

The Cow Puncher

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THE COW PUNCHER

Here's an up-to-date story of the ranch country, the city and "over there." It's a love story—the story of the master passion that drives a man onward to success for the sake of the woman he loves. The hero is a maverick of the foothills. The heroine is a city girl born to the conventions.

As the boy was practicing shooting with his cayuse on the dead run along came the first automobile he had ever seen. It obligingly tipped over right behind the ranch house and broke the owner's leg. So there was time for Dave and Irene to get acquainted—which was to fall in love.

They parted with a kiss—she to go back to her city life, he to win his way up to her.

CHAPTER I.

The shadows of the spruce trees fell northeastward, pointing long, cool fingers across belts of undulating prairie or leaning lazily against the brown foothills. And among the trees it was cool and green, and clear blue water rippled over beds of shining gravel.

The house was of round, straight logs; the shingles of the squat roof were cupped and blistered with the suns of many summers. Refuse loitered about the open door: many empty tins, a leaky barrel with missing hoops, boxes, harness, tangled bits of wire. Once there had been a fence, a sort of picket fence of little saplings, but wild broncos had kicked it to pieces and range steers had straggled unscarred across its scattered remnants.

Forward, and to the left, was a small corral, mill slabs on end or fences of lodgepole pine; a corner somewhat covered in, offering vague protection from the weather. The upper poles were worn thin with the cribbing of many horses.

The desertion seemed absolute; the silence was the silence of the unspoken places. But suddenly it was broken by a stamping in the covered part of the corral, and a man's voice saying:

"Hip, there! Whoa, you cayuse! Get under your saddle! Sleepin' against a post all day, you Sloppy-eye. Hip! Come to it!"

Horse and rider dashed into the sunlight. The boy—for he was no more than a boy—sat the beast as though born to it, his lithe frame taking every motion of his mount as softly as a good boat rides the sea. With a yell at his horse he snatched the hat from his head, turning to the sun a smooth brown face and a mane of dark hair, and slapped the horse across the flank with his crumpled headgear. The animal sprang into



The Animal Sprang Into the Air, Then Dashed at a Gallop Down the Roadway.

the air, then dashed at a gallop down the roadway, bearing the boy as unconcerned as a flower on its stem.

Suddenly he brought his horse to a stop, swung about, and rode back at a gentle canter. A few yards from the house he again spurred him to a gallop, and, leaning far down by the animal's side deftly picked a bottle from among the grass. Then he circled about, repeating this operation as often as his eye fell on a bottle, until he had half a dozen; then down the road again, carefully setting a bottle on each post of the fence that skirted it to the right.

Again he came back to the house, but when he turned his eye was on the row of posts and his right hand lay on the grip of his revolver. Again his sharp yell broke the silence and the horse dashed forward as though shot from a gun. Down the road they went until within a rod of the first bottle; then there was a flash in the sunlight and to the clatter of the horse's hoofs came the crack-crack of the revolver. Two bottles shattered in fragments, but four remained in-

fact, and the boy rode back, muttering and disappointed. He reasoned with his horse as he rode:

"Tain't no use, you ol' Sloppy-eye; a fellow can't get the bead if he ain't got the fillin'—cooked meals an' decent chuck. I could plug 'em six out o' six—you know that, you ol' floppers. Don't you argue about it, neither. When I'm right inside my belt I smash 'em six out o' six, but I ain't right, an' you know it. You don't know nothin' about it. You never had a father; leastways you never had to be responsible for one. . . . Well, it's comin' to a finish—a d— lame finish, you know that. You know—"

But he had reloaded his revolver and set up two more bottles. This time he broke four and was better pleased with himself. As he rode back his soliloquy was broken by a strange sound from beyond the belt of trees. The horse pricked up his ears and the boy turned in the saddle to listen. "Jumpin' crickets! What's loose?" he ejaculated. He knew every sound of the foothill country, but this was strange to him. A kind of snort, a sort of hiss, mechanical in its regularity, startling in its strangeness, it came across the valley with the unbroken rhythm of a watch tick.

"Well, I guess it won't eat us," he ventured at last. "We'll just run it down and perhaps poke a hole in it." So saying, he cantered along the road, crossed the little stream, and swung up the hill on the farther side.

He was half way up when a turn in the road brought him into sudden sight of the strange visitor. It was the first he had seen, but he knew it at once, for the fame of the automobile, then in its single-cylinder stage, had already spread into the farthest ranching country. The horse was less well informed. He bucked and kicked in rage and terror. But the boy was conscious not so much of the horse as of two bright eyes turned on him in frank and surprised admiration.

"What horsemanship!" she exclaimed. But the words had scarce left her lips when they were followed by a cry of alarm. For the car had taken a sudden turn from the road and plunged into a growth of young poplars that fringed the hillside. It half slid, half plowed its way into a semi-vertical position among the young trees. The two occupants were thrown from their seat; the girl fell clear but her father was less fortunate.

In an instant the boy had flung himself from his horse, dropping the reins to the ground, and the animal, although snorting and shivering, had no thought of disgracing his training by breaking his parole. With quick, ungainly strides the boy brought himself to the upturned machine. It was curious that he should appear to such disadvantage on his feet. In the saddle he was grace personified.

For a moment he looked somewhat stupidly upon the wreck. Had it been a horse or a steer he would have known the procedure, but this experience was new to his life. Besides there were strangers here. He had no fear of strangers when they wore chaps and colored handkerchiefs, but a girl in a brown sweater and an oldish man with a white collar were creatures to be approached with caution. The oldish man was lying on the ground, with a leg pinned under the car, and Brown Sweater raised his head against her knee and pressed his cheeks with small white fingers, and looked at the boy with bright gray eyes and said:

"Aren't you going to do anything?" That brought him back. "Sure," he said, springing to her side. "Whada ye want me to do?"

"I am afraid my leg is broken," said the man, speaking calmly notwithstanding his pain. "Can you get the jack out of the toolbox and raise the car?"

The girl pointed to the box, and in a moment he had the jack in his hand. But it was a new tool to him and he fumbled with it stupidly. The handle would not fit, and when it did fit it operated the wrong way.

"Oh, let me have it," she cried impatiently.

In a moment she had it set under the frame of the car and was plying the handle up and down with rapid strokes. The boy looked on, helpless and mortified. He was beginning to realize that there were more things in the world than riding a horse and shooting bottles. He felt a sudden desire to be of great service. And just now he could be of no service whatever.

But the foot of the jack began to sink in the soft earth, and the girl looked up helplessly.

"It won't lift it," she said. "What shall we do?"

It was his chance. He was eighteen, and his wild, open life had given him muscles of steel. "Here," he said roughly, "move his leg when I get it clear." He turned his back to the machine and crouched down until he could get his hands under the steel frame. Then he lifted. The car was in a somewhat poised position, and he was able to swing it up far enough to release the injured leg.

"Very good, my boy," said the man. "That was a wonderful lift. The leg is broken—compound. Can you get some way of moving me to shelter? I will pay you well."

The last words were unfortunate. Hospitality in the ranching country is not bought and sold.

"You can't pay me nothin'," he said rudely. "But I can bring a light wagon, if you can ride in that, and put you up at the ranch. The old man's soused," he added, as an afterthought, "but it's better than sleepin' out. I won't be long."

He was back at his horse, and in a moment they heard the clatter of hoofs galloping down the hillside. The girl rested her father's head in her lap. Tears made her bright eyes brighter still.

"Don't cry, Reenie," he said gently. "We are very lucky to be so close to help. Of course I'll be laid up for a while, but it will give you a chance to see ranch life as it really is." He winced with pain but continued: "I fancy we shall find it plain and unvarnished. What a horseman! If I could run an automobile like he does a horse we should not be here."

"He's strong," she said. "But he's rude."

"The best fields for muscle are often poor schools for manners," he answered.

The boy was soon back with a wagon and a stretcher. He avoided the eyes of his guests, but quickly and gently enough he placed the injured man on the stretcher. "I guess you'll have to take the feet," he said. The words were for the girl although he did not look at her. "I could hustle him myself but it might hurt 'im."

But the injured man interrupted. "I beg your pardon," he said, "that I did not introduce my daughter. I am Doctor Hardy; this is my daughter Irene, Mr.—?"

"They don't call me mister," said the boy. "Misters is scarce in these woods. My name is Elden—Dave Elden."

The girl came up with extended hand. He took it shyly, but it made him curiously bold.

"I'm glad to meet you, Mr. Elden," she said.

"I'm glad to meet you, too," he answered. "Misses is scarcer than misters in this neck o' the woods."

Carefully they lifted the injured man into the wagon, and Dave drove to the ranch building with an unwonted caution that must have caused strange misgivings in the hearts of his team.

"It ain't much of a place," he said, as they pulled up at the door. "I guess you can see that for yourself," he added, with a grin. "You see there's just dad and me, and he's soused most of the time, and I handle a lasso better'n a scrubbin' brush." He was already losing his shyness. "Now you take the feet again. Steady! Look out for that barrel hoop. This way now."

He led into the old ranch house, kicking the door wider open with his heel as he passed. A partition from east to west divided the house, and another partition from north to south divided the northern half. In the northeast room they set the stretcher on the floor.

"Now," said the boy, "I'm goin' for the doctor. It's forty miles to town, and it'll likely be mornin' before I'm back, but I'll sure burn the trail. There's grub in the house, and you won't starve—that is if you can cook." (This was evidently for Irene. There was a note in it that suggested the girl might have her limitations.) "Dig into anythin' in sight. And I hope your father's leg won't hurt very much."

"Oh, I'll stand it," said Doctor Hardy, with some cheerfulness. "We medical men become accustomed to suffering—in other people. You are very kind. My daughter may remain in this room, I suppose? There is no one else?"

"No one but the old man," he answered. "He's asleep in the next room, safe till mornin'. I'll be back by that time. That's my bed," indicating a corner. "Make yourselves at home." He lounged through the door, and they heard his spurs clanking across the hard earth.

The girl's first thought was for her father. She removed his boot and stocking, and, under his direction, slit the leg of his trousers above the injury. It was bleeding a little. In the large room of the house she found a pail of water, and she bathed the wound, wiping it with her handkerchief and mingling a tear or two with the warm blood that dripped from it. "You're good stuff," her father said, pressing the fingers of her unoccupied hand. "Now if you could find a clean cloth to bandage it—"

"Is that you, Dave?"
"Yes, Reenie, and the doctor, too."

(TO BE CONTINUED)



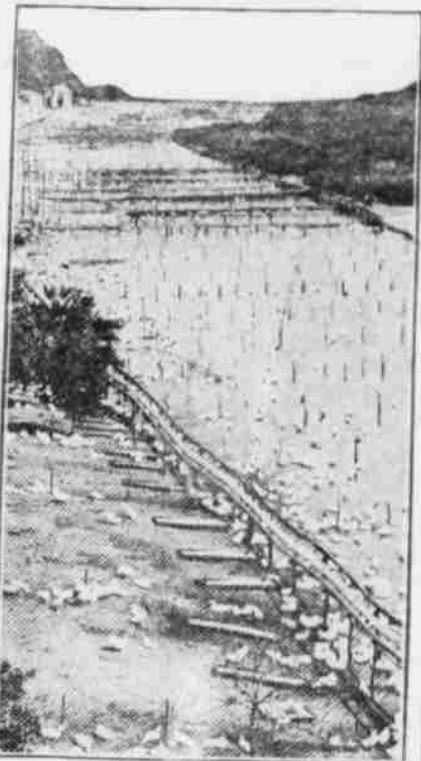
DUCK RAISING ON INCREASE

Long Island, N. Y., Contains Large Number of Commercial Farms—There Are Three Classes.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

According to the census of 1910 there were 2,906,025 ducks in the United States, valued at \$1,567,164, showing a decrease in number of nearly 40 per cent as compared with 1900. It should be stated, however, that the animal census of 1900 was taken June 1, and that of 1910 April 15, which fact would considerably reduce the above percentage, although only fowls three months old or over were reported on only 7.9 per cent of the farms in the country and are most numerous in the following states, arranged according to their production: Iowa, Illinois, New York, Pennsylvania, Missouri, Tennessee, Indiana, Kansas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Ohio, the number ranging from about 225,000 head in Iowa to 100,000 in Ohio. New York is the only one of these states which shows an increase in the number of ducks, while all the others show a marked decrease. Long Island, N. Y., contains a number of large commercial duck farms which apparently are quite successful. It would appear, therefore, that commercial duck farms are increasing somewhat, while the production of ducks on general farms as a side issue is decreasing, especially in the middle West.

There are 11 standard breeds of ducks which have been admitted to the American standard of perfection. These may be divided into three classes: (1) the meat class, including the Pekin, Aylesbury, Muscovy, Rouen, Cayuga, Buff, and Swedish; (2) the egg class, which includes the Indian Runner; and (3) the ornamental class, composed of the Call,



Large Duck Farm on Long Island.

the Crested White, and the Black East India. The common or so-called "puddle" duck is kept on many farms in middle West and South and is generally of small size, a poor layer, and an undesirable type of market duck. Excepting the Muscovy, all of our economic breeds of ducks are said to have originated from the Mallard, or common wild duck.

GOOD POULTRY HINTS

Keep the nests clean; provide one nest for every four hens. Gather the eggs twice daily. Keep the eggs in a cool, dry room or cellar. Market the eggs at least twice a week. Purchase well-matured pullets rather than hens.

CHANGE IN BREED OF FOWLS

Breeder Ought to Remember That New Variety May Have to Be Fed in Different Way.

If a breeder who has always kept one kind of hens suddenly changes to another breed, he ought to remember that the new variety may have to be fed and cared for in quite a different way. That will call for study as to the best kinds of food, best methods of housing and many other things.

DRY MASH HANDY FOR FOWLS

Mixture of Wheat, Bran, Cornmeal and Meat Scrap Should Be Available at All Times.

A dry mash composed of 100 pounds wheat middlings, 100 pounds wheat bran, 100 pounds corn meal, 50 pounds of meat scrap, mixed and fed in hoppers, should be where the fowls will have access to it at all times. All the skim milk should be given that they will clean up in connection with this.



The largest electric sign in the world advertises

WRIGLEY'S

on Times Square, New York City: It is 250 feet long, 70 feet high. Made up of 17,286 electric lamps.

The fountains play, the trade mark changes, reading alternately WRIGLEY'S SPEARMINT, DOUBLEMINT, and JUICY FRUIT, and the Spearmen "do a turn."

This sign is seen nightly by about 500,000 people from all over the world.



Kangaroo Farms.

Kangaroo farming is an important industry in Australia. The hides are valuable and the tendons extremely fine; indeed they are the best material known to surgeons for sewing up wounds and especially for sewing up broken bones together, being much finer and tougher than catgut.

Being Prejudiced.

Some of the world's greatest men have been prejudiced about most things; and all women make a specialty of prejudices—that is one reason why women are so delightful and so exasperating.—Holbrook Jackson in Today.

As we grow more sensible, we refuse drug cathartics and take instead Nature's herb cure, Garfield Tea.—Adv. Garfield Tea, taken regularly, will correct both liver and kidney disorders.—Adv.

Why Archie Muffed It.

It was at a cricket match in Australia. A tremendous skyer had been hit and the fielder was in fair way to catch the batter out. At this tense moment one of the spectators called out, "Miss it, Archie, and I'll let you kiss my sister."

Billions of Lead Pencils.

The world's product of lead pencils probably amounts to nearly two thousand millions a year, half of which are made from American-grown cedar. The United States makes about 750,000,000 a year, or more than eight pencils for each of its inhabitants.

Daily Thought.

Strengthen me by sympathizing with my strength, not my weakness.—Amos Bronson Alcott.

The Easiest Way.

Following the line of the least resistance is what makes rivers and men crooked.—Boston Transcript.

No Rent to Pay.

There is a city on the coast of southern California which is wholly built on stilts and where no rent is paid.

How Much Per Helping?

In South America two dainties are lizards and baked centipedes.

Visionary.

Which fruit is the most visionary? The apple of the eye.

Girls! Girls!!
Clear Your Skin
With Cuticura
Soap 25c, Ointment 25 and 50c, Talcum 25c.

NAME 'BAYER' MEAN ASPIRIN IS GENUINE

Safe, proper directions each "Bayer" package



The "Bayer Cross" stamped on each tablet means you are getting true Bayer Tablets of Aspirin, proved safe by lions of people—the genuine Aspirin prescribed by physicians for over years.

In every handy "Bayer" package proper directions for Colds, Headaches, Toothache, Earache, Neuralgia, Rheumatism, Lumbago, Sciatica, Neuritis and for Pain generally.

Tin boxes of 12 tablets, cost of few cents. Drugists also sell "Bayer" packages. Aspirin is the mark of Bayer Manufacture of Aceticacidester of Salicylicacid.

Measurement by Light Rays

The most delicate measuring possible, accurate within millionth of inch, is done by means of light rays.

Very True.

That a man may be "down" and out is also true of the match player in golf.—Boston Transcript.

Natural Alliance.

Poetry has a natural alliance with our best affections.—W. E. Channing.

Hurrah! How's This

Cincinnati authority says corn dries up and lifts out with fingers.

Ouch! ! ! ! This kind of corn talk will be heard less here in town people troubled with corns will follow the simple advice of this Cincinnati authority, who claims that a few drops of a drug called freezone when applied to a tender, aching corn or hard corn stops soreness at once, as soon the corn or callous dries up and lifts right off without pain.

He says freezone dries immediate and never inflames or even irritates the surrounding skin. A small bottle of freezone will cost very little at any drug store, but will positively remove every hard or soft corn or callous from one's feet. Millions of American women will welcome this announcement since the inauguration of the high heels. If your druggist doesn't have freezone tell him to order a bottle for you.—Adv.