



The COW PUNCHER

By Robert J.C. Stead
Author of "Kitchener, and other poems"

CHAPTER IX.—Continued.

Night had settled when Dave left the office. A soft wind blew from the southwest; June was in the air. June too, was in Dave's heart as he walked the few blocks to his bachelor quarters. What of the drab injustice of business? Let him forget that; now it was night . . . and she had called him Dave.

He dressed with care. It was not until he was about to leave his rooms that he remembered he must dine alone; he had been dressing for her, unconsciously. The realization brought him up with something of a shock. "This will never do," he said. "I can't eat alone tonight, and I can't ask Reenie, so soon after the incident with her mother. I know—Bert Morrison."

He reached for the telephone and rang her number. Her number did not answer. He thought of Edith Duncan. But Edith lived at home, and it was much too late to extend a formal dinner invitation. There was nothing for it but



Dave Paused for a Moment, but in That Moment His Eye Fell on Con-

ward. He suddenly became conscious of the great loneliness of his bachelor life. The charm of bachelorhood was a myth which only needed contact with the gentle atmosphere of feminine affection to be exposed. He took his hat and coat and went into the street. It was his custom to take his meals at a modest eating-place on a side-avenue, but tonight he directed his steps to the best hotel the city afforded. There was no wisdom in dressing for an event unless he was going to deflect his course somewhat from the daily routine.

The dining hall was a blaze of light. Dave paused for a moment, awaiting the beck of a waiter, but in that moment his eye fell on Conward, seated at a table with Mrs. Hardy and Irene. Conward had seen him and was motioning to him to join them. The situation was embarrassing, and yet delightful. He was glad he had dressed for dinner.

"Join us, Elden," Conward said, as he reached their table. "Just a little dinner to celebrate today's transaction. You will not refuse to share to that extent?"

Dave looked at Mrs. Hardy. Had he been dealing with Conward and Mrs. Hardy alone he would have excused himself, but he had to think of Irene. That is, he had to justify her by being correct in his manners.

"Do join us," said Mrs. Hardy. It was evident to Mrs. Hardy that it would be correct for her to support Mr. Conward's invitation.

"You are very kind," said Dave as he seated himself. "I had not hoped for this pleasure." And yet the pleasure was not unmixed. He felt that Conward had outplayed him. It was Conward who had done the gracious thing, and Dave could not prevent Conward doing the gracious thing without himself being ungracious.

After dinner they sat in the lounge room, and Conward beguiled the time with stories of sudden wealth which had been practically forced upon men who were now regarded as the business framework of the country. As these worthies strolled through the richly furnished room, leisurely smoking their after-dinner cigars, Conward would make a swift summary of their rise from liveryman, cow puncher, clerk or laborer to their present affluence, occasionally appealing to Dave to corroborate his statements. It was particularly distasteful to Elden to be obliged to add his word to Conward's in such matters, for, although Conward carefully refrained from making any direct reference to Mrs. Hardy's purchase the inference that great profits would accrue to her therefrom was very obvious.

Elden was glad when Mrs. Hardy remembered that she must not remain up late. Her physician had prescribed rest. Early to bed, you know. Dave had opportunity for just a word with Irene before they left.

"How did this happen—tonight?" he asked, with the calm assumption of one who has a right to know.

"Oh, Mr. Conward telephoned an invitation to mother," she explained. "I

was so glad you happened in. You have had wonderful experiences. Mr. Conward is charming, isn't he?"

Dave did not know whether the compliment to Conward was a personal matter concerning his partner or whether it was to be taken as a courtesy to the firm. In either case he rather resented it. He wondered what Irene would think of this "ennobling" business in the drab days of disillusionment that must soon sweep down upon them. But Irene apparently did not miss his answer.

"We shall soon be settled," she said as Mrs. Hardy and Conward were seen approaching. "Then you will come and visit us?"

"I will—Reenie," he whispered, and he was sure the color that mounted to her cheeks held no tinge of displeasure.

CHAPTER X.

Elden lost no time in making his first call upon the Hardys. Irene received him cordially, but Mrs. Hardy evinced no more warmth than propriety demanded. Elden, however, allowed himself no annoyance over that. A very much greater grievance had been thrust upon his mind. Conward had preceded him and was already a guest of the Hardys.

Dave knew Conward well enough to know that purpose always lay behind his conduct, and during the small talk with which they whiled away an hour his mind was reaching out acutely, exploring every nook of possibility, to arrive if it could at some explanation of the sudden interest which Conward was displaying in the Hardys. These explanations narrowed down to two almost equally unpalatable. Conward was deliberately setting about to capture the friendship, perhaps the affection, of either Mrs. Hardy or Irene. Strangely enough, Elden was more irritated by the former alternative than by the latter.

Perhaps this attitude was due to subconscious recognition of the fact that he had much more to fear from Conward as a suitor for the hand of Mrs. Hardy than as a rival for that of Irene. Conward as a prospective father-in-law was a more grievous menace to his peace of mind than Conward as a defeated rival.

The more he contemplated this aspect of the case the less he liked it. To Conward the affair could be nothing more than an adventure, but it would give him a position of a sort of semi-paternal authority over both Irene and Elden.

When at length Mrs. Hardy began to show signs of weariness Irene served coffee and cake, and the two men, taking that as an intimation that their welcome had run down, but would remind itself if not too continually drawn upon, left the house together. On their way they agreed that it was a very delightful night.

Dave turned the situation over in his mind with some impatience. Irene had now been in the city for several weeks, and he had had opportunity for scarce a dozen personal words with her. Was he to be balked by such an insufferable chaperonage as it seemed the purpose of Mrs. Hardy and Conward to establish over his love affair? No. In the act of undressing he told himself, "No," sulking to the word such vigor of behavior that in the morning he found his shoes at opposite corners of the room.

Several days passed without any word from Irene, and he had almost made up his mind to attempt another telephone appointment, when he met her, quite accidentally, in the street. She had been shopping, she said. The duty of household purchases fell mainly upon her. Her mother rested in the afternoons—

"How about a cup of tea," said Dave. "And a thin sandwich? And a delicate morsel of cake? One can always count on thin sandwiches and delicate morsels of cake. Their function is purely a social one, having no relation to the physical requirements."

"I should be very glad," said Irene. They found a quiet tearoom. When they were seated Dave, without preliminaries, plunged into the subject nearest his heart.

"I have been wanting an opportunity to talk to you—wanting it for weeks," he said. "But it always seemed—"

"Always seemed that you were thwarted," Irene completed his thought. "You didn't disguise your annoyance very well the other night."

"Do you blame me for being annoyed?"

"No. But I rather blame you for showing it. You see I was annoyed too."

"Then you had nothing to do with—bringing about the situation that existed?"

"Certainly not. Surely you do not think that I would—that I would—"

"I beg your pardon, Reenie," said Dave, contritely. "I should have known better. But it seemed such a strong coincidence."

She was toying with her cup, and for once her eyes avoided him. "You should hardly think, Dave," she ventured—"you should hardly conclude that—what has been, you know, gives you the right—entitles you—"

"To a monopoly of your attentions? Perhaps not. But it gives me the right to a fair chance to win a monopoly of your attentions."

"Speaking low and earnestly, as if in a deep, rich timbre in it, he almost frightened her. She felt that he was already asserting his claim upon her, and there was something tender and delightful in the sense of being claimed by such a man.

"I must have a fair chance to win that monopoly," he repeated. "How did it happen that Conward was present?"

"I don't know. It just happened. A little after you telephoned he called up and asked for mother, and the next thing I knew she said he was coming up to spend the evening."

Dave dropped into a sudden reverie. It was not so remarkable as it seemed that Conward should have telephoned Mrs. Hardy almost immediately after he had used the line. Conward's telephone and Dave's were on the same circuit; it was a simple matter for Conward, if he had happened to lift the receiver during Dave's conversation with Irene, to overhear all that was said. That might happen accidentally; at least it might begin innocently enough. The fact that Conward had acted upon the information indicated two things; first, that he had no very troublesome sense of honor—which Dave had long suspected—and, second, that he had deliberately planned a conflict with Dave's visit to the Hardy home. This indicated a policy of some kind; a scheme deeper than Dave was as yet able to fathom. He would at least guard against any further eavesdropping on his telephone.

He took a card from his pocket and made some figures on it. "If you should have occasion to call me at the office at any time please use that number and ask for me," he said. "It is the accountant's number. There's a reason."

The cups were empty; the sandwiches and cake were gone, but they lingered on.

"I have been wondering," Dave ventured, at length, "just where I stand—with you. You remember our agreement?"

She averted her eyes but her voice was steady. "You have observed the terms?" she said.

"Yes, in all essential matters. I come to you now, in accordance with those terms. You said that now we would know. Now I know; now I have always known since those wonderful days in the foothills; those days from which I date my existence."

"I realize that I owe you an answer now, Dave," she said frankly. "And I find it very hard to make that answer. Marriage means so much more to a woman than it does to a man. . . . Don't misunderstand me, Dave. I would be ashamed to say I doubt myself or that I don't know my mind, but you and I are no longer boy and girl. We are man and woman now. And I just want time—just want time to be sure that—that—"

"I suppose you are right," he answered. "I will not try to hurry your decision. I will only try to give you an opportunity to know—to be sure, as you said. Then, when you are sure, you will speak. I will not reopen the subject."

His words had something of the ring of an ultimatum, but no endearments that his lips might have uttered could have gripped her heart so surely. She knew they were the words of a man in deadly earnest, a man who had himself in hand, a man

who made love with the same serious purpose as he had employed in the other projects of his successful life. Had it not been for some strange sense of shame—some fear that too ready capitulation might be mistaken for weakness—she would have surrendered then.

"I think that is best," she managed to say. "We will let our acquaintance ripen."

He rose and helped her with her light wrap. His fingers touched her hand and it seemed to him the battle was won. . . . But he had promised not to reopen the subject.

In the street he said, "If you will wait a moment I will take you home in my car."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Have an Elephant Stew. An elephant's foot takes longer to cook than any other meat. To make it tender it must be boiled for thirty-six hours.

A Coryzatic Word. We never run across the word "hebdomada" without thinking of a cold in the head.

DAIRY COWS FED TOO MUCH GRAIN

Greatest Quantity at Lowest Cost for Production Makes Dairying Profitable.

HOLSTEIN COW MADE RECORD

Produced More Milk and Butterfat on Pasture, Silage and Roughage Than When Fed Grain—Feed Stuff Grown on Farm.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.) Profitable dairying does not consist in producing the greatest possible quantity of milk.

It does consist, however, in producing the greatest possible quantity of milk at the lowest possible cost.

To produce more milk, many dairymen feed too much grain, and pile up stupendous feed bills. But the grain does not always increase the flow of milk above what it would have been without grain, enough to pay the difference in the feed bill. Dairy specialists of the United States department of agriculture believe that in many cases more grain is fed to dairy cows than can be justified by the results in milk and butterfat.

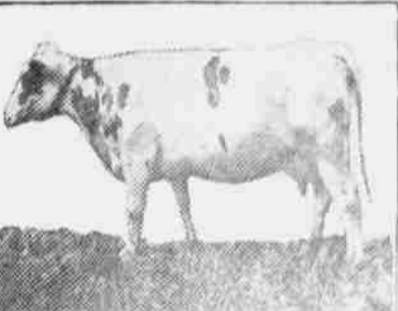
If your neighbor told you that his cow, that had not eaten a pound of grain for a whole year, produced 3,000 pounds more milk and 90 pounds more butterfat than she ever did when fed the regular grain and roughage ration—well, what would you believe if your neighbor told you that? And yet, that has actually happened. At least, that is substantially the story that the United States department of agriculture tells about its Holstein cow, Helen Ulkja Calamity 14587.

Up to the time Helen was eight years old, she had always been fed a grain, silage, and roughage ration, and the best she had ever done was 11,782 pounds of milk and 308.72 pounds of butterfat. When she was eight years old, that being in the spring of 1918, it was decided to feed her no grain for a year. She lived for a full 12 months on pasture, silage, and roughage. And that year she produced 14,204.1 pounds of milk and 470.24 pounds of butterfat. The experiment was carried out at Huntley, Mont.

A Revolutionary Cow.

Helen may properly be referred to as a revolutionary cow. Some other cows, in cow-testing associations and elsewhere, have shown similar tendencies. And the result is that the dairy specialists are urging dairymen to see if it is not possible to produce milk and butter without feeding so much grain as is commonly fed.

The basis of successful dairy feeding is now said to be to feed the cows on the stuff that the farm produces instead of buying a great deal of grain and other concentrates. The dairymen should plan his feeding and cropping growing to take care of the herd he has, instead of buying as the need arises for more feed. He should devote special attention to having the right kind of pasture and the right kind of roughage, if he cannot grow



She Produced More Milk Without Grain Than With It.

alfalfa, say, he should see what can be done toward growing soy beans or cowpeas or some other roughage crop that will supply the protein needed.

Caring for Pasture Pays

In the old days, when a cow could be fed on grain and roughage at \$5 or \$6 a month, there was no great inducement to take care of pastures. But today it costs from \$15 to \$20 a month to feed a cow on grain and roughage. Attention devoted to pasture, therefore, pays bigger dividends than formerly. Dairymen used to figure that they must get \$15 a year from every acre of land in pasture, and this meant that the acre had to pasture a cow for three months. Now, if the same acre pastures a cow only one month, it produces its \$15. If it pastures a cow for three months it is producing \$45 a year. And the price of pasture land has not increased in that proportion. Therefore, every day that the cow is kept on pasture means a saving of money to the dairymen. It pays, nowadays, to take care of the pastures. And it pays equally well to take care of the roughage. Pasture, forage, silage—these things are the essentials in dairy production.

SOLVE WINTER EGG PROBLEM

Commercial Breeders Have Discovered Importance of Green Food in Ration of Fowls.

The most important discovery the commercial breeders have made in the past few years towards solving the winter egg problem has been the discovery of the value of green food in a tender, succulent form in the ration.



LIVE STOCK

Important That Sheep Raising Be Encouraged Where Conditions Are Suitable for It.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

"I am not convinced that a general campaign to increase the number of small-farm stocks of sheep is thoroughly wise unless the field for such an effort is first prepared," said Dr. J. R. Mohler, chief of the bureau of animal industry, in an address before the More Sheep-More Wool association. "There must be established a popular understanding of principles which experienced sheepmen are likely to take for granted.

"With dairy herds we find that best methods of production seldom prevail when only a few animals are kept. The owner of a very small herd is not often interested in better breeding, feeding or disease control. He is not a dairyman. But when he has a herd of a dozen cows or more he becomes a real asset to a great dairy business.

"So with sheep. We must aim, it appears to me, not so much for an increase in the number of flocks as an increase in the number of sheep kept by men who are real shepherds or have the qualifications and desire to become shepherds. Not should we forget that farmers in general may not be versatile enough to add a profitable



PERPETUAL DISSATISFACTION

The man who has to stay at a place that is not to his liking. The "drummer," always at the door, is sick and tired of being there.

It isn't that the home is bad. The road's no such a lamer. It's just that what we're doing is what we're condemned.

'Twould sure be finer, would it? And give the world a rest. If each declared that what he's doing is just the very best!

Couldn't Stand Everything. A man had just walked under.

A girl spilt the salt and then of it over her left shoulder.

A boy had just kicked a ball that crossed the road.

Providence pulled down his pants. "My face won't stand up to being put into," it said.

EXPLAINED.

"What is meant by the paper headline, 'Lemon doctor's bills'?"

"It means that those who their money instead of their bills are regarded by attendant physicians as lemon."

OIL, VOIL. From rugged Maine to Golden photo-reel stuff is unfurled. And every fit-show in the land is best movie in the world."

OIL STOVES. One time in a careless Luther Burbank, the well-known ble-croser, conceived the mischievous idea of creating glow-worm and the skunk.

The result was an oil stove. The hybrid inherited its best the glow-worm and its aroma the skunk.

When one retires in a fireless, registerless room from home, they sometimes one of these kerosene, alcohol burners in with him for company. Any time he wakes in the night, he knows the stove is there, because he can smell it.

He is glad it doesn't make heat, for smells small warm a warm room than in a cold room. They say there are oil stoves warm one. But we have not all.

CROSBY'S KIDS

Alice Joyce



Among the favorites of the screen is dainty Alice Joyce, met with success after success. ing double roles is one of her ties and has won her a warm hearts of the patrons of drama.

Off Again, On Again

STRICKLAND W. GILLIS

(Copyright.)

PERPETUAL DISSATISFACTION. The man who has to stay at a place that is not to his liking. The "drummer," always at the door, is sick and tired of being there.

It isn't that the home is bad. The road's no such a lamer. It's just that what we're doing is what we're condemned.

'Twould sure be finer, would it? And give the world a rest. If each declared that what he's doing is just the very best!

Couldn't Stand Everything. A man had just walked under.

A girl spilt the salt and then of it over her left shoulder.

A boy had just kicked a ball that crossed the road.

Providence pulled down his pants. "My face won't stand up to being put into," it said.

EXPLAINED. "What is meant by the paper headline, 'Lemon doctor's bills'?"

"It means that those who their money instead of their bills are regarded by attendant physicians as lemon."

OIL, VOIL. From rugged Maine to Golden photo-reel stuff is unfurled. And every fit-show in the land is best movie in the world."

OIL STOVES. One time in a careless Luther Burbank, the well-known ble-croser, conceived the mischievous idea of creating glow-worm and the skunk.

The result was an oil stove. The hybrid inherited its best the glow-worm and its aroma the skunk.

When one retires in a fireless, registerless room from home, they sometimes one of these kerosene, alcohol burners in with him for company. Any time he wakes in the night, he knows the stove is there, because he can smell it.

He is glad it doesn't make heat, for smells small warm a warm room than in a cold room. They say there are oil stoves warm one. But we have not all.

CROSBY'S KIDS

