The Blazed Trail

By STEWART EDWARD WHITE

CHAPTER XI.

THE young fellow stayed three weeks and was a constant joy to Thorpe. Thorpe liked the boy because he was open hearted, free from affectation, assumptive of no superiority—in short, because he was direct and sincere. Wallace, on his part, adored in Thorpe the free, open air life, the adventurous quality, the quiet, hidden power, the resourcefulness and the self sufficiency of the pioneer. He did anything at all. He accepted Thorpe for what he thought him to be rather than for what he might think him to be.

Little by little the eager questions of the youth extracted a full statement of the situation. He learned of the timber thieves up the river, of their present operations and their probable plans, of the valuable pine lying still unclaimed, of Thorpe's stealthy raid into the enemy's country.

"Why, it's great! It's better than any book I ever read!"

He wanted to know what he could do to help.

"Nothing except keep quiet," replied Thorpe. "You mustn't try to act any different. If the men from up river come by, be just as cordial to them as you can and don't act mysterious and important."

"All right," agreed Wallace, bubbling with excitement. "And then what do you do—after you get the timber estimated?"

"I'll go south and try, quietly, to raise some money. That will be difficult because, you see, people don't know me, and I am not in a position to let them look over the timber. Of course it will be merely a question of my judgment. They can go themselves to the land office and pay their money. There won't be any chance of my making way with that. The investors will become possessed of certain 'descriptions' lying in this country, all right enough. The rub is, Will they have enough confidence in me and my judgment to believe the timber to be what I represent it?"

"I see," commented Wallace, suddenly grave.

"Harry," said he that evening, with a crisp decision new to his voice, "will you take a little walk with me down by the dam? I want to talk with you."

They strolled to the edge of the bank and stood for a moment looking at the swirling waters.

"I want you to tell me all about logging," began Wallace. "Start from the beginning. Suppose, for instance—what would be your first move?"

They sat side by side on a log, and Thorpe explained. The excitement of war was in it. When he had finished, Wallace drew a deep breath.

"When I am home," said he simply, "I live in a big house on the Lake Shore drive. It is heated by steam and lighted by electricity. I touch a button or turn a screw and at once I am lighted and warmed. At certain hours

"Oh, please!" cried the boy.

meals are served me. I don't know how they are cooked or where the materials come from. Since leaving college I have spent a little time downtown every day, and then I've played golf or tennis or ridden a horse in the park. We do little imitations of the real thing with blue ribbons tied to them and think we are camping or roughing it. This life of yours is glorious, is vital; it means something in the march of the world."

The young fellow spoke with unexpected swiftness and earnestness. Thorpe looked at him in surprise.

"I know what you are thinking," said the boy, flushing. "You are surprised that I can be in earnest about anything."

Thorpe watched him with sympathetic eyes, but with lips that obstinately refused to say one word.

"I left college at nineteen because my father died." Wallace went on. "I am now just twenty-one. A large estate descended to me, and I have had to care for its investment all alone. I have one sister; that is all."

"So have I!" cried Thorpe and stopped.

"The estates have not suffered," went on the boy simply. "I have done well with them. But," he cried fiercely, "I hate it! It is petty and mean and worrying and nagging. Now, Harry, I have a proposal to make you. It is this: You need $30,000 to buy your land. Let me supply it and come in as half partner."

An expression of doubt crossed the land looker's face.

"Oh, please!" cried the boy. "I do want to get in something real. It will be the making of me."

"Now, see here," interposed Thorpe suddenly. "You don't even know my name."

"I know you," replied the boy.

"My name is Harry Thorpe," pursued the other. "My father was Henry Thorpe, an embezzler."

"Harry," replied Wallace soberly, "I am sorry I made you say that. I do not care for your name, except, perhaps, to put it in the articles of partnership, and I have no concern with your ancestry. I tell you, it is a favor to let me in on this deal. I don't know anything about lumbering, but I've got eyes. I can see that big timber standing up thick and tall, and I know people make profits in the business."

Thorpe considered a few moments in silence.

"Wallace," he said gravely at last, "I honestly do think that whoever goes into this deal with me will make money. Of course there's always chances against it, but I am going to do my best."

The man's accustomed aloofness had gone. His eyes flashed, his brow frowned, the muscles of his cheeks contracted under his beard.

Wallace gazed at him with fascinated admiration.

"Then you will?" he asked tremulously.

"Wallace," he replied again, "they'll say that you have been the victim of an adventurer, but the result will prove them wrong. If I weren't perfectly sure of this I wouldn't think of it, for I like you, and I know you want to go into this more out of friendship for me and because your imagination is touched than from any business sense. But I'll accept gladly, and I'll do my best!"

"Hooray!" cried the boy, throwing his cap up in the air. "We'll do 'em up in the first round!"

CHAPTER XII.

AFTER Wallace left them the two men settled again into their customary ways of life.

Up to the present Thorpe had enjoyed a clear field. Now two men came down from above and established a temporary camp in the woods half a mile below the dam. Thorpe soon satisfied himself that they were picking out a route for the logging road.

The two men, of course, did not bother themselves with the timber to be travoyed, but gave their entire attention to that lying farther back. Thorpe was enabled thus to avoid them entirely. He simply transferred his estimating to the forest by the stream. Once he met one of the men, but was fortunately in a country that lent itself to his pose of hunter. The other he did not see at all.

But one day he heard him. The two up river men were following carefully but noisily the bed of a little creek. Thorpe happened to be on the side hill, so he seated himself quietly until they should have moved on down. One of them shouted to the other, who, crashing through a thicket, did not hear. "Ho-op, Dyer!" the first repeated. "Here's that infernal comer over here!"

"Yop," assented the other, "coming."

Thorpe recognized the yoth instantly as that of Radway's scaler. His hand crisped in a gesture of disgust. The man had always been obnoxious to him.

Two days later he stumbled on their camp. He paused in wonder at what he saw.

The packs lay open, their contents scattered in every direction. The fire had been hastily extinguished with a bucket of water, and a frying pan lay where it had been overturned. If the thing had been possible, Thorpe would have guessed at a hasty and unpremeditated flight.

He was about to withdraw carefully lest he be discovered when he was startled by a touch on his elbow. It was Injun Charley.

"Dey go up river," he said. "I come see what de row."

The Indian examined rapidly the condition of the little camp.

"Dey look for somethin'," said he, making his hand revolve as though rummaging and indicating the packs.

"I t'ink dey see you in de woods," he concluded. "Dey go camp get 'um boss. Boss he gone on river trail two t'ree hour."

"You're right, Charley," replied Thorpe, who had been drawing his own conclusions. "One of them knows me. They've been looking in their packs for their notebooks with the descriptions of these sections in them. When they piled out for the boss. If I know anything at all, the boss'll make tracks for Detroit."

"Wot you do?" asked Injun Charley, curiously.

"I got to get to Detroit before then do; that's all."

Instantly the Indian became all action.

"You come," he ordered and set out at a rapid pace for camp.

There, with incredible deftness, he packed together about twelve pounds of the jerked venison and a pair of blankets, thrust Thorpe's waterproof match safe in his pocket and turned eagerly to the young man.

"You come," he repeated.

Thorpe hastily unearthed his "descriptions" and wrapped them up. The Indian in silence rearranged the misplaced articles in such a manner as to relieve the camp of its abandoned air.

It was nearly sundown. Without a word the two men struck off into the forest, the Indian in the lead. Their course was southeast, but Thorpe asked no questions. He followed blindly. Soon he found that if he did even that adequately he would have little attention left for anything else. The Indian walked with long, swift strides, his knees always slightly bent, even at the finish of the step, his back hollowed, his shoulders and head thrust forward. His gait had a queer sag in it, up and down in a long curve from one rise to the other. After a time Thorpe became fascinated in watching before him this easy, untiring lope, hour after hour, without the variation of a second's fraction in speed or an inch in length.

At first Thorpe followed him with comparative ease, but at the end of three hours he was compelled to put forth decided efforts to keep pace. His walking was no longer mechanical, but conscious. When it becomes so a man soon tires. Thorpe resented the inequalities, the stones, the roots, the patches of soft ground which lay in his way. He felt dully that they were not fair. He could negotiate the distance, but anything else was a gratuitous insult.

Then suddenly he gained his second wind. He felt better and stronger and moved freer.

At midnight Injun Charley called a halt. He spread his blanket, leaned on one elbow long enough to eat a strip of dried meat and fell asleep. Thorpe imitated his example. Three hours later the Indian roused his companion, and the two set out again.

From 3 o'clock until 8 they walked continually without a pause, without an instant's breathing spell. Then they rested half an hour, ate a little venison and smoked a pipe.

An hour after noon they repeated the rest. Thorpe rose with a certain physical reluctance. The Indian seemed as fresh as when he started. At sunset they took an hour, then forward again by the dim intermittent light of the moon and stars through the ghostly haunts of forest until Thorpe thought he would drop with weariness and was mentally incapable of contemplating more than a hundred steps in advance.

"When I get to that square patch of light I'll quit," he would say to himself and struggle painfully the required twenty yards.

"No, I won't quit here," he would continue. "I'll make it that birch. Then I'll lie down and die."

And so on. To the actual physical exhaustion of Thorpe's muscles was added that immense mental weariness which uncertainty of time and distance inflicts on a man. The journey might last a week for all he knew. In the presence of an emergency these men of action had actually not exchanged a dozen words. The Indian led; Thorpe followed.

When the halt was called Thorpe fell into his blanket too weary even to eat. Next morning sharp, shooting pains, like the stabs of swords, ran through his groin.

"You come," repeated the Indian, stolid as ever.

Then the sun was an hour high. The travelers suddenly ran into a trail, which as suddenly dived into a spruce thicket. On the other side of it Thorpe unexpectedly found himself in an extensive clearing dotted with the blackened stumps of pines. Athwart the distance he could perceive the wide blue horizon of Lake Michigan. He had crossed the upper peninsula on foot.

"Boat come by today," said Injun Charley, indicating the tall stacks of a mill. "Him no stop. You mak' him stop take you with him. You get train Mackinaw City tonight. Dose men, dey on dat train."

Thorpe calculated rapidly. The enemy would require even with their teams a day to cover the thirty miles to the fishing village of Munising, whence the stage ran each morning to Seney, the present terminal of the South Shore railroad. He, Thorpe, on foot and three hours behind, could never have caught the stage. But from Seney only one train a day was dispatched to connect at Mackinaw City with the Michigan Central, and on that one train, due to leave this very morning, the up river man was just about pulling out. He would arrive at Mackinaw City at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, where he would be forced to wait until 8 in the evening. By catching a boat at the mill to which Injun Charley had led him Thorpe could still make the same train. Thus the start in the race for Detroit's land office would be fair.

"All right," he cried, all his energy returning to him. "Here goes! We'll beat him out yet!"

"You come back?" inquired the Indian, peering with a certain anxiety into his companion's eyes.

"Come back!" cried Thorpe. "You bet your hat!"

"I wait," replied the Indian, and was gone.

Thorpe saw over the headland to the east a dense trail of black smoke. He set off on a stumbling run toward the mill.

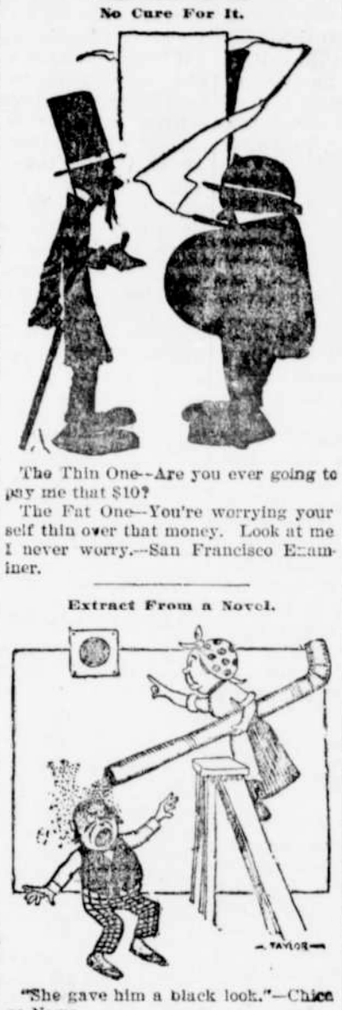
CONTINUED.

Too Much Diet.

"Why don't you try dieting to reduce your weight?"

"Dieting! Why, that's the way I got fat!"—New York Evening Journal.

No Cure For It.



The Thin One—Are you ever going to pay me that $10?

The Fat One—You're worrying yourself thin over that money. Look at me! I never worry.—San Francisco Examiner.

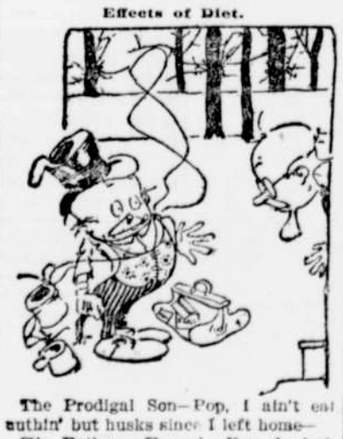
Extract From a Novel.

"She gave him a black look."—Chicago News.

Not a Suicide.

Doing a-weigh with himself.

Effects of Diet.



The Prodigal Son—Pop, I ain't eat nuthin' but husks since I left home—

His Father—Hm-m! You do look rather husky!

Illustrated Phrase From a Novel.

"The villain ground his teeth."

TICKETS FOR TWO

[Copyright, 1902, by the S. S. McClure Company.]

Rod Scott was waiting his turn at the Pullman window where he wanted a "lower" for Chicago. Just ahead of him was a very pretty girl, and he could not help overhearing the conversation. She, too, was buying a ticket to Chicago and wanted a berth as well.

She had made a mistake in the amount necessary to secure a sleeper, and when the ticket seller called for the additional $2 she discovered that her purse was empty. It was an embarrassing position for the girl, but there was no help for it, and she took her railroad ticket and passed on to the waiting room.

Rod could not help noting the outcome. He bought his own ticket and then saw the girl standing in the adjoining room examining her empty pocketbook.

His sympathies were aroused; she looked so forlorn, and he thought of his own little sister and wondered how she would feel under similar circumstances.

That settled it. He walked quickly toward her and, raising his hat, said: "Pardon me, but I could not help seeing the trouble you were in at the ticket window. Won't you allow me to be your banker in the emergency?"

She looked up at him shyly. He had a good, honest face.

"Oh, thank you; but I don't like"—

"Of course you don't," said Rod; "but I'll give you my card, and you can send the money back to me when you get home."

Her face brightened up. "You are very kind. My father was to have been with me, but was detained at the last moment. I thought I had all the money I needed to get home."

"Well, I fortunately have plenty," said Rod, "so let us get the ticket."

Of course he saw that it was in the same car, and it was natural that they should occupy the same seat.

It was all too soon for Rod when the berths had to be made up, but he arranged that they should have breakfast together.

Rod says he will never forget that breakfast. He never did know what he ordered, but he feasted upon a pair of gray eyes which took shy glances across the little table. All the time he was trying to summon up courage to tell how much he wanted to meet her again.

Another hour and they would reach their destination, the pleasant tete-a-tete would be over, and he did not even know her name. Rod was getting desperate.

"By the way, do you expect any one to meet you at the station, or may I"—

"Oh, yes; papa said he would wire so, you see, I won't have to trouble you any more."

"Trouble! I know you don't mean that. It has been a great pleasure to me, and I only wish I could"—

"Don't say anything more, Mr. Scott. I am under many obligations to you, but papa will write you when he returns."

Poor Rod! He wanted to say more but politeness prevented him from pressing a matter which he felt might embarrass her.

When the train pulled into Chicago and he saw her affectionately greeted by an elderly lady, he awakened to the realization that his pleasant day dream was over.

Rod was assistant freight agent on the B. and A. road, with headquarters at Omaha. He spent a week in Chicago, and on his return home he found the following letter awaiting him:

Dear Sir—My daughter has given me your card and asked me to thank you for your courtesy to her when she was returning home. I inclose draft for $5, which will reimburse you for the amount you expended on her. The general freight agent of the road, Mr. Fletcher, is a very old friend of mine. Kindly remember me to him, and whenever you are in Chicago I will be glad to have you call on me. Yours truly, JOHN H. MASON.

It was astonishing how much attention the Chicago end of the B. and A. road required. Rod found it necessary to make weekly trips there, and he never failed to call and inquire for Mr. Mason's health and incidentally to accept the hospitality of the Mason home.

Alice, she of the gray eyes, always welcomed the guest with such winning smiles that he thought he was in paradise. On one such evening she was singing an old Scotch ballad with the refrain, "Lassie, could you lo'e me?" He stooped over her as she sat at the piano, and, looking into the gray eyes that were turned toward him, he whispered, "Alice, dear, could you lo'e me?" He read his answer there and sealed it with a kiss.

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Six months later a carriage was being driven toward the station. A few stray kernels of rice still clung to the steps.

The carriage stopped, and the occupants went hurriedly to the train which was starting for the east.

"Oh, Rod, you haven't got the tickets!"

"Haven't I, sweetheart? When I travel with somebody, I always make up my mind that I'll have to pay for a couple, and so I get them in advance."

"That's the meanest thing you ever said to me, Rod," was the laughing rejoinder, "but you've got to pay for them now."

WILLIAM B. DOUGLAS.

An Absolute Gift.

Cheerem—Oh, come! Stop borrowing trouble.

Glumey—Borrowing? Gee whiz, man, trouble isn't like money. When I borrow money, I can forget about it right away.—Philadelphia Press.

RENOVATING OLD SCREENS.

Show They May Be Recovered and Made More Attractive.

A simple and inexpensive method of renovating an old screen is to cover it with heavy wall paper, either a plain paper of damask or sateen-like surface or one showing a large floral pattern, says the Pittsburg Press. The first proceeding is to measure a fold of the screen with great accuracy and then with very sharp scissors to cut the paper to fit exactly inside the surrounding frame, which incloses the cloth of the previous covering.

Have in readiness some thin glue, and with this quickly brush over the edges of your paper. An inch or two is sufficient. If too much glue is applied it will cause the paper to cockle. Apply the strip deftly to the screen, and with a soft, clean cloth press it firmly into contact. Proceed in like manner with each fold, laying the screen flat upon a large table for greater ease in working.

Sometimes the edges do not require any kind of finish, but when this seems desirable a narrow border of gold Japanese leather paper or round brass headed nails serves the purpose admirably. It is quite easy to obtain a richer effect by employing one of the beautiful Japanese leather papers which are now to be had in all sorts of different designs and at almost any price. These are applied in exactly the same manner.

A screen of plain paper may in several different ways be rendered more ornamental. One method is to mount a good sized photograph in bromide or platinotype on each flap near the top. Or if desired more than one print may be employed, these being arranged symmetrically against a paper of suitable tone. This plan appeals specially to the photographer.

Another pretty way of render[illegible] a plain screen more attractive is to hang upon it any small miniatures, pictures, bas-reliefs, bits of silver, medals, coins and so on. Not only does this serve to turn the screen into a feature in itself, but it is an ideal way of displaying little objets d'art of this kind.

How to Clean Chinchilla.

Chinchilla is a becoming fur, but has a way of taking on a ghastly yellow tinge when soiled. When this happens it can be cleaned by this method: Take a bag of fine sea sand, sift it well to eliminate all grit or gravel and then rub it vigorously through the fur. When shaken out the fur will be found to have regained all its freshness and that at the cost of a very little labor and no expense.

How to Cover Books.

To cover paper bound books take two pieces of cardboard, a tiny bit larger than the book. Paste fly leaves at the front and back to the cardboard, which of course is outside. Then take a strip of strong cotton cloth, paste it down back of the book, have it wide so it will cover about one inch of each piece of cardboard, then joining the two pieces together. Now put a cover of brown paper over all, pasting securely, and your decorated cover goes over this. The books may be covered with decorated silk, pique or duck if you paint or embroider, but the simplest way is to cover with tissue paper (not crape). Paste a pretty card on the front and after cutting title and author's name from old cover arrange them prettily on the new one.

How to Make Olive Sauce.

Mix an ounce of flour in four teaspoonfuls of olive oil and add three shallots chopped fine, half a lemon peel grated to powder, salt, pepper, a bay leaf, two tablespoonfuls of vinegar and a cup of soup stock. Cook twenty minutes. Strain and stir in the meat of six olives cut small. Mutton hash should be made simply and dry and the sauce poured around it or served apart.

How to Pickle Herring.

Clean the fish and boil it in salted water. Drain, wipe dry and set aside all night. Make a pickle of two quarts of vinegar, a dozen blades of mace, a dozen white peppers, a dozen cloves, two teaspoonfuls of French mustard, three tablespoonfuls of white sugar and a pint of the liquid in which the fish has been boiled. Boil up once and skim. Drop the herring into the kettle and boil up hard once. Pack the herring into crocks or jars, boil up the vinegar and fill the jars to overflowing and seal immediately.

How to Keep Mice Away.

The poisonous articles to keep mice away are dangerous if there are children about. Here is a simple and not objectionable remedy: Mice do not like the smell of peppermint, and a little oil of peppermint spread around their hiding places will keep them away.

How to Make China Cement.

Into a little bottle press as much isinglass as will fill it. Then pour in by degrees some gin, which will gradually sink in and fill up entirely the interstices left by the isinglass. Keep the bottle in a warm place, but not near the fire, until the isinglass is perfectly dissolved, when the cement is ready to use. Should it become stiff with keeping let the bottle stand in hot water a little while before the cement is required.

How to Clean Indian Brass.

Clean Indian brass by rubbing with a lemon and afterward washing in warm soapy water, rinse in clear water, dry and polish with bran and prepared chalk mixed in equal quantities. The ordinary brass polishes destroy the color of Indian work and should never be used.

How to Make Muslins Incombustible.

Muslin and lace may be made quite incombustible by the simple addition of mixing with the starch half an ounce of whiting.