



The COW PUNCHER

By Robert J.C. Stead

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"Kitcheners, and other poems"
Illustrations by Irwin Myers

CHAPTER X.—Continued.

Their eyes met, and each of them knew what it meant. It meant an announcement to her mother that she had met Dave downtown. It meant perhaps a supposition on her mother's part that she had gone downtown for that purpose. It was far-reaching. But she said simply, "I should enjoy driving home with you."

On the way they planned that the following Sunday they would drive into the foothills together. Of course they would ask Mrs. Hardy to accompany them. Of course. But it might happen that Mrs. Hardy would be indisposed. Irene was of the opinion that what her mother needed now was rest.

As it happened Mrs. Hardy was at the gate. She greeted Dave cordially enough. Encouraged by her mood, Irene determined to settle the Sunday program at once.

"Dave was good enough to bring me up in his car," she said. "And just think! He invites us to drive into the foothills with him next Sunday. Will you come? It will be delightful. Or are you feeling—"

"Mr. Elden is very kind," said Mrs. Hardy, with dignity. "I have no doubt Mr. Conward will accompany us. He is to call this evening and I will ask him. . . . Yes, I think it very likely we will go."

The summer wore on, and autumn followed on its heels. The processes which had been discerned by Conward and other astute operators were now apparent to the mob which forever follows in the wake of the successful, but usually at such a distance as to be overwhelmed in the receding flood. The forces which had built up fabulous fortunes were now in reverse gear, and the same mechanism that had built up was now tearing down. As the boom had fed upon itself, carrying prices to heights justifiable only to the most insane optimism, so did the subsequent depression bear down upon values until they reached depths justifiable only to the most abandoned despondency. The rosy bubble, inflated with the vapors of irresponsible speculation, had dissolved into thin air.

Mrs. Hardy was among the last to admit that she had bought on an ebbing tide. She contended that her house was well worth the price she had paid; what if speculation had come to a stop? So much the better; her house was still worth its price. She would stand firm.

Mrs. Hardy consulted Conward. It had grown to be her habit to consult Conward on all matters in which she found an interest.

"How is it, Mr. Conward," Mrs. Hardy said to him one evening over her fancy work—for she practiced an indefatigable industry in matters of no importance—"how is it that there is no demand for property? You are a real-estate expert; you should be able to answer that. Isn't this city as good today as it was a year ago? Doesn't it occupy the same site? Are not the farms still producing?"

"That's just it, dear Mrs. Hardy. Why, indeed? Simply because the booster has given way to the calamity howler. Its psychological explanation is simple enough. The world lives by faith. Without faith there would be neither seedtime nor harvest. That is true of raising cities as well as of raising crops. But there are always those who ridicule faith; always were, always will be. And as soon as faith disappears things begin to sink."

"Ah!" said Mrs. Hardy gently. "So we owe all this—these empty houses and shops, unsalable property and everything to those who have lost faith—or never had it. To men like Mr. Elden, for instance. You remember how he tried to discourage me from the very first—tried to break down my faith—that was it, Mr. Conward—I see it all very plainly now—and he and others like him have brought things to their present pass. Well, they have a great responsibility."

As a result of this discussion Dave found himself rather less popular with Mrs. Hardy than before. Dave accepted her displeasure with a light-heartedness that was extremely trying to the good woman's temper. Had it not been for his desire to spare Irene any unhappiness he would have treated it with open flippancy. He was engaged in the serious business of capturing the heart of Irene Hardy—a task made none the easier by the self-imposed condition that he must conduct no offensive but must await with such patience as he could command the voluntary capitulation of the besieged. On the whole he told himself he had no reason to be dissatisfied with the progress of events. He and Irene often motored together, frequently accompanied by Mrs. Hardy, sometimes by Conward as well, but occasionally alone. And Irene made no secret of the fact that she preferred the trips in which only she and Dave participated.

The gradual shrinkage of values to the vanishing point imposed upon Dave many business duties which he would very gladly have evaded. The office of Conward & Elden, which had

once been besieged by customers eager to buy, was now a center of groups no less eager to sell; and when they could not sell they contrived to lay the blame upon the firm which had originally sold to them. Although, for the most part, these were men and women who had bought purely from the gambler's motive, they behaved toward the real-estate dealer as though he had done them an injustice when the finger of fortune turned up a loss instead of a profit. For such people Dave had little sympathy, and if they persisted in their murmurings he told them so with becoming frankness.

Then there was Merton, the widower with sick lungs and the motherless boy, who had brought his little savings to the West in the hope of husbanding out his life in the dry, clear atmosphere and saving his son from the white death that had already invaded their little family. With a cruelty almost unbelievable Conward had talked this man into the purchase of property so far removed from the city as to possess no value except as farm land; and the little savings which were to ward off sickness and death, or, if that could not be, minister modest comfort in the declining hours of life, had been exchanged for property which, even at the time of the transaction, was valueless and unsalable.

Merton had called on Dave with respect to his investment. Dave had at first been disposed to tell him frankly that the property, for which he had paid twenty dollars a foot, was barely worth that much an acre. But a second look at the man changed his purpose.

"I know you were stung, Merton," he said, "shamelessly stung. You are one of those unsuspecting fellows who think everybody is going to play fair with them. You belong to the class who keep all kinds of rogues and scoundrels in easy circumstances. You might almost be charged with being accessories. Now, just to show how I feel about it—how much did you pay for those lots?"

"Three thousand dollars. It was all I had."

"Of course it was. If you had had more you would have paid more. I suppose Conward justified himself



"I think you are absolutely innocent," he said gravely.

with the argument that if he didn't take your easy money someone else would, which is doubtless true. But just to show you how I feel about it—I'll buy those lots from you, for three thousand dollars."

"I can't do it, Mr. Elden; I can't do it," said Merton, and there was moisture on his cheeks. "That would be charity—and I can't take it. But I'm much obliged. It shows you're square, Mr. Elden, and I hold no ill will to you."

"Well, can I help you in some way you will accept? I'm afraid—I don't mean to be unkind, but we may as well be frank—I'm afraid you won't need help very long."

Merton answered as one who has made up his mind to the inevitable, and Dave thought better of him. This little wreck of a man—this child in business matters—could look death in the face without a quiver.

"Not so long," he said. "I felt ever so much better when I came here first; I thought I was really going to be well again. But when I found what a mistake I had made I began to worry, not for myself, you know, but the boy, and worry is just what my trouble lives on. I have been working a little, and boarding out, and the boy is going to school. But I can't do heavy work, and work of any kind is hard to get. I find I can't keep going that way."

Merton looked with dreamy eyes through the office window, while Dave was turning over the hopelessness of his position and inwardly cursing a system which made such conditions possible. Society protects the physically weak from the physically strong; the physical highwayman usually gets his deserts; but the mental highwayman preys upon the weak and the inexperienced and the unorganized, and Society votes him a good citizen and a success.

"I had a plan," Merton continued, half apologetically, as though his plan

did him little credit—"I had a plan, but it can't be worked out. I have been trying to raise a little money on my lots, but the mortgage people just look at me."

"What is your plan?" said Dave kindly. "Any plan, no matter how bad, is always better than no plan." "I thought," said Merton timidly—"I thought if I could build a little shack on the lots I could live there with the boy and we could raise a very fine garden. The soil is very fertile and at least we should not starve. And the gardening would be good for me, and I could perhaps keep some chickens and work out at odd jobs as well. But it takes money to build even a very small shack."

"How much money?" demanded Dave.

"If I had a hundred dollars—" "Bring your title to me tomorrow; to me personally, you understand. I'll advance you five hundred dollars."

Merton sprang up, and there was more enthusiasm in his eyes than had seemed possible. "You will? But I don't need that much—"

"Then use the surplus to live on."

So the Merton affair was straightened away in a manner which left Dave more at peace with his conscience. But another event, much more dramatic and far-reaching in its effects upon his life, was already ripe for the enacting.

There were cases that could not be turned away with a sharp answer. Bert Morrison, for instance. Bert had never mentioned her "investments" since the occasion already recorded. She greeted Dave with the sociability due to their long-standing friendship; and her calm avoidance of the subject hurt him more than the abuse of all his irate patrons.

Business conditions had necessitated unwelcome economy in the office affairs of Conward & Elden, as a result of which many old employees had been laid off and others had been replaced by cheaper and less experienced labor. Stenographers who had been receiving a hundred dollars a month could not readily bring themselves to accept fifty, and some of them had to make way for new girls, fresh from the business colleges. Such a new girl was Gladys Warden—pretty, likable, inexperienced. Her country home had offered no answer to her ambitions, and she had come to the city with the most dangerous equipment a young woman can carry—an attractive face and an unsophisticated confidence in the goodness of humanity. Conward had been responsible for her position in the office, and Dave had given little thought to her except to note that she was a willing worker and of comely appearance.

Returning to the office one Saturday evening Dave found Miss Warden making up a bundle of paper, pencils and carbon paper. She was evidently in high spirits, and he smilingly asked if she intended working at home over Sunday.

"Oh, didn't Mr. Conward tell you?" she answered, as though surprised that the good news had been kept a secret. "He is to spend a day or two at one of the mountain hotels, and I am to go along to do his correspondence. Isn't it just lovely? I have so wanted to go to the mountains, but never felt that I could afford it. And now I can combine business with pleasure."

The smile died out of Dave's eyes, and his face became more set and stern than she had ever seen it.

"Why, what's the matter, Mr. Elden?" she exclaimed. "Is anything wrong?" He found it hard to meet her frank, unsuspecting eyes; hard to draw back the curtains of the world so much that those eyes would never again be quite so frank and unsuspecting. "Miss Warden," he said, "did Conward tell you that?"

"What? About going to the mountains? Of course. He said he was taking some work with him, and he wondered if I would mind going along to do it, and he would pay the expenses, and—and—" There was a quick, hard catch in her voice, and she seized Elden's arm violently. Her eyes were big and round; her pretty face had gone suddenly white.

"Oh, Mr. Elden, you don't think—you don't think—that I—that he—you wouldn't believe that—"

"I think you are absolutely innocent," he said, gravely, "but—it's the innocent thing that gets caught."

The girl had broken into violent tears. "Whatever shall I do? What can I do?" she moaned. "Oh, why didn't somebody tell me? What can I do?"

He let her passion run on for a few minutes, and then he sought, as gently as he could, to win her back to some composure. "Some one has told you," he said—"in time. You don't have to go. Don't be afraid of anything Conward may do. I will settle this score with him."

She controlled herself, but when she spoke again her voice had fear and shame in it. "I—I hate to tell you, Mr. Elden, but I must tell you—I—I took—I let him give me some money—to buy things. He said maybe I was short of money and I would want to buy some new clothes—and he would pay me extra, in advance—and I've spent it!"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Tricks of the Trade.
Lawyer (to fair client, a defendant)—"When a young juror looks at you, weep; when an old one looks at you, flirt."

Nothing New.
"All the world's a stage," and yet some people look upon the revolving stage as a modern idea.

POULTRY FACTS



FOWLS OPEN DOOR OF HOUSE

Tilting Platform Arranged So That Hens May Liberate Themselves by Stepping on It.

The following is one of the simplest methods of enabling hens to open the henhouse door in the morning, thereby relieving their owner of the necessity of rising at daybreak to let them out. The door of the henhouse is hinged at the top, so that it opens outward, and the lower edge catches against the floor, so that it cannot swing inward. Near the lower edge on the outside a cord is attached, which passes upward over two small pulleys hanging from a beam. The other end of the cord supports a tin can weighted with stones, so as to be just heavy enough to pull the door open and keep it so. On the floor of the henhouse, right in front of the door, is a tilting platform, with a hook in the front edge, which fits an eye screwed into the door. The door can therefore be locked at night by catching the hook in the eye, and the pull of the cord against the door on the outside has the effect of making the hook hold securely. When the owner has locked the door in the evening, after the hens have gone to roost, he sprinkles a few grains of feed on the outward end of the tilting platform, which is now in a horizontal position, and leaves the henhouse by the large door, which he locks behind him. On the following morning, the first hen which jumps upon the platform to pick at the feed tilts the platform, releasing the hook from the eye; and the weighted can on the outside pulls



Hens Unlock Poultry House Door by Stepping on Tilting Platform.

the door open. A knot in the cord, made to catch in the pulley, will prevent wrenching at the hinges.—L. Hussakof, Brooklyn, N. Y., in Popular Mechanics Magazine.

POULTRY IN PUREBRED CLASS

Entry of Peafowls Received From South Dakota Farmer—Also Turkeys, Ducks and Geese.

The first peafowls have been entered in the "Better Sires—Better Stock" crusade of the agricultural colleges, the United States department of agriculture, and co-operating agencies. The entry comes from Butte county, S. D., and the owner is J. L. Jones. He is using purebred sires in breeding horses, cattle, swine and poultry. Among his poultry he records a peacock and two peahens, also a liberal number of turkeys, geese and ducks. The campaign already is giving valuable facts and figures regarding the classes of live stock most commonly kept together on farms.

MAKE FRIENDS WITH FOWLS

Hens Will Not Do Their Best When They Run at Approach of Attendant—Feed From Hand.

Make friends with your hens. They will thrive better. You will like to care for them better. Hens cannot be at their best when they always run at the approach of their attendant. Feed a little from your hand. You will get their confidence, and more of their eggs.

ARRANGE TO PRESERVE EGGS

Those Gathered in April and May May Be Put in Waterglass and Saved for Winter.

Save eggs during April and May for winter use by preserving in waterglass. Mix nine quarts of water, boiled and cooled, with one quart of waterglass. Place the solution in a five-gallon jar. Will preserve 15 dozen eggs. Store in cool place for winter use.

COLONY HOUSES BENEFICIAL

Poultryman Enabled to Place Growing Stock on Clean Ground Reducing Disease Dangers.

Colony houses permit the poultryman to place his growing stock on clean ground each year and this reduces the danger of disease which is present when young stock is raised on the same soil over which the old birds have been ranging for many years.

DISINFECT SEED BED TO PREVENT DISEASE

Before Planting Be Sure to Destroy All Fungi.

Sterilization by Heat in Form of Steam is Most Effective—Formalin Treatment May Be More Practical for Majority.

(By OTIS REINKING, Colorado Agricultural College, Fort Collins, Colo.)

Be sure to disinfect your seed beds, cold frames or hot house beds before planting. The purpose is to kill all fungi which cause damping off, stem rot, black rot, and other diseases. Sterilization by heat in the form of steam is the most effective; however, the formalin treatment may be more practical for the majority.

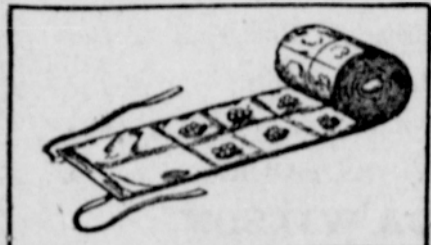
The formalin solution is made up by using 4 quarts of formalin (40 per cent formaldehyde to 50 gallons (1 barrel) of water. Apply at the rate of 2 quarts per square foot of ground. One barrel, at this rate, will cover a piece of ground one rod long by six feet wide. Apply the solution gradually to the soil with a sprinkling pot. It is well to cover the bed for 24 hours with sacks disinfected in the formalin solution.

Do not plant until the third or fourth day after disinfecting, or until the ground is in a suitable condition. This will allow all formalin fumes to escape so that the seed and young growing plants will not be injured.

SEED TESTER QUITE SIMPLE

Inexpensive Contrivance Comprises Envelope Enfolded Pad Which Retains Moisture.

The Scientific American in illustrating and describing a seed tester invented by A. F. Esslinger of Ypsilanti, Mich., says: The object of the invention is to provide a simple, and inexpensive contrivance for testing seeds. The tester comprises an envelope



Showing Manner in Which Seeds Are Enclosed in Tester.

formed by folding longitudinally the outer member and stitching it at one of the edges, this envelope enfolds a pad which absorbs and retains moisture for a period sufficient to cause germination of the seeds. The envelope is stitched longitudinally and transversely, to form sections each of which is numbered for identification purposes.

SOIL FERTILITY IS LACKING

Many Unprofitable Pastures Need Re-seeding or Liberal Application of Plant Food.

Many pastures gradually prove unprofitable not from overgrazing or seasonable conditions but from lack of soil fertility. This is especially true where cattle, sheep, etc., graze in an open field and then run into some shady spot to rest, so conditions should be carefully studied. In some cases it will be found that the pasture needs reseeded, though in many cases it will be learned that it is overgrazing or lack of available fertility in the soil that causes the decline, in which case removing the stock for a time if from overgrazing or the application of the necessary plant food if the latter will prove profitable.

CONFINED FOWLS NEED GRIT

Conditions in Winter Season Are Vastly Different From Summer When Hens Are Free.

When the hens are running in the field in summer they pick up and eat small sharp pieces of gravel which serve as grit to grind the food in the gizzard and keep the digestive organs in good shape. When the hens are confined to the houses during the winter they must have plenty of grit, and the commercial grit to be given in boxes and hoppers is the best, because it is the right size and is sharp.

LIME IS GOOD DISINFECTANT

Scattered About Henhouse It Has Tendency to Keep Fowls in Thrifty Condition.

Air-slaked lime is one of the best things known to scatter about in the henhouse, over the walls, roosts and floor, and in the nests, as a disinfectant. It keeps fowls in good health. It is also excellent to use in fighting roup and mites.

MORE FERTILIZER IS NEEDED

Every Shovelful of Manure Should Be Saved and With Rubbish Plowed Under.

More fertilizer is needed on many farms. Every shovelful of manure should be saved and all rubbish turned under when possible to improve the fertility of the soil. It takes plant food to yield crops. Poor land should be improved.

NATUROPATH

Dr. Geo. W. Crickwell, Specialist in Female Diseases—704-6 Dekum Bldg.

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WALL PAPER—PAINT

At wholesale and retail. Mail orders promptly filled. Smith's Wall Paper House, 108-110 Second St., Portland.

Introduction of English Walnuts.

The English walnut came to the Pacific coast in 1867, when Joseph Sexton of Santa Barbara, Cal., brought a sack of nuts from Chile and grew 1,000 trees at Goleta.

Sneeze Reform.

Do you sneeze correctly? A learned doctor says a-choo! is wrong; that you should sneeze a-da! or a-de! Try this on your organ.—Boston Transcript.

MARKETING BY PARCEL POST

Not All Farm Products Lend Themselves to Practice—Saving Can Be Made With Some.

While it may be attractive to a city dweller to believe that he can have a vegetable garden grown for him 100 miles or 150 miles away, place his orders for the cost of a stamp, and have the produce delivered at his door, it should be remembered the United States department of agriculture points out that not all farm products lend themselves to direct marketing by parcel post. Usually it is impracticable to market such heavy products as potatoes by parcel post, whereas eggs, butter, sausage, poultry, many vegetables, and nut meats may frequently be shipped with profit and at a saving to the purchaser. In general the greater the value per pound the more favorable is the chance for direct marketing.

NATURE SELF-PRUNES TREES

Pruning Is Often Paying Practice in Farm Timber Tracts of Valuable Small Pines.

When trees are properly spaced, nature "self prunes" the lower branches. But in farm timber tracts of small pines and with valuable kinds of trees, pruning is often a paying practice, say forestry specialists of the United States department of agriculture, if it is done during the slack time of winter.

SEED HOUSES ARE RELIABLE

Occasionally Concern Found That Cannot Resist Temptation of Mixing Grades.

The majority of the seed houses are reliable and trustworthy, but occasionally a concern cannot resist the temptation of mixing common, inferior and good seed together and selling it as first-class grade.

NAME 'BAYER' MEANS ASPIRIN IS GENUINE

Get relief without fear as told in "Bayer package"



"Bayer Tablets of Aspirin" to be genuine must be marked with the safety "Bayer Cross." Then you are getting the true, world-famous Aspirin, prescribed by physicians for over 18 years. Always buy an unbroken package of "Bayer Tablets of Aspirin," which contains proper directions to safely relieve Colds, Headache, Toothache, Earache, Neuralgia, Lumbago, Rheumatism, Neuritis, Joint Pains, and Pain generally.

Handy tin boxes of twelve tablets cost but a few cents. Druggists also sell larger "Bayer" packages. Aspirin is the trade mark of Bayer Manufacture of Mononitroacetate of Salicylic Acid.—Adv.

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