Haughty Dude Spins Spurs to Get Surprise from Dozing Cowboy

(Continued from page one)

down the Cimarron for 150 miles and they were real honest-to-goodness cattle ranches, too. Substantial houses, buildings, barns and corrals, always kept in fine shape. He paid good wages, treated his men right and was always able to keep the top hands of that country to do his riding. It was the bon-ton job of that section and any rider who was on Steve Dorsey's payroll was regarded as a little above the average.

Of course there were a lot of other cattle ranches, and big ones too, that were well liked by the punchers, but Dorsey's spread was head and shoulders above them all. I need only tell you that he made a shipment of 85,000 head of beef cattle after one roundup to impress it on your mind that he had a tremendously big outfit.

Steve was a man everybody liked, not a bit swelled up over his wealth, common as an old shoe, would stop and talk to an humble working man as quick as he would to one of his own class and had the welfare of his employes constantly in mind, striving always to improve their condition.

After the fall roundup a large number of his riders had to scatter out to the line camps, from two to three in a camp, where they remained all winter to keep the cattle from drifting off the range, practically isolated from communication with the outside world. Plenty to eat, of course, but not much recreation to relieve the monotony and always craving for letters or papers with the news of the day, which were long weeks in coming, if ever.

So Dorsey conceived the idea of at least supplying them with mail facilities and induced the government to establish postoffices here and there, where the boys could get their mail, and also mail routes which were handled by such of the punchers who otherwise would be out of employment till spring, but could pick up a few dollars by driving mail-stage to different points, once or twice a week.

This worked out fine all around till some of the "muddy eyes" back east began to discern a mote in the eye of Steve Dorsey with their long-range telescopes.

These "muddy eyes" as we called them seemed to put in all their time in endeavoring to remove the motes from their neighbors' eyes, regardless of the fact their own eyes were full of mud, gravel, boulders and other things. Nine-tenths of all the real troubles the west ever had were caused by the machinations of these self-appointed meddlers.

So having located the said mote in Steve Dorsey's eye, they immediately, through their own fawning politicians, proceeded to make a great hullabaloo about the way the government was being robbed. The real trouble was that they had discovered some of the government money which they had intended to grab for certain nefarious purposes of their own was getting away and being used for a needful undertaking in the west.

I am telling you now about the GREAT STAR-ROUTE ROBBERY, which nearly turned the country upside down and, for a time, branded as fine a man as ever lived as a crook, swindler and robber who, they claimed, was systematically pilfering the treasury of the United States, boldly and shamelessly. Every newspaper for weeks, under big black headlines, contained garbled accounts of this barefaced swindle. So Steve Dorsey was indicted and taken to Washington for trial.

Arrived at the capitol, Steve sent for his old friend, Robert G. Ingersoll, also a fellow lodge member, to defend him. It didn't take Ingersoll long to convince the judges that an humble cowpuncher, out in some godforsaken line camp in New Mexico, was just as fully entitled to receive mail as was any one of the city-dwelling "muddy eyes," and Dorsey was cleared.

After the trial, Dorsey asked Bob what he owed him. Bob laughed and said it was so easy of accomplishment, he didn't have the heart to charge him anything. Dorsey sat right down and wrote Bob a check for $100,000.

Later Bob came west on a visit and it was on the Cimarron I had the good fortune to meet him. And there I found another "so" that was not so. From previous descriptions I had been led to believe Bob Ingersoll was a demon in human guise, an infidel outcast whom the Lord had marked for terrible punishment and a man whom it would be well to have nothing to do with.

I found him just the contrary. Never in my life have I met a finer, more whole-souled human being, and never have I regretted meeting him. One of nature's noblemen, broad minded, generous to a fault and a man among men. He was not an infidel, but an agnostic, there being considerable difference, if you care to know. Of course he didn't believe the earth was flat, or that the moon was made of green cheese, as some do, but we can't blame him for that. I have a poem written by Bob which I have carried with me all over the west and money couldn't buy it. It is one of the most beautiful gems of verse ever composed.

Incidentally, Bob fell in love with a spot on the head of the Cimarron which indeed is a paradise, and decided to build a little cabin there where he could come and resuscitate for a few weeks in summertime. That was sure SOME cabin. It cost $10,000, everything in the most approved rustic style. And while we are on the subject, I will mention another "so" that is not so. The "muddy eyes" who seem to be unable to respect the memory of any one who differs from their beliefs have taken a lot of enjoyment in late years by circulating a story that Ingersoll recanted on his death bed. They made such a noise about it that his daughter, Eva, came out publicly in the Hearst newspapers, about three years ago, with the statement that she was present at the time of his passing and that nothing of the kind happened. Many times people, who are more familiar with the future plans of the Lord than I am, have assured me that a terrible punishment awaited Bob Ingersoll in the next world. All I have to say about that is, if a man of Ingersoll's integrity is marked for future punishment, I shudder to think what the Lord may do to some of the rest of us.

Raton, just over the Colorado line in New Mexico, was a bad little town. Many a man passed over the Great Divide from that place. Squarely on the line is a tunnel, one-half mile long, through which the trains of the Santa Fe pass. At its exact center are two springs, one of which drains out north into Colorado, and the other into New Mexico. Railroads those days apparently failed to make provision for the enlargements that must come later and made their tunnels a little too small.

A circus train, bound for points in New Mexico, and having an oversized car containing an enormous elephant midway in its length, was wrecked in that tunnel, when the big car hit some of the supporting timbers. The front part of the train continued on, leaving the rear end in the tunnel. When help came it was found that the elephant, who was not much hurt, had climbed out to hunt for his keeper, of whom he was very fond and, finding him unconscious under the wreckage, had put his head against a car and shoved the whole rear end of the train back far enough so he could drag his keeper out, and was standing guard over him. It took some strength to do that.

A party of eastern dudes, waiting for the train at Raton one day, spied a cowpuncher reclining on the platform, back against the depot, taking a nap. The big silver-steel rowels of his spurs attracted their attention and, strolling over to him, one of the dudes began to whirl the rowels round and round and make them tinkle with a light cane he had in his hand. This roused the puncher, but he simply opened his eyes, saw what was going on and appeared to go to sleep again. After a time the dude became tired of his amusement and started to walk away, but suddenly found himself covered by a wicked looking .45 in the hand of the puncher, who made him turn back and play with the rowels for half an hour, till the train came, much to the edification of the crowd of onlookers who had gathered. Which may have taught him not to be quite so snooty next time.

Riding into Raton one fine day about 2 o'clock with a young Mexican cowboy, I ran into something entirely unsuspected. We were awfully hungry, so as soon as we had seen our horses taken care of, we entered a saloon and bought a long, cool glass of beer to relieve our thirst. We inquired of the bartender if there was anywhere in town we could get a feed at that hour. He directed us across the street to a restaurant, which also had a lunch counter where meals were served at all hours. The proprietor, a red-headed Irishman, was all alone except for a fellow who was eating at one of the tables. Perching ourselves on the high stools, we ordered a tremendous lot of good things, including half a pie apiece and proceeded to get busy.

Just then the fellow at the table finished eating and, going up to the proprietor, for whom it seems he had done some work, had a settlement with him and I saw the proprietor hand him $15, which he carefully put away in his pocket. Then he said, "How about that half-day before, that you owe me for?" The proprietor replied he didn't owe him anything outside of what he had paid.

The fellow hit the counter so hard with his fist that dishes jumped a foot high, and shouted, "By G——, you will pay me or I'll take it out of your hide!" "You will, will you?" barked the proprietor, and out came his hand with a big .45 in it, which he had grabbed from beneath the counter. The guy made a wild leap and landed square behind me and the first thing I knew, I was looking right down the barrel of that cannon, which by then had been cocked, and I could see by the proprietor's eyes that he was going to shoot.

Giving the fellow a hard dig in the ribs with my elbow, I told him to get to hell away from me. So he gave another leap to the stove in the center of the restaurant and his next leap took him through the door and just then the proprietor pulled the trigger and the bullet smashed through the casing, not missing the guy more than a couple of inches. Almost in no time the place was crowded with men who ran in to see what the shooting was about. The young Mexican and I finished our meal, but I am free to admit the food didn't seem to taste as appetizing as it had at first.

I met the fellow that evening down town and spoke to him. "Say," I remarked, "don't you know you had a pretty narrow squeak today from getting all shot up?" "Oh, hell," he replied, "that damned Irishman wouldn't dare to shoot me—my friends around here would lynch him if he did and he knows it."

Maybe so, but if my eyes saw straight—and they generally do—and if I know anything about red-headed Irishmen when they get mad, I will bet the only reason that guy didn't catch a bullet was because the red-headed proprietor couldn't shoot straight enough.

Blackstone, famed magician, is mystifying audiences at the Craterian theater today and Saturday with his show of 1001 wonders, as it has been termed. Only those old tricks and illusions that still retain their mystery have been kept in his act with many new ones added. On the screen, Zasu Pitts, El Brendel, Pert Kelton, James Gleason and Skeets Gallagher are all featured in "The Meanest Gal in Town."

Sales Tax Would Clip Third from Property's School Tax Burdens

(Continued from page one)

circle that has been squeezing property for more in taxes than it can possibly be worth."

As the property tax works out, explained one Jacksonville homeowner, a man never really owns any property. Though he may have a clear title to his land, he must constantly pay RENT to the government for being a "pillar" of the community. He is penalized for expressing his desire to settle down and follow the human instinct to own his closest surroundings, he pointed out. It would be far better to work toward some other method of taxation that will ultimately permit a family to buy and pay for a place to live, and then get that important worry forever off its mind, say some. They insist the sales tax is the only logical move in this direction so far offered by state lawmakers and this fact, tied together with the emergency arising among school districts, has been instrumental in winning over to the sales tax many local residents who had voted against the previous measure that was on last year's ballot, a survey has shown.

Continual discussion of the sales tax problem has removed some of the natural prejudice held by many for any phrase containing the word "tax," and those citizens inclined to think have been more willing to view the proposition in a fair, unbiased light. Strength of the sales tax movement has been undeniably gaining, according to Professor Coe, who has evidenced a great interest in the measure, being one of those close to school districts' most distressing problems—of securing enough money to keep operating.

It is not known definitely whether the measure will be put to a referendum in the spring election. Should the legislators' action stand without the necessity of a popular vote, the relief measure—to automatically die in two years—will go into effect March 10. Otherwise, if it is taken to voters and succeeds, the sales tax will become operative May 20.

Fans See Wild Night of Armory Dramatics With Ace Performers

It was lean-forward-in-your-seat-and-yell night Wednesday when Promoter Lillard dished out his second helping of wrestling treats to southern Oregon fans. Topping the card was that smooth boy from Texas, Les Wolfe, with his rolling scissors sensation, and Sailor Franz, San Diego. As a warm-up, fans alternately booed and cheered Pete Bellcastro and Frank Clemens, the latter from the land of oil rigs and Osage Indians, Oklahoma.

In the main event Sailor Franz rushed Wolfe while the latter was still doffing his dressing gown and had the boy from Dallas in a series of headlocks and a body press that give him a fall in the first minute. Wolfe, at this display of hurry, merely gritted his teeth, gave fans a "you wait and see" grimace and came back to twice enmesh Franz in his tortuous rolling scissors, after nearly an hour of near-falls for both. Franz, stocky and with a proclivity for making very unbeautiful faces at fans, also gave them a treat of moving pictures. Not the cinema type, but garish purple designs tattooed on his legs, chest and arms. A monstrous eagle, adorning the sailor's chest, seemed to be minus a few tail-feathers when the evening was over, however, and the rolling scissors left the old salt more seasick than he ever became on the briny deep. Wolfe is a tall, skillful lad with a good head and plenty of smart tricks, but no roughness.

In the warm-up, which sent the entire house looking for throat gargles after the show, Pete Bellcastro twice pinned the Oklahoma Clemens with a Boston crab, while the oil stater gave fans a new thrill with his Indian paralyzer, a queer sort of neck hold obtained by means of crossing the legs and locking the victim's neck in a vise-like grip of feet, which apparently leaves the boys wiggling like a dog with its head caught in a picket fence. It was one of the best shows Lillard has presented, and enjoyed a large house of pay customers, which fact alone will assure more stellar cards every Wednesday night at the armory. It was one of those shows this week that the homespun dopesters, who always yell "fixed" before they see who is to be on the card, had to admit that if it was "fixed," it was one of the neatest bits of preparation in many a moon.

Next Wednesday night, at the Medford armory, Lillard will present another of his stellar shows.

With flexible dollars there ought to be more snaps.—Weston Leader.

One is led to hope that liquor control won't prove to be as raw as the liquor.—Weston Leader.

An astronomer asserts that the sun may explode and destroy the planets, as though people needed any further excuse for not paying ahead for their home-town paper.—Weston Leader.

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