothy isn't quite ripe.

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We've been working too hard, Duckie. Hmm—trout ! Say, Pete, let's knock off and run up to the beaver dams for a couple days fishing."

Pete smiled. "Now, that's what I bin hankerin' for—a big mess of trout."

Mrs. Belton didn't say anything. Hunting and fishing were irresistible to Dan. A mess of trout would go good. She baked fresh bread and raisin cookies: they were Dan's favorite kind.

With a wistful face she watched them go, their horses loping steadily up the road toward the canyon and the beaver dams. It was a long time since she had gone. She sighed, thinking of the work to be done. Dan should be getting ready for haying. Now he would be behind all fall.

He was—late with the haying and late with the potato digging, but they had a fine crop. The seed potatoes and enough for their own use were in the root-house. The rest were stacked in the corner of the cowshed, ready to haul. Dan threw a layer of straw on them for protection.

"Now, woman, you see? I was right. That was foresight. Pretty soon you can buy all those things you've been wanting, like Fords and separators," he announced gaily.

Mrs. Belton was happy, too. "I'll have breakfast early. You can haul a load and be back before dark. I'll use the separator the next morning."

Dan sobered. "What? Will you never learn? I'd be foolish to sell now. They'll be five dollars a sack

before long. You see, my love, I've got business sense: that's where *you* fall down. You can't see far enough ahead."

"Dan!" Mrs. Belton's hands dropped to her side. "You'd better sell those in the shed. The price is good and we've got to have money. A hard frost—"

Dan lounged to the doorway. "Great weather—Indian summer." He whistled. "Oh, I'll cover them. Charge what we have to have."

He looked up at the McClellan range, wondering how many shells he had for the rifle.

"You better get our winter's wood, then."

He counted the shells in the belt under the rifle.

"Eight's enough," said Dan. "What?—oh, yes, I'll get some wood. Looks like we'll have a late fall. Guess I'll take a little hunt. I can't resist the call of the hills, woman.

*When the days of bright September
Rest upon the mountains bold,
And the sun in regal splendor,
Turns the aspen leaves to gold:
Then my heart is in the mountains,
And that's where I long to be,
Where the blacktail herd together,
And the blue grouse wait for me."*

As Dan sang his jingle he took Betsy Jane off the hooks and looked thru the barrel.

"Betsy Jane and I will get you some venison, my love."

"You'd better get some wood to cook it with first."

"Oh, I'll let you do that. There's the ax."

"Pa, can I go?" Dick quivered like an anxious hound.

"Not this time. We might get snowed in." Dick blinked and turned away. Dan hastened on. "I'm only going for a hurry-up trip. I'll take you next year."

"I want to go *now*."

Dan was delighted. "He's just like I was when I was a kid," he told his wife, with a hearty laugh, "crazy to hunt."

He began cleaning the rifle. "You stay home and help your mother, this time, Dick."

Mrs. Belton worried after Dan was gone. She was afraid something would happen to the potatoes. The price might go down or they might freeze and then she wouldn't get the separator.

The second day after Dan went hunting it clouded up and the wind grew cold. Mrs. Belton watched the weather all day. In the evening she and Dick piled more straw on the potatoes.

"I'm so afraid we'll get a bad storm that'll freeze them," she said to Dick.

"Aw, they won't freeze, Ma. Look't all the straw on them." He stuck his arm into the covering.

"I hope not," she answered worriedly.

Mrs. Belton didn't sleep much that night. She got up several times to look at the thermometer, but it went down only three degrees. The next

day was still threatening. She stood outside, looking at the low hung clouds, feeling the chilly wind from the northwest.

"Dick," she suddenly said, "you stay home today."

Dick looked at her in surprise.

"I'm going to sell the potatoes before it's too late. Go over to Tony's and see if you can borrow a team and wagon. Get the hired man, too."

Mrs. Belton harnessed their own team, hitched it to the wagon and drove up to the cow-shed. Dick arrived with Tony's hired man and a four-horse team. They made one trip that day and another the next, hauling all but forty sacks of the potatoes. The weather was still raw but no worse.

"If it will hold off another day," Mrs. Belton said, "I'll take the rest in tomorrow and bring out the separator."

"Maybe it won't get cold," said Dick.

"Oh, don't you think so?" His mother swallowed. She looked outside. "It will. I did best. Dan won't get more than three dollars a sack if he keeps them forever."

Mrs. Belton went to bed and dropped into a restful sleep. She was humming through her nose when she opened the door on the grey morning. The humming stopped. Her eyes were wide open as she took a quick breath, raised one hand and put it against the door jamb. A warm, southwest wind pressed against her face.

For several minutes she stood in

the doorway, then slowly went out to the cow-shed. Dick followed.

She threw the straw off the potatoes.

"What'll we do?" she said, looking at them.

Dick only shook his head.

"Here—I know. Drag them out as far as they were." She marked the point with her toe.

They piled them in two rows across the empty corner, covering them and filling the corner with straw.

"Dan can't tell. You keep still, Dick. We'll wait and when the price drops it will be all right."

"Now we can't get the separator, darn it, Ma."

An inch of wet snow fell during the night. "That will cover my tracks," thought Mrs. Belton.

Late that afternoon Dan came in. He had two blue grouse tied to his saddle.

"I'm soaked to the skin," he said when his wife came out. "Poor luck. The deer are too high up yet. I'll get one later."

"Pshaw, and I'm hungry for steak." Her voice wasn't quite natural.

There was something wrong. Dan felt it. He looked at the wood place. The ax, sawbuck and one crooked cottonwood log showed him where it was. He hunched his shoulders as though suddenly chilled.

"Here, woman," he said quickly. "Don't stand gapping. Take these grouse in and cook them for supper. I'm starved."

She obeyed without a word. Dan cocked his eye at her, then thumped the horse in the ribs. "Cut her off that time," he said to the horse and began whistling loudly as he unsaddled.

Mrs. Belton was rolling biscuits and Dick was sitting by the stove drying his shoes. Dan came in, hung up his rifle and began unbuttoning his coat. It was half off. "Did you put more straw on the spuds?"

The rolling pin stopped.

Dick spoke quickly. "We put about two feet on." He bent over to see if his shoes were dry.

"Good enough." The coat came off.

The rolling pin revolved again.

Dan picked up the latest paper.

"Ho, Duckie, did you see this? Spuds went up two-bits. Now we'll see what we see. I knew it, I knew it all the time. They'll go up more, too. Wait and see."

"I noticed that," she said weakly.

By the first of December potatoes were four dollars.

"Too bad they didn't get to five," Dan said, "so we could have a good Christmas. I'd like to buy Dick a rifle. But we'll make it up. I tell you, woman, we're on the road to riches. If I can do this once I can do it again."

Mrs. Belton did not look up from the socks she was darning, yet she stuck her finger with the needle. She sucked the pain out. "Dan, I wish you wouldn't bother me when I'm busy."

Laying down his pencil, Dan looked long at his wife.

"Bother you? Say, what's the matter? You're nervous as an old settin' hen. Been drinking too much coffee?"

"Oh, hush up." Mrs. Belton didn't look at him; her hand was shaking.

"Huh," he grunted, and started writing again.

Slower and slower Mrs. Belton pushed the darning needle thru the sock heel until she stopped altogether. Suddenly scooping the articles from her lap, she got up and went into the bedroom. Far back in the corner of the clothes closet, in a little box under a pile of rubbish, was the potato money. Pulling it out she looked at the roll of bills, clenching it in her hand. A noise from the front room startled her and quickly throwing the money back in the box she hurried to the kitchen, unconsciously wiping her hand on her apron.

By the middle of January the price of potatoes had crawled to four-seventy-five. Dan sang as he chopped wood and fed the cattle. Then he sat by the stove, chair tipped back, and dreamed of a rich future. His wife wasn't happy. She grew more nervous and reticent.

"You've spent that money a million times, and you haven't got it yet." She glanced toward the bedroom.

"It's lying out in the shed in sacks," was his cheerful answer.

Mrs. Belton caught her breath.

"Well, that doesn't get any wood and the box is empty."

"Wood? What do you do with it all? I've brought in at least a cord today. I never saw such a woman to burn wood!"

"And I never saw such a man to get it!"

Dan went out and got a load.

"It's turning cold. Looks like a bad spell," he said.

Before long Dick came home from school, bringing the paper with him.

"Tony was to town and got it," he said. "I'm hungry, Ma."

Mrs. Belton gave him a doughnut. "I'll have to get my baking done ahead. Mrs. Tony will be needing me any day now. She wants a boy."

Dan took the paper and settled back in his chair.

"Women are always wanting something. She'll take what she gets, I guess. Dick, fix the fire."

Mrs. Belton stood gripping the back of a chair as Dan looked at the price quotations. Her back was to him. Suddenly the paper rattled. Dan's feet slapped the floor.

"Whoopee!" he leapt up. "Ho, ho. I knew it! I knew it! Five dollars. They're up to five dollars."

"Oh!" His wife sank into the chair.

Dan didn't see her. He jumped in the air and clapped his heels twice before landing. The house shook under the impact of his capers.

Big-eyed and pale-faced, Dick stood by the stove and watched his mother. She was trying to smile.

"Gosh, it's awful cold," Dick said, and pushed the draft open.

"We'll have to quit this foolishness and do the chores." Dan was out of breath. "Tomorrow, if it isn't too bad, I'll start hauling." He kissed his wife on the back of her neck and hurried out.

Mrs. Belton went to bed early because of a headache and Dick studied hard. Dan pranced around the house all evening, whistling and singing.

That night the thermometer traveled till it hit bottom. It was the coldest Dan had ever seen in Montana: fifty-four below and the wind knifing in from the east. The snow whirled and drove thru cracks in the windows and doors. The cattle crowded against the buildings, backs humped to the storm, tails curved between their legs.

"Say, my love, do you think the spuds will stand it? I never dreamed it would get so cold. They're well protected except on the inside."

"Oh, I don't know. Go see."

It was soon after dinner when Dan started putting on his coat.

"Come on, Dick, dress warm and we'll go out and take a look."

"What do you want me for, Pa? It's too cold. I don't want to go out there." Dick didn't look at Dan; he was busily whittling a match to tooth-pick size.

"Come, come. Put on your coat." Dan was impatient. "I might need you."

Dick looked beseechingly at his mother, but her back was turned and

she was very busy. He slowly put on his overshoes, coat and cap.

Mrs. Belton scraped the frost off a part of the window and watched them go. One hundred feet from the house they were covered by the blizzard, but she still looked out. Only forty sacks, but that was two hundred dollars! She wished she had told Dan before. If they were froze—She got the money, tucking it in her dress front, and tried to steady herself.

Dick watched Dan dig into the potatoes with one hand. He shifted from left foot to right foot and back, as he saw Dan's face set and whiten. Dan remained on his knees, quiet, looking at the straw. Dick imagined he could hear Dan's watch ticking the seconds off. He turned away, blinking. Gosh, it was cold! A cow bawled.

Dan felt of the potatoes again. "I—I guess we can't get you a gun this year."

He got up, brushing the straw from his coat.

"Froze, Pa?" Dick's teeth chattered.

"I hate like the very devil to tell your mother. I'll never hear the last of it."

Dan beat his hands together to keep them warm.

"Never mind, Dick, we'll do better next time. Blast the weather!"

With his chin pulled deep in his coat collar, Dick stood and shivered.

"Hey, you're getting cold. Run along." Dan got down again and began to dig farther in.

Hunching his shoulders higher, Dick remained where he was, wishing he had been in school that day. He kicked at the straw.

"It wasn't Ma's fault. I told her there was enough straw."

Dan jerked his head up, his temper flaring. "You here yet? Get the hell into the house." As he watched Dick go his face relaxed. Sticking up for his mother—the rascal. He went on with the inspection, feeling of the second row of potatoes. He began whistling as he got up and threw the straw back in the hole. The frost hadn't got that far.

Hurrying toward the house, he caught up with Dick and together they went into the kitchen. Dan closed the door and kicked the rag against the crack at the bottom. He slowly peeled off his coat.

"Brrrrr," he shivered.

Dick slipped into the front room and sat quietly by the heater.

"Well, my love." Dan took a deep breath.

"Froze?" Mrs. Belton stood rigid before him.

"We lost the whole—." Dan was going to say "outside row" but she didn't let him finish. Her face broke into a happy smile.

"Oh, Dan, then it was a good thing

I sold them last fall!" She waited her eyes bright.

"What?" Dan shouted.

The light began to fade from her face. She fumbled for the money got it and pressed it into his hands. Dan's shoulders sagged as he gazed stupidly at the bills.

"How many's left," his voice was thick.

"Forty sacks, just two rows."

Dan licked his dry lips. Two rows? Twenty sacks frozen, twenty not—his mind struggled with figures—about a three hundred dollar loss. He looked up, smiling with one side of his mouth. Suddenly he leaned forward and kissed his wife on the right cheek.

"Woman, you do show a little sense at times," he said.

She looked away.

Dan edged thru the door to the front room.

"Dick," he whispered, his lips close to the boy's ear. "We won't tell mother only the outside row was frozen. When she goes over to Tony's we'll sneak them into town."

"All right," said Dick, with a warm smile.

In the kitchen Mrs. Belton hummed "Annie Laurie" as she drained the potatoes for supper.

The Banner of Truth

By Mary Brennan Clapp

To saints Truth was a banner
They bore high, joyously.

Who carries it like a burden
It never will set free.

The Machine Shop

By Joan Dareth Prosper

I.

MORNING

It's a quarter to eight, and the alley
is jammed with the Coming-In,
And it's Ho! for a summer morning,
and Ho! for the lifted chin.
With a jostle and nudge for each other,
and a lingering pull at the pipe . . .
And Bill streaks by with a wicked eye,
and lands me a friendly swipe.
Inside, the machines stand silent
with faces blank as can be,
But Bill is whistling jazztime, . . .
"I feel like a kid!" says he.

Then it's grind, grind, grind,
With the morning left behind,
And the greasy floor a-tremble underfoot;
And it's crash, bing, bang
And it's dash, crash, chang,
In the rattling, in the shouting, in the soot.

II.

NOON

Here's an hour . . . an hour for living;
here's the dinner pail and pipe,
And noon hanging yellow and juicy
like a pear just bursting ripe.
From a corner most choice and shady,
we squint at the buildings' glow,
And, warm and still on a window sill,
see red geraniums grow.
Why, even the busted skyline
shows more of sun than smoke,
And, "Gosh, this is great!" grunts Bill,
as he pulls me an ancient joke.

Now it's sun, sun, sun,
From twelve o'clock till one,
And the minutes racing on, most indiscreet;

And it's sandwiches and pie
 While a freight train screeches by,
 And the laundry girls pass giggling down the street

III.
 NIGHT

Five o'clock! The machines stop roaring.
 Steel jaws that have crashed all day,
 Self-glutted on zinc and iron,
 hang wide, in a startled way.
 There's the stench of oil and the whirling
 of dust in the checkered sun;
 As the gang files by with Bill and I
 at its tail, says Bill—"That's done!"
 Turned out on the wilted pavement,
 not one with a grin to spill,
 We slouch on, blackened and surly.
 "Guess I'm gettin' *old*," growls Bill.

So it's grind, grind, grind,
 Another day behind,
 And the prospect of a million days ahead;
 There's the sweating and the grime,
 There's the smell of heat and slime,
 And it's quite a while (says Bill)—until you're dead.

Gone?

By Violet Crane

Gone? Well, that is all right.
 Your going was as gentle as your coming,
 As natural as the mild rains with which you came
 Then the door closed with a lingering smile
 All right.
 I shall be glad you came at all;
 I did not ask to have you—
 Yet I am not sad to have known your gentle hands
 It is another edge of actuality
 O yes—the chair you sat in yesterday seems today to have an empty
 look.

Greer's Road

By Roland English Hartley

ON ONE of my aimless jaunts through the countryside about Fairlands, I scrambled one afternoon up the steep grassy slope of a cone-shaped hill, and was surprised to find the top of it a leveled platform of rock from which a road descended. All about me was a wildly beautiful expanse of country: a tangle of wooded hills and yellowing valleys running down, toward the south, to the faint blue line of the bay, and mounting, northward, to the dusky bulk of Loma Alta.

Going down, I followed that unexpected road. At the top its angles were chiseled sharply into the hard red rock. From each short stretch of zigzag the hill fell away almost sheerly to the stretch below. Further down, where the hill had gathered more meat upon its bony skeleton, the reaches were longer, with a gentler slope lying between them. And here the road began to show deterioration: little slides of rock and earth had fallen in from above; the outer edges were crumbling. As it neared the valley, the road grew less and less distinct in its outlines. The lower reaches were grass-grown. Finally I was following only a vague indication of a "grade" across the lower billowings of land. And at last even this ghost of a road spent itself in a series of futile writhings through the grass of a pasture, beside a decrepit farm-

house with an untidy array of out-buildings.

I found myself unaccountably saddened. Among the hills I had seen many roads that knew the contrary fate—roads that set out bravely from the valley highways to climb into the hills, gradually lost heart when they met the hindrances of rock and landslide and increasing steepness, and at last crept furtively through the woods to die in some bushy covert. But this road that I had discovered was different. It came down. It came down from the heights. . . .

"Foolish fancy!" I told myself, and wondered more sensibly why the road had been built—since clearly there had never been a house on the hilltop—and who had been its builder.

All questions of this sort concerning the Fairlands country, I took to Denny Shea. Indeed, I often invented questions solely for the sake of Denny's answers. Denny combined the past and the present in a rare degree. Working among the automobiles in Rieber's Garage, he talked almost exclusively of horses. He ran his drying-cloth over polished hoods with the free sweep of the curry-comb and brush; and when he stooped to the spokes, you rather expected the "Easy now, boy" of one who approaches the sensitive fetlock. In the fumes of burnt gasoline and in the

pulsing purr and roar of motors, Denny talked to me of different days.

"It's Greer's road you mean," he told me. And he took his empty pipe from his mouth and with the stem traced zigzags in the heavy air.

"And so you were up there?" he mumbled then around the restored pipe-stem.

When I nodded, he said, "She wouldn't have made the wife for him, any way you look at it."

I made no comment. Denny told his tales in the Joseph Conrad manner, with an unscrupulous juggling of the time elements. I sat on the running-board beside him, where he plied the sponge measuredly along the fender.

"You never heard of the Greers?" he began again; and when I shook my head, he shook his own protestingly and muttered, "Man, they owned half of the county!"

Then I had to hear much of the celebrated Greer stables, where Denny had worked . . . and suddenly we were back to the subject again. "It was those two bays," said Denny, "that I drove up the hill that day."

"So there *was* a house up there?" I broke in.

"Not at all," said Denny. "I'm telling you."

And I followed him around the car to the other fender.

As I brought the story afterwards into an ordered form, it ran something like this: Winfield Greer, the only son of the old pioneer family, had gone abroad to study art. "He

could paint wonderful," said Denny. And I decided from the old man's account of a prize which Greer had won over there, bringing with it the privilege of study "down in some Italian place," that he must have gained the Prix de Rome at the Beaux Arts; he must have been a painter of definite ability. But Denny declared that it had all been a waste of time.

"For when I asked him, that day when he came back and was looking around the stables . . . when I says to him, 'What did you learn over there, Mr. Winfield?' . . . he says, 'I learned to see Fairlands, Denny.'"

He wandered now with the joy of a discoverer among his native hills. One day he called Denny out into the stable yard and pointed to the conical hill that showed above the cypresses around the house.

"That's where I'm going to live, Denny," he said. "And then you'll see what pictures I paint!"

Denny laughed at it as the fancy of a mind somewhat unbalanced by residence in foreign parts; but it wasn't many weeks before men were to be seen moving along the steep slopes of Rocky, surveying; and soon after, the first blast sounded from near the base of the hill and a wisp of red dust rose above the tree-tops.

"They had the money then," explained Denny, "that they could have moved the whole hill away and built another one there."

A lonely place to live, the bare crest of Rocky seemed to Denny Shea. But when he saw Enid Melville among

the guests at the Greer home, and learned from the servants that she was to be Winfield Greer's wife, then he decided that wherever that young man chose to make his home, loneliness would be remote. "She was that merry and smiling she would melt the North Pole," said Denny.

And Denny remembered well how on one later day, when they had grown to be friends, the young man had said to him, "It's for her that I paint all my pictures, Denny. Men used to paint, in the far-off days, for love of their God. Their art was their religion. And now my art is mine; and I too put into my pictures my reverence for what is the most sacred thing I know."

To Denny soon came the general request that was being circulated, that no hint of the work on Rocky should be let fall before Miss Enid's ears during her visits with the Greer girls. The young man wanted the secret kept until the work was complete.

And when at last the road was ready, so that Denny could see the upper angles of it from the barnyard, and the ragged rocks that had made the crest were cut down to a level platform, then came Denny's share in the undertaking. Each morning for several weeks he drove his favorite bays up the narrow reaches of the zigzag road.

"And a ticklish job it was at first," said Denny, "with the creatures pricking their ears, and staring red-eyed at every strange rock, and snif-

ing up the air that came blowing to them out of the clouds."

"But the view when you get up there?" I suggested.

"You can see a long ways," said Denny.

The bays grew more accustomed to the strange adventure, and Denny's handling of them on the sharp turns became masterly.

Winfield Greer said to him, "I'll get my own hand in some day. But the first time we go up, there'll be so much to point out to her; and on that road a man can't let his eyes go roaming."

"And when I'm driving on that road," Denny told him, "I'm deaf."

And Denny insisted that their talk from the back seat of the surrey came to him only as a symphony of bass and treble murmurs. Only, when a loose rock slid down into the road and the nervous bays shied sharply, Winfield Greer called out, "Stop a minute, Denny." And when Denny looked about for further orders, he saw the girl's face white, "pinched-like around her mouth."

Then they went on to the top. Here, with the stresses of the road overcome, Denny's deafness left him.

"With the wind blowing their words right into my ears," he said. "And what was I to do but stand there and listen? I couldn't leave the horses, and there was the two young things standing not six paces from me, on the edge of the world."

"It is pretty up here," the girl was saying. "But I can't understand

how there ever came to be a road."

He laughed proudly and told her, "I built the road."

She faced him silently and he reached out and caught both her hands.

"Enid! Wouldn't it be wonderful to live up here?"

She gave a short high laugh. "It blew by me like a bird-call," said Denny. The man held to her hands and leaned forward a little.

"You don't really mean it?" she asked after a moment.

"Think what it would mean to waken here in the morning," he went on in a low tense voice. "To be here at night with the stars. Think what pictures a man could make that lived with this beauty."

"But what of me?" she cried out. "I'd be imprisoned! I couldn't get away from the mornings and the stars. And who would ever come up to see me . . . up that terrible road?"

He released her hands and turned slowly about to let the whole circle of hills pass under his gaze.

"I thought you'd love it here," he said.

"I hate it already," she answered.

He moved a little away from her. "It was like a light," said Denny, "went out in his face. . . . But when you come to think of it, you can't be blaming her."

The young man had turned to the surrey. "We might as well go down now."

But she held her hands before her eyes. "I can't go over that road

again! I thought there would be some other way from the top."

"There's no other way," he told her.

"And you want me to live here!" She laughed again, and started to walk down the road. Young Greer turned to tell Denny, "You can pick us up at the bottom." And he followed the girl down the steep slope. They walked with the width of the road between them. She held close to the inner wall of rock. Denny says that no sound came back from them but the grind of their tread on the loose stones.

At the bottom of the grade they turned back to the carriage. Greer helped her in without a word. They were swinging in the avenue at home when he said, in a low flat voice, "I'm sorry the day has been such a disappointment." The girl made no answer.

That same afternoon, Greer came out to ask Denny to make ready again for the trip; but this time he was to hitch to the spring-wagon. Together they put on the load of tent, cot, bedding, simple utensils. On the bare crest of Rocky, Denny helped him make camp. They kept up an exchange of forced chatter, as if it were a happy holiday commencing. When they unloaded the easel and the little case of paints, Greer stood a moment regarding them.

"I'll get some splendid work done up here," he said.

"But he talked," added Denny,

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"like he was listening to somebody inside of him saying No."

When he got back, Denny could see from the barn-yard the fleck of white on the red crest of the hill. Many of the others came out from the house to see. Enid Melville came with the younger Greer girl. They fluttered their handkerchiefs up toward the lofty cone. The next day Miss Melville went away.

Greer stayed on the hilltop until the rains set in. Twice a week Denny took supplies up to him. On the easel he found always the same scant beginnings that had been thrown onto the canvas during the first days.

On the day when Denny was helping him break camp, for the move down from the hilltop, the young man said to him, "I don't suppose it matters much where a man lives, to do his work. But it matters very greatly *why*. And sometimes he loses the answer to that."

Next spring the news came that Miss Melville had married. Also that spring, Mr. Greer died, Winfield's father. In the breaking-up of the estate, Denny's connection with the family came to an end. But his interest continued, and he heard within the next year or two that the girls were married and that Winfield was rapidly disposing of his share of the inheritance.

The Greer wealth had consisted almost wholly of land, and when young Winfield Greer made no attempts at farming or stock-raising on his inherited portion, he soon found it nec-

essary to sacrifice one part after another. Within ten years there was nothing left to him but the tract that included Rocky and the land lying between the hill and the highway. This piece of property, the least valuable of all, he had clung to.

"And what finally became of him?" I demanded of Denny, as he moved on toward another car, dragging the hose. "Did he give up his painting?"

"The poor man," said Denny, "and what could he do with colors when his thoughts was black?"

I was sifting the philosophy of this when Denny called over to me, above the splash of water, "Did you see that shack at the bottom of the hill? That's where he lives, alone, Winfield Greer."

I made my way back in that direction at the very next opportunity. This time, I approached the hill from the opposite side. I had the road before me as I came near; and I seemed to see the black surrey moving cautiously up the grade, and the two silent young people marching down. On the top, if I looked long enough, I could see Denny at the horses' heads, the two young figures at the wind-swept edge, and, in the same instant, Winfield Greer's lonely tent.

I wanted to look at the man. I swung open the sagging gate and knocked at the door to ask the way. He came into the yard. He was a much older man than his years should have made him. There was a dignity about him despite his neglected

clothing. He answered my inquiries courteously, but his faded eyes were always moving past me, losing themselves in vagueness, and then coming back slowly and unwillingly to what was near.

He held a battered book in his hand, one finger between the pages. I apologized for interrupting his reading. There was ample time for that, he said. And to some casual remark of mine about the pleasures of reading, he answered, "The time comes for a man when he wants to forget himself and live only in the life of the race."

He seemed so remote from reality

that I allowed myself to point to the red zigzags of the road up the hill. "And that road . . . does it lead anywhere?"

He straightened himself slightly. "I built that road," he said slowly. "It hasn't been used for thirty years."

I expressed wonder at its state of preservation, looking up to the sharp-cut higher angles, away from the untidy decay of the lower stretches.

"The road," said Winfield Greer "was well made." He smiled, looking past me. "It will last. It isn't every man who can stand and see before him his whole life's work."

Dawn Over the Valley

By J. Corson Miller

Swift, while the beards of the patriarchs are blowing,
And the dawn-messenger loosens his wings from sleep,
The naked crag recedes from an eagle going
In windy spirals for prey; the whirling sweep

Of saffron cloud in smoky purple churning,
Heats eyes of fox and weasel to festal flame;
My Spanish game-cock crows the hour, and, turning,
My half-wild wolf-hound sniffs the air for game.

No hand of man contends with far commotion
Now mingling concerts of color, like thunder, hurled
Into lakes of molten emerald, till an ocean
Apocalyptic, boils above the world.

Then, straight across a rocking sea of roses,
The golden whales break through white barriers of foam;
And after their stampede, the sheep-boy closes
The mess-room doors; an eagle dips for home.

Full Tide at Sunset

Cannon Beach, Oregon

By Howard McKinley Corning

I.

Times over I have come here to this volleying silence
Leaping against the breast of these murmurous cedars;
Back of me the retreating ranks of the forest,
Before me the furious crumbling of the sea's waves.
Here the questioning Red Man came at day's end
To be of the mystery of death a portion,
And of all life the atom lost in rhythm.
And here at the sea's frustration of the West trail
I am a pilgrim, overland . . . and brooding.

Too much are the waves the salt waves of my own blood;
Too little is silence mine where the waves are boisterous.
I listen . . . and out of the gulf of the waning glory
The bouvieries of sea birds lift and shatter.
Their strange, uncertain wings curve back the sunset;
They burst like arrows through the splintered silence.

My feet have now no way for going farther,
But rooted in the unresisting sands here
Anchor the urge they may not enter into.
Rocks are for feet, and I shall take one quickly
To watch the last sun-spears thrust upward, broken.

II.

. . . The color is going now in the ruin of distance.
Immensity is a cave with the falling of darkness.
I am a futile song in a lived-out story;
A word on the manuscript of the ageless sky.
No one will know that I turn away from this splendor;
No one will question to know that I stood here and questioned.

I shall go back to the immemorial forests,
To the bearded cedars wise in their shadowed seclusions
To be at the end the echo of their anthem.
Too soon the waves of another sea will reach me—

Reach me with granite waves that will cover me surely,
 And gather me back to the sands that dreamed and spawned me.
 Stone against stone they will come, and rending and building,
 They will plant their unyielding headlands into the sunset.
 Atom of atoms, I will be fused with their rhythm,
 Poured with their mortar, yielded up with their thunder.
 Ocean to ocean, I will be fused and forgotten;
 A futile song as this song of the cedars is futile—
 A patriarch in the memory song of the silence.

No more am I than this wave that drowns in its being,
 Yielding itself to the sunset dirge of its dying.
 No more am I than the atom or the tossed wave,
 Reaching to lose what it holds, subsiding in rhythm.

III.

A wave of the waves, I will draw away to the silence.
 I will listen along the East for the swelling of waters,
 Bearing a stranger tide than this of the ocean's:
 Tides of thundering granite to shoulder it back and rebuff it,
 Shower and shift in its throes, hurtle itself toward the future;—
 Defying the water of waters, this prismatic ruin of distance,
 But yielding in turn with me to the answer of darkness,—
 Where here at the sea's frustration of the West trail
 No one will question then that I stood and questioned.

Blind Alley

By Norman Macleod.

The waterfalls split seven ways
 Down from Heaven Peaks,
 And I have climbed the summit to
 Find the source of creeks;

But following a mountain gulch,
 Avalanche and slide,
 I only found a dark ravine
 Where tall waters ride.

OUT OF LIFE

I. *Kristina*

By Isabel Orchard

I THINK Kristina was the prettiest girl that I have ever seen. She was tall and slim, with a coronet of sleek black braids wound around her small head. Her skin was smooth and dark with a slight flush on her cheeks that lay just beneath the surface. Her people were German-Russians. Her mother was a great silent woman who shuffled about her kitchen, frying sausages or baking anise-seed bread. Kristina's father was a huge man with a coarse, dark face, usually mottled with anger. Most people were afraid of him, and Kristina and her mother more than anyone else. He had the biggest wheat and stock farm in the country—the pasture alone covered several hundred acres of hilly land.

He liked to brag about his big farm to Adolf. Adolf was a young Russian who had a farm near theirs. He used to come over to play cards with Kristina's father and they would quarrel noisily over every hand. They drank home-brew and chewed sunflower seeds. The more home-brew they drank the noisier their arguments became. But Kristina's father never fell out with Adolph during any of these quarrels, because he

wanted Adolph to marry Kristina. Adolf had a big farm.

Kristina didn't want to marry Adolf. I used to see her out walking with Schweibel's young hired man, Bill. They showed plainly enough that they were in love. Everyone (except Adolf and Kristina's father) liked Bill; he was tall and had laughing blue eyes. He wasn't at all like Adolf, who was greasy-looking and always sulking about something.

One day Bill disappeared. No one knew where he went and, as Schweibels said nothing, most people just thought that Schweibel had fired him. The disappearance of a farm hand is not so important in a busy farming community. Only he had left no word for Kristina. After his departure she looked paler every day and she became as silent about the house as her mother.

Bill had been gone a year when Kristina married Adolf. They had a real Russian wedding with a great deal to eat and to drink. Kristina's mother was as quiet as usual, but her father was unusually noisy—except that, at times, he would sink into silent spells of moroseness.

I think Kristina had been married

about three months when I heard her one day questioning the oldest Schweibel boy. They were standing in the road which ran beside Schweibel's orchard. I suppose she was thinking of the times she and Bill had walked by that orchard when it was a white mist of beauty. Anyway, she stood for a long time looking at the bare branches of the trees. Then I heard her ask the boy, when was the last time that he had seen Bill?

He looked around furtively before answering, as if he wanted to tell something but was half-afraid. I couldn't see that he had given her very much information when he answered.

"The last time we saw him he went

over in your dad's pasture to look for a calf that slipped thru the fence. It was the day that big store in town burned down; that's how I remember it."

I couldn't understand Kristina at all, at the time—altho I think I understand now the way she acted, as also why her father has "No Trespassing" signs all over his pasture fence. She stood for a long time as tho she heard what the Schweibel boy said as coming from a distance. When he mentioned the day of the fire she gave a queer wild laugh. I think she must have suspected something for a long time.

"Yes," she said, "that was the day Dad and Adolf went hunting in the pasture."

II. *Death in Summer*

By Nina Crow.

NATURE was dormant in the enervating heat of August. The little prairie town lay like a withered leaf on the flat of glaring yellow gumbo.

At the window of a log house, a woman's face looked out, haggard. At the door, flies buzzed. Neighbors came and went on silent errands; little was spoken, for the baby had died.

There was nothing peculiar about that death; hundreds of children have died in similar circumstances throughout the West; this baby's father had died of pneumonia the previous spring; the details of the

baby's illness were usual and simple—a sick and undernourished mother, a bottle-fed baby, days of intolerable heat, unfit milk, no doctor for a hundred miles, inadequate remedies. There were lacking here the commonest facilities for care of the dead: the little body had been packed in ice. Faint drops stood on the smooth, fair skin, and the silky hair lay in fragile curls about the delicate ears. The wretched mother looked on dumbly, unable to realize.

The coffin had been made by the village carpenter in his shop; he had slipped into the darkened room to ask the mother if she would like a

glass in the lid; yes, of course, didn't all coffins have windows? It must be dreadful to be shut up inside without a window. The women had found a bolt of white outing at the general store for covering, and, with bows of white ribbon, had made the casket beautiful.

In the kitchen, a stalwart ranch woman thrust the stems of prairie flowers through the meshes of a square of common screen; and the make-shift pillow grew into a work of beauty under her rough, capable fingers. There were other flowers, gathered into ordinary bouquets.

The service was simple and brief; a few fitting words were spoken by the town druggist; a woman struck softly a chord on the square piano, and two young mothers sang. A distressed sob was hastily smothered. This music and the quiet gloom soothed the sorrowful scene. The procession climbed slowly to the cemetery on a hilltop overlooking the river, where a huge reservoir kept it, in spite of burning sun and cloudless days, always green and vital, with a scattering of flowers. Here the last rites were performed. A cluster of fresh pink rosebuds was laid atop.

III. *Silence*

By May Vontver

THE THIN wail of the week-old infant pierced the darkness of the homestead cabin again, but Mrs. Yanki dared not move. The last time she had attempted to leave her bed to hush that fretful cry her husband had leaned over and pinned down her arms brutally.

"Let the damned brat yell. I ain't going to have you spoiling him."

Ivan was still grasping one of her arms. Silent tears of abject weakness dampened the bare ticking of the pillow. The moon, coming from behind a cloud, stared through the curtainless window, and shone on the rough pine-board crib against the opposite wall.

Mrs. Yanki had given birth to this

habe without any aid of doctor, without even the usual kindly ministrations of a neighbor-woman. The nearest neighbor was fourteen miles away and Ivan had not seen fit to go for help. It was their fourth child: they ought to be able to manage alone.

Mrs. Yanki was certain that something ailed the infant, for he cried all the time. It wasn't so hard for her in the daytime; her husband was out of the house then, but at night the crying made Ivan furious. The last two nights, weak as she was, she had been up with the baby nearly all the time, hushing him before Ivan could get fully awakened.

Exhausted for a moment the baby ceased its insistent wailing. Mrs.

Yanki lay breathless, praying that he might fall asleep. In vain. In a minute or two the call for the mother came with renewed vigor and shriller than before.

An agonized wrench twisted Mrs. Yanki's body. Ivan's grip tightened. Bereft of all reason she writhed in his hold; but she could not free herself, and fell back panting. Sobs racked her body and Ivan's curses could not check them. Then his hard fingers dug into her thin frame and the physical pain at length forced her to a trembling silence. Ivan's cruel hands relaxed, but they did not leave her. The crying went on and on. The steady rise and fall of it tore at the mother's heart. It sawed, too, at the jagged edges of Ivan's temper. Monotonous, piercing, compelling, the wailing continued. They both lay tense and endured it.

Then in the attic, directly above them, a bedspring creaked under the stirring of one of the children. Ivan sat up with an oath.

"I am going to put a stop to that damned howling. You'll see." He laughed harshly.

She caught at him with numbed arms.

"Don't, don't," she begged fearfully.

But he was already out of bed rushing across the floor to the crib. The wailing stopped suddenly.

Nameless terror lent strength to the mother. She slid down from the bed and lurched toward her husband. With his one free hand he easily held her off. The other hand was in the cradle, motionless. No further sound came from there. Mrs. Yanki's spent body sank in a heap on the floor.

When she came to, the lamp was lit; Ivan had been pouring water over her head. She lay in the puddle it had made. He stood close, looking down at her in the horrible stillness. She glanced wildly at the crib; but her husband's rough jerk stopped her wobbly scramble towards it.

"You get back to bed. I stopped him for good. And," one sinewy hand closed about her throat, "that's what will happen to you, too, unless you keep your mouth shut, see!"

Nine years later on the day of Ivan Yanki's funeral his wife told.

IV. God and the Rabbit

By B. Dixon

We sat on the rabbit cage in the back yard, and hurriedly crammed the chocolate cake that we had grabbed from the kitchen table when the cook wasn't looking, down our mouths.

"I beat," I announce triumphantly as I lick the vestiges of frosting from my fingers.

"I wasn't trying to," says Theodore loftily, "I always like to go slow. It lasts longer."

Deliberately he places the last bit in his mouth, searches in his trouser pocket, and drawing forth an immaculate handkerchief wipes his fingers on it. I gaze at him a trifle contemptuously. Theodore is such a sissy. His chubby face, in spite of our arduous play of the afternoon, is still shiningly clean. His yellow curls are not in the least ruffled. His white blouse has not the sign of a spot on it. I wiggle uncomfortably. My dress has a long rent in the back. My socks have wormed their way down into my sandals. My hands are grimy, and my face, where I wasn't able to reach it with my tongue, is sticky from cake. Quite unreasonably, I have a sudden desire to smack Theodore, hard.

Theodore looks at me calmly. "Your face is dirty," he remarks coolly, "and you've got crumbs all over it."

"I have not," I deny vigorously, and furtively try to rub them off with the back of my hand.

"You have too. You just tried to wipe them off."

"I did not." I am growing angry.

"You did too."

I clench my hands. I feel sticky and hot all over. My face is burning.

"Theodore Williams," I shout, "you're a f-i-b-b-e-r!"

There is dead silence. Theodore stares at me, horror-stricken. The stillness is appalling. I experience a horrible sinking sensation. My

throat is quite dry, I gulp. I cannot say a thing. I have said The Word. Nibs, the rabbit, scurries in the pen below us. A wan hope lightens me. I turn to Theodore.

"I wasn't talking to you," I explain lamely, "I was talking to Nibs. We call him Fibber for short."

I could bite my tongue off as soon as the words are out. Theodore's pink face stiffens into scorn, and I suddenly loathe him with a deadly hate.

"You told a lie," he slides majestically from the top of the pen. "You'll go to Hell." He stalks across the yard. He turns at the gate. "My mother says you're a dirty little tomboy, and I shouldn't play with you."

I have been paralyzed with rage, but now energy suddenly floods through me. "Don't want you to," I shriek at the top of my lungs, and grabbing a stick, charge for the gate. But Theodore has fled. I swagger back to the pen, and crawl up on it. For a few minutes I gloat over Theodore's ignominious flight down the alley. "Baby," I mutter, "he's just a big baby." Then the memory of Theodore's damning words comes back. I squirm at the thought. A sudden terror settles over me. I wonder if God will be awfully mad about my telling that lie. I wonder what He will do about it. I don't want to go to Hell a bit. I look up at the sky. "God, oh God," I call softly. There is no response. I wriggle from my position and walk slowly across the yard to the cellar steps. I've got

to go talk to Him about it. I hope that Theodore hasn't got there first. I steal carefully down the stairs and make my way to the coal bin. I clamber over the massed coal to the farthest and darkest corner. I huddle quietly there. Now I can talk.

"God," I fold my hands, "I'm awfully sorry. I really didn't mean to. But Theodore makes me so mad." I get more confidential. "Honest, God, I bet you would have got mad too." I consider this last speech. Maybe it isn't respectful enough. "That

last didn't count, God," I add. I sit meditating for a few minutes more. I really have said all I could. I wonder what time it is. It must be nearly dinner time. As if in answer to my thought comes the cook's voice bellowing outside.

"Mary-e-e-e; Dinn-nur!"

"I beg your pardon, God," I say politely, "but I've got to go to dinner. I won't do it again." I scramble hastily off the coal pile, and dash eagerly up the steps.

V. In Connaught

By Elizabeth A. McKenzie

I NEVER knew my great grandmother, but she has always been very real to me. I have been told that she was tall and slender, and had red brown hair and green eyes such as my own. When she died she was over ninety; she never would tell her exact age. She must have had a strong personality—the story of her life is told among us in the same phrases that she used.

She was born in Roscommon, a pleasant place on the plains of Boyle in Connaught. Her father belonged to the landed gentry, descendants of the five bloods of Elizabeth's time. A spare stern man, proud of his name and race, he owned five great bands of sheep that fed on the plains of Boyle and the slopes of the Braulieve mountains by Lough Boderg. He used to ride up the lush valley of the Shannon every two weeks to see his flocks, and Bedelia went with him,

dressed in white, the color she always wore. The road was lined with tall hawthorne hedges that bloomed into snow in the spring; under the hedges grew the tiny, brilliant primroses that she loved.

Her mother was descended from Brian Boromhe ('Boru', the English say it) who died at Clontarf. A tall woman of great dignity. Her dowry was her weight in silver, the coins poured out upon one pan of the scale and she standing in the other.

Bedelia went to the Madame's school in Dublin with her sisters. There she learned the sweet French, and the making of fine laces. When she returned from the convent she stayed at home, making her debut in the county society.

In the season everyone in Roscommon went to the races. Bedelia's family went in the coach with a footman riding in back to impress the

neighbors. This footman, James Connelly, was the son of the steward. The other servants had nicknamed him "Stand Behind" when he first became a footman; he hated the name and the work. Bedelia's mother could never make him wear the green and gold livery, but on grand occasions he played a certain part in the drawing-room.

He loved Bedelia, tolerating his position only to be near her. She was flattered by his admiration and became infatuated. His grandfather herded the sheep in the meadow and Bedelia used to slip out of the house, leaving the linen chests and lace pillows, to talk to the old man. He told her long wandering stories about the old Ireland, when the high king and his Brehons held court at Emain Macha. The way they tried murder was this—men laid their hands upon the corpse, and when the murderer touched it blood flowed out of the dead lips, marking his guilt with the brand of Cain. Sometimes romancing, he talked about the old heroes, rolling their names with unction. There was Conchobar Mac Nessa and Lewy Mac Nessa, his kinsman, who rebelled and led the hordes of Maeve, the queen of Ulster, into Connaught, until they were stopped at the ford of the Shannon by Cuchulain of Muirthemne. As he talked the old shepherd sipped the heady golden pucehen that Bedelia brought him in an empty goose egg. Bedelia, though respectful, was there with another interest in her heart.

Between James and Bedelia a bond of some sort was tacitly admitted. She was willing to be in love with him but being ambitious she would not admit her love to the world.

Her family went every Sunday to the small church of the Sacred Heart. James, a primrose in his lapel, rode to church behind the coach, but during mass he knelt in his father's pew, just behind Bedelia. As the people rose to go to communion it chanced that he followed her up the aisle and knelt beside her, directly before the tabernacle. They were the last to receive the sacrament. They rose from the altar railing together and walked slowly down the aisle, hands folded, heads bent, the eyes of the church upon them.

So life drifted on in the old home. To see him every day became a pleasure, then a need. Her sisters noticed it and twitted her about it. In tiny ways he showed his love to her. Every morning he gathered the primroses that her maid placed before the shrine in Bedelia's bedroom. Every fall the wagons loaded with wool went to Dublin and returned with supplies. Once James went up with his father and in Fraughton street he bought a pair of tiny slippers of scarlet brocaded velvet with jeweled heels. He never gave them to her but hid them.

One day Bedelia asked her mother if she and her sisters might go to Roscommon to pay several calls. James went with them as usual. On the way home it rained. The tops of the mountains that surround the

plains of Boyle were lost in the clouds. James rode behind the lumbering coach, unsheltered, with his eyes on Bedelia through the windows. Suddenly a band of sheep appeared from the gray mist like creatures sprung from the heather. "—Thy hair is as flocks of goats which come up from Mount Gilead—thy lips are as scarlet lace—sweet as honeycombs dripping." The canticle flowed through his mind in sensuous phrases. "Arise, oh north wind, and come, oh South Wind; blow through my garden—" The mist had settled on the road. It clung about him. In a few days he was ill.

Bedelia went every day to the lower meadow to ask his grandfather about him. The old man told her stories of his own valliant youth while she thought of James. Gracious phrases for him kept occurring to her as she worked with her lace bobbins.

One night when the coach came to take them home from a ball the coachman said that "Stand Behind" was dead.

The next day Ellen, her maid, told her that Stand Behind's mother had found a pair of slippers in a little box with her name on it. They gave them to her. She never wore them but she brought them to America with her and had them to the end of her days. Bedelia and her sisters went to his father's home to say the rosary for the dead. His big body dressed in his best suit was in the front room. Six tall candles burned around him.

There was a great keening as the old women in the house wept for one so young who had died. The priest was there praying. His grandfather knelt in a corner, forgotten, saying the *De Profundis* over and over, like a child frightened in the dark. After the prayers were said his mother lifted the lid of the coffin. Bedelia bent over the white face with a faint smile just stirring the end of the lips. As she touched his hair bright red blood suddenly flowed out upon his skin. Her white sleeve was stained by a red blot that spread quickly. She turned, took the bit of branch dipped in holy water and blessed him, fulfilling the old custom.

At his funeral she watched the coffin, not thinking of grief, only seeing him here and there, riding back of the coach, in the drawing-room, coming down the aisle of the church with a scarlet primrose in his lapel. As the coffin went into the grave, slowly descending, it seemed to her that the world's finest beauty was lost.

Later she eloped with a student from Rheims who had returned to Ireland for a last visit before taking orders. He had curly hair, blue eyes, a swagger that would not have become a priest. Bedelia told her grandchildren how she had first seen him at the races, handsome and dashing, a sprig of hawthorne in his tall beaver hat, his trousers white and straight from the mangle. Her husband never knew that for her he was but a figure of James, called "Stand Behind."

Late Victorian

Notes from a Professor's Diary

By Brassil Fitzgerald

JUNE 4th. A day of sunshine and fragrant wind. I gave my last examination this morning, suffered blue books until four and then went out the Post Road for an hour. Three new roadside stands. The farmers are all turning shopkeepers; only teachers walk, and they warily.

This evening I have been reading my son-in-law's novel. *The Winged Buffoon* he calls it. I feel as if he had been calling on me in his underwear. Happily Jane isn't in it. Reticence rode away on a bicycle before the war. A warm rain tonight whispering against the library windows.

June 5th. Ellen came down this morning and found the hall light still burning. She served breakfast in oppressive silence. Since Jane has left us, righteousness grows upon her.

Dinner at the Judkins' tonight. They had seen a review of *The Winged Buffoon*. In the drawing room a large lady with rings talked at me. "It must be so exciting to be the father-in-law of genius." And didn't I adore Huysmans and didn't I think words, like jewels, more precious than meanings? "More frequent than meanings," I suggested, and presently she glittered elsewhere. I must be getting old—people irritate me so.

June 7th. A letter from Jane this morning. *The Winged Buffoon* is receiving favorable attention. Hugh's father is visiting them. It was seven months ago yesterday that Jane wired her marriage. I haven't recovered yet from the abruptness of it all. The telegram, a rhapsodic letter and then at the term end Jane herself, shiny eyed and incoherent, exhibiting a lean, cropped haired M. A., who told me that Shakespeare was largely overrated. He did condescend to Chaucer, perhaps out of deference to me. Behind his amazing brusqueness one was aware of something sensitive and very young. Jane took for granted the quality of my approval and I did my best.

June 8th. The exodus has begun. Crude young St. Michaels whooping off to slay the dragon. One pities and envies them.

June 9th. I sent my grades to the registrar today. All the dull young men are staying on for graduate work. This will be my first summer without Jane. *The Winged Buffoon* is frank, biting, splendidly sincere. People who never even heard of my Concordance stop me on the street to tell me it is.

The town is quiet tonight. I can hear the rustle of the plane tree in the yard and every half hour the metallic clang of a street car climb-

ing the campus hill. I have been reading again Jane's last letter. It does contain a note of forced gaiety. I wish I knew into that young man.

June 10th. Departmental meeting this afternoon. Young Mr. Thurber was agitated about Freshman Composition. He is "increasingly aware of frustration" and doubts the value of it all. I suggested one try teaching sentence structure. He seemed annoyed.

June 14th. Another letter from Jane and again that intangible impression of restlessness. She recalled the one grievous sin of her childhood. I can see her now; the guilty droop of her little mouth, the blue frightened eyes and the betraying library shears. These prohibiting people might get up a law against the marriage of only daughters. I have been trying to get my notes on Caedmon in shape for a paper. An unsatisfactory day.

June 21st. No letter for a week. I am going to Cambridge to see Jane. She is on my mind constantly. If that young—I never wished her a boy until now. When I tell Ellen where I'm going she will load me down with things.

June 22nd. I have just left the recurring old grad. He pretended to remember my course in the Elizabethan Lyric. We discussed football, Coolidge and prohibition. He was very patient with me.

I haven't warned Jane of my coming. It's odd that she hasn't mentioned their plans for the summer.

I hope the novel hasn't jeopardized the boy's position in his department. I seem to remember that his father has, or has had, a shoe factory in St. Louis. There is no reason in this visit of mine. If she's not happy I'll be aware of it—that's all. I suppose traveling men do sleep on these trains.

June 23rd. Boston. I arrived this morning with a violent headache, after a night of pigeon-holed bumping and rattling. I went to the—House and toward noon, feeling better, wandered restlessly about. They are putting up new hotels and the traffic is dreadful. Boylston Street windows full of Americana. Our best people are turning to clipper ships and green bottles. It used to be Madonnas and Russian copper. In the Art Club a hanging of local work; after Sargent so much deft impotence.

On the brink of Copley Square's magnificence, I came face to face with Henry Delfields and he took me off to his club. After luncheon we sat a while in a window overlooking the green tranquility of the common. The older I get the more I thank God for trees. There wasn't much to say. He's a member of his firm now and I'm trying not to think of retiring. I did ask him if he knew Jane's husband. He spoke generously of *The Winged Buffoon*, and then somehow we were talking of something else. Tomorrow I must shake off this curious reluctance. I have grown unaccustomed to hotels; the stale clean-

liness of the room, the impersonal chairs and the muted noise.

June 24th. Cambridge. Jane has just gone and I am to turn off my light in a half hour. I shall have something to say to her tomorrow. I think it may have been a happy thought—my coming. One grows addicted to this habit of putting things down. It's a discreet form of talking to oneself.

The square was dozing when I came up from the subway. In the green emptiness of the Yard a few summer students hurrying to class, grim in the pursuit of knowledge. The new educational courses I suppose; methods and measurements, classroom technique, the teaching psychology. A few of us still believe in subject matter.

A bookstore window compelled my attention; flaming placards announcing the season's sensation; pyramids and pyramids of Hugh's book. I became conscious of movement at my elbow. A portly little man of fifty, fanning a red face with a bright ribbioned panama. Surprisingly, he beamed at me. "Have you read *The Winged Buffoon*, sir? If not—you must. The book of the year, sir." "Indeed!" I said weakly. There was conviction in his smile. "And the work, sir, of my son, Hugh." I rose to the occasion. "But it's the work of my son-in-law," I protested smiling. We shook hands with exceeding vigor. "And to think I spoke to you, Professor! By George, that's one on me. Come

right along; Hugh and Jane will be tickled to death." We went. My Jane, he told me in confidence, was in every way worthy to be his son's wife. Hugh had always been different; a problem at times, but a fine boy—a fine boy.

They were having tea when we came in. It was good to see Jane's eyes. We kissed shamelessly, with Hugh grinning awkwardly over her shoulder, and Mr. Caulkins in a fever of amiability, telling them all how he met the professor. There were some colleagues of Hugh's and a graduate student or two. A long windowed room with the inevitable books; spiraea in the fireplace; cigarettes and the stir of tea things; waning sunlight and young voices. Now and again Jane's low laughter. After disposing of my cup and the usual amenities, I diminished to an alcove window, content to be there to watch the bright flow of the river, and beyond the stadium's bulk the urbane Brighton hills.

Suddenly the talk came over to me. Mr. Caulkins was explaining *The Winged Buffoon*. In the listening silence one sensed inhibited amusement. In a moment Jane very gently turned the page and I crossed over to them. There was an odd look in her eyes; the look of an orchestra leader tense for discordance. Hugh slouched smoking nervously. I wondered then if the question of my visit were answered, if I had glimpsed the third point of a triangle. I am convinced of it now.

There were guests at dinner and Mr. Caulkins told them about Hugh's early promise. The boy tries to be natural. These young people ought to be alone. Such little things may be seeds of ill. We are going to have a long walk tomorrow—Jane and I.

June 28th. Home again. Ellen, taking advantage of my absence, ran riot in the library. There's a new pad on my desk and the windows shine. The room is oppressed with the virtue Darwin has left first. I expressed annoyance and Ellen said something that sounded like "bother your old books." The tyranny of dependents on whom one has grown dependent!

I have been poking about the garden all the afternoon. The azaleas are here, jubilant maidens after their aunts, the lilacs. No one has caught in words the smell of spaded earth and northern sun.

Jane and I had our walk. We left Mr. Caulkins listening respectfully to the staccato of Hugh's typewriter, and getting away from the square, wandered down Brattle Street, past the square old houses, aloof under their serene trees. Jane a little wistfully, I thought, made me talk of Ellen and of my work. She cherishes the illusion that in her absence I toil endlessly and that unfailingly I leave on the downstairs lights. And she wanted to know of faculty babies. Fortunately I knew vaguely of two.

"Jane," I asked casually, "don't you think you and Hugh ought to be

alone?" Color touched her cheek. "Did you see it then, father—that Hugh isn't quite happy?" "It's his father of course?" She nodded frowning. "He's really a dear, too, but he does gloat over Hugh so. It distresses Hugh. He's so afraid of being ashamed—and he watches to see if I am." "Well," I said bluntly, "when is he going back to St. Louis?" We had come down to the parkway and a breeze was ripping up the Charles, remembering the salt marsh. It blew a fair tendril of hair across the pallor of her cheek. "That's just it, father. I've been putting off vacation plans and I'm beginning to think he isn't at all. Now that he has sold the factory he has no interest but Hugh." Exasperation grew on me. "Hugh ought to tell him that you two want to be alone." She gave me a quick smile. "If Hugh could do that, father, he wouldn't be Hugh. Come."

As we sauntered down toward the boathouses, the lamps began to bloom through the dusk, and in the fading light the river took on sadness. We stopped on the bridge to look across at the city rising from the basin's edge. Jane quoted softly from Thompson: "* * * glimmering tapers round the day's dead sanctities." "I think," I said at last, "that when sentiment and good sense are at war someone has to be—ungallant." She gave me a long thoughtful look and we turned back toward the square.

In the morning she came in to

help me pack. "Father," she whispered when my bag was strapped, "one feels so—so sentimental getting ready to be brutal." Her thin young arms. I could only mumble something stupid about courage and *lares et penates*.

Mr. Caulkins followed me out to the taxi to press into my hand an envelope of clippings—Hugh's publicity.

Somehow tonight I regret my advice. This family diplomacy! Jane must be happy and I can only meddle from the edge of things. If there is anything in reincarnation I'll be a monk the next time.

July 1st. A letter from Jane. The child has gallantly waded her Rubicon. She told Mr. Caulkins very frankly that she wanted to have Hugh to herself for a while. "And Daddy he was so determined not to be hurt—so decent about it all. Hugh hasn't said anything but I think he knows."

July 5th. An absurd telegram came before I was out of bed. I woke to hear Ellen scolding the boy for riding across the lawn. I'm too old for this sort of thing. They will be here tomorrow, en route for the Maine coast, where they are to spend the summer—all three of them. It's incomprehensible after Jane's letter. Perhaps he refuses to go and so they retreat to the wilderness.

I have been as nervous as a cat all day. Ellen has been everywhere with a dustcloth, making the house echo with *Killarney Lakes*.

July 6th. Well, they got here, the three of them, late in the afternoon. They came blaring into the yard in Mr. Caulkins car—a huge blue glitter. In the first bag-encumbered moment I saw that it was somehow all right. Jane was radiant.

After supper people came over; such a babble of voices on the veranda. The Merton girls, young Thurber and inevitably the Judkins. After a while the conversation washed me ashore and I took my pipe into the damp hush of the garden. Presently the glow of a cigarette emerged from the blur of the vines. It was Hugh. He muttered something about fed up on novels and we smoked comfortably, watching the moon rise. A remote young moon, moving sedately through clouds like bridal lace. I thought of Keats and said nothing. The moon has become mid-Victorian.

In the end my curiosity ran over in words. "Your father is planning to make his home with you?" I asked out of the silence. "Jane is a prince," he remarked vigorously. As an answer it was somewhat vague. "I think," he said presently, "I think I'll tell you before Jane does." For a second, as we walked, I felt the light pressure of his hand on my arm. Words can be very banal. I knew that we were to be friends. "You know," Hugh said, "I owe Dad a good deal. After the war when I seemed and was drifting, he didn't understand but he stood by." His voice hesitated.

"But he is—he is—well you see for yourself—very proud of me." "And of course," I murmured, "it is a little embarrassing." "Not to me, sir, though I saw it must be to Jane. She's so utterly unlike that. So reticent. It was bothering me. Then last week Jane asked him to go away. I couldn't understand that. It wasn't a thing Jane would do and yet there it was. Dad tried to be vague about his going but of course he couldn't. He was darned decent about it all. He told me in secrecy that I didn't understand Jane and he did. Jane, he said, wasn't well, and at such times all women were a little incomprehensible and to be humored. He said Mother had been like that. You see what he thought? It would be the obvious explanation." "Yes," I said gently, "it would be the obvious explanation." The boy's loyalty turned our laughter inward. "Finally," he went on, "the hurt of it drove me to speak. I might have known. It was for me that she had done it. She had seen my distress and feared that Dad would eventually." He laughed quietly. "But it was only on her account that I was distressed. And she, not minding, tried to protect me—and him. It makes a fellow feel humble. . . . Well after we talked it out she went down to Dad, and I don't know how, made him happy

again in ten minutes. But he sticks to it that this fall he must go back to St. Louis. He'll be with us again for Christmas."

We strode back toward the house in a companionable silence. Our callers had gone, leaving the veranda to leaf shadows and moonlight. As we drew near, Jane's laughter came out of the darkness, and then her voice, low and distinct across the silence. "Ellen dear, you're not to say a word. We won't let these men of ours know for a while yet." The screen door closed with a gentle bang and the windows went suddenly ruddy. Very quietly we moved on. Under the porch light we looked at each other sheepishly. He was groping for words. "Say it, Hugh," I urged, "the obvious thing—" "The joke's on us," he grinned—and we found ourselves shaking hands. Then guiltily we went in.

July 7th. After breakfast Jane and I had an hour alone in the east arbor. It was very pleasant. The sunlight drowsed in the garden and a humming bird came at intervals to pause delicately poised over the slender chalices of the honeysuckle. We talked of Jane's mother.

July 8th. I am going with them for the summer. Jane and Hugh both insist. Ellen is packing my things.

Lilac

By Borghild Lee

MATHILDE walked to the window and looked out. The snow fell soft and white. A wind came and whirled the flakes in the air. The light on the lamp post was like a yellow eye winking. The hand on the curtain trembled. Fifty years old today—John's day. The snow came thicker, veiling the yellow eye. Mathilde drew the shade down, stood looking at the green cloth a moment, and with a shudder snapped it up. She turned and walked over to the fire-place. Virginia Lee was stretched out on the oval rug, purring faintly, contentedly. The table beside the fireplace was set for two, and the flame from the burning log threw golden splotches on the silver service. A slender vase held a sprig of lilac. The scent hovered in the air, a breath of spring.

Mathilde heard the clock strike five.

"John," she whispered, "John—"

"Mathilde—"

He held her close, kissing her eyes and hair. Then releasing herself, she motioned him to sit down. The fire, flickering, diffused a faint light through the room; outside the heavy snow continued to fall.

"Lilacs!" he whispered, "let us go back—"

* * *

The path went up and up, climbing the hill joyously. It was a daring path, winding in and out until it

came to an open place. The house was white with a red roof and green shutters. There were small holes in each shutter, like surprised eyes peering at the world. A wisp of smoke rose from the chimney, straight up into the air, then, as if suddenly realizing it was free, turned a somersault. A white fence, a gate with ten points and a climbing rose-branch twining around it. Lilacs everywhere. Spring, and lilacs shedding perfume.

Mathilde sat on the steps watching the path.

"John, John—" She ran down to meet him.

She held his hand to her cheek and rubbed her soft face against the rough tweed of his coat.

"Darling—your lips are like roses—I love you!"

The moon came like a silver dream through the clouds.

"One more month," he whispered, "and I need not leave you!"

"I wish it was today, my birthday!"

"—Never, never leave you!"

"The lilacs—John! Our flower—"

"Every birthday, dearest, all our lives, a sprig of lilac for you wherever we are. Our flower, dear, and this is our lilac night."

The lilac bush drenched with silver, shivered in the night breeze—

* * *

—"Come, John, our tea!"

She poured the water into the pot, and measured the black leaves in the tea-ball.

"John, you are so young—you will never grow old!"

Her hands shook as she lifted the tea-cups.

The log crackled and fell apart. Outside the snow fell steadily, inevitable as time, covering the tracks made by many feet. Covering—covering—the yellow eye winked—

Mathilde cut the bread in thin slices; her wrinkled hands carefully brushed the crumbs from the table. The clear jelly in the dish quivered slightly.

"Oh, John, I have been waiting for you to come! It has been years and years—"

She poured the golden fluid, hot and steaming, and laid the brown toast on his plate. The butter made pools of liquid in the center.

"I know you like lots of butter, John! I haven't forgotten—"

"Darling—your lips are like roses."

She drew the table closer to the fire.

"I believe another log, don't you?"

She saw him kneeling by the fire. The dear sweep of his hair, the tall slender body! She knew every feature, every movement. She turned away from the fire, and walked over to the window. The yellow light was like a clear star, now. It had stopped snowing. The moon made a long streak across the floor.

Moonlight and the scent of lilacs—

"Our lilac night, Mathilde!"

"Yes—I know, John—another cup of tea, dear?"

She poured the thick cream and added the three lumps of sugar. She played with the spoon.

"John—I am old—fifty years—and you are so young—"

"The feel of your lips is like roses—!"

"Don't, John!"

She drew her hands across her thin lips.

"Your eyes are like heaven—"

The burning log snapped.

She walked again to the window. The moon was sailing high, breaking triumphantly through a cloud. The yellow eye of the lamp was winking—A gray strand of hair had come loose; she smoothed it back.

"Dearest," he held her in his arms. How tender he was and strong. John—her lover.

"John, finish your tea!"

"No one can make as good tea—"

Virginia Lee jumped up on the chair opposite Mathilde and meowed, looking at her with inscrutable eyes. Mathilde started; a long heaving sob shook her body; she dropped her head on the table.

Virginia Lee's eyes became points of green as she watched the shaking table.

The cold tea in the other cup spilled slowly, filling the saucer. The toast, on the plate beside the cup, had shrunk and the butter had congealed with a yellow spot in the center.

Trees of Heaven

By Grace Stone Coates

FATHER seldom sat on the porch to rest, where the others sat.

If he came outdoors in the evening after the chores were done, he went farther down the walk where he could look at the ailanthus trees. Father called them ailanthus trees, and mother, ailantus. I called them ailanthus.

There were two of them. They stood beyond the west pantry window. The pantry was long, and had a kitchen table in it. It had a sink with two pumps, one from the well and one from the cistern; and a trough for cold water, where mother set crocks of milk. Mother did most of her work in the pantry, so she saw the ailanthus trees all day. She hated them. They were the only trees in the yard that she did not like. She said they should have been planted where she would not have to look at them.

The pantry sink drained into a pool beside the ailanthus trees. The water was supposed to run off along the gooseberry bushes, but it didn't. There was a hollow where water always stood. Mother would not let us play there. That was why I was not acquainted with the ailanthus trees. I had never taken hold of them. Their trunks were small. I wondered whether I could reach around one with both hands. The bark looked

smooth and grey, but I didn't know how it felt.

The trees were strangers. They were like foreigners. Both were thin and tall, with branches only at the top. One was crooked. The leaves were dark, not like other tree leaves. They were fancier, and had red on them. I thought of ailanthus trees and castor beans together. Both made me feel the same way, except that castor beans were not nice. Mrs. Clarrington had castor beans, and father did not like her.

The wind broke a tip from the crooked tree, and blew it along the path. I took it to mother. She said, "Take the thing outside." She didn't like the smell. It did smell queer.

Father liked to look at the ailanthus trees against the sunset. He held my hand while we walked around the yard and talked about them. He used words that I said over and over in my mind. The trees were exotic, he said, and quite palm-like in aspect. He showed me why their leaves looked like palm leaves. They had leaflets up and down a broad stem. The ailanthus was an East Indian tree, father said. The Indians called it the Tree of Heaven.

One of the trees worried father. He walked around it, looking up into its branches. The next spring it was dead. Father said he would uproot both trees. Mother thought it foolish

to ruin the other's life because one happened to die; but father said it were kinder to consign it, also, to oblivion.

The day father took away the ailanthus trees he did nothing else. He brought other tools from the shed besides an ax. He brought a grub hoe and a spade. I was waiting for him to chop down the first tree, so I could look at the top, and gather leaves to press. Before he started to work father told me to play on the other side of the house. It was the first time he had ever sent me away. The pantry window was open, and mother called me. She put me in the front room, to sew. I sewed two square pieces of cloth together for a quilt. When I was ready to play, she unlocked the front door, and told me to go down the front path to the orchard; and to come back up the front path, and in at the front door. When mother told us exactly how to do things we did them that way.

The next time I saw the place where the ailanthus trees had been, they were gone. The ground was smooth, and covered with sand and little stones left over from making cement for the cellar. It looked neat and quiet. The trees were not in sight, and we were not burning their wood in the kitchen stove. I saw scratches on the ground where they had been dragged away. I walked in the marks to the blacksmith shop.

The trees were not behind the shed, nor in the ditch beyond. After a while I knew father had burned them in the forge where he heated plow shares.

I asked mother why father took away both ailanthus trees. She told me not to question her. I asked father, and he said, "It lies beyond your comprehension, my child." I asked Teressa, when she was holding me on her lap. Teressa's lap wasn't big enough to hold me very well. She kept saying, "I know, I know!" and wouldn't tell me. Then she whispered, "Father and *somebody* planted an ailanthus tree on each side of their gate."

I wondered what gate. We hadn't any gate but the corral gates, and horses would trample them there. Teressa said, "Little Idiot!" and pushed me from her lap. She said she would tell mother I was asking questions about things that did not concern me.

It bothered me to know something and not to know why it was so. It kept me from wanting to play with my dolls. There was no one else to ask. It was dusk. I went into the yard, and looked where the trees had been. I could imagine them against the sky, but they were blacker and flatter than when I could look at them with my eyes, and I could not make their leaves stir in my mind.

Child-Wife

By Helen Maring

They caged her in
With jet black shoon
And a hat that was never
Made for June,—
A hat that was made
For rain and frown.
She walked sedately
Through the town,
No colored garb,
No glow of grace,
And nothing but silence
On her face.

*What the town would think
Was the only reason
That she wore black
For a weary season.*

They caged her in
With a shuttered room,
A parlor that lived
In dust and gloom.
How could they know
Her dress was red;
And that she danced
With her man dead?
. . . . Danced in her dreams,
Wore beads and silk,—
And sang in her thoughts
While skimming milk.

*What the town would think
Was the only reason
That she wore black
For a weary season.*

On War Literature

By Edmund L. Freeman.

MANY books have come out of the World War. The most of them have been spoiled by succumbing to some sorry fashion like forced gaiety, or to some propagandistic end, or to the fear of challenging the pious assurances of people who would be angered by the realities of war. Also, it is not accident alone that a story like *The Dynasts* was written one hundred years after the Napoleonic wars. Time and meditation and a great mind are required to reveal the meaning of a great event.

For all that, there is a number of books already written out of the World War which I would expect might be memorable. Among them are Montague's *Disenchantment*, von Unruh's *Way of Sacrifice*, Dos passos' *Three Soldiers*, Boyd's *Through the Wheat*, Barbusse's *Under Fire*, Cummings' *The Enormous Room*, Mottram's *Spanish Farm Trilogy*, and Zweig's *The Case of Sergeant Grischa*.

Greatly different in essential respects, these books still seem to have something in the way of common attitude toward war which can lead one who believes art is the conscience of mankind to hope.

To put the matter simply, it seems that war has always had in it two things, glory and ignominy; and the modern attitude differs essentially from the ancient attitude by seeing chiefly ignominy where the older at-

titude saw chiefly glory. The terms are not sufficient. Inevitability and stupidity might be used too. The modern mind finds war neither inevitable nor glorious. It is horrible beyond all beauty, and stupid beyond all justification. It is "a wild beast rush," "a solemn and approved dementia," "human disease," "a reversion to barbarism," "a testimony of our imbecility and imperfection."

The modern mind seems to be becoming pacifistic. Mark Twain, Whitman, Emerson, William James, Bertrand Russell, A. E., Havelock Ellis, Thomas Hardy, Shelley, Croce, Tolstoi, Rolland, Voltaire, Anatole France, and Montaigne are pacifists. They cannot accept war, as did Milton, Shakespeare, Saint Augustine, Plato, Homer.

John Milton saw in warfare the triumph in human affairs of the almighty will, bestial as he knew war to be. He had full faith that the consciousness of a righteous cause was the source of victory. Before him, Saint Augustine was in no doubt that the originals and conclusions of wars are all at God's disposal. Before him, Homer drew a glorious picture of war in the *Iliad*. The horrors of war and the roots of war in the love of booty and vainglory are not so much covered over as they are by many modern apologists for war. But still Homer's war is noble. If his soldiers suffered, they fought willing-

ly, with no sickness in their hearts about their cause and "above their heads, half-seen through the clouds of dust and pain, flew the winged chariots of the gods."

Could a modern author make anything out of the angels at Mons comparable to the winged chariots of the gods? For good or bad a stronger realism is on us, and the angels at Mons for us are the hallucinations of pitiful men.

The great authors who more nearly represent the modern mind on war are Michel Montaigne and Thomas Hardy. The *Iliad* for Montaigne meant "The whole of Asia ruined and destroyed in war for Paris' bawdry!" Montaigne might almost be Hardy on many matters of war. Consider Hardy's soldiers killing each other in "dynasts' discords not our own," and then Montaigne's observation that "of our customary actions there is not one in a thousand that concerns ourself. The man that you see scaling that wall in ruins, furious and beside himself, exposed to so many musket-shots; and that other, all scarred, pale and half dead with hunger, determined to perish rather than open the gates to him, do you think they are there on their own account? For one, per-adventure, whom they have never set eyes on, and who is quite unconcerned about their fate, and is all the time wallowing in idleness and pleasure." Montaigne was under no illusions about the nobility of the makers of war. "The souls of emperors and cobblers are cast in the same mould.

The same cause that makes us bandy words with a neighbor will stir up a war between kings; for the same reason that we flog a lackey a prince will lay waste a province."

So, knowing something about the real nature of war is no new thing. What seems to be new in our contemporary writers is the conviction that the thing can be uprooted from the earth. Montaigne seems not to have felt that. He does little more about it than now and then casually show that he understands. The modern writers no longer see man as the special creature of a God's apprehension. Man is in charge of his own destiny, and it is only his own uncritical acceptance of heroic notions about war that keeps him butchering and offering up his own flesh to the tribal gods.

Out of the conviction that war must go, there has come a new way of uncompromising realism in writing about war, a way of scientific dryness that may eventually discourage man from war. Stendhal was perhaps the first in modern times to use it. Thomas Hardy is the great exponent of the way in our time. Though in his own *Dynasts*, the greatest piece of modern war literature—*War and Peace* excepted—Hardy holds much to the pessimistic idea that mind is not the cause of human actions but only a collateral effect, still Hardy's most fundamental of all ideas about life and literature is "that if way to the Better there be, it exacts a full look at the Worst."

A full look at the Worst is the new thing in war literature—the worst on the battlefield, in the military office, in the soldier's consciousness, in the nationalists, sentimentalists and maudlin moralists at home, in the economic and social systems which find

*It pays to bluster about peace
And keep their ships and guns on the
increase.*

For quite a while the psychologists have been dethroning reason in man. Now the war novelists are making it clear that when we all start off hot pace after the patriots into war more often than not it is not reason we are responding to but dark tribal passions, strange fear and pride, or perhaps only the being told something loudly many hundred times.

This passion for analysis is in *The Case of Sergeant Grischa*, where it is finely discovered how very humane men are consumed in a very inhumane system. It is in *Three Soldiers* where potentially decent characters are ruined by the nightmare oppression of the army. It is in Boyd's *Through the Wheat* which reveals to the good critic Edmund Wilson that "the soldier's endurance is half helpless exhaustion, his obedience is deeply tinctured with bitterness, and his bravery becomes finally an utter numbness beyond horror and beyond pain."

It is the way of thinking that possesses Barbusse's soldiers who "began not only to see dimly how war, as hideous morally as physically, outrages common sense, debases noble

ideas and dictates all kind of crime but they remembered how it had enlarged in them and about them every evil instinct save none, mischief developed into lustful cruelty, selfishness into ferocity, the hunger for enjoyment into a mania."

This same detached and prosaic treatment of the Worst is in all of Montague's war books. Chivalrous man that he was, his faith in ugly realism makes him look at those neurotic women, for whom war is an opportunity to release their cravings for sensational reality. It is the illuminating way of R. H. Mottram, who has undertaken "to set down what can be remembered before it becomes too dim—to set it down with the least official, personal, or imaginative bias."

Calm detachment is not the spirit of all the good war literature. In Sassoon, Unruh and Latzko, most notably, there is terrific expression of despair and madness in the authors themselves. But every one of these books "exacts a full look at the Worst" and is sufficient to stop all prattle about the glamor of war.

E. E. Cummings is no enemy of the French, yet his *Enormous Room*—a French prison—is the most scathing revelation of the war mentality that it is possible to wish for. Edmund Blunden is an ordinarily reticent Englishman, yet the first words in his *Undertone of War* are, "I was not anxious to go." And how frank about the going: "My mother went to the station with me, between pride and

revolt—but the war must be attended to.” Siegfried Sassoon in his recent *Memoirs of a Fox Hunting Man*, says “The intimate mental history of any man who went to the war would make unheroic reading.”

If this honesty of seeing and telling goes on, there is still a hope that man may some day live by his disciplined soul.

Women are in these modern war books, too. A student has recently told me he thinks that “war literature satisfies the warlike instincts of dames and infants.” It may be there are still novelists satisfying the unspent impulses of reclused women who get something like a sensuous pleasure from thinking of the unseen sufferings of their heroes, and feeling noble and enduring. But it is from books like the ones I have named that we are learning what to think of women who get excitement out of war. Women like Rose Burbage in *Right Off the Map* “waiting for some great lift of the heart to befall her . . . any mood that might be passionate, any escape from her own vapid shortage of relish for the contents of life.”

To our time women have felt they have free part in neither the cause nor the cure of war. Philosophies of war have been man-made, and because she could not offer her own body to mutilation on the battlefield, woman has conceived it her duty to offer the sons of her body with grim silence, to bind the wounded, and to reward the brave with her love. But there are signs in literature that changes may be at

hand. Emily Dickinson years ago knew of battle:

*'Tis populous with bone and stain,
And men too straight to bend again,
And piles of solid moan,
And chips of blank in boyish eyes,
And shreds of prayer
And death's surprise
Stamped visible in stone.*

But it is Mary Austin of our day who asks:

*Why should we weep
Who taught them to follow the music;
We who attuned them
To feints, pursuits, and surprises?
Have we ever denied them the game
that we should wonder
When they go roaring forth to hunt
one another?*

* * *

*Was it you or I, son,
Made this war, I wonder!*

And what shall we expect from that solid Medaleine whom Mottram has drawn in *The Spanish Farm*? Does she not betoken a day when it will not be written: Woman has only her choice in self-sacrifice, and sometimes not even the choosing.

Most of us believe that all reason is against war, but reason alone cannot drive out of us our passion for war. For that, reason needs to be “carried alive into the heart by passion.” Literature of war today is giving us a new set of symbols, informed, terrible, ugly and distressing. If literature can shape the soul of a people there is still hope that “war and all its deeds of carnage must in time be utterly lost.”



Painted by a Navajo artist, from the sand-painting of a Shamen, made at the birth of a Navajo child. It is symbolic of the child's life.

Prayer for the New-Born

By Lilian White Spencer

Ye-bi-chai, the thanks for harvest, Navajos had danced but once since
 In the dusk of spring, a bridegroom brought the shamen to his hogan
 That he might bestow a blessing on new wife, new loom and new home.
 All were gay with strands and laughter . . . Time has also woven, woven
 Since that hour. Now, a husband brings the priest again beside her.
 She lies low: the wind is moaning like her lips: the loom is idle.

New life comes but it is waiting till a picture of the Birth-Prayer
 Shines in sands of many colors: sands dyed from Degin Now Hosun,
 Mother Earth, the dear and holy. Then, it shall be born in gladness.
 Swiftly, sacerdotal fingers strew and shape the ancient symbols.
 In the shadows; rising, falling, by the dim light of the fire;
 On the floor beside the prone one, see the sacred image forming!
 See the arrow, star and rainbow, black and red and blue and yellow!
 This is medicine and magic. See the wonder growing . . . growing . . .
 Till its maker shouts to heaven: "It is done and done, her labor!"

Hark! A little cry! The fire leaps into a flame, rejoicing,
 As the shamen speaks: "O mother of a chief, our gods smile on you!"

THE FRONTIER

Quickly blending all the colors, he blots out the Birth-Prayer, scooping
In his palms the vivid showers, raining them round babe and woman.
Then, his last commands are uttered: "Father of a chief, tomorrow
Gather all these sands and bear them far from Halguit, this brown desert,
Up and up to Zilth, the mountains! There, beneath young pine trees, lay
them!

To Degin Now Hosun, where our Mother is most holy, take them!
High on Earth's pure breast, untainted by the touch of man or evil
Shall this praying rest forever!" Out he goes into the darkness.

Once, the flame leaps up behind him; once, a small voice follows after;
Then, the wind dies and the fire sinks to ashes . . . and three slumber.

Willow Weaver

By Queene B. Lister

Willows over windy water—
Mirrored low in green white laughter.
Myrtle warbler, oriole;
Scarves of breeze
On beryl bole.

Catch their silver satin cadence.
Match a syllable, a tremour;
Single—double—double treble . . .
Thoughts for pauper,
God or—pebble.

Willows over windy water—
Weaving music in a mirror.
Robe for mind of any hearer . . .
Strip your soul!
And listen—nearer.

Windy water,—blowing willow,—
Willows over shuttled water.
Scarves of singing silence, woven
For a hag or—monarch's daughter . . .

Willows over windy water—
Mirrored low in green white laughter.
Myrtle warbler, oriole;
Scarves of breeze
On beryl bole.

The Forge

By Israel Newman

I see them still: the blacksmith sleeves uprolled;
 The shack lit up with every hammer-thrust—
 The iron lay a bar of burnished gold;
 Down came the hammer shattering its crust.

But under it, it bared the glowing core
 Of hotter gold. But this too turned dark red.
 Down came the blow revealing as before
 A heart of brighter metal in its stead.

Thus over and again the hammer tolled,
 The iron dimmed and brightened with each blow,
 Until that metal, growing gray and cold,
 Became a shapely implement—a hoe.

I know hoes well; yet useful though they are,
 Rather than feel that cold gray crust advance
 Slowly around me, I would stay a bar
 Of white-hot steel beneath the strokes of chance.

So come, big hammer, if come down you must,
 Pile blow on blow no matter what the hurt.
 Let not one speck remain of that gray crust;
 Nor let the glowing metal stay inert.

And when but one small scrap be left of me,
 Nor cease, nor hesitate but strike, old friend,
 And with a vengeance! Let that moment be
 One blaze of sparks whose lightning is its end.

The Mansions of the Mind

By John Richard Moreland

The mansions of the mind are stored with loot
 Of vanished years. Age plays a miser's part,
 Guarding this wealth, and starts when memory's foot
 Treads on some board that creaks within his heart.

Lemuel Lane

By Ethel Romig Fuller

Lemuel Lane could hold up a wet thumb
Saying which way the wind blows from.

By twirling a wand from a willow tree
Could spot the place a well should be.

And by sowing nails at their roots, he grew
His pink hydrangea bushes, blue.

He wished warts off his little daughter,
Hatched snakes from horsehairs in rain water;

Carried a chestnut in his vest pocket;
Wore asafetida in a locket.

He talked to himself and could whistle a bird
Right to his shoulder, or so I have heard.

Some thought he was simple. Some said, Lemuel
Was Solomon-wise. I never could tell.

The Ranch Mother

By Walter Evans Kidd

From dawn to night, while buoyantly resigned
To circumstance, she breasts the tide
Of work, and for the glowing sake of life,
She sings to give her motive pride.

In her you see the graciousness of soil
From planting through to harvestings,
The radiant urge of summer that reveals
Significance in common things.

Incarnate poetry of earth she is
Who knows that every year of breath,
Which helps to make her life complete, is worth
The hushed relinquishment to death.

Glory of the Seas

(Burned for her copper at Seattle in 1922)

By Bill Adams

She lay all lonely on the harbor mud.
 The ferry steamers passed her, to and fro.
 I've seen her when the skies were colored blood
 At evening ere there came a fall of snow.
 I've seen her beautiful on sunny seas
 With all her white wings spread, and her long rail
 Scooping blue water. Aye, she'd often throw
 Sprays to the high leech of her great mainsail.
 She flew, light-footed. Sentient, she'd rise
 To meet swift surging rollers with a leaping keel,
 And her tall mastheads seemed to scrape the clouds.
 In trade wind nights the stars would swing and reel
 About her mastheads, and her twanging shrouds
 Would give the merry wind its merry music back,
 With every rope astrain. When wintry skies hung black,
 And thunder rumbled, and the sea was wan,
 She was a glorious thing to look upon.
 A fearless creature calling the sea home;
 At home upon her sea as were the whales,
 Or porpoises that sported in the foam,
 Or albatross that hovered o'er her rails.
 Her seamen loved her, and her master trod
 Her poop with prideful feet. The grace of God
 Gave hand of man the power to give her birth.
 Donald McKay's hand. God's good artist he.
 His swift creations were the queens of the earth.
 She was the last of them. In from her sea
 She lay all lonely. No one knew nor cared.
 The torch was lighted and her hot pyre flared.
 Burned for her copper! Low the questing breeze
 Moaned o'er her torture.—Glory of the Seas!
 Donald McKay's last clipper. Yankee pride
 A heap of embers at the water's side.

The One Big Union

By Harry G. Huse

“AND WHEN you git to town, you damn Wobbly,” shouted Culp, through cupped hands, “if you know what’s good for you you’ll grab a freight and keep right on a-goin’!”

The shambling figure at the fence turned and shook a fist back toward the threshing crew, then clambered hastily between the strands of barbed wire as Culp snatched up a bundle-fork and started forward.

“Haw-haw!” roared the man from the Goosebill, capering with pleasant excitement, “Haw-haw! Lookit him hit the road and ramble! Haw-haw! lookit him go! That’s the last I guess we’ll hear of that feller!”

“Maybe it is and maybe it ain’t,” said Loomis, the separator-man, gloomily. He came out from his lounging place under a bundle-rack where he had remained during the late altercation.

“Maybe it is and maybe it ain’t. It don’t do to take no chances with them Bolsheviks and I. W. W.’s. Like as not he’ll be sneakin’ back after it gits dark to do some mischief. If it’d been me firin’ him ’stead of Culp I’d of used a monkey-wrench to knock him down with. Yes sir! Flattened him out with a wrench and he’d of stayed flat!”

“There was a neckyoke was layin’ right beside you,” suggested Fife, the water-wagon flunkey. “You could of come out and hit him with that

’most any time you was a mind to. ’Tain’t too late yit if you’re a mind to hurry.”

He nodded toward the road where the discharged harvest-hand had slowed to a walk, turning now and again to shout his maledictions at the lanky Culp, who had halted and stood leaning upon his fork handle.

“If I’d of been Culp,” insisted Loomis, “if it’d been me firin’ him—”

“Say!” interrupted young Speers, a header-driver, “Old Culp didn’t need no monkey-wrench nor neckyoke neither! Damn! Did you see the old boy sock him! Zowie! Right in that big mouth that done so much big talking—”

“I’d of flattened him for keeps,” stubbornly reasserted Loomis. “That’s the way to cure Bolsheviks. Wipe ’em off the earth like the oldtimers done the rattlesnakes and Injuns!”

He glared about fiercely and encountered the mild blue eyes of ‘Dry-Land’ Dawson fixed reflectively upon him. “Stomp ’em into the ground,” he blustered, fidgetting slightly under the old homesteader’s continued gaze.

“Hmmm,” said Dry-land Dawson.

He laid aside the mail order catalog whose glamorous, dog-eared pages he had been perusing.

“Hmmm,” he repeated, and contemplated the distant Culp who remained near the fence, watching the

dusk envelope the plodding figure of the outfit's late spike-pitcher.

"Stomp 'em—" reiterated Loomis, with sullen defiance.

The old homesteader spat tenuously and wiped his moustaches with a large red handkerchief.

"There wasn't no need," he said mildly, "for Culp or nobody else to hit the feller."

"I s'pose," said Loomis, "you'd of let him git away with all them Bolshewiki things he was a-preachin'!"

Dry-Land spat again and nodded.

"And woke up," sneered Loomis, "'bout midnight to find the whole outfit maybe blowed to Kingdom Come with dynamite!"

The old homesteader stroked his leathery throat dispassionately.

"'Twasn't likely."

"I guess," said Loomis scornfully, "you ain't never lived in Oregon like I done and got real well acquainted with the reptiles!"

Dry-Land again massaged his throat. "I ain't had no chance to study no great number of them. Maybe the problem's different when you got a big bunch of them together to kind of prop each other up and keep each other going. Maybe then you got to put them in jail or shoot 'em. But there's other ways to cure the individual Wobbly. I've seen it done."

"Huh!" sneered Loomis, "Kind words and gentlin', I s'pose! Payin' no 'tention when he puts gopher poison in the horses' oats and phosphorus in the hay barns. Jest smilin' in-

dulgent-like and tellin' him he hadn' ought to be so naughty!"

"Well, partly that," conceded Dry Land, "though not entire. Kind words and gentlin' and chocolate cake and 'long towards the last—for jest a minute—a potato masher."

"Huh!" said Loomis.

"We was threshing at the time," explained the old homesteader, "over on Turkey Butte bench that lays off there at the east end of the mountains, and things was runnin' 'long smooth as grease.

"We was jest about the same kind of outfit this is, a bunch of dry-landers that'd got their own harvest out of the way and had throwed in together and was movin' along threshin' from place to place. We'd got our own cook-car same as now and Otto Schmidt's widder was doin' the cookin'.

"Ed Masters, who was runnin' the outfit, was a good feeder hisself and free-handed 'bout pervidin' groceries, and the meals we was a-settin' down to in that cook-car was somethin' to remember.

"Everybody'd felt downright sorry fer Mrs. Schmidt the year before when Otto up and died of the Spanish influenzer and left her with a mortgaged homestead and a couple of real small younguns. It's tough on a woman being left with a farm and no one to run it and havin' to turn her kids over to the neighbors and go work out. Everybody'd sympathized with her then, but after the first two,

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three days she's cooked fer us we're really feeling sorrier fer Otto fer havin' to quit this vale of tears, as the feller says, and the elegant victuals his wife must of fed him.

"Mrs. Schmidt wasn't what you'd call at first glance purty, bein' a mite heavier built than the gen'ral run that'll take a man's eye and kind of plain featured. But time you'd see her standin' over the cook stove with her brown hair all curlin' up in little rings 'bout her temples where it's damp with perspiration, and'd et two three of her meals and seen the slow, kind way she smiled when you asked fer a third or fourth helpin' you'd git to wonderin' why there hadn't been more poetry wrote to slow-movin', slow-smilin' two hundred pound women that understood men's failin's and knew how to cook.

"We're a outfit, as I say, of drylanders and near neighbors, and things is workin' 'long nice as they can be. We're havin' a lot of argoements evenins on assorted subjects—politics and religion and automobiles and the weather and women and married life, the way you will when you got a bunch of fellers together. But they's jest friendly argoements and everybody's good-natured.

"Then Tom Gentry gits a couple of fingers smashed bad while he's helpin' tinker up the engine, and he has to knock off and go back home. Ed tries 'round the neighborhood to pick up someone to drive a bundle-rack in Tom's place but everybody's busy with his own work so Ed goes in

town to see who he can pick up along the street. He comes back 'bout supper time with his car full of groceries and a husky enough lookin' feller with a homely face and sandy hair settin' in the seat 'longside him. This feller's got a kind of surly, hunched-down, dissatisfied look about him and Ed ain't lookin' any too cheerful neither.

"Supper's 'most ready time Ed and the new feller pull in. Ed's got down out of the flivver and is commencin' to load up with groceries to carry 'em into the cook-car. The new feller's still settin' in the seat, sullen-like, not offerin' to help none when Mrs. Schmidt comes out on the little platform at the back end of the cook-car and gives the triangle that's hangin' there a couple of licks with a hammer. The new feller's down out of that seat and inside sittin' down at the table shovellin' meat and potatoes onto his plate 'fore any of the rest of us has even had time to git rid of our tobacco.

"Well, he don't talk none at the supper table. He's too busy forkin' Mrs. Schmidt's first class cookin' into his face. They's apple pie I 'member that night fer supper. Gen'rally you take apple pie like we got to make it here out of dried apples and it ain't nothin' to git excited about. You'll eat it more fer its name than fer any real pleasure that's in it.

"But this here apple pie of Mrs. Schmidt's was somethin' different. She'll take the dried apples and soak 'em and cook 'em up fer a long time

with lemon and spices and other things to make 'em tasty. Then she'll load 'em into pies that'll scale a good inch thick when they come out of the oven, and the crust all light and flaky and a kind of golden colored syrup oozin' out through the holes she's made in fancy patterns in the top coverin'. She'll always cut her pie into quarters and seems like she'll make two three extra in case anybody wants a second helpin'.

"The new feller, as I'm sayin', don't do no talkin' at supper, jest sets there with his two elbows planted good and solid on the table and stows it in like he was pitchin' hay into a big haymow. Seems like it does Mrs. Schmidt good to see him eat so hearty. She's looked kind of tired and almost cross like when we first come in. Spite of her seeming so strong and capable she's 'most tuckered out I guess being on her feet since four o'clock in the mornin' cookin' for other women's men-folks. She's looked kind of low-spirited and unhappy as I say. But now her eyes are kind of shinin' as she watches the new feller. He's finished up with a half a pie and a couple of extra cups of coffee to wash it down with, and his eyes are bulgin' out of his face so's you could knock them off with a scantlin'. He's et as much ag'in as Matt Kimes, our engineer, who's a lean, lanky feller with a big Adam's apple and a natural born eater.

"We don't git acquainted none with the new feller at the table. Ed's already told us all he knows 'bout

him—that he's been kicked off a train by a brakeman and was loungin' 'round in town, holdin' out fer top wages and no work on Sunday. Ed ain't liked his looks and wouldn't of took him if he could of got any other.

"We don't learn nothin' more 'bout him at supper. Nor he don't open up none after we git outside and are loungin' round on the wheat bundles we've got throwed down 'longside one of the bundle wagons. He jest sprawls hisself out on the ground slow and sluggish like a bull snake that's swallowed a whole burrow of field mice, and lets the talk go on 'round him like he wasn't takin' no notice.

"'Tain't 'til long 'bout nine o'clock that he commences to kind of rouse hisself and git to fidgettin'. He'll sneak a look now and ag'in over toward the cook-car where Mrs. Schmidt's finishin' up the dishes and mixin' up bread fer the next day's bakin' and though it aint hardly believable he acts like he's gettin' hungry ag'in.

"The moon's come up and is shinin' bright and purty on everythin'. Seems like you can see off 'cross country fer 'most a hunderd miles with all the wheat shocks throwin' dark shadows ag'in the gleamin' stubble and here and there, 'way off, a yellow light in some rancher's window. Off over in a coulee somewhere there's the yip-yip and howl of a coyote.

"The wind's died down and so has most of the talk when the new feller

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raises hisself on his elbow and then sets up and starts a-singin'.

"Well sir, he's got a real fine singin' voice. Yes sir, he's got a singin' voice that'd s'prise you. He starts kind of low and soft and mournful, and the tune he's singin' is a good oldfashioned hymn. Lyin' there kind of dozin' like a man will when it's gittin' his bedtime you'd 'most think you was in church somewheres and the sermon's over and the choir was startin' in to sing. If you was nat'rally musical you'd sort of rouse yourself and start a-gittin' ready to join in.

"But I aint no more'n commenced feelin' fer the notes when I realizes the words he's singin' aint the right words at all. The tune's 'In The Sweet Bye and Bye' all right but what he's singin' goes like this—"

Dry-Land cleared his throat discreetly, and lifted a quavering baritone into the cool night air.

"Long-haired preachers come out every night,

Try to tell you what's wrong and what's right.

When you ask how 'bout somethin' to eat

They will answer in voices so sweet—"

He paused to clear the huskiness again from his throat. "That's the way the verse went," he explained, self-consciously. "The chorus, where it was the most different from the way it used to be printed in the Gospel Hymn book went like this—

"You will eat—bye and bye,

In that glor-ee-us land above the sky. Work and pra-ay—live on hay.

You'll have pie—in the sky—when you die."

"Haw-haw," laughed the man from the Goosebill, "Haw-haw. Pie in the sky. That's purty good. Pie in the sky."

The old homesteader fixed his interrupter with a sobering gaze.

"I am willing to concede," he said severely, "that there are certain low elements of humor in the song as jest sung. On the occasion to which I am referrin' the singer's first renderin' was greeted on the part of several with thoughtless laughter. But Ed Masters got hot under the collar, and my dander's up too 'cause while the feller's singin' I've looked up and see Mrs. Schmidt who's left off her dishwashin' and is standin' listenin' in the window of the cook-car. She's fond of music as I already learned. Otto havin' played the fiddle. 'Sides she's got a religious streak in her like most women. After her long day, and the everlastin' arguin' and talkin' she's had to listen to night after night, I guess at first it must of been real kind of nice and restful fer her to hear that old hymn comin' soft and kind of mournful from the dusk. But now she's made out the change in the words and her face's real troubled-like studyin' why a feller that's et like this new feller done would be singin' so bitter 'bout only gittin' pie in the sky.

"Well, Ed's 'bout ready to blow off, and I'm some riled up myself at

the ongentlemanliness of any such reflections on Widder Schmidt's cookin' when right away the feller leaves off singin' and goes to preachin'.

"Yes sir. That's what it sounds like—preachin'. He drops the hymn and gits up on his feet and starts off a-lecturin' us in a kind of sing-song voice like he's learned what he's sayin' by heart and don't understand all of it his own self.

"Seems like 'cordin' to what he's sayin' everythin's all wrong in the world and aint goin' to git no better 'til somethin' violent is done about it. Seems like they's two classes of people in the world, what he calls the masters and the slaves.

"The masters is the ones that's got the money and they git all the gravy. They got their fine women all dressed up in silks and satins and loaded down with diamonds and other jew'lry, and their fine automobiles and their big houses that they don't live in more'n two three months a year.

"The slaves is the ones that does all the work and they don't git nothin' but a scurvy pittance fer it. They live in hovels, he says, and eat food that aint no better'n garbage, and wear poor clothes so's the masters can dress their women in them silks and jew'ls. If it wasn't fer the work of the slaves, he says, the masters would have nothin'. But do they give the slaves any credit fer it? Do they show any gratitude fer the gold the slaves have coined fer them out of their sweat and blood? Not on your lousy life. Let a slave refuse to work

and see what happens! Let him take some of the master's gold and see how quick they'll clap him into jail and maybe hang him!

"Things is turrible wrong, he says, and they's only one thing to be done about it. They's jest one way fer the slaves to git out from under the iron heels of the masters. That's to join theirselves together in the I. W. W., and fight the masters. Fight 'em and cripple 'em in the only place they can feel it—in their pocketbooks. Arise, slaves, he hollers, strike off your shackles and join the One Big Union.

"Well, they's quite a lot more along that line includin' most of the the stuff this feller Culp jest fired was spoutin'. I guess he would have kept on all night if somebody'd give him an argument or set up to listen. They was a lot of points a person could of took him up on and some things that needed explainin' like callin' the five dollars a day and board a harvest hand was earnin' a scurvy pittance, and the reference he made to garbage.

"But it's gittin' late and spite of his loud voice and inflammatory language the fellers have been noddin' off a little on him and finally they start rollin' in fer the night and somebody tells him to shut up or if he's got to holler to go over in the coulee and yelp with the coyote.

"Last I see of him when I drop off he's settin' there on the ground gazin' off over the wheat shocks kind of bitter and onhappy, and sneakin' a

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hungry look now and ag'in at the cook-car where Mrs. Schmidt's still stirrin' 'round settin' her bread for the next day's bakin'. She's singin' low to herself like she'll sometimes do when she's workin' but I'm so sleepy and it sounds so soothin' and restful like when I'm droppin' off that I don't think nothin' of it that she should be singin' that 'Sweet Bye and Bye' hymn that's been sung wrong by the Wobbly feller.

"Well, come mornin' we have to pull the Wob, as the boys've already started callin' him, out of his blankets. Tom Gentry's left his horses when he went home and sence the new feller's drivin' 'em he's s'posed to git up and git 'em fed and harnessed. He gits up harder'n 'most any feller I ever knowed 'less'n it is this one Culp's jest got rid of. Seems like he wouldn't never of rolled out if he hadn't smelt the breakfast cookin'.

"We've had elegant breakfasts before but never nothin' so elegant as that one. There was fried liver and bacon, I 'member, and fried potatoes, and hot sody biscuits that'd jest melt in your mouth, and wheat cakes and doughnuts and apple sauce, and the Wob does an even better job of eatin' than he done at supper time.

"Matt Kimes says kind of spiteful that he guesses it's the night air give the new feller sech an appetite and that if jest thinkin' 'bout goin' to work makes him eat thataway he wonders what's goin' to happen after he's been pitchin' bundles four five hours.

"Pudge Edwards that's flunkey asks Ed Masters real serious-like if he don't think he'd better oncouple the horses from the water-wagon and git another team and hitch all four onto a bundle rack and set to haulin' out groceries from town steady.

"But the Wob don't seem to pay no 'tention to the joshin' nor don't talk none 'bout the masters and the slaves. He jest gits outside all the food he's able and brings away a couple of doughnuts with him to eat a little later.

"Well, we're threshin' from the shock, and my rack and the one the Wob's to drive is both loaded and drawed up on each side of the separator. So when Matt Kimes starts up the engine the Wob and me's pitchin' opposite to one another.

"Well sir, it's quite a study to see that feller work. It's one of these here clear Montana mornin's 'thout no wind and a little chill in the air. From up on the load seems like you can see the whole state of Montana with blue mountains stickin' up from the horizon 'most anywhere you look. The air's so fine it seems like it's somethin' you want to take a big gulp of and swaller and you got to hold yourself in to keep from whoopin' and a-yellin'.

"Well sir, the Wob's feelin' it and the big breakfast he's et and maybe he's noticed too where Mrs. Schmidt's come out on the back platform to hang up her dish towels and ain't gone back in right away but is kind of standin' there watchin'

him 'cause he's plumb forgot the iron heels of the masters and is standin' astraddle up on that load pitchin' bundles into the separator 'most faster than the old girl'll take 'em. Yes sir! He's standin' up there with the bundle fork lookin' like some kind of plaything in them big freckled hands of his, stabbin' the bundles two, three at a time and heavin' and swingin' them like he was sashayin' a purty gal in a schot-tische.

"I got a chance to study him better'n I been able to so far and now that I come to look at him he ain't a half-bad lookin' feller. He ain't handsome by a whole lot and his features ain't what you'd call distinguished, but he's big and husky with a good broad pair of shoulders now that he's got them throwed back and not droopin' like they was when he was slouchin' 'round before breakfast and his mouth has kind of lost its peevish look and his eyes is kind of gentle and shinin'.

"If ever they was a feller naturally built fer the life out here with heavy outdoor work and big eatin', seems to me it's him. I'm studyin' my hardest to figger out what kind of a kick a big husky like him's got ag'in the world, and I've 'most got to where I'm thinkin' he was joshin' us all the night before, when Mrs. Schmidt goes back in the car and it seems like he commences to 'member again the turrible way society's organized with the slaves sweatin' blood to be coined into gold by the

masters, and a change commences to come over him. His eyes git dull and s'picious, and his chest kind of caves in, and his mouth draws down, and he jest dawdles along with his pitchin'. I'm plumb onloaded and half-way out to the first shocks 'fore he's pulled away from the separator.

"Well sir, that's the way it goes all mornin'. Seems like he'll look over toward the cook-car and work 'long like he's havin' the time of his life fer a few minutes. Then he'll come to and mope down and slow up 'til he ain't but barely crawlin'. He's droppin' behind all the time with his loads and throwin' things out of schedule and 'taint long before Ed's begun to yell at him to git a move on.

"Come noon all the fellers have noticed how he's been playin' off and they've started to josh him.

"Somebody says while we're goin' into the cook-car that it must be tough not to have worked enough to of gotten up a appetite fer what the Widder's got laid out fer us, and somebody else says so long's the Wob's only hauled five rack-loads of bundles he ought to be held down to five helpin's of meat and potatoes, and later on Matt Kimes says that if the Wob'd only pitch bundles like he's pitchin' victuals into his mouth he'd have to git a ten-horse power bigger engine to pull the separator.

"They's a good deal more of this joshin' and though the Wob don't take no time off from his eatin' to answer you can see him gittin sul-

lener and sullener and soon's he gits through he commences to sneer real bitter 'bout wage slaves that don't know no better'n to sweat the meat off their bones to fatten capitalistic purses.

"Mostly the fellers don't take what he's sayin' serious but jest keep on joshin' him the way a man will when he's et a good dinner and is feelin' contented like and good-natured. But I can see Ed Masters gittin' het up over all the cracks the Wob's makin' 'bout gittin' back at the employers by layin' down on 'em. And Mrs. Schmidt's onhappy, too. I ketches her lookin' at the new feller with a kind of sorrowful look in her eyes 'most like you'll see a mother lookin' at one of her young-uns that she's extra fond of when he's doin' things he hadn't ort to and she knows he needs a spankin'.

"Well, the new feller works poorer in the afternoon than he done in the mornin'. I guess he ain't been doin' much fer quite a spell before Ed hired him—jest hoboin' his way from place to place on freight trains with other I. W. W.'s and he's kind of soft and out of condition.

"We're figgerin' on cleanin' up the field we're workin' on 'long 'bout four o'clock in the afternoon and movin' on over to the next ranch and gittin' set before suppertime. But the Wob loaf's along so much it's 'most six o'clock when we've forked the last bundle into the separator and Kimes has took down the belt and backed 'round and hooked onto

the outfit. Ed says we'll leave the horses harnessed and move on over to the next place after we've et and be ready to start in come mornin', and right away the Wob starts grumblin' to the other fellers 'bout it's bein' after six o'clock and says he ain't engaged to do no night work.

"Ed's riled up when he hears 'bout it, and talks to me of firin' the new feller on the spot. He asks me if I don't think we'll make as much headway workin' short-handed as we will with a feller like that eatin' his weight at every meal and still kickin' and up-settin' the others and spendin' half his time leanin' on his fork-handle. I'm mostly in favor of it myself only seems like I keep rememberin' the feller like he was early that mornin' when he wasn't stewin' 'bout the world's troubles and was turnin' his muscles loose and gittin' real pleasure out of it.

"Seems to me like he's prob'bly been cussed 'round a lot by railroad police and brakemen, and has listened to a lot of other I. W. W.'s spoutin' 'bout injustices and persecution, and not et very regular or very heavy, and got to feelin' sorry fer hisself and makin' out that the cards is stacked ag'in him. Seems to me now he's gittin' fed on good A number one victuals soon's he gits over his first day's lameness if the boys'll stop a-pickin' on him and payin' so much 'tention to him he'll straighten out gradual and git to

be a good hearty worker. If he'll only git a-goin' like he done first thing in the mornin' when he was enjoyin' hisself, I tells Ed, he'll pitch twice as much in a day as the average feller.

"Well, Ed's willin' to let him ride fer a little. Mostly Ed's one of these quiet fellers that don't like a ruckus onless it's plumb necessary. He passes the word 'round among the boys not to pay too much notice to the Wobbly and to treat him jest like he was a normal feller. Havin' stuck up fer the Wob I now set out to study him real close and see what is the matter of him.

"Well, it's late in the evenin' and 'most dark time we git moved and settled. Mrs. Schmidt's been held up in her work by the movin'. She ain't been able to do no dishwashin' nor nothin' else while the old car's a-trundlin' and a-rattlin' out of the field and down the road to the next place. Once we're settled down ag'in she's hard at work makin' up the time lost in movin'.

"We got some bundles throwed down fer our beds and are waitin' fer bedtime same as we are here now when the Wob starts singin' ag'in. He's back on 'Pie in the Sky' and he's singin' it over and over in a mean, spiteful kind of way. I'm watchin' him sharp and it seems like it kind of bothers him 'cause the fellers don't seem to pay no 'tention to him.

"He gits to singin' it louder and more insultin'. Then he starts on

another song that's got a religious tune, too, only where he should be sayin' to Take It to the Lord in Prayer he's singin' to Dump the Bosses Off Your Back. They's some ornery things in the song like where he calls the feller that works hard fer day wages a big boob and later on a long-eared jack, and some of the boys git to fidgettin'. I look up and see Mrs. Schmidt listenin' ag'in in the cook-car window.

"Well, the boys don't pay no 'tention, like they been told, but keep right on talkin' and the Wob leaves off singin' and comes bustin' into the conversation.

"He starts off bitter like he done the night before tellin' how the laborin' man is bound down in shackles. I'm payin' real close attention to him. Generally you can tell somethin' 'bout what a man's got drivin' him in his mind if you'll listen to him talkin'. But it's got me scratchin' my head to figger this one out. Here he is, a good big healthy feller that ain't got a thing wrong with him fur as I can see. He can eat like a horse and sleep like a log and if what I've see that mornin' is anythin' to go by, them big muscles of his enjoy workin' when he'll let 'em.

"He can go 'most any place and git his four five dollars a day fer eight nine hours work, and be healthy's a mule and have a good time joshin' 'long with a good bunch of fellers. If he's a mind to he can settle down right here and rent a piece of ground and be his own boss

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and own the place after he's got a few crops off it. He's got hisself stuffed full as he'll hold of elegant food and a bed of soft wheat straw to sleep on. He ort to be sprawled out kind of lazy-like on the ground like the rest of us, soakin' in the starlight and the good-smellin' air that's comin' up off the stubble, and listenin' to the chomp-chomp of the horses a-grindin' hay where they're tied to the bundle-racks, and beginin' to yawn a little and think how nice and warm his blankets are goin' to be, and lookin' forward to the Widder's breakfast in the mornin'.

"But 'stead of that he's r'ared up on his feet snarlin' 'bout chattel slaves, and breakin' our chains, and greedy capitalistic parasites, and class consciousness, and solidarity, whatever that means, and the only remedy fer everythin' that's wrong in the world bein' the One Big Union."

The old homesteader broke off to delve for his package of fine-cut.

"The One Big Union," he mused, his eyes fixed reminiscently upon the cook-car. "The One Big Union."

He brushed the tobacco crumbs from his moustaches, spat meagrely, and resumed his narrative.

"I'm watchin' the feller close as I say, but I ain't findin' out nothin'. All I can make out is that the less 'tention is paid to him the fiercer he talks.

"He gits to boastin' 'bout crippin' machinery and floodin' mines and startin' forest fires and talkin'

'bout the bloody revolution that's a-comin'. He makes out like the capitalistic class is scared to death of the I. W. W.s and got 'em black-listed all over the United States and the whole world maybe, and got their spies a-doggin' them.

"I ain't findin' out much, as I'm sayin', 'cept that he's doin' his best to make hisself out a real important feller. Watchin' him wavin' his arms there in the light from a lantern, and goin' on there with all that racket I git to thinkin' somehow of one of these younguns you'll run into sometimes that don't like it when company comes 'cause they ain't gittin' no 'tention and keep makin' a fuss and actin' meaner and meaner until they git so bad they have to be spoke to or took out and give a spankin'.

"Well, I ain't figgered him out and I guess I wouldn't of figgered him out no further'n this if it hadn't been fer what come later. We start goin' to bed on him ag'in and he's left 'thout no one to talk to. He don't turn in with the rest hisself but stays settin' there on the ground lookin' lonely and kind of hungry at the light in the cook-car. Most of the fellers drops off the minute they hits the hay and you can hear 'em snorin' at a great rate. I lay there on my side kind of watchin' the Wob and purty soon I see him git up forlorn-like and move over to the cook-car like he's goin' to git hisself a drink out of the water barrel that stands on the back platform.

"Mrs. Schmidt's still up and

workin' 'round inside the car and he takes longer'n he needs to git his drink, and makes some noise with the dipper gittin' the water out of the barrel. First thing I know Mrs. Schmidt comes out on the platform with a big plate of chocolate cake and is talkin' to him and tellin' him to help hisself from it.

"Well sir, they're talkin' there fer quite a spell and it's 'most all I can do to make out what they're a-sayin'. Mrs. Schmidt tells him he's got a real nice singin' voice and that it sounded real nice to hear him singin' there in the dusk 'cept that it's too bad he ain't learned the right words 'stead of those bitter ones he was a-singin'.

"I can't hear what he says to this 'cause he jest sort of mumbles and has another chunk of cake.

"She says this is a good bunch of fellers in this threshin' crew and Ed Masters is a fine man and reasonable and nice to work fer.

"But ag'in he jest mumbles some-thing' like he didn't care to do no talkin' or maybe was bashful. She goes right on easy and pleasant-like, talkin' 'bout the good harvest this year and the sociable times folks have here winters and 'bout this bein' a fine new country fer a strong ambitious man, and presently she's got him talkin'.

"They're settin' there side by side on the edge of the platform and he's still bitter and hard but he ain't preachin' like he done earlier in the evenin'. He's tellin' her 'bout his-

self and tryin' to make out he's a hero that's fightin' with all the other brave Wobblies fer the benefit of the human race.

"She don't say a word, far as I can hear, only listens to him. But jest her settin' there beside him, big and restful and kind-like and quiet seems to do somethin' to the feller 'cause little by little the bluster and brag and big talkin' all trickles out of him and he's begun tellin' her the things that's really the matter.

"Seems like he don't think he's ever had a fair break sence he was a youngun in a big orphan asylum. He's jest one of several hunderd there dressed all alike, and ain't nobody paid no 'tention to him 'less it was to give him a jawin'. He ain't quick in the school work and the teachers ain't give him a square deal, he says, so he ain't got much education. He's turned loose after he's old enough to work and they ain't nothin' he can do 'cept common labor.

"He starts out workin' first at this and then at that and it aint no different from the orphan asylum only maybe more lonesome. He don't make friends easy and noboby pays him no notice 'cept now and then to give him a cussin'. He's always the first to be laid off and lots of times he's fired 'thout knowin' the reason. He ain't got no 'special friends so one place's as good as another and purty soon he's on the bum, driftin' west from place to place, workin' on gradin' gangs and in lumber

camp and coal-minin' fer a spell and stevedorin' and diggin' sewers. He don't make no friends nowhere. Decent folks, he says, wont have nothin' to do with him 'cause he's dressed rough and talks rough, and women folks turn up their noses at him, all 'cept the kind that's sweet on him fer a little while when he pays them money fer it.

"Don't nobody take no interest in him or care whether he's sick or hungry or dead even, until he meets up with a I. W. W. organizer in a box car one night down in Wyoming. This feller, he says, has studied everythin' out and shows him how the whole of society's organized to grind down the workingman and keep him homeless and broke and wanderin'. He talks to him and two three other fellers there in the box car fer two three hours and then signs 'em up on red cards and takes their membership fees and pats 'em on the back and calls 'em brother.

"Well, listenin' there in the dark, and studyin' what he's a-sayin', and watchin' Mrs. Schmidt say nothin' but jest a word now and ag'in to keep him pouring out his troubles, and reaching out her hand once to put it soft-like on his arm when he's telling about nobody ever carin', it comes to me all of a sudden how natural and easy a big, hard-workin', kind-hearted woman like her, that's got younguns of her own, has understood from the start what's really wrong with the feller. And with other homeless men that's on-

happy and restless too, I reckon. It comes to me how natural it is fer a lonesome feller like him to blame his troubles on the way the world's organized, and to talk bitter about the folks that's got their comfortable homes and their automobiles and their women. And it comes to me real clear that it'll make a feller like him that nobody pays no attention to feel real important and like he amounted to somethin' to belong to the I. W. W. and be told by their speakers that he's the comin' ruler of the world and the capitalists are scared of him and got him black-listed and their detectives trailin' him.

"And then purty soon I begin to realize how slow and kind and understandin' but steady-purposed a woman that's lonesome herself and needs a man to run her homestead can be when she's found one that's fitted fer the job and only needs straightenin' out and bein' made happy and contented. Mrs. Schmidt jest encourages him in some way I ain't aware of to tell all there is to tell about hisself, and is real interested, and don't point out at all where he's misjudged things or listened to the wrong kind of preachin'.

"She jest lets him git it all off his chest, and when he's through has him have one more piece of cake and finish up the plate, and says somethin' ag'in 'bout his nice singin' voice and enjoyin' music herself and havin' an organ to home that she plays when she can find time to do

it, and says she guesses after he's got over his first day's stiffness a big feller like him'll probably pitch twice as many bundles as the next best man on the crew and the rest of them'll have to take off their hats to him."

The old homesteader paused to clear a growing huskiness from his throat.

"Huh," said Loomis, who was suspected of being hen-pecked, "she was tryin' to work him."

"Not jest tryin'," corrected Dry-Land, "she *was* workin' him. The way any strong woman like her'll work a man she's took a interest in when she finds him with his dobber down and his pride gone, and not usin' his strength and blamin' all his troubles on things besides his own self.

"She *was* workin' him, and not in no little way neither. He come away from that cook-car to roll in fer the night hummin' them songs real light and cheerful under his breath. He stands in the moonlight with his chest throwed out and his head up fer 'most five minutes, lookin' at the cook-car where Mrs. Schmidt's blowed out the light to go to bed, and he ain't thinkin' 'bout class consciousness or shackles or solidarity neither. If he'd kept on lookin' two, three minutes longer like I done, and'd see her come to the window where I guess she thought she was out of sight and stand there a long time lookin' out into the night, I guess he'd of felt more stirred up and manly yet.

"Yes sir. She was workin' him. And she'd of kept right on workin' him and gentled him right out of all them notions of his that was keepin' him upset and triflin' and onhappy if things hadn't happened and the others hadn't gone and spoiled it.

"Come mornin' he's et a couple dozen pancakes and four five fried eggs and as many helpin's of fried potatoes fer breakfast and he's started out workin' like a workin' fool.

"He's got his rack loaded in 'most no time and he's pullin' in lively from the field when he busts a tug comin' up out of a little coulee. It's jest a ordinary accident like'll happen 'most anytime 'speecially with a old harness like Tom Gentry's got on his horses, and it don't take the Wob more'n five ten minutes to mend it.

"But comin' on top of what he's said 'bout crippin' the employers and layin' down on the job, Ed Masters and the fellers start a-talkin'. They hint like he could easy of cut some of the sewin' so the tug would bust thataway, and they don't talk to him none the rest of the mornin' but keep their eyes on him distrustful-like and 'spicious.

"Come noon seems like he's slipped back a little from the way he felt in the mornin'. But he tries to talk some at the table 'bout places he's been and things he's see and brags a little 'bout jobs he's been on, the way a feller will, and 'bout how many loads he's hauled that mornin'. The others don't pay no 'tention to him.

"Come afternoon he's slowin' down

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noticeable but it might be jest 'cause he's gittin' tired when somethin' else happens. He's workin' with a old bundle fork and while he's pitchin' off his load the head of the fork stays stuck in a bundle and pulls right off'n the handle and goes a-shootin' into the separator. The Wob don't see it quick as me where I'm pitchin' across from him, and I'm the one that hollers out to stop the separator. We git her stopped in time but if we'd waited fer the Wob to yell the fork'd of been inside and tearin' hell out of the separator.

"Well, they made quite a to-do and seems like the Wob and me's the only ones that thinks the thing was accidental. Everybody's got to come runnin' up and examine the fork and the handle, and even though you can see where the bolts pulled out of the rotten wood the most of them ain't satisfied at all and the Wob gets surlier and surlier. Come supptime he's downright sullen and don't lift his eyes from the plate and Mrs. Schmidt's upset and onhappy over by the cook-stove and has let the biscuits burn.

"Come evenin' the Wob's right back singin' them old bitter songs, and talkin' wilder and more violent all the time, and sneerin' at farmers like us that works our heads off raisin' wheat and lets the grain speculators take all the profit, and makin' threats, and goin' on louder'n louder every minute.

"Everybody's riled up and gittin' madder'n madder. The Widow's quit her dishwashin', and I can see her

standin' all worried and nervous jest inside the screen door.

"The Wob is shoutin' 'bout a bloody industrial revolution and the boys are yellin' back at him and tellin' him to shut up or they'll shut him up, and he's hollerin' louder'n ever and more insultin', and the first thing we know Ed Masters's got up real quiet but all white and shakin' and busted the Wob with his fist right square in the eye. While the feller's staggerin' Ed lets him have four, five more so fast you can't count 'em, and before the Widow's through the door and down off the platform the Wob's flat on the ground with Ed on top of him like he was goin' to stomp his brains out. It takes me and Matt Kimes that I make help me to pull Ed off. Even then I guess we couldn't of held him quiet if the Widow hadn't come bustin' through the circle, with her eyes blazin', and stood there over the Wob like a fierce old mother hen over a little chicken tellin' us all in a low, tight voice what a fine bunch of cowards we was to be all pickin' on one man.

"Well, things calm down some, and I guess everybody's kind of ashamed of himself fer gittin' so excited. But the Widow nor nobody else ain't able to keep the boys from runnin' the Wob right out of camp. It don't hardly seem right to me to start him off on foot that time of night beat up like he is. Far as I can see the fight's all out of him. He don't look dangerous. He's plumb licked, I'd say, and jest settin' there on the ground wip-

in' the blood off'n his nose and lips with the back of his hand, and nursin' an eye that's swellin' bad and turnin' purple.

"Knowin' what I do the whole thing seems like a big mistake to me but it don't do no good talkin' to the other fellers. They ain't addressin' no more remarks to the Wobbly but they're kind of jeerin' among themselves 'bout these fierce I. W. W.'s that's goin' to revolutionize the United States but cave in the first time anybody hits them. The Wob can't help but hear it but he jest keeps suckin' at his cut lips.

"I ain't feelin' happy at all. Mrs. Schmidt has kind of pulled herself together when she's seen nobody ain't goin' to do the Wobbly no more harm, and has got embarrassed and gone back to the cook-car platform. I'm feelin' what a mess a bunch of men'll make of somethin' a woman might of straightened out in no time, and hopin' the Wob'll go by the car and say somethin' to her anyway before he leaves. But when Ed pays him what he's got comin' and tells him to git he jest gives the whole outfit a sneerin', sour look, with somethin' I don't like at all glitterin' in that one eye of his that's still open, and stumbles away into the dark.

"Well, they's a lot of talk, mostly onreasonable, after he's gone. Presently we turn in fer the night.

"I'm kind of tired out and low feelin'. But jest the same I don't sleep very well. Seems like I won't no more'n doze off and I'll come awake

ag'in feelin' things ain't right and somethin's goin' to happen.

"But they won't be nothin' stirrin'. After awhile the moon comes up and I can see all 'round and seems like that makes me more easy. Anyway I drop off fer quite a spell 'cause when I next wake up the sky's got cloudy and it's jest about plumb dark.

"The wind's come up the way it will in the night out here, and it's makin' a little hiss'n noise in the stubble and rattlin' things here and there in the outfit. It's bangin' the washbasin that hangs on a nail ag'in the side of the cook-car and I'm thinkin' that's what's woke me up and fixin' to roll over and go back to sawin' wood when I hear somethin' up among the bundle-racks that ain't no wind a-blowin'. It's a noise like someone prowlin' 'round in the dark has bumped into the danglin' end of a singletree and set it clatterin'.

"Well, it don't take me longer'n it's takin' me to tell it to roll out of my bankets and work out through the sleepin' fellers. I'm plumb awake now and my head's puttin' things together. I've picked me up the pump-handle off'n the water wagon and I'm slidin' 'long up past the cook-car toward where the noise is come from when I hear the screen door of the car squeak and open. I don't no more'n have time to pull up and slide 'round a bundle rack when I can jest make out the Widder Schmidt on the platform. And then she's down on the ground and movin' quiet and fast past me toward the noise which come

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from up near the separator. She goes by so close I could of put out my hand and touched her.

“I’m plumb took with admirin’ the courage of the woman. She’s heard the noise same as me and she’s got the same worry in the back of her head, I guess. She understands the treacherous wild desp’rateness that’ll take hold of a harmless feller when he’s been plumb humiliated and laughed at. But she ain’t knowed fer certain what she was goin’ to run into out there ’cause when she’s went by me I’ve made out she’s got some kind of weapon in her hand.

“She’s jest a shadow movin’ straight fer the separator which kind of nestles there ag’in the big loomin’ straw-stack, and when I take after her I’m a good fifty feet behind.

“Then all of a sudden there’s a light low down ag’in the straw-stack where a match’s been struck and flared up a second and been blowed out by the wind. It’s jest a quick flash of yellow light and then black darkness, but it’s give me time to see a feller squattin’ down there at the edge of that stack of tindery straw that’s so dry it’s like gunpowder, and Mrs. Schmidt comin’ up on him. She’s callin’ him by name, and I ’member how funny it seemed to me fer the feller to have a real name when all we been callin’ him is Wob-bly and the Wob. ‘Mr. Christianson!’ she’s callin’ real low and desperate, ‘Mr. Christianson! Wait! Wait!’

“Well, I’m plumb alive now and movin’ fast’s I’m able. And then

somethin’ fetches me a lick on the chin and the nose and the middle of the forehead that near knocks the senses right out of me. It’s a fork some fool has stuck up in the ground and that I’ve run a-straddle.

“There’s another flare of light that ain’t the stars I’m seein’. It’s fainter this time ’cause the Wob’s nursin’ the flame in his hands ag’in the wind. I’m up on my knees now with the blood a-hammerin’ in my temples. Then there’s a kind of a thud, and the match drops into the straw, and the straw flares up fer jest one turrible second, and then goes out sudden like somethin’ heavy’s fell down on it.

“Well, far as my bein’ any use is concerned, I might as well of gone back to bed and got my night’s sleep. As is the case when matters is in the hands of a capable woman the only thing there is for a man to do is look knowin’ and give advice.

“When I come up to where the two is at, the Wob’s out cold where Mrs Schmidt’s hit him with what she had in her hand which was one of these heavy wooden potato mashers. She’s hauled off and let him have it when she see there wasn’t no time to argue. Then she’s throwed herself down on the blaze and smothered it, and now she’s down in the chaff beside him, fingering his head to see if he’s hurt.

“She only jumps a little when I come up and find them. She looks up at me and says, kind of onhappy and happy at the same time, she says ‘I jest had to hit him. The outfit’d

been burned and he'd of been lynched 'fore he could git out of the country."

"Well, we git him into the cook-car between us, and git him stretched out on the table and some water on him. He's kind of a sorry sight what with the black eye and swole lip he got earlier in the evenin' and now a lump on his head the size of a hen's egg where the potato masher's hit him. Seem's like Mrs. Schmidt's real sorrowful havin' to batter him up some more when he was already purty well battered. She bathes his head and purty soon he comes to and lays there and looks at us with only a little of the sullen left in his eye.

"I'm standin' 'round first on one foot and then the other not knowin' what to do next, when Mrs. Schmidt takes hold of things ag'in and straightens them out fer us. She says there ain't no real meanness in Mr. Christianson, that he jest ain't been understood. She sends me back to cover up the burned place in the straw-pile and to git my sleep, and asks me to say nothin' of what's happened. I guess she must of stayed up all night herself, 'cause she's fixed up the Wob's head and rested him up some and talked him out of his troubles and sent him off while it's still dark and gives us our breakfast at the reg'lar time next mornin' like nothin's happened."

"You don't mean," said Loomis, incredulously, "she took it for granted that one lick with a 'tater masher cured him? I'd of flattened him with

a monkey wrench or a neckyoke! You don't mean she turned him loose like that to maybe keep on doin' damage?"

"She didn't hardly turn him loose," replied Dry-Land, sighing "I been tellin' you she needs a feller bad to work her homestead. She fixes him up a big lunch to carry with him, and sends him over to her place to ketch up her work-horses and start puttin' in her winter wheat.

"Come noon she's told Ed she's 'bliged to quit soon's he can git someone else to do the cookin'. Come Sat'-day evenin' she's fed us a last meal that you couldn't equal nowhere, and left us stuffed but broken-hearted. Come Fall—"

"Say!" said the man from the Goosebill, eagerly, "Speakin' of Mrs. Schmidt and the Wobbly, we got a widower over our way that had a Swede housekeeper—"

Dry-Land sighed again.

"Come Fall—" He broke off to gesture impressively out across the gloomy expanse of prairie where the scattered lights of snug ranch houses glowed ruddily in the darkness.

"Come Fall—the One Big Union! The remedy fer the Wobbly's sorrows, trials and tribulations! The One Big Union! I drove the two of them in town together. I drove them home a little later. Me bein' a bachelor she asked me to stay and eat the weddin' supper with them. I stayed 'most all the evenin'. She played the organ, and Christianson and me, we done some first-rate Gospel singin'!"

Going to School

By D'Arcy Dahlberg

DAWN had come but it was still dark. The lights from the houses shone almost as brightly as they would have in the middle of night. A stiff wind came up at intervals and the sky over the eastern mountains was unmistakably growing lighter every minute. Roosters were crowing and occasionally a door opened and a man came out to spit and look at the sky.

A young boy stood by the dirt road and peered toward the fringe of timber that lay a quarter of a mile eastward from the town. He could see or hear nothing and was munching an apple. In one hand he carried a lunch bucket.

Suddenly he heard horses snorting and blowing in the cold air. And then he could hear buggy wheels rattling over the frozen ground. He finished his apple in several large bites and tossed the core aside. He wiped his mouth with the sleeve of his coat and put his mitten on the hand that had held the apple. A moment later a team of horses and a buggy materialized out of the mist and gloom and a voice called out sharply:

"Whoa, there, cayuses!"

A girl's voice followed immediately after: "Good morning, Joey! Are we late?"

"Naw, you're not late. I just came from the house." He put his lunch pail in the back of the rig and climbed onto the seat.

"Put these blankets around you good. It's terribly cold." The girl helped to wrap the blankets around his legs.

"That's good enough," he said before she had finished.

The scraggy team of mares was put at a trot and the buggy was on its way again. It was precarious footing, however, and though they picked their feet up quickly and made a motion of trotting they couldn't manage anything better than a fast walk.

The sky had turned a shade lighter and the town could be made out more distinctly. It was a forlorn place clinging to the edge of the timber. Not a house was painted; they were all shanties.

On the left the mountains were still black and heavy mist hid their wide bases. High up among the peaks a ray of light gleamed now and then on a snow bank. Off to the right was the rolling prairie land and clumps of trees could be seen along some creek bank. There was a mist over the prairie, too, and it seemed dull and dead out that way. A chill breeze cut into the faces of the three travelers in the buggy and made them keep their heads pulled low on their shoulders.

Gene, the driver, was a thin-faced youth whose eyes watered constantly in the cold wind. His jaws stood out rigidly and his skin was smooth, for he hadn't yet put a razor to his face.

He didn't talk as much as the others; he sat and brooded and wore a long face.

Ada sat in the middle and her blue eyes were always twinkling. She had a clear, healthy complexion and the stinging wind made her cheeks glow warmly. She was eighteen at most, yet she too looked older.

Joe, who had waited at the roadside, knew of nothing better in the world than to be sitting where he was, beside Ada. The buggy seat was narrow and he was pressed closely against her; he could feel her warmth up and down his right side. Joe was younger than the others, four years younger than Ada, but he never thought of that.

When they came to the bridge at the end of the first mile the team slowed down and looked cautiously from one side to the other as they went up the approach. The bridge planks were white with frost and after the buggy had passed over two neat tracks were left behind. When the bridge was crossed the horses picked up their shambling trot again. The breath came out of their nostrils in white clouds and formed a coating of frost on the hair of their necks. They were an unkempt team of little mares with their long winter's hair; bits of straw and their night's bedding still clung to their sides. Gene forgot to curry them most of the time.

A serious conversation was being carried on in the buggy. Joe had said: "My folks had a fight last

night and we may be moving away one of these days."

"No! You don't mean right away—before school's out?" Ada asked.

"Well, no, not that soon."

"What was they fighting about?" Gene asked.

"Why, ma thinks that we made a bad move when we bought lots during the boom. She says we might as well have thrown the money in the river. But pa laughs about it. 'Money's no good if you don't use it,' he says. 'You just as well take a gambling chance once in a while; all you have is a gambling chance; and even then you're bound to lose,' he says."

"Were they angry?" Ada wanted to know.

"Oh yes, I suppose all the neighbors heard them."

"Well," Gene said, "your ma's right. Nobody's going to make any money out of that town!"

"You don't know anything about it! You've heard dad say that," his sister reminded him.

"We could have made a little money last fall. We were offered three hundred dollars more for the shop than it cost us. But ma said it wasn't enough. She got mad last night when we reminded her of it."

Gene went off on a tangent.

"Your folks don't fight any more than ours," he said. "There's a wrangle at home every day."

"We have dad to thank for that. If it was mother alone it would be different."

But Gene couldn't agree with that.

"It takes two to make a quarrel and she nags as much as he does. She doesn't do it outright, that's the difference. She goes around complaining until somebody has to get mad."

"She has something to complain about, I think! Not one of you kids ever helps her and she's had ten of us to take care of."

"Well," said Gene, "I'll tell you one thing, Joe, don't get married! A poor man's got to work his fingers to the bone as it is, but if he gets married, he's sunk!"

But Joe disagreed. No. It wasn't that bad! It depended on yourself—and, of course, on whom you married.

"Do you think married people are never happy? Sure, lots of them are! But you've got to be in love. I don't think my folks were ever in love; they don't act like it, and that's why they row."

"You talk like a calf! What's love? I ain't seen any yet," Gene said.

What, no love! And Joe sat there burning with it! He knew no unhappiness. It was true that his father and mother made things unpleasant with their misunderstandings and uncharitable accusations. His sister was half an idiot and sat at home laughing and crying by turns and trying to draw pictures on the windowpane with her pencil. There was no money in the home

most of the time though his father ran a butcher shop.

Joe lived in the midst of many things that might have been thought unpleasant, yet he went through them unscathed. When he sat beside Ada he was content. He thought of finer things; it might even be imagined that he saw them dancing by like the fence posts on either side that went flying past in an endless chain. For seven months, ever since school opened in September, he had been riding with the Silverthorns, and ever since Christmas when Ada kissed him at the School Entertainment he had been engulfed in a great world of mist and warm dew.

The sun had burst over the mountains and the gloom that had lurked in the hollows and over against the timber all disappeared. The few scattered banks of snow that lay in the nearby fields sparkled and looked whiter. The frost disappeared from the horses' necks and they got over the road with a freer gait.

On and on the road led in a straight line down the valley. The mountains were always parallel and as one travelled along one could see ever new angles to the peaks and canyons.

Gene sat on the driver's side in his peculiar hunched over fashion and he held the lines with listless hands. He hissed at the horses and cursed them soundly when they slowed to catch a breath or when one of them slipped on a patch of ice. He seemed to dream, perhaps of the dreary

round of chores that awaited him when he returned at night, perhaps of his father with his savage temper, or perhaps he dreamed of freedom from these things.

Ada, as she sat there, wore a half smile and an eager expression as if she expected every moment to come upon some marvelous discovery. No one would think of calling her a girl, exactly; she held her head with the studied grace of a woman; in a few years she would be a little too fleshy and then she would be a woman indeed.

For Joe there could be no accounting for her charm. He never relaxed in the seat beside her; he was in a continual flux of emotions. Something happened almost every day that brought him more deeply under her spell. It wasn't much, a mere nothing, but he came to regard each new day with wistful expectation. Anything might happen! In these past few months he had suddenly begun to feel like a matured young man. He looked backward from the pinnacle of his fourteen years and saw his childhood lying somewhere in the indeterminate past.

The conversation had gone to other things.

"I've made up my mind to study law when I get to college," Joe said.

"Do you really plan to go to college, then?" Ada asked him.

"Yes. Ma always wanted me to be a lawyer. When she got her divorce they made her say a lot of things that weren't true but she

couldn't help herself. So she's always wanted me to study law and make up for it, though I don't see what can be done now."

"That will be fine! When I come to get my divorce I'll see you the first thing. I'll say: 'Joey, my husband's mean to me. Please get me a divorce right away!' And then what will you do?"

Joe's tongue failed him and he couldn't think of a witty reply. He said: "I'll go and kick the seat of his pants up between his shoulders!"

Ada was surprised and didn't know whether to laugh or not, but Gene roared aloud and the horses threw up their heads and trotted faster.

Now they were approaching town. The seven mile ride was ending. The sun was an hour above the mountains and the frostiness had almost gone from the air. The sky was completely free from cloud and mist and a golden effulgence poured down upon the land.

The school was the first building on the left as they entered town. It stood by itself in the center of a large yard. There were tall poles standing upright with cross bars over the top, these were the swings where the children played.

The school building was long and narrow and built in two stories. The lower half was covered with shingles and painted brown; white clapboards covered the upper half. From all directions one could see pupils coming towards the school in vehicles of

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all descriptions—some were on horse-back, some had single horse rigs, while others drove a team; and now a green and white school-wagon came lumbering down the lane.

When Gene stopped his team of brown mares before the entrance gate there were fully a half-hundred youngsters jumping around; they laughed and shouted and banged one another with their dinner pails. Something as fluid as electricity and as startling took possession of the three in the buggy. They looked at each other, at the crowd of pupils, and began to laugh. This was school! There was nothing else like it!

Joe got down and helped Ada from the buggy; then he drove with Gene to the stable to unhitch the horses.

It was a strange business, this going to school. Out at home things went their humdrum way; the father would be stamping around the fields to see how near the frost was to leaving the ground or he would be in the granary fanning his seed wheat; the mother would be in the kitchen mixing her bread or else out in the yard feeding the chickens. But in school it was different; they read about the capital of one State and the area of another; they learned about Nigeria and Liberia and Abyssinia and Lake Titicaca high in the mountains; they used words like "hypotenuse" and "congruent" in geometry; they found out that there had been a French Revolution and a War of the Spanish Suc-

cession and that Shakespeare had written many plays and was no doubt the greatest man in the world. But when they went home they kept their discoveries under their hats. It would never do to let the old folks feel that they didn't know everything; they would have only one way to answer such a charge, and that was with the stick.

Joe knew well enough how it was. He sat in his classroom and swallowed everything greedily. His head was full of things that had happened thousands of miles away and hundreds of years ago. But he knew better than to talk about them when he got home. There was no sense in being laughed at.

"Wipe your nose!" his father would say if Joe should tell him that Rome had been a great Empire ruled over by Julius Caesar who talked Latin.

The morning's ride had been a pleasant event in its way, and the school hours were themselves filled with moments of ecstasy; but the pleasantest time of all was when they drove home at night.

The air was warm then, so warm that coats were left unbuttoned and one could crane one's neck around and have a look at the scenery; and there were heavy shadows lying across the land. At the big cattle ranch along the foothills it was feeding time and the steers could be heard blowing and bellowing. The feeding wouldn't last much longer; soon there would be a coating of

green over the hills and prairie and the stockman could leave off measuring his haystacks with his eye.

But there was no green grass yet. Indeed, the frost had by no means left the ground. The first few inches were free and soft with mud but down below there was something hard. And when morning came around everything would be stiff with frost again.

Everyone felt the glory of those first spring afternoons. Even Gene's shabby mares held their heads with a certain pride and they took to the long road with renewed energy as they swung around the corner and left the school house behind. And Gene himself was not the same. Whatever sparkle of humor his system could muster then came to the surface and played about for a moment like faint blue lightning on the horizon. But he wasn't at home when it came to playing with wit; he would stumble around for a while and before long take to cursing something or other as a more effective way of getting over what he wanted to say. No, Gene didn't fit into this world of youthful thoughts and feelings. He had shrivelled already. He had been broken to the plow when he was too young a colt and now he could never enjoy running wild.

Ada was touched by the same searing process. If she escaped at all it was something to marvel at. She was the eldest in the family of ten and she had borne the brunt of it

all; she had mothered nine of the ten children; but it hadn't proved too heavy a task for her. She was charming and sprightly for an elderly woman of eighteen!

The family of ten was gradually becoming valuable as time went on. Over half of them were working now and if the first ones had been put at it a little too early it was easier for the late comers.

Ada had kissed Joe at Christmas time and here it was March and he hadn't awakened from the spell yet! He hadn't enjoyed it at the time, it is true. He had been too ashamed and confused to know just what had happened. Besides, the room had been full of people. Since then the event had revealed its proper significance. He would know how to act the next time.

His father and mother spent all their time making life unpleasant for each other. Every night when Joe came home they were at it. He lived his life on the road to school; the night was only spent in waiting for another day. Sometimes he couldn't avoid being drawn into a family melee; he went about looking so dreamy and absent-minded that his parents must turn and attack him occasionally. And then he became more pointedly aware of the two worlds he was attempting to straddle. But on the road to school much was left behind and he dreamed astounding dreams. In fact, it would be hard to say which of Joe's thoughts were real and

which were but the froth and mist of some dream pot bubbling over. And on this very day one dream, at least, was to put on a cloak of reality and meet Joe face to face.

For over seven months the two brown mares had performed their task in the most irreproachable manner possible. They had trotted mile after mile without complaint,—though it is true that a fast-legged man could have kept abreast of them at any time; and as they went they looked neither on one side nor the other but with bowed heads kept the middle of the road. Viewing them critically, they were commonplace and shabby and a whip lash falling on their scrawny backs brought no protest. Yet on this day they did a most unexpected and unreasonable thing.

They had been trotting along with their eyes glued to the road and the three young people in the buggy behind them had been engaged in a methodical discussion of the day's events. The mares were shedding heavily and it was really difficult to talk as one had to stop at every other word and spit out a horse hair. Gene sat with the lines held loosely in his hands and he seemed to be pondering things in his uninspired way.

And then three pigs appeared suddenly.

They had escaped their pen and were in the lane, looking for the feast of green grass they had scented on the wind, no doubt. They had been hidden from view behind a pile

of last year's dead tumble weeds and just as the buggy came abreast of them they ran into the road to sniff the air and decide which way to run. They grunted and squealed and one old sow grew confused and tried to run between the legs of Tricksey, the mare on the near side.

Tricksey was patient enough but she couldn't be expected to allow a pig to run between her legs. She sat back on her haunches for just a second and then she shot ahead like a cannon ball and it was a wonder that the tug straps didn't snap like cotton twine. Tricksey's mate caught the panic too and it took only a moment to get their legs and harness untangled and then they were off!

The buggy swayed from side to side; it dashed into the gutter and balanced for a moment on two wheels, then it straightened itself and lurched to the other side of the road. All the loose bolts and rods and wheel spokes were rattling as they never had rattled before.

It was strange to see what happened inside the buggy. At the first unexpected move Gene straightened himself in the seat. When the horses took the bits into their teeth and began their mad gallop straight for destruction—he lost no time in contemplation. With one movement he thrust the lines into Ada's hands and with a second motion he had vaulted out of the buggy and clear of the wheels. He landed in a lump on the roadside.

Joe sat there in a daze. If he had

tried to talk he would have stuttered. The buggy swayed perilously, the slightest obstruction sent the wheels bounding into the air. He probably would have continued to sit in a trance until they had smashed against a fence or telephone post if he hadn't thrown his hand out involuntarily to balance himself. In doing so he grasped the lines. The next moment he had braced his feet against the dashboard and was pulling for all he was worth. He was thoroughly frightened by now and he had the strength of desperation.

Joe stopped the mares by running them into a sand bank at a corner of the lane where the road had been cut through a low hill. The moment they stopped he scrambled out and took them by the bridles. He was trembling. He led them around into the road again before they tried to climb the hill. He kept saying over and over:

"You damn mutts! You damn mutts! Hold up now!"

Gene didn't overtake them for half an hour. He came up the road with a limp in one leg.

Ada looked at him with amazement and contempt. "Why on earth did you jump?" she asked.

He didn't answer until he had examined the buggy and harness to see that nothing was broken. He climbed wearily onto the seat and he looked like quite an old man.

"Why did I jump? What do you suppose! Am I going to risk my neck for a team of scrub cayuses?

Not much! I'll die soon enough as it is!"

Ada scorned such premature wisdom. "Look at little Joe!" she said. "He isn't thinking of himself all the time! He acts like a little man!—Why Joe!" She turned to him ecstatically. "You're so brave!"

With a swift movement she grasped his coat and pulled him close and kissed him, once on the cheek and once on the mouth. Then she laughed gently and let him go.

Joe had anticipated her action. He had braced himself to meet it—to no avail. His courage gave way and he turned red; after the second kiss he actually put up his hands to protect himself! And immediately afterwards he felt miserable. He pushed his shoulders up and drew in his head to hide his confusion.

"You girls make me sick!" Gene said, "always kissing people!"

"We don't kiss everybody, do we, Joe?"

What could Joe say!

They started down the road again. The mares had spent themselves and were content to go at an ordinary pace though they threw their heads from side to side and blew through their nostrils with the pride of their deed.

Darkness was coming now and there was coolness in the air. After the buggy had disappeared in the shadows and mist that arose from the cooling earth the wheels could still be heard rattling over the gravelled road. One more day of school was ending.

THE OPEN RANGE

Each issue will carry accounts of men's personal outdoor experiences. Only accounts of actual experiences are solicited.

Laying the Iron Trail in the Northwest

By Luke D. Sweetman

IT was in late March of 1887 when the first chinook came to start the huge drifts of snow melting that had been piling up since early October. This has ever since been known by old timers as the "hard winter" of '86 and '87, and as the most disastrous winter Montana has ever known. Many cattlemen who were considered rich in the fall were flat broke in the spring and were lucky if they had a horse and outfit to hire out to some more fortunate owner with which to start all over again.

In those days no one owned land, the cattle herds being ranged over the countless acres of prairie that offered their rich feed free to the cow-man. This winter snow covered what grass there was as effectively as if it had been plowed under and cattle starved and froze to death by the thousands. Cattlemen's estimate of their losses was from 60 to 65% of the native cattle and in many cases entire herds of southern stock were wiped out clean. It was a hard blow to the cattle business, at this time in its infancy in Montana.

Having temporarily laid aside my plans for the cattle business, I bought a few head of horses and with one man to help drive them, headed north from Miles City to the newly proposed line of railroad. This road, which was to be built through the northern part of Montana and Dakota territories, was laid out under the name of the Saint Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba railway, and was later changed to the Great Northern. I believed there would be a big demand for horses in this

new enterprise and perhaps other ways of bettering my own present depleted financial condition. So as soon as the snow had gone sufficiently to allow traveling, we struck out with our driven stock and despite our pack animals, laden with provisions and bedding, made good time. Our last camp before crossing the Missouri river was made at Sioux pass, about fifteen miles from Fort Buford. Snow fell on us while making camp, and as a result the bacon and flapjacks we had for supper were more filling than appetizing.

The first gray dawn in the region of the Missouri river found us driving our little herd in a cold, drizzling sleet-storm toward the junction of the Missouri and Yellowstone rivers. There Tom Forbes put us across on the Government ferry.

After gaining the northern side of the Missouri river, we drifted eastward to where Williston is now located. This new country to me was a virginal paradise and my thoughts again turned to vast herds of cattle growing fat on the rich bluejoint grass which in sunlit places was beginning to show green. The untouched last year's growth, though bent flat to the ground by the snow, had been knee-high in the river bottoms. The low hills sloping back from the river were treeless. In fact, the only trees to be seen were the cottonwood groves that lined the river and a few straggling evergreens that thrived on the rocky acres and on the clay banks of the badlands. This first picture of the untamed land remained imprinted

in my mind; and it was near here on the banks of the Missouri a few years later that I staked my homestead rights.

I left the Missouri at Williston and cut across country to the Mouse river. Except for the soldiers stationed at the few forts and Indian agencies, the white men one would encounter could be counted on the fingers. For miles and miles in any direction a rider would not see a human being or a human habitation. Along the course of the river an occasional "wood-hawk", who supplied fuel to the steamboats, had his dug-out or log hut. No other white men had come to this region—there had been nothing to bring them.

Later on, in this same year, small herd-owners from the stricken western and southern parts of Montana pushed northward to this Missouri river country where their cattle might recuperate from the severe winter. The next few years they made good money. Hay could be put up on the river bottom to insure against another hard winter and feed famine.

The railroad had been completed between Devils lake and Minot, of Dakota territory, the previous year. Minot, at the western end of the line, was now a flourishing young town. Here, the railroad company was daily unloading contractors with their grading equipment and pushing them westward as rapidly as possible to where their different stretches of grading work were to be done. In a short time the trail along the line of survey was a moving array of men and teams doing their bit, and, when finished, passing the others and beginning the next stretch out at the front. Soon they were moving earth over a surveyed line of more than two hundred miles in length. A steel gang followed close on the heels of the contractors, laying the track at the rate of four miles a day.

The contractors depended on the grain for their horses to be brought to the rail's end by freight and from here relayed to their camps by four- and six-horse teams.

There was no hay to be had, but grass was plentiful everywhere, so the work-horses were turned loose at night under the care of the night-herder. Such a system was hard on the eastern horses that had always been cared for in stables with plenty of good feed handed to them. This shifting for themselves soon began to take a death-toll from their numbers. Of course they had to be replaced. I sold my entire band and wished for a nearer source for replenishing it. Not only were many horses sacrificed but many men gave their lives as well. Human tragedies were witnessed every day and shallow graves marked at regular intervals the progress of the Iron Trail.

Where the railroad survey joined and paralleled the Missouri river, the town of Williston was taking on a semblance of permanency. So far, owing to the inability to procure lumber, it was a village of tents. Each steamboat from Saint Louis brought entire families, some with their stocks of merchandise, ready to give odds for the progress of civilization. Building material was steadily being shipped in and the foundations were laid for many of Williston's pioneer business blocks of today. People, hearing of the new country and sensing advantages of fortune, were daily arriving in increasing numbers to swell the population and expand the frontier. The Yellowstone and Missouri rivers afforded the smoothest highway, and each boat brought in its load of home and fortune seekers.

In this growing village there were various games of chance in session at all hours of the day and night, and the usual human parasites in the gathering-places of men exacted their daily tolls. There were killings, of course, but I had been in places that were better organized municipally where there were more. These little tragedies of life went hand in hand with progress and civilization everywhere.

Soon there were structures of logs and rough timber which answered the demand

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for stores, saloons and lodging-houses. I remember distinctly a neat little hotel, built and operated by a Mrs. Leonhardy. She prospered, and in later years the site was occupied by a substantial brick building which was operated as the Number One hotel for several years.

The horse market which I found so good encouraged me to bring in more bunches of western stock to peddle along the line to grading contractors. The demand was great and the prices were high.

I remember hearing one little pioneer episode that had its tragic ending, in the camp of Leech and Francis, two Iowa contractors, where I had put up for the night. One of their men had just returned from a thirty-mile trek to the river, where he had gone to bring back a load of wood. He related an account of the death of Grinnell, a squaw-man, who had got a supply of whiskey from an up-river boat and proceeded to get drunk. He was at the height of his spree when his squaw, tiring of his actions, set about to pull him off his horse and put him to bed. Grinnell, not wanting to be interrupted at this period of his fun, endeavored to ride the horse over his wife. He was prevented from this only by the sudden action of his mount, which, in rearing and pivoting, unseated its rider. The squaw, seizing this opportunity, made haste to benefit by it and in so doing, clung tightly to the first hold she could find. Unfortunately for the man, he wore one of those then popular braided leather watch-guards which was suspended from his neck, and this was the woman's first hold. In the melee that followed, the knot was slipped up tight around the fellow's throat and held, thereby ending the career of one more old-timer. "You couldn't blame the squaw," the wood-hauler commented, "she was only trying to protect herself."

It was on this same night that a severe storm came up and stampeded the crew's entire bunch of Iowa workhorses, some sixty head in number. The night-herder

of this camp was a young fellow from the East, green and inexperienced in western ways. He was willing enough in his efforts to locate the missing bunch but ignorant to the first degree of common-sense in hunting for the runaway horses. He rode all night and returned in the forenoon with only the horse he was riding and that one nearly exhausted. After a breathing-spell for lunch and a rest for his mount, he set out again, and soon after noon he came back to the camp, empty-handed for the second time. The crew were, of course, enjoying the vacation, but not so Mr. Leech. He was paying his men for straight time. I volunteered the suggestion that the night wrangler was doing his hunting in circles too close to the camp and that he would have to look farther away to find the horses. Mr. Leech asked me if I thought I could find them and I answered that I believed I could. He gave me the chance.

I figured out the direction the horses would naturally take, which was westward with the storm. I shall never forget the horse I was riding that day. He was one of a herd I had bought in southern Montana. The big brown was unusually large for a saddle horse but the gamest fellow I have ever ridden. I was able to follow a faint trail left by the herd, and after about twenty miles of riding, I saw fresh signs of it. The sun had disappeared behind the hills when I came upon the bunch, now quietly grazing. I counted them as I rode around them, herding them together. They were all there, and I headed them back toward camp. I allowed my horse a few swallows of water as we crossed a little stream and without any further halts, started the runaways at a good clip over the trail. A horse trailer's principal aid was a six-shooter to turn back those that might chance to break out from the rest, and a long rope to snap at the heels of the laggards. With these two I started the bunch at a swift pace, which I kept up

through the night. With the first sign of morning, I hit the grade close to camp, and it was only a short time until I had the horses corralled and ready to harness.

Mr. Leech's displeasure at having lost so much time over-shadowed his generosity, so I did not net much of a reward for my efforts. He did make up for it afterwards, however, by offering me a good contract on another bit of work. The crew had also lost some time on account of bad weather and the "boss" asked me to help by putting in my horses to finish the stretch. This I did and he sent me out to the end of the line, then at Lonetree, a few miles west of Minot, to fetch a load of oats. He let me take a new wagon. After loading to capacity, I put in as a lead team a pair of saddle-horses that had never been driven before. This is where I had some fun—keeping the eveners off the heels of the leaders and from under the front feet of the pole team. The team was strung out nicely by the time I had been on the road a few hours, and just when I believed I could breathe safely we came to the long White Earth hill. I set the brake and held in the wheelers and momentarily slackened the lead lines; this evidently caused the lead team, together with the sudden relief from the heavy load, to believe they were free to go to the hills; and that's just what they tried to do. When the leaders jackknifed, the wagon tongue snapped and the eveners broke, which loosened the team entirely. I had to sit and watch them tear off across the prairie as I eased the loaded wagon to the foot of the hill by gentle degrees. This is a difficult job with the wagon tongue broken. I had to temporarily patch this so the team could guide the load. Well, I mounted one of the wheelers and after much riding, rounded up the trouble-makers and tied them behind the wagon. They had torn their harness to pieces and broken their eveners, so the entire load had to be drawn by the wheelers. The remaining

fifteen miles was negotiated at a snail's pace.

I stayed with the crew, renting out my teams and freighting for the camp myself, until the end of the grade reached the point on the Missouri river where Wolf Point was later built. There was an Indian agency here and that was all. The "boss" sent Pat O'Brien, a Montanan, and me back along the line to where Bainville is now located. This was the western extremity of the rails. Here we loaded our cargoes of oats and started back to where we were to catch the outfit. By this time they would have finished at Wolf Point and passed the other graders, going on to the front line, which would be west of Fort Assiniboine. This made a haul for us of 300 miles, for which we were to receive a dollar per hundred weight for each hundred miles.

It was late summer now and the mosquitoes along the Missouri river and the numerous streams we had to cross were so thick it was nearly impossible to get any rest at night. Our tarpaulin had to be drawn over our heads, which kept the mosquitoes off all right, but nearly suffocated us. We nearly wore ourselves out trying to find which was the more pleasant, the mosquitoes or the heat. Our horses had to be closely hobbled, and even so we would have to tramp long distances in the morning to find them.

One night one of Pat's teams swam the river with the hobbles on. Lucky for us, the two horses couldn't find a place to land on the other side and were just swimming back when we found them.

At the Big Muddy creek just west of the present site of Culbertson, Jakey Bowers, a squaw-man, had an improvised ferry and was literally coining money with it. At the Milk river another ferry had been put in, but it was a poor excuse and we were delayed there a full day, getting it into a condition safe to cross on. During the day, many freighters had gathered there. We practically rebuilt

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the boat, and then helped each other across.

We delivered our loads and fortunately for me it was the end of the trail, for I was taken sick. The Government doctor at Fort Assiniboine gave me temporary relief, but it was a case of fever and the next day after I became ill, I felt worse than ever. Leech and Francis wanted to buy my stock, so I sold to them and rode on the sick-list in one of their wagons, making a trip to Fort Benton after supplies.

Fort Benton was at the head of navigation on the Missouri river and the distributing point for all incoming freight. The town was full of every character peculiar to a frontier settlement. Bullwhackers and mule-skinners thronged the streets. Marvelous tales and yarns could be listened to at nearly any hour of the day from the boasting miners, cow-punchers, and skinners. The skinner's accomplishment was guiding as many as ten teams with a single line from his seat on the near wheel animal. The train was made up of a succession of loaded wagons and it was often operated over trails that took days and weeks to travel. The bullwhackers drove as many or more oxen, and walking by their side kept them in motion with the aid of a long bull-whip. This whip was in itself difficult to handle; a novice might easily scalp himself with it at a single crack. These freighters kept a saddle-pony with them to round up their teams in the morning, and with the inevitable bed-roll, a coffee-pot and frying-pan were as independent as a porcupine in his skin.

Up the river from Fort Benton, Paris Gibson was planning and building a town on a beautiful plain on the Missouri river banks. This is now Great Falls. With keen foresight he was preparing for the advent of the railroad that was rapidly approaching.

I still had some fever, but I was gaining strength each day; so, with O'Brien,

I boarded the next boat downstream with the intention of buying more horses to sell. At the mouth of the Judith river, O'Brien left me to go to Miles City, where I would meet him later.

The trip downstream was made without any particular incident. We were grounded all of one night on a sand bar, but escaped without mishap. We were very fortunate in having only a single misfortune of this kind, for the time of year and the prominence of the sand bars made navigating hazardous. It was 300 miles back to Fort Buford. About the only "kick" I got out of the ride was watching and listening to the pilot as to stood on the prow of the boat, sounding bottom and calling out to the man at the wheel. "Four f-e-e-t; six f-e-e-t; eight f-e-e-t, N-O-B-O-T-T-O-M." In addition to this pastime, there would be a woodyard to stop at, at various intervals, and the fast work of replenishing the exhausted supply of fuel.

At Fort Buford I disembarked and took the stage to Glendive, and from there to Miles City by train. Thirty-five miles out of Fort Buford we stopped at a relay station, known as the Kelsh ranch, the present site of Sidney, Montana, to change teams. That which stood out most memorably in my mind was the dinner Mrs. Kelsh prepared for us. Here, I had the first vegetables fresh from the garden that I had had in four summers. I met Major Scobey on the stage on this trip. He was afterwards appointed Indian agent at Poplar. The town of Scobey, near the Canadian line in northeastern Montana, is his namesake.

And so, in three and a half months, the railroad spanned a distance of six hundred miles through new and wild land. There a few years before, J. J. (Jim) Hill, afterwards known as the Empire Builder, traveled in a buckboard, and chose the route from Devils lake, Dakota territory, to the Pacific Coast for his Iron Trail.

Burnt, But Not Stewed

By Pat. T. Tucker.

MY boyhood days were spent in the Lone Star State, called Texas, where in the late sixties there was nothing but cowboys, longhorn cattle and wild mustangs. I took to cowpunching before I was twelve years old and later on found out that I could make more silver by busting bronks for the big cattle outfits.

I became interested in the tales of Montana and the northern cow country that the cowboys told when they returned from a trail drive, and decided to bid farewell to the sunny ranges of Texas at the first opportunity. I knew that if I waited a while I could hire out to an outfit driving cattle from Texas to Montana, but thought that would be too slow, so I trailed north by my lonesome.

I rode up into the Indian Territory, punched cows there for two months, then drifted up to Cheyenne, Wyoming. My silver was going fast, so I hired out to peel bronks for a big cow outfit on the Belle Fourche. After I had rode myself out of a job, I bought myself a grub-stake and headed down the Powder River into Montana.

The range on the north side of the Yellowstone River looked good to me and it wasn't long before I was at work riding for a big cow outfit. Along about July, 1883, I was pointing a large herd of Texas longhorns to the famous Judith Basin country. I had never seen the Basin before in my life and when I rode into the Judith Gap I stopped my horse and gazed spellbound at the country spread out before me.

The Judith Basin is a huge rough-shaped basin, about eighty-five miles across and about the same in length. The Missouri River skirts its northern boundary and the Snowy and Moccasin mountains bound it on the east. To the south are the Belt Mountains and on the west are the High-

woods. As beautiful a valley as the eye could wish to look upon.

I liked the Judith Basin so well that I never left it for years. It was a cattleman's Paradise. There was about eighty-five thousand head of cattle in this valley, and about seventy-five cowboys rounded up these cattle twice a year, branded the calves and cut out the beef steers and trailed them to the railroad.

On the roundup in 1884, Horace Brewster was our captain, and he sure knew the cattle business. One particular morning on this round-up we was paired off by the captain, and given a certain stretch of country to ride on this circle. Jim Spurgen and I were told to trail up on the bench land and away from the river.

We rode due north till noon that day, then we came to the mouth of Wolf Creek, got off our ponies, and let them graze on the soft green grass. We ate what lunch we had in our saddle-bags, took on a big smoke and caught up our horses. Then we separated, I trailed up the Judith River, and Jim rode up Wolf Creek.

The water in the Judith looked mighty cooling and as it was so terribly hot I started to think of taking a dip. In those days I used to take a bath once a year and so I decided that this was an opportunity I couldn't afford to pass up. So I got down off Bunky, my cowhorse, and threw the reins over his head.

I climbed out of my clothes in a hurry and threw them on the ground, but on taking a second look at the ground I saw it was alive with ants and already the little pests had taken possession of my clothes. I snatched the garments from the ground, shook them off as best I could and tied them on my saddle; then I turned my attention to swimming.

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The water was very cool and refreshing, so as soon as my blood began to run in the right channels again, I got out of the water, climbed up the bank and headed for Bunky and my clothes. Bunky, my good old cowhorse, did not know this nice clean cowboy in his birthday suit and refused to let me near him. He knew my voice, but try as I could I couldn't get hold of those bridle reins. I kept following him around, but at last he snorted and trotted away from me and up on the Bench, then turned around and looked back at me.

The sun was burning hot, and there was only one thing for me to do, and that was to take the Squaw trot. I decided to camp on Bunky's trail in the hope that he would decide I was his master and not some strange animal, after all. I approached him several times, but each time he became more alarmed at sight of me; and at last he broke into a run, holding his head off to one side so that he wouldn't step on the reins.

At last I came to the edge of a large field of prickly pears or in other words, cactus, and although I searched carefully for a way to get around, I found none. My body was beginning to burn very painfully from the sun, so I blazed a barefoot trail thru this prickly pear plantation.

I hadn't walked more than two dog lengths through this cactus before my feet looked like two big pin-cushions, but I couldn't turn back now. So I bowed my short neck like a young buffalo and kept on making tracks, with my heart pounding my ribs like a Salvation Army captain pounds a drum. But there was nobody dropping any jingle in the tambourine and here I had to fight my own Salvation, and it sure was a sinful shame. Although I was a suffering cowboy, I had nothing to

blame but my own carelessness, and those miserable little ants.

Between the torture of the cactus spines and the broiling hot sun I was nearly driven mad, but I managed to keep control of my senses and picked out a far landmark which I knew would bring me to the cow camp. At regular intervals I would stop and scan the horizon with hopeful eyes and each time would turn disgustedly to my painful task.

The sun began to affect my head, and I staggered on through the cactus until I fell face downward in the stickers from exhaustion. How long I laid there I don't know, but it seemed like ages before I heard a wild war-hoop from some cowboys. Soon these cowboys galloped up and circled me where I lay with my head propped on a rock. I could hardly talk, for the way I was suffering was something fierce; but finally the boys got me into camp and laid me down gently where the round-up cook could doctor me.

When I came to life once more, I thought I was in Heaven, and felt pretty good considering what I went through. This good old roundup cook had put under and over me, two hundred pounds of flour, so my bed had been rather soft.

The sun had blistered my body severely and my feet were swollen into shapelessness. Every move I made no matter how slight was extremely painful. All I could do was to lay still and listen to the flies buzzing around my sunshade. Finally I heard someone lope up to the chuck wagon and start talking with the cook in a hushed voice, which I recognized to be that of Jim Spurgen.

I didn't catch all that was said between the two but I did hear Jim ask the cook: "Has Tuck made his last ride?"

So I rose up out of the dough, and said: "Jim, old pard—no!"

HISTORICAL SECTION

Each issue will carry some authentic account, diary or journal or reminiscence, preferably of early days in this region of the country.

A Reminiscence of John Bozeman

By James Kirkpatrick

Editor's Note: James Kirkpatrick was born in Boston, March 9, 1849. When he was quite young the family moved to Wisconsin. In 1863 James and his older brother started for the recently discovered gold mines of Bannack in what was then eastern Idaho. They went west on the Oregon trail until they fell in with the party of Bozeman and Jacobs. Then they attempted to shorten their journey by following these two leaders across the country. The misfortunes which overtook them are described by Kirkpatrick in the *Reminiscence of John Bozeman*. After the failure to get to Bannack by the shorter route the Kirkpatrick brothers went back to the Oregon trail and continued along it to Fort Hall and thence north to Bannack. At the Bannack mines they met with little success and after two years they turned to ranching. This did not bring enough fortune and James began to peddle merchandise through southwestern Montana and southeastern Idaho. In 1880 the brothers established themselves as merchants in Dillon, Montana, where for many years they carried on an extensive business.

This *Reminiscence of John Bozeman* tells the story of the first attempt of Bozeman and Jacobs to lead a party over what was later called the "Bozeman Trail" to the gold fields of Montana. John Bozeman had come from Georgia to Colorado to search for gold. Failing to find any he went to Bannack in 1862, when gold had just been discovered. In this country he met John M. Jacobs, who had been for years in the mountains, trapping, trading, and freighting.

The development of this country was handicapped by the fact that there was no direct road to it. Emigrants had their choice of two routes. One was up the Missouri to Fort Benton, but from there to the mines there was no adequate transportation. The other one was over the Oregon trail to Fort Hall and then north along the route of the Oregon Short Line from Ogden to Butte, Montana. Both of these routes were unsatisfactory. In the winter of 1862-63 Bozeman and Jacobs decided to explore for a short route to the mines. They went from Bannack to the Three Forks of the Missouri, then up the Gallatin. This was the route followed by Clark on his return in 1806. They crossed over the pass to which Sacajawea had guided Clark, and which now bears the name of Bozeman pass. They followed the Yellowstone to the neighborhood of Powder river, where they turned south towards Fort Laramie. In spite of hostile Indians they got through successfully and determined to lead a party of emigrants back to Bannack. The adventures and failures of this expedition are recounted in the following narrative.

Bozeman and Jacobs were not discouraged and in 1864 led a party over the road which was soon called the "Bozeman Cutoff." For two years this road carried heavy traffic. Then came the Sioux wars and Bozeman himself was killed. In 1867 the government abandoned all efforts to keep open the road and emigrants to Montana were forced to seek other and longer routes. A detailed account of the Bozeman Trail and events in its brief history may be found in Grace Raymond Hebard and E. A. Brininstool, *The Bozeman Trail*, 2 vols. (Cleveland 1922).

PAUL C. PHILLIPS.

One day in the early autumn of 1863 a train of 44 canvas-covered wagons lay resting on the banks of the North Platte river opposite Deer Creek in what is now Wyoming.¹ With this train was John Bozeman, for whom the city of Bozeman afterward was named, and John Jacobs, a red-bearded Italian from the valley of the Deer Lodge, at that time within the confines of the territory of Dakota, since in Idaho and now in Montana. Jacobs had with him his little eight-year-old half-breed daughter.

The trio had been sent from Bannack City—nothing less than cities out west in those days—to open a new road between Bannack and some convenient point on the river Platte, by way of the Gallatin valley and east of the formidable Big Horn mountains. This train had been forming for several days from such westbound teams as wished to cut short the trip to Grasshopper creek² the fame of which as a gold producer had reached far to the East. After our lone outfit had driven up and camped

¹ Near Glenrock.

² Bannack was located on Grasshopper creek.

THE FRONTIER

for the night it was decided to await no more wagons but to strike out next day into the wilderness. Forty-five wagons, mostly ox-drawn, and ninety men prepared to shoot 425 rounds without re-loading strung out over a long, cactus infested slope toward the North.

James Brady of Missouri, a most estimable man, who owned four teams of six oxen each, had been chosen captain. His four wagons contained supplies for the new mines. A number of men, since more or less concerned with Montana's history, had with their teams cast their lot with our train, all eager to quickly reach the reputed rich gold diggings of Grasshopper creek. There were Sam Word,³ who habitually rode a grey saddle mule and employed a driver for his one yoke of oxen; at that early date Sam displayed unmistakable evidences of ambition and always took a leading part in the frequent conferences of the train. We also had Lieutenant Coleman, Ed. Waters, Charles Bliven, John Ensley, the three Wilson brothers, Gus Streitz, James M. Mann⁴ and family, John Powers and family, Wm. Grove and wife, Wm. Baker and wife, and many others then well known to the river, but whose names I have since forgotten, a braver or sturdier lot it would have been difficult to find. Several horse teams and a number of saddle animals lent variety. An old Frenchman, nick-named Bouillon (soup) from his fondness for that excellent dish, rode first as local guide; booze was his besetting weakness. Next went Bozeman, followed by Jacobs and a troop of other horsemen of the train.

Topping the slope we turned, after a farewell backward look at the pellucid Platte, down a dry ravine which showed signs of recent floods. A party of Indians had recently preceded us, their pony tracks and the marks of their trailing tepee poles still fresh in the sand. Although the signs indicated only a hunting party, Captain Brady now formed the train in two lines for possible quick corral formation, and organized both a front and rear guard of horsemen and directed all hunters and boys to keep close in. We soon reached a beautiful well-grassed and well-watered region abounding in fish, fowl, antelope and buffalo. Westwardly, to our left, loomed distantly the rugged Big Horn mountains, to the right stretched far the watershed of the forked Powder river and its tributaries, in front were the headwaters of the Big Horn. Captain Brady had in his employ a half-breed hunter who daily brought in pony loads of game, all the meat his men required and much to give away. Crossing the Rosebud, Crazywoman's Fork, the South Fork of Powder river and Lodgepole creek, we made a noonday camp on Clear creek, a stream abounding in fish. On one of the previous days the train had lain over to enable some of the horsemen to investigate a nook of the nearest mountains where Old Bouillon assured us plenty of gold nuggets in sizes to suit were to be had; it turned out as Bozeman predicted, one of drunken Bouillon's pipe dreams.

One day two men and myself, then a lad of fifteen, killed a buffalo. The train was far ahead, and there being no way of carrying much meat, to say nothing of the hide, only a few pounds of choice steak were selected besides the tongue, and the rest of the animal was left to the coyotes while we hurried on to overtake the train.

The evenings, like the days, were fine; campfires enlivened the nightly scene while accordion and violin, varied with song and story, whiled away the pleasant hours.

Jacobs had always a fund of anecdote concerning Bannaek and mining days for eager listeners. He told of squaw and Indian life in the wigwams of the Deer Lodge;

³ Sam Word became later one of the most prominent lawyers in the Northwest. He was an influential Democrat and had much to do with developing the coal mining industry.

⁴ Blivens discovered Blivens Gulch. Mann was a miner for many years.

also he told of an adventure between Bozeman, himself and daughter, and a roving band of Crow Indians whom they had met while journeying to our place of rendezvous on the Platte.⁵

The Crows, at that time professedly on good terms with the whites, had a funny way, on meeting straggling parties of the latter in out-of-the-way places, of exchanging guns, horses and other contraptions with their white brothers, always taking the best and leaving the worst to the pale faces. Jacobs, from a distance, had, while passing some brush, spied the savages and, unseen by them had shied rifle in the bushes. A parley with the Indians ensued, during which the little half-breed girl received an impromptu ramrod castigation for being caught in such poor company as her white father and Bozeman and, the plundering completed, the two parties went their several ways.

The hidden rifle was recovered but no ammunition had been saved from the swap and no food, so the whites were obliged to subsist for days miserably until they reached the emigrant road on a portion of an old, blind buffalo bull. This they had killed with a hunting knife attached to the end of a pole.

Bozeman, not as voluble as Jacobs, was a tall, fine looking Georgian of somewhat light complexion, a tinge of red in his cheeks. He wore a fine suit of fringed buckskin, and had the looks and ways of a manly man. The writer cannot vouch for his being a peace officer of any sort, but there being a couple in the train who, according to some of the matrons, should long since have been in wedlock's bonds, Bozeman kindly consented to mitigate the scandal by tying the nuptial knot, one bright evening at the head of the corral.

But to return to our noon camp at Clear creek. In a large clump of willows, flanked by a low bench close to camp, a bear showed up. All flew to the fray, against the admonition of Bozeman as well as of the other guides who, having known of bears in underbrush before, and having personally "lost no bear" repaired to the bench to watch developments. Most of our men were in the bushes. Bang! went the guns and pistols; a battle royal was on and soon a cry reached camp, "a man killed." Some of the women screamed and one fainted. An old veteran with a half inch of stubble on his chin was led in with his whole under lip hanging at the corner of his mouth. The bear evidently understood the "noble art of self-defense." A few stitches of black thread and the doughty old chap, with bandaged jaw and gun in hand was, a few days later, again trudging through the sage brush alongside the train. In the meantime, and while the surgical act was on, arose a cry from the willow swamp, "another man killed." Ed. Walters had surprised the bear crouching near a bush. He fired and missed; bruin came on with a rush. Ed. had somewhere read that bears eat only fresh meat, so dropping on his face, he tried very earnestly to play "dead man." The bear was very suspicious, walked all over Ed., smelled of him, and bit into his scalp to make sure for himself. Ed.'s nerve was not equal to being eaten alive, if he knew it, and jumping to his feet, he let out a real Comanche yell that quickly brought the "boys" who stampeded Mr. Bear.

And now a third man got "killed." From an unsuspected ambush the bear rose right up in front of him, big as anybody, suggesting a friendly hug. Mr. Bruin sought to slap Baker's face, but, gun in hand, he fended and got off with only a finger scratch. A volley always followed the appearance of the bear from each new hiding place, and he was finally laid low with forty bullets through his hide. Four

⁵James Stuart gives an account of this in his *Journal of the Yellowstone Expedition of 1863* (Montana Historical Society, Contribution I, p. 188).

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men brought him into camp slung on a sapling, and presented the veteran with a claw, Walters with a tooth, and gave Baker the hide.

After the bear fight the stock was being corralled preparatory to moving on. Spying a long, dark, sinuous line on the slope of a distant ridge, I called Bozeman's attention. He quickly pronounced it Indians, 125 of them, all mounted, and the telescope revealed that they had only bows and arrows, with a few sawed-off shotguns. They trotted briskly down toward us and stopped a hundred yards away, making signs of peace. All was bustle and confusion in camp. We had previously become familiar with Indians along the overland road, but this was such a crowd. The stock was hustled in, the corral ropes drawn, and everyone was out armed to the teeth. Baker's wife hurriedly loaded her husband's muzzle loader which he had previously loaded himself. Not seeing her act, and not feeling sure of what he had done, he again loaded the same gun, but discovery was later made in time to avoid a casualty. The guides, seeing that squaws were in the party, and assured that this indicated a peaceful attitude, allowed them to approach the camp for a parley, after which the whole crowd squatted about a wagon sheet spread nearby on the ground.

Our women must offer a feast as an earnest of friendship, but Bozeman warned them that the Indians would take it as a sign of fear. No sooner were the dishes placed than a young buck, indignant and scornful, spurred his horse to ride over the grub. Bozeman, from the center of the corral among the oxen, having anticipated the possibility of such a demonstration, drew a bead on the reckless young savage and was just about to pull the trigger, when an old chief sprang to his feet and saved the day by grabbing the bridle, setting the horse back on his haunches, and, leading him out of the crowd with much cursing, sent the brave flying back to his tepee over the hills. Another moment and the whole pack would have been killed, and we would have had to fight all the Sioux and Cheyennes in Wyoming, as we went our way. Dinner being devoured, the spokesman of the Indians made known their errand.

"That was the only extensive game country remaining in the West; the California and Oregon Trails had driven most of the antelope and buffalo away from the wagon roads and the result would be the same here; the Indians were determined to prevent the opening of this new road, as it would mean starvation to their squaws and papooses; if we wished to return to the Platte, well and good; if not, all the Sioux and Cheyennes, already warned by nightly signal fires on the Big Horn mountains, would collect and wear us out."

Of course we could not consult each other in their presence, yet consult we must. They were told to retire to their camp after which we would make a decision and notify them. They mounted and left with a telescope and nine bridles concealed under their blankets besides a square meal to the good. One young brave remained to act as courier, and the situation was reviewed by several of our prominent men.

John Bozeman advised going through, as he said we were well armed and provisioned, well on our way in a splendid region, could travel in a double line, keep double guard night and day, and, having mostly oxen which were not easily to be stampeded or stolen, would have a great advantage. Jacobs and the other guides concurred. Captain Brady, although he had much to risk in his four teams and valuable outfit, urged going on—we all liked our noble captain.

At the conclusion of his speech the young Indian came forward and shook his hand confirming the tradition that savages admire bravery even in an enemy. Most of the men favored giving up the expedition. The season was advanced, they said; we were still a long way from the mines with the disadvantage of being in a hostile

country. We would be constantly harrassed, and would probably lose at least our horses. We had a number of women and children, and the savages would be pretty sure to keep their word. The Indian courier was sent away and told that we would take three days to decide what we would do. It was decided to dispatch a messenger back to the military posts along the Platte and request an escort to the Bannack mines.

Lieutenant William Coleman, now residing, I believe, at Deer Lodge, a fine looking and spirited young man, admired by all, volunteered, with his splendid horse, to attempt the trip starting at nightfall to elude the savages. It was agreed to await his return three days and, failing that, to infer that he had been captured by the redskins and to start on the back track. The period of anxious waiting expired, and no horseman dotted the distant plain.

On the fourth morning Bozeman offered to guide such as wished to proceed on the forward trip, providing there were no less than eight wagons. Only four, ours among the number, pulled out of the line, the other 41, with popping whips, turning back on a crosscut to strike the Platte opposite Scott's Bluff, some distance upstream from Deer creek, from whence we had started. Bozeman advised the four venturesome ones to follow, and away we went. On the second or third day, to our great relief and joy, here came the gallant Coleman galloping fast and none the worse for wear.

Red tape among the military people with vexatious delays through the necessity of telegraphing to Washington for instruction, permission and orders, had resulted in a company of soldiers with a cannon and supplies for such as might be in need being dispatched over our road to escort us through. Many of the eager soldier boys had refused offers of five dollars bonus from comrades at the posts for their places in the ranks, and the troop was already close to our late camp on Clear creek.

Imagine our chagrin! However, once on the return, no one would stop, and reaching again the Overland Trail, the train disbanded and a race for the mines began. Before leaving Clear creek, Bozeman had organized a party of eight horsemen with pack animals to continue the journey so well begun. They steered a course as much as possible between the rivers and mountains, as being less likely to encounter Indians, often suffering for water during the hot afternoons and being obliged at times to eat even crows. All got safely through, however, and the writer afterward met several at various times and places in Montana.

Jacobs repaired to Denver for the winter, after which he and Bozeman, during the following year, 1864, inaugurated the Bozeman Cut-off, and the Indians made no end of trouble.

The subsequent treacherous murder of John Bozeman by the Indians in revenge for his activities in opening the road is now a matter of history.

Dillon, Montana, September 7th, 1920.

BOOK SHELF

A Stranger and Afraid. Ted Olson.
(Yale University Press. 1928. \$1.25.)

There is beautiful adequacy in the verse of this Wyoming poet. The reader rests in the phrases and the rhythms. For the poems, happily lacking for the most part the fervor, the raucousness, the staccato, the "Here, here" of so much recent verse, have clarity of idea and restraint of emotion and right, and therefore unobtrusive, language.

Mr. Olson has thought about life for himself; and although he has discovered nothing new, what he has found he expresses with sturdy courage, and his philosophic attitude is unmistakable. One finds in his verse occasionally the daring of Thomas Hardy or perhaps it is the good-natured arrogance of Stephens's Tomas an Bruile; one often finds the mellow, almost pathetic acceptance of life, without the dramatic sense, of A. E. Housman; and everywhere there is the pessimism of Schopenhauer. Yet the ideas and the moods are authentically Mr. Olson's.

Nowhere in the poetry is there notable memorability; seldom powerful conceptions; but often and often the reader feels the happy rightness of conception and language and is content that the poet has attempted only hills of song that he is able to scale largely because of repeated trial journeys. The poems are each so finely a unit that lines for quotation are hard to cull, but one might in illustration choose these:

*Time has a way with flesh that is more
cruel,*

Than any ruin it may work on stone."

And there are phrases beautiful in suggestion and picture—"The long pulse of the wind", "warming to dim, great dreams of grain and God", "the aspen leaves that lift so thin a web against the waning day", "the white horror of uncharted snows". The most complete blending, perhaps, of emotion and idea and imagery and rhythm and form is found in the beautiful sonnet, "The City in the Sea". Its figure of speech is not so consciously employed as the figure in that other fine sonnet, "The Lariat", and the adjustment of the idea to form seems a little snugger than in another fine sonnet, "Makeshift".

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Lanterns in the Mist. Lucy M. C. Robinson. (Belleville Press, Amity, Oregon. 1928.)

The title is attractive and quite in the contemporary fashion. But the title poem is a disappointment. "On living in Greenwich Village", however, which is really on living in Spokane, encourages the reader. "The Keeper of the Flame", rather grandiose light verse to the fireman in the Davenport Hotel, is interesting not so much in its details as in its stimulating central idea—centralized heating as it were! "In Peaceful Valley" is, in the main, lovely and alive, to be enjoyed by all who know rivers.

But "The Lonely Wind", short, real, loving, is the best thing in the volume.

*"The wind is a lonesome beastie,
He whines around my door;
And if I leave the smallest crack
He crawls along the floor,
To steal up close behind my chair,
I feel his breath behind me there,
And little paws that pat my hair."*

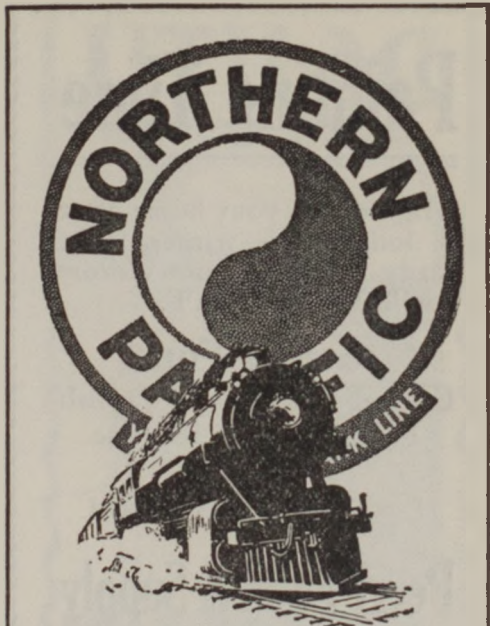
The book, in spite of faults in form and feeling, apparently innate in newspaper verse, which most of this is, reprinted from Spokane and other papers, does, nevertheless, make one wish to see Spokane and know more about the things of it that Lucy M. C. Robinson writes of
Missoula Mary Brennan Clapp

The Litany of Washington Street. Vachel Lindsay. (Macmillan. 1929. \$3.00.)

"This is a Gilbert Stuart kind of a book. It is a kind of a Washington's birthday, a Lincoln's birthday, Whitman's birthday and Jefferson's birthday book. Please do not be too censorious of non-historical sentences. Draw your pencil through them and go on."

These initial sentences from the prologue of Vachel Lindsay's new book not only defer to the historian but intimate what will follow. The poet enjoys the word "Litany". He uses it frequently, for instance, in his poem *The Litany of Heroes*. It is a fitting term. His choice of the fine old word "troubadour" for a sobriquet suggests his preference for anything pertaining to the chant.

The Litany of Washington Street comes after a period of rather extended incubation, broken by occasional verse or bits of criticism. It is a collection of orations or fantasies which have appeared from time to time in such periodicals as *The Dearborn Independent*, *The English Journal*, or *The New Republic*. To my mind Mr. Lindsay's genius is creative rather than critical and for this reason the pres-



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ent volume has not for me the appeal of his earlier prose reminiscences: *A Handy Guide for Beggars* or *Adventures While Preaching the Gospel of Beauty*. This is not to say that it is not new, or fresh, or significant. Every poet—or nearly every one—is a craftsman of prose as well and Mr. Lindsay's latest effort contains arresting observation phrased beautifully. It is a series of *aperçu*, the author wandering at will. For him "to travel is better than to arrive". His introduction intimates as much. His, he infers, will be a poetic interpretation of history—an assurance which to many enthusiasts is as much as saying it will be the truest.

A word regarding the handiwork of Macmillan and Company. The volume is most attractively bound and has extra heavy plate paper. It contains some very fine reproductions of steel engravings.

Missoula

R. A. Coleman

Kristin Lavransdatter. Sigrid Undset. (Knopf. 1929. \$3.00.)

Consisting of three books in one, *Kristin Lavransdatter* presents a challenge to the hurried present-day reader that it will be well worth while to accept. Since its author, Sigrid Undset, has won the Nobel Prize, these books have been reprinted by Knopf in a beautifully bound volume which does not appear to contain, as it does, over a thousand pages.

The stories of the three books are very closely related and tell of the life of Kristin, born in Norway in the fourteenth century, from the time she is a little girl until her death. *The Bridal Wreath* tells of her childhood and girlhood, her betrothal, which she breaks on account of her love for, and passionate absorption in, another man, Erlend Nikulausson, of Husaby, whom her father finally allows her to marry. Her father, Lavrans, is an outstanding character in a large group of characters vividly portrayed. The relationship and some of the conversations between him and Kristin are not soon forgotten. The Second book, entitled *The Mistress of Husaby*, tells of Kristin's married life, the bearing of seven sons and of their irresponsible, incurably youthful and yet charming father. On account of political plotting Erlend loses Husaby, his inherited estate, and barely escapes death. *The Cross* is the title of the Third book. Here we see Kristin's relationship to her growing sons and the years of her maturity. In it Kristin suffers much and learns much. And at last, having lost her husband and having turned the affairs of her ancestral estate over to a daughter-

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in-law, she enters a religious order, and later dies in an epidemic of the black plague.

The significance of this trilogy lies in the fact that it combines the historical novel of a Sir Walter Scott with the psychological analysis of a Swinnerton. The reader has the interest of the kind of book which is today considered somewhat old-fashioned—the accurate notation of historical events, and manners and customs, of 14th century Norway. (Sigrid Undset's father is said to be one of the best known archeological scholars of Norway and his daughter's knowledge of the Viking period is founded upon deep study.) But this historical interest is blended with a most modern analysis of character, and intimate glimpses into the minds and feelings of those who people its pages. There is the fascination of watching actual growth in individuals. There is no character who is stereotyped or perfect. The imperfections of Kristin's make-up are so obvious as to irritate the reader at times. She is so real that one rages at her shortcomings, and loves her. So it is with her knightly, impractical husband, whom she berated and resented and yet found irresistible. Her sons are all interesting and different.

One finishes the book feeling that there is much to be said for the lengthy novel.
Missoula *Doris F. Merriam*

The Making of Buffalo Bill. Richard J. Walsh. (Bobbs Merrill, 1928. \$5.00.)

The west and the Indian wars made William F. Cody. An Irishman, named John Burke, genial liar and press agent extraordinary, made Buffalo Bill. And Will Cody loved it. Pitilessly, Mr. Walsh undresses the glamorous hero. He takes off the buckskin trappings and the splendid boots. He turns off the calcium glare of the big tent and leads a shrunken figure into the daylight of facts.

Bill Cody was an adventuresome, likeable young man, whose scalp was once creased by an Indian bullet; who scouted a little for a regiment of soldiers. His active life on the plains ended when he was but twenty-six years old.

Buffalo Bill was the chief of scouts for the United States Army; his body bore the scars of one hundred and thirty-seven wounds. He was the long-haired savior of the Inland Empire, at whose name outlaw and Indian grovelled. Mr. Burke, the press agent, did it. The pen is mightier than the sword.

Walsh did a scholarly piece of work. He traced the legends to their sources;

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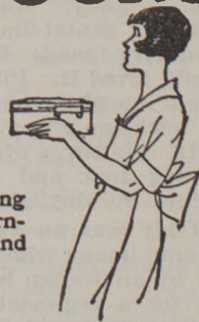
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examined the known facts; brought to light the discrepancies, and reinterpreted the hero in the light of his generation and his background. The result is an honest book. A book which helps one to see in proper proportion, not only the wavy-locked hero of the Deadwood Coach, but the decade of which he was a brilliant ornament. It is Mr. Walsh's achievement, that in destroying the hero, he brings to life the man. A very human man, given to follies and capable of nobility. Braver in his old age, facing dwindling audiences and disease, than in youth, riding to avenge Custer. Mr. Walsh's book places him quite definitely among the men who are saving the west from Hollywood. And it's very readable.

Missoula

Brassil Fitzgerald

In Those Days. Harvey Fergusson. (Knopf, 1929. \$2.50.)

The blight of the melodramatic and the sentimental, those twin curses of Western fiction, is unmistakably passing. What fine promise lies in the craftsmanship of Stanley Vestal's *Life of Kit Carson*, Vardis Fisher's *Toilers of the Hills*, and—the greatest of the three—Willa Cather's *Death Comes for the Archbishop*. To make the trio a memorable quartet one need only add Harvey Fergusson's latest book *In Those Days*, like Miss Cather's novel an impression of the Old Southwest. The setting is about as far as the analogy will carry us, for there are no saints in Mr. Fergusson's pages. Miss Cather is more searching in her analysis; her protagonists are more worthy of solicitation and therefore more abiding. She pours out her love for them as a mother would for her children. Mr. Fergusson's treatment is more superficial; his affection tempered with judgment; his humor genial, detached, calculative. Unlike the leisurely unfolding of Miss Cather's story, the impressions of Mr. Fergusson come to us in four great leaps of time: *Wagons, Indians, Railroad, Gas*. The narrative, however, is not so episodic as these titles suggest. It is unified in the person of Robert Jayson, a gawky, self-conscious son of the Middle Border, whose coming to himself must have been the writer's joy in fashioning as much as it is the reader's delight in apprehending.

Young Jayson is literally shoved into life. A young Mexican hot-blood almost drags him into a brawl; two Mexican girls, one of the peasant type, the other highly sophisticated, awake him sexually. And when he returns from his expedition

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as a horse-trader among the Apaches, he is a hardened gringo, keen, decisive, capable. Thus we follow him through the different stages of Western development up to the coming of the automobile.

In this feverish interim of raucous laughter and rude jest we see the young West growing up. It is a period of growing pains, breaking out in such freak disguises as the uproarious saloon, the still more boisterous Kelly Club, the serio-comic antagonism of wife against prostitute.

And at the end of this "strange, eventful history" our hero comes into the "lean and slippered pantaloons," sobered at the quick dropping off of old cronies, sadly reminiscent of the good old days.

Harvey Fergusson knows his material first hand. We are told the background is that of his own family, his grandfather having been a freighter over the old Santa Fe trail. The author's later years as a newspaper man in Washington, D. C., bore fruit in two society novels: *Capitol Hill* and *Women and Wives*. His earlier western story, *Wolf Song*, is to my mind distinctly inferior to the book here reviewed. This is as it should be.

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