

# The Free Traders

By Victor Rousseau

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(Continued from last week)

## CHAPTER XVI

### Joyce or a Gold Mine

Lee did not go as far as the forest, which loomed out of the distance beyond the ridges of broken ground. He waited some little distance away, until the priest's sleigh had gone. Then he went quietly back toward the log house.

Lights burned inside. A strip of cloth had been pinned before the window of the largest room—the one in which Lee had camped with Joyce for a brief hour upon that afternoon of their arrival. This was the room that Lee had selected in his mind for their occupancy during their brief honeymoon.

But not the least spasm twisted Lee's face at the realization that another had supplanted him in that relationship with Joyce. There are some phases of emotion so tense that they appear to neutralize themselves by destroying their own manifestations.

Lee's expression showed not the smallest deviation from the normal now. It was quiet, dispassionate and very cold. Softly Lee approached the window and, stooping, looked beneath the frame and the curtain of cloth.

The window on this side had a piece missing out of the corner, and over the little gap some one had pasted a piece of paper. With the barrel of his rifle Lee quietly made a small hole in it.

From there he could catch glimpses of the two figures. He heard their voices. He was in no hurry. He was waiting till the chosen to finish their conversation. Then, in due time, Rathway would stand in a line with his sights and he would make an end of him.

And the wild turmoil in Lee's heart seemed divorced from his brain, which remained impassive and cold and steady as the piece of mechanism in his hands.

Rathway's voice grew louder. Lee saw the hunched figure gesticulating, the sneer on Rathway's face. Lee drew a bead. He might as well end the business after all.

But before Lee's finger tightened on the trigger, a hand upon his shoulder made him leap to his feet and start up, his rifle clutched, ready to strike. He thought Rathway's men had surprised him.

But to his amazement it was a woman standing at his side; then in that cloaked and hooded figure that confronted him he recognized—Estelle once more.

She looked at him fixedly; she was deeply agitated, and caught at her breath before she was able to find her voice.

"You fool!" she exclaimed bitterly. "You fool! You had her in your hands and you let Jim Rathway take her away from you! You couldn't hold her—and now I come upon you to find you planning a cold-blooded cowardly murder—you, a colporteur!"

At that something broke in Lee's heart. The realization of the act he planned came over him. He would have killed Rathway as heedlessly as any bloodthirsty forest beast. But Estelle's reference to the police touched his pride.

He let the rifle drop, grounding the butt.

"Listen to what I've got to tell you, Lee. I love him. Do you understand that? I suppose you think it's not my nature to love. But it is! It was you who couldn't hold my love. I hated and despised you. I never knew how much I loved James Rathway till I found out how much I hated you that morning when you came to our camp and struck him down so treacherously.

"Oh, yes, I have love and passion, and constancy in my nature, Lee Anderson. It was only you who couldn't draw them out!"

Her voice was vibrant, hoarse with passion.

"That girl will make a fool of you too, Lee Anderson, just as I did," she cried. "You'd be made a fool of anywhere, by any woman!"

But her words passed Lee by like the wind.

"I could have killed you that afternoon, as I could kill you now, only—I love James Rathway. And he'll love me again when you take this new attraction away out of his sight, where he can't find her. I thought you'd go away—but here you are, back again with her, and all the work's got to be done over again.

"I was crouching near, and I overheard your dialogue, you and she, and the priest, and James Rathway. You gave her up—the woman you loved—because she'd stood up before the altar with the man she hated and called herself his wife. I'd hold the woman I loved, were I a man, against God Himself, and all His cohorts!"

"Oh, if only I could find words to hurt you, Lee Anderson, to pierce that tough skin of yours! But I haven't time. Listen to me, now! You don't have to commit murder to get her. You fool, you blind fool, shall I tell you?"

She laughed with taunting malignity. "Shall I tell you, Lee Anderson?" she repeated.

And suddenly came the sound of Joyce screaming within the house. There came the noise of a struggle.

Even as Lee turned, Joyce was running along the passage toward the door. Instantly Estelle glided away into the shadows.

Joyce flung the door open; and then Rathway caught her from behind and swung her back toward him. His black beard hung over her face.

"Lee! Lee! Come to me!" Joyce cried to struggle.

"Here!" answered Lee, and dashed his fist into Rathway's face, sending him staggering.

Rathway howled and felt for his pistol. Lee was upon him, pinning his arms to his sides, before he could draw it. But Rathway's men came burrying along the passage. In an instant there was a furious melee. Lee tripped over a leg thrust out, fell heavily upon his back, and struggled in vain under the weight of his four adversaries.

Quickly he was reduced to helplessness, his limbs held firmly. Momentarily he ceased to struggle, nursing his strength for a more violent effort.

He looked up into the grinning faces, at Rathway, standing over him, leaning, arms outstretched, gasping for breath and consciousness.

Rathway pulled his pistol and covered Lee. "Here! Shorty! Krummer! You're witnesses that you saw this man spying outside this house."

They assented. Pierre grinned. Shorty swore, spat, and scowled, and Lee saw the half-healed scar of his pistol butt upon his cheek.

"You saw him assault me," Rathway continued. "Well, Anderson, I guess if I choose to shoot you like the dog you are, the law wouldn't have much to say about it. But I'll be reasonable. Get back to your quarters!" he snarled at his aides, and the three men in surprise released Lee and went down the passage.

Lee leaped to his feet, confronting Rathway resolutely, but puzzled. Rathway held him covered.

"You must want my wife mighty bad to come back like a fox at night in the hope of picking her up under my nose, Anderson," said Rathway. "Well, I'm a business man, and I guess anyone can get most anything he wants if he wants it bad enough to be willing to pay the price for it. Maybe you can get her at the price, Anderson."

"Pelly's gold mine belongs to me under the law. She tells me you've found it and are holding the secret of it. All right. The price is Pelly's gold mine. The woman for the mine."

"What'd you say to that, Anderson?" Rathway was trembling with eagerness. "I was willing to overlook the past and take her back, but if she doesn't want me and does want you, I guess I can't hold her against her will. So I'm ready to take my mine instead and close the bargain. What'd you say to it, Anderson?"

Lee suspected some trick, but the anxiety on Rathway's face, the trembling tones of his voice showed that his avowal was a stronger passion than that for Joyce. And, despite the villainous of the proposal, Lee realized that in no other way could Joyce be saved.

He knew that even then Rathway was contemplating treachery, but there was nothing else to do. If he refused, Rathway would shoot him in cold blood—and the law would justify him.

"I must speak to Miss Pelly first."

"There's no Miss Pelly here," Rathway snarled. "If you mean Mrs. Rathway, you can have five minutes' talk with her to make up your mind. And if you don't accept, or try any tricks, I'll be by heaven, it's your last minute!"

Lee nodded, took Joyce by the arm, and drew her into the room. Rathway stood in the doorway, covering him with his pistol, but Lee quietly closed the door on him, and Rathway

received no attention. Lee went back to the girl.

"Joyce! Joyce, darling!" "Oh, Lee, I can't bear it. I thought I could, but it's impossible. Oh, take me away, Lee! Help me now, as you offered to help me on the range, though we can never be anything to each other. Take me somewhere to safety, where I need never see that man again, or think of him, or of this place, or—of ever remember anything of the past."

She clung to him, sobbing in terror and loneliness. Lee, holding her, raised her hands to his lips.

"Joyce, dearest, I'll do as you propose, then. I'll show him the mine, and then I'll take you away somewhere south, where you need never think of him or of this place again. And if that wretched marriage can't be annulled, I'll be contented to be your brother for the rest of our lives, dear."

He flung the door open. Rathway was standing uneasily behind it, and Lee felt pretty sure that he had been trying to listen with his ear to the ill-fitting jamb.

"I've decided to accept your proposition, Rathway," said Lee. "The terms are these: I guarantee nothing as to the mine; merely to conduct you to the place where Pelly worked for gold. I'll show you the secret entrance. This lady will accompany us, and you will leave your men behind. And we'll go unarmed."

"But I shall carry Mr. Anderson's pistol," Joyce interposed calmly, "and I shall see that the terms are fairly carried out."

Rathway shot a look of hatred at her. "I've an objection to that, either," he answered, shrugging his shoulders nonchalantly.

"At sunrise, then—" Lee began. "At sunrise? God, man, do you suppose I'm going to wait till sunrise?" shouted Rathway. He took off his belt containing his pistol, and laid it on the floor. "We'll start at once."

Lee handed Joyce his pistol, then, going into the room, extinguished the candle, brought it out, and slipped it into his pocket, and the three set out immediately. When they reached the rocky stone Lee looked back, scanning the country carefully in case Rathway's aides were following them. He had expected treachery, but it was quite impossible for any spy to approach near enough to discover the entrance under the stone without being observed, as Rathway had himself discovered during his years of fruitless effort to follow old Pelly; and there was no sign of the Pellys.

It occurred to Lee, besides, that Rathway was not likely to wish the entrance to the mine to be known to any of his aides.

Rathway was looking uneasily about him. "It's in the gorge, then?" he muttered. And, throwing off all pretense of concealment, "There's no way down. I've walked round and round the d-d place a thousand times."

Lee tilted back the stone and showed Rathway the hole beneath it. Rathway stared at it in amazement, uttering an oath as the stone came back into position.

(To be continued next week)

NEW ERA FOR AGRICULTURE

New York—A new era has ahead for agriculture because it now commands the best economic thought of the business world directed on its prime requirements of better distribution and marketing. President W. C. Gordon of the State Bank Division, American Bankers Association, declares in a recent communication to the thirteen thousand members of the division. He seeks to enlist their interest in the work of improving the marketing of farm products.

"The farmer today finds himself starved for a long line of intermediate agencies, which often leave him in a position of disadvantage as an individual producer," Mr. Gordon says. "It is, therefore, not strange that those principles of production and distribution found successful in industry. His rightful ambition is to make, where feasible, a general application of successful business experience to the marketing of agricultural products. Commanding the best economic thought of the business world, agriculture undoubtedly stands on the threshold of a new era. In lieu of fantastic panaceas, agricultural welfare—which, after all, is the Nation's welfare—has need of a sane, long range program that is at once practical, constructive and economically sound."

He goes on to call attention to the "long view program" suggested for agricultural distribution at Washington by the Agricultural Conference, urging study of it.

CO-OPS

There are many small co-operatives throughout the United States, handling wool, peanuts, watermelons, strawberries, beans, syrup, and other products. The co-operatives are scattered all over the country, but there are at least 10,000 local co-operative organizations in the United States. The Iowa Pleece and Wool Growers' Association does an annual business of \$2,836,259; the Ohio Sheep and Wool Growers, \$1,500,000; the Oregon wool growers, \$500,000; while the New York, Texas and South Dakota Associations are said to be handling about a quarter of a million dollars' business each.

Slam—Going to bed? Bang—Naw, I'm just undressing to see how I look in my B. V. D's.

Judge—Have you ever been up before me? Accused—I'm sure I do not know. What time do you get up?

"A man's crazy to marry five or six times," remarked the thoughtful man. "He's crazy to marry once," growled the cynic.

## WHEN SIGNALS ARE SET AGAINST YOU

### Danger Signs Given by Bankers—People With Money to Invest Warned Against Ways to Lose It—The Lure of "Easy Money."

If you were an engineer on a railroad you would not intentionally pass safety signals set against you. To the experienced investor there are similar signals for safeguarding his investments. Some of these signs of danger, issued by the Public Service Committee of the State Bank Division, American Bankers Association, in conjunction with the Better Business Bureau, are briefly indicated here.

**BIG RETURNS**—It is easy to promise an abnormally high rate of dividends, or large market profits, to prospective investors. Heavy risks usually accompany such lures. They are too often the chief talking points of financial charlatans.

**PROMINENT NAMES**—Promoters know that the names and endorsements of successful men carry weight. They are often used without authorization. The prudent investor will look beyond names and will investigate.

**THE "GOLDEN FLOOR"**—An opportunity to "get in on the ground floor" often turns out to be the same sort of opportunity which the proverbial spider extended to the fly.

**INSIDE INFORMATION**—"Inside tips" are usually expensive pieces of misinformation. When used as "confidential information" to influence the small investor they are generally of spurious character.

**THE FICTITIOUS ADVANCE**—Professional promoters often arbitrarily advance the price of the shares they sell as their campaigns gain headway to create buying excitement and induce new buyers to get in before the next rise. Such price advances are artificial, usually employed merely to "speed up" the unloading of shares.

**THE TELEPHONE CANVASS**—Irresponsible vendors find it easy to work over the telephone to victimize incautious investors. The cautious investor will not enter into securities transactions by telephone unless he personally knows with whom he is dealing.

**THE UNDESIRABLE PROMOTER**—The promoter who "gives his services" in organizing a company or as an officer of it and advertises that he does so, will bear watching.

**THE IRRESPONSIBLE GUARANTEE**—Irresponsible sellers of securities often "guarantee" certain profits, or even that they will buy back shares when the purchaser wants his money. Promises of this nature are made to create confidence and to lure unsuspecting investors.

**"REORGANIZATION" AND MERGERS**—Unsuccessful companies forced into "reorganization" often call upon stockholders for new funds. Response to such appeals often means merely throwing good money after bad. A conspicuously fraudulent device has been the "merger," by which a new company trading upon a cash prospectus by telephone, takes over the assets of an unsuccessful venture and issues new stock for old, provided the shareholder pays 25 per cent or so in cash.

**THE PARTIAL-PAYMENT PLAN**—This helpful method of selling securities has been much abused. People who prefer to buy securities out of their weekly or monthly earnings, are sometimes victimized by vendors of stocks which have little or no value.

**MY FAVORITE STORIES**  
By IRVIN S. COBB

What Aunt Myra Desired

They brought a darky out of the jail in a North Carolina town with intent to hang him for murder. This was in the day when capital punishment was publicly inflicted. As a special mark of attention the widow of the murderer's victim was permitted to witness the event from a position of vantage directly facing the gallows. She had had a sort of small grandstand rigged up and she decorated it with bunting and when the march to the scaffold started, there she sat in a white mother-hubbard wrapper gently agitating a pale-faced man, flanked and surrounded by relatives, invited friends and sister members of her lodge.

The preliminaries went forward according to the ritual. When the condemned had been properly trussed up with the noose dangling about his neck, the sheriff, holding the black cane in his hand, edged up to him and said:

"Well, Jim, we're about ready. If you've got anything to say, I reckon this would be a mighty good time to say it."

"Yes, suh," said the doomed, "I has got stum'p to say. I jest wants to say dat I is fully repented for whut I done. I taken it to de Lord in prayer an' I knows it's all right wid Him. I ast de Judge w'ich tried and de persecutin' attorney, an' de foreman of de jury of they bore me any grudge, w'ich, one and all, they said they did not. An' now I kin go right straight to hebban an' nestle in de bosom of Father Abraham of only I kin git de forgiveness of dat nigger lady sittin' yonder—de wife of de man I kill!"

He lifted his voice, addressing the white-clad figure in front of him:

"Lady," he entreated, "does you forgive me fur shootin' yore husband six times wid a forty-fo' caliber revolver?"

Excepting that her under lip jutted out a trifle farther there was no sign she had heard him. She calmly fanned on.

The darky on the scaffold tried again:

"Lady," he pleaded, "for de second time I axa you, an' you, please ma'am, gwine forgive me?"

Still from her there was no response. It was as though she had not heard him. The sympathetic sheriff felt moved to add his intercession:

"Aunt Myra," he called, "Jim, here, will be gone away from us in a minute and we don't expect him back. Surely you don't entertain any hard feelings against him now? Won't you speak to him and let him go in peace?"

This time the obstinate widow shook her head in an emphatic negative. Yet still she uttered no sound. The sheriff

## STRAIGHT TALKS WITH AUNT EMMY

### ON THE SOUND OF WORDS

"Aunt Emmy," said Helen, handing her a letter, "I want you to tell me what you think of this as an investment for that money I have in the bank." Aunt Emmy adjusted her spectacles and read the letter carefully.

"I see," she remarked, "that you are offered debenture bonds in the Blank Manufacturing Corporation—"

"Yes!" cried Helen, interrupting her. "That's what makes me think so well of it. A debenture bond must be so safe!"

"Why do you say that?" inquired Aunt Emmy. "What, exactly, is a debenture bond?"

Helen hesitated while Aunt Emmy looked at her with a twinkle in her eyes. Then she stammered something about security.

"Now, child," admonished Aunt Emmy, "don't get flustered. It's very simple. When you buy a bond, whatever it is called, you loan your money to the company putting out the bonds. The word debenture comes from the Latin word 'debeo,' which means, as you should know if you remember your schooling, 'I owe.' Now, then, if you lend someone money, you would expect security unless the character of the borrower was so high that you would feel safe merely in holding his I. O. U. In the case of a debenture bond you are loaning money on a company's I. O. U. The company offering you debenture bonds does not pledge or mortgage any property to secure the bonds.

"If the company is in good standing, has a high credit rating and is making money, a debenture bond is a good investment. If the company is weak a debenture bond is a risky

**CALL FOR BIDS**

Bids will be received by the Board of Directors of School District No. 60 for a basement to be placed under the school house and other repair work on the building.

Plans and specifications may be seen at the Hazeldale Store, four miles west of Beaverton

**HAVE DARK HAIR AND LOOK YOUNG**

Nobody Can Tell When You Darken Gray, Faded Hair With Sage Tea

Grandmother kept her hair beautifully darkened, glossy and attractive with a brew of Sage Tea and Sulphur. Whenever her hair took on that dull, faded or streaked appearance, this simple mixture was applied with wonderful effect. By asking at any drug store for "Wyeth's Sage and Sulphur Compound," you will get a large bottle of this old-time recipe, improved by the addition of other ingredients, all ready to use, at very little cost. This simple mixture can be depended upon to restore natural color and beauty to the hair.

Well-known druggists say everybody uses Wyeth's Sage and Sulphur Compound now because it darkens so naturally and evenly that nobody can tell it has been applied—it's so easy to use, too. You simply dampen a comb or soft brush and draw it through your hair, taking one strand at a time. By morning the gray hair disappears; after another application or two, it is restored to its natural color and looks glossy, soft and beautiful.

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thing to buy. It all depends on the soundness of the company and not on the sound of the word 'debenture.' As for the company described in this letter, I don't know anything about it, do you?"

"No," admitted Helen reluctantly, "I do not know a thing. After what you have told me I wish I did. How do you suppose I can find out who 'what they are'?"

"There is nothing easier than that," rejoined her aunt. "All you have to do is to go down to the bank and ask them to give you a report on the Blank Manufacturing Corporation. They will be glad to look into this for you and will give you some really good advice if you want to invest your money in something safe. Never hesitate about talking to your banker about your financial affairs. He is willing to help you at any time."

**BANKERS HELP**

Pierce County Bankers Association, Wisconsin, have sent a boy and a girl to the week's Short Course at the University of Wisconsin, all the banks sharing in the expense. The Association is active in boys' and girls' club work.

Easton County, Michigan, bankers sponsored an enthusiastic dairy-alfalfa meeting at Charlotte. As a direct result of the last campaign, 2,900 acres of alfalfa have been added. A county-wide bovine tuberculosis eradication campaign is being conducted with every assurance that the county will be on the accredited list this fall. Three cow testing associations have been organized.

Richland County Bankers Association, North Dakota, is one of the county associations which has organized to carry out the work of the boys' and girls' clubs and the "alfalfa on every farm" project. This program was adopted at a State banker-farmer meeting at Fargo in February.

and two miles south of Reedville. W. P. Brooks, Clerk of District No. 60. Adv c 32-33

**Salts Fine for Aching Kidneys**

When Back Hurts Flush Your Kidneys as You Clean Your Bowels

Most folks forget that the kidneys, like the bowels, sometimes get sluggish and clogged and need a flushing occasionally, else we have backache and dull misery in the kidney region, severe headaches, rheumatic twinges, torpid liver, acid stomach, sleeplessness and all sorts of bladder disorders.

You simply must keep your kidneys active and clean and the moment you feel an ache or pain in the kidney region begin drinking lots of water. Also get about four ounces of Jad Salts from any good drug store here, take a tablespoonful in a glass of water before breakfast for a few days and your kidneys will then act fine. This famous salt is made from the acid of grapes and lemon juice, combined with lithium and is intended to flush clogged kidneys and help stimulate them to activity. It also helps neutralize the acids in the urine so they no longer irritate, thus helping to relieve bladder disorders.

Jad Salts is inexpensive; makes a delightful effervescent lithia water drink which everybody should take now and then to help keep their kidneys clean. A well-known local druggist says he sells lots of Jad Salts to folks who believe in trying to correct kidney trouble while it is only trouble. By all means have your physician examine your kidneys at least twice a year.

## Beaverton Transfer Co. Lewis Brothers Props.

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Our goods safeguard the health of yourself and family, give strength and keep you happy and contented. Give us your order today and every day.

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We Give Green Trading Stamps

Beaverton Market & Grocery H. A. Morrison, Mgr.

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