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HOW CRACKER CAME HOME

By STACY E. BAKER

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The city-cut clothes and Van Dyke beard of Cracker effectively disguised him as he strode carelessly along in the rear of Piodville's two most substantial citizens. Shreds of their conversation came back to him.
 Cracker had no particular reason for remaining incognito, except for a vivid memory, the unhealed bruises of which even now smarted to the sneers and comments of the same two, now before him, on his simple statement, years before, that he wished to become a lawyer.
 Cracker's father had been a fairly prosperous farmer on a tract of land bordering Piodville. Cracker's grandfather had preceded his father on this same spot—and there had been others before him bearing the same name and with the same blood in their veins. That the last of the clan had ambitions above that of tilling the soil had amused Piodville. Piodville, slumbering old village that it was, reeked not of stress and the fighting germ in a man's blood.
 The harsh voice of Enoch Sneedman broke in on the reverie of the youth.

"Emma died this morning," came from the lips of the old man. Lyman Tollman strode stolidly along beside his fellow townsman for some seconds before he ventured a reply.
 "Good thing," came in a harsh voice at last. "She was an expensive critter, Emma was."
 The nails of the man behind bit into the palms of his hands as he listened.
 "Oh, she was all right," championed old Enoch, reminiscently, "but pesky unreliable, and as finicky as a lady's lapdog."
 Cracker at these words took a sudden step forward, and then came to a stop with a contemptuous shrug of



his shoulders. "I can't assault old men," he grumbled, half aloud. "I should know more anyway than to expect sentiment from such—cattle. Still—her own father!—what brutes there are in this world!"
 Although Cracker had long since assured himself that he had put thoughts of the timid-eyed, golden-haired little maid from him, the dull beat of his heart now told him of the secret crypt that had long been kept for her.
 Emma! No other woman of his acquaintance before or since his college days could compare with her. And then a word had cut into his sensitive, town-taunted soul and ruined it all.
 Embittered with a town that could not or would not understand the ambition of a courageous son striving to rise above his environments, Cracker had made just one visit back to Piodville since the death of his mother had made it possible for him to sever all ties except one and take his long-dreamed-of college course.
 This one tie had been Emma Sneedman. He had come back to her, and into his conversation he had subtly woven a question that would decide whether she was above the narrow prejudice of the town, or hopelessly permeated with the views of her father and his neighbors.
 "Emma," he had said, "I have finished college. Where would you advise me to locate?"
 "Here," Emma had replied, simply; and Cracker, heavy of heart, had gone away and never, until now, came back.
 Cracker had gone to the far city, been admitted to the bar, and prospered. He had never intended to come back for the girl. Business had called him here, and now—she was dead!

She was dead! The heart, long unshaken, bravely threw off its shackles to tell Cracker the truth.
 "I must go to the house," murmured Cracker. There was a noticeable droop to the broad shoulders. "What a beast of a man that Sneedman is to talk in such a heartless manner of his own daughter who has just died. Let me see. Emma was nineteen years of age when I left here. I have been in the city eight years. She was twenty-seven when she died. I—I wonder if she ever married!" Cracker

turned his feet toward the old Sneedman homestead.
 There was little in the town that had changed. Cracker noticed, with listless eyes, the well-remembered crack in the tavern window, a scar given it in the old days through a rock propelled at him by "Bully" Henderson. The town pump still squeaked dully as the antiquated Hobbs drew the water for the wife's weekly wash.

No one recognized Cracker. His smart attire, the nose glasses and his heavy dark beard gave him an appearance of prosperity that not one of them would have credited to the queer boy who had left town years before.
 Cracker strode sorrowfully up the long walk leading through the Sneedman yard. His eyes sight the old-fashioned knocker of the front door. It was crapeless!
 "Beast!" reiterated Cracker. His hand stopped as he reached forth to sound his arrival. A gasp quivered on his lips. Some one inside the house was singing! Singing, at that, a catchy little melody of last season's musical comedy; a bit sadly amiss in this house of sorrow. His hand again found the knocker. The singing suddenly ceased, and hurrying steps told him that some one was on the way to the door.
 "I—I am an old—er—acquaintance of the family," came from Cracker as a pretty girl suddenly flung open the door. "I have come to view the remains."

The girl stared at him a moment in speechless silence. "The remains," she gasped, and then, with alarmingly red cheeks, "Oh, you are here to see—Emma."
 "Come in," giggled the girl. She led him speedily into the well-remembered parlor, and, murmuring something that escaped him, she disappeared through the door into the hall. A tinkle of holdenish laughter came echoing back to him.
 "I wish I had married Emma," groaned Cracker. "She must have endured a dog's life with these unfeeling people."
 "Why—it is Frank Cracker!"
 The man raised startled eyes, and fairly flung himself out of his chair. "You," he gasped.
 Before him, and all the dainty beauty that he had known of old, and poise and carriage that he could not define, stood—Emma Sneedman.

"Why, yes—me! Why not, Frank? Is there anything so very wonderful about it?"
 "But—but I thought you were dead."
 "Me—dead?" wondered the girl, and then she suddenly broke into a ripple of laughter. "Oh, I see it all now," she explained. "Some one has told you that Emma is dead, and you instantly thought that it was I. Listen! Emma was papa's carriage horse! He bought her while I was away at college, and he named her after me."
 "Away at college?"
 "Why, yes, Frank. After you went away it was lonesome here, and I persuaded papa to let me go to college. It was an old chum of mine who is now visiting me who admitted you to the house. I—I thought—when I went away—that you would come back, and—and I wanted to have an education, too."
 The girl's face was crimson. She had come impulsively forward to shake hands, and now Cracker was holding her close. Gradually she ceased to struggle and raised her eyes fearlessly to his own. The man saw in them the answer to his unspoken question.
 "I have come for you now," he whispered.

SAVAGE IMPULSES OF MAN
 When Emergencies Arise We're as Primitive as the Most Primitive of Our Ancestors.
 It's a mighty short step from modern civilization to the natural impulses of ancient savagery.
 If you don't believe it, just watch something, and you'll see a small boy—or a grown man—discover a rabbit.
 The first thought that comes into his mind is to kill the rabbit. Quickly he searches his mind to see where a weapon can be found.
 The second thought is to secure a rock to throw at it—just as some cave man might.
 A man finds a snake coiled in the road. It may be a harmless snake, but it's a snake, and therefore his primitive instinct calls upon him to kill it.
 A weapon! He seeks about for a club, just as his ancient, skin-clothed ancestors would have done, and having secured the club he dispatches the snake, his soul singing with triumph.
 Modern civilization probably would have urged the man to cut a forked stick and catch the snake by the neck with it, then to secure 10c worth of chloroform and kill it swiftly and painlessly. But he goes after the club just as naturally as if he had never seen a steam-heated flat, or ridden on a trolley car, or seen an automobile.
 Children roam in the woods and eat every variety of berry they can find. It matters not if they are poisonous. They taste them all from the looks, and the amount eaten depends on the taste. This is probably what the cave children did, and the modern infants show the same intelligent caution regarding what they put in their mouths.
 It's that way all through. We may have acquired a more or less thick veneer of modern civilization, but the emergencies arise and we're as primitive as the most primitive of our ancestors.—Galveston News.

Winter Turbans



THIS is decidedly a season of draped hats with velvets the leading fabric for draperies. Entire hats are made of it and numbers of others are combinations of velvet and silk, velvet and tapestry, velvet and fur, or beaver cloth or any of the millinery fabrics.
 These draped hats are, naturally, made on turban shapes, whose inspiration in most cases, is plainly drawn from the oriental headdress. Many of them set closely to the head, and some of them so close that they might be classed as caps. They are becoming and full of "style," that elusive quality which is worth so much to the milliner in money and to the wearer in "distinction."
 Large turbans bordered with shaggy furs, have crowns of velvet draped and cleverly arranged into trimming.
 Other shapes show crowns of velvet with brims of tapestry and velvet or of silk folded and tacked about the brim. A big bow of the fabric finishes a simple model of this sort, as shown in the illustration. But any other trimming that is fancied may be used as a finish.
 A lovely model as a soft crown (what is called this season the "flexible" crown) and a wide brim or coronet of marten fur. It is finished at the side with a handsome shaded willow plume, showing three colorings.
 Turbans, in fact, include most elaborate designs as well as those pretty simple models in which velvet is employed alone, and in which the designer relies upon clever draping effects to achieve style.
JULIA BOTTOMLEY.

CREAM BEAVER HAT. HATS ON THE FREAK ORDER

Millinery of the Moment May Be Described as Fearful and Wonderful.
 The millinery of the moment can only be described as freakish, for surely never before was the head of woman covered with such incongruities.
 Not content with simulating the appearance of mushrooms, sugar loaves and variegated birds' nests, the latest hat is the aeroplane, with large outstanding wings adorning the back of the hat and set at the jauntiest angle imaginable.
 The reign of the winged hat, soberly and decorously adorned with feathers covering the crown and part of the brim, is apparently over, for the wings must be made freakish to look smart, so following on the aeroplane hat we have the hat which can only be described as a winged Mercury, with two seductive looking wings plucked at the back of the crown of a large black hat, shaped exactly like the wings which adorn the ankles of the famous Mercury statue.
 There is no accounting for taste, for even if a woman knows she does not look well in a hat pulled down over her eyes until half her face is hidden, that hat she will wear because it is the fashion.
 One of the most startling millinery freaks seen was a blue velvet toque which can best be described as a bedizened sugar loaf.
 The cone part of this sugar loaf toque was of Wedgwood blue velvet, while a deep band of steel embroidered lace formed the lower part, and hanging from this was a tiny fringe of steel beads which would adorn the forehead Salomonwise. The toque, it should be added, completely covered all signs of hair and hid the wearer's left eye entirely.
 Other toques of the moment have crowns ascending skywards, so high and so full are these velvet crowns rising from a band of bizarre embroidery that they give a top-heavy appearance to the unfortunate wearer.

To Wash Bed Clothes.
 To wash heavy bed clothes make a warm suds with good soap and let the comfortables or blankets soak in it for awhile. Then take a new, clean hoe for a pounder. Pound well, and pound again in another suds. Rinse thoroughly and hang on the line without wringing. If a hose is handy spray plenty of water over them when on the line. The cotton comfortables will not mat when washed in this way.

Embroidery Jabot.
 For something new and dressy to wear with a linen shirtwaist, the embroidered jabot at once suggests itself, since it is less perishable than dainty but short-lived laces.
 One jabot of fine swiss embroidery in the vandyke pattern was laid in cascades from the neck to the waist line, gradually decreasing to a point. The material was gathered tightly, of course, and arranged in zigzag style down the narrow strip of lawn which served as its foundation.

A Sewing Tip.
 You will find when sewing fine silk that quite often the seams are inclined to pucker when silk thread is used. The sewing is made much smoother if cotton thread of the same color and size be used in the bobbin, with silk thread above.
 Do not dampen such seams when pressing them, for often water marks silk so that the stain cannot be removed.
Cucumber Cream.
 Cucumber cream is made from two ounces of almond oil, one-half ounce each of white wax and spermaceti and one ounce of cucumber juice. The latter is obtained either by grating the vegetable, skin and all, or by cutting and simmering it until pulpy. In either case it must be strained. Mixing proceed—as with other creams.

Fresh Air in Winter

In winter, it is hard to get fresh air in certain rooms. Some rooms in a house are usually colder than others, and if you open the windows it is hard again to heat the room properly.
 If you keep the windows closed you don't get fresh air; if you keep them open you cannot quickly reheat the room. The



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