

# THE SPRINGFIELD NEWS

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## OTHERS ARE WORSE OFF THAN WE

After reading the news from the rest of the world we begin to feel as if we were not as badly off in the United States as a good many people seem to think. At least, we are not on the verge of war with any of our neighbors, and that seems to be the situation of many other nations today.

Observers are pretty nearly unanimous that there will be another great European war in the not far distant future. The friction between France and Germany, instead of subsiding, seems to be growing greater. The longer time Germany has to get ready, the more certain it is that she will again try to assert her equality with her ancient enemy. Once France gets embodied in the north with Germany, those who watch such things say, Italy will be on France's tail in the south. Italy wants to recover the Mediterranean coast now held by France. Germany wants to recover the Saar Basin, where the iron mines are.

Central and eastern Europe are in a ferment. Austria is putting up a gallant struggle against the invasion of Nazi propaganda from Germany, which is designed to bring Austria under the German flag. Italy, on Austria's south, is watching, and many believe that Hitler and Mussolini may soon be at war.

Over in Asia, Japan and Russia are growling at each other across the Manchurian border. Both sides openly admit the possibility of war. Both Russia and Japan are trying to undermine England's influence in India and Persia. China is still trying to maintain some sort of an effective National government, largely with the help of the British, but the Chinese people have been for years the victims of one armed force after another. Several nations of South America are still in a state of war with their neighbors.

Reflecting on those things, we realize that we are lucky in having peaceful neighbors. If we were scared to death of Canada and nervous about the intentions of Mexico, we might feel ourselves as badly off as France and Austria feel today.

Charlie Hall is to run for governor on a platform for the private sale of liquor. He might as well say he wants to put the state out of the business for the return of the saloon.

If the democrats stay in power it looks like we must vote on several more amendments to the constitution to give them free reign. Courts all over the land have been reversing acts and codes lately.

Eugene is planning again on presenting the "Trail to Rail" pageant. We presume it will be brought up to date with the last act entitled "The New Deal—The End of the Trail."

Well, since the army took over the mail our sleep is not bothered with two mail planes circling the Springfield beacon every night. "Hot air" mail seems to be what the Pacific Coast is getting out of the deal.

Europe would be in a war now if this country would finance it. And, this country would more than likely finance it if we had the money.

General Martin is said to be Os West's candidate. Os always has a candidate you know.

# THE BOOK

... the first line of which reads, "The Holy Bible,"  
and which contains Four Great Treasures

## by BRUCE BARTON

### VIRTUOUS LOVE

Another group of sayings is given under the heading, "These also are the sayings of the wise"; the last chapter of proverbs is the work of an anonymous writer, presumably a woman, and possibly Bathsheba, that remarkable lady who deserted Uriah the Hittite to become the favorite wife of Israel's greatest king, David, and mother of the wisest, Solomon.

There are two other Old Testament books which come to mind in connection with Solomon. The first is the "Song of Songs" which, as the first verse says, "is Solomon's," but whether this means by Solomon or concerning Solomon is a question. It is a poem about a young girl who lived in the northern hills. Solomon saw her on his travels and wanted her for his harem, but her heart was true to her shepherd love. When the ladies of the court praised Solomon to her and demanded, "What is thy lover more than any other?" she answered stoutly, "My beloved is mine, and I am his."

She was carried off to Jerusalem, but she slept fitfully. "I slept but my soul was awake," she said. In her dreams she found herself wandering all about the streets of a strange city, looking for her lover. Finally her loyalty was rewarded. Solomon would not hold her against the hunger of her heart and returned her to her Galilean swain.

This is the story, somewhat involved in the telling but clear enough to any one who will take time to puzzle it out. When you read the italic type at the head of each chapter, however, what do you discover? That this old-fashioned love song is "an allegory of Christ and the church"! Nothing could be more absurd. The "Song" is not a religious book in any sense; the name God does not occur in it. Its theme of virtuous love over all the riches that a king can offer. Simply that and nothing more. When you see how diligently certain annotators have worked to squeeze all the life and humanity out of the Bible you wonder how the Book has lasted so long. Its vitality, in spite of the bad offices of its friends, is the most powerful argument for its inspiration.

Ecclesiastes is the other book commonly attributed to Solomon because the first verse reads:

The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king of Jerusalem.

Modern scholars seem to think that some obscure writer of a much later date wrote the book and the resplendent Solomon gets the credit—a quite plausible conjecture. It is too bad we cannot be sure about the authorship, for the writer, whoever he was, left us one of the great masterpieces. Frederick the Great called it the "book for kings," and insisted that every monarch ought to read it regularly.

# Whispering Rock

By JOHN LEBAR

### SYNOPSIS

Ruth Warren, who lived in the East, is willed three-fourth interest in the "Dead Lantern" ranch in Arizona by her only brother who is reported to have met his death while on business in Mexico. Arriving in Arizona with her husband who has ailing lungs, and their small child, they learn that the ranch is located 85 miles from the nearest railroad. Old Charley Thane, rancher and rural mail carrier agrees to take them to the "Dead Lantern" gate, 5 miles from the ranch house, as they trudge wearily through a gulch approaching the ranch house, a voice whispers "Go back! . . . Go back!" At the ranch house they are greeted suspiciously by the gaunt ranch partner, Snavely, and Indian Ann, a herculean woman of mixed negro and Indian blood. Snavely is difficult to understand but regardless, Ruth takes up the task of trying to adjust their three lives to the ranch and its development. Kenneth, Ruth's husband, caught in a chilling rain contracts pneumonia and passes away before a doctor arrives. Ruth tries to carry on. She is not encouraged by Snavely in plans to try and stock the ranch or improve it. She writes to her father in the East asking a loan with which to buy cattle. She receives no reply. Will Thane comes home to visit his father . . . and Ruth meets him. A rancher nearby decides to retire and offers to sell Ruth and Snavely his livestock on credit. Snavely tries to balk the deal but Ruth buys to the limit of her three-quarter interest in Dead Lantern ranch. She is assisted by Old Charley Thane and his son, Will Thane. A Mexican family has been hired to assist with the work. A peculiar sickness develops with the livestock. Snavely calls it "liver fever" . . . and says he has a powder for the water to cure the disease. Ruth's whole future is at stake on the development of the herd to meet her notes following the first round-up.

At the round-up Ruth has enough stock to sell to meet her notes. NOW GO ON WITH STORY—

Ruth entered the gully which ran eastward a few yards south of the house, and followed it. At last she stopped beneath an ash tree which had a low branch. With the paring knife she cut the potato in half and made numerous little cuts in the white surface. Into this surface she rubbed a pinch of powder from the liver fever box. She placed the piece of potato on the branch of the tree and, walking a short distance away, seated herself in the shade to wait, her eyes on the potato.

She waited more than an hour and was about to give up when a little gray bird flew down from the top of the ash tree and alighted on the branch. After a moment the bird hopped to the potato, looked it over, and took a speculative peck.

Ruth watched so intently that her eyes burned. The little bird had taken several bites when it ceased and moved away from the potato. It stood upon a small twig and jerked its head as though trying to shake something from its mouth or throat. Then the little wings drooped, the bird toppled, hung by a single claw for a moment, and dropped to the ground.

Ruth buried the bird and the piece of potato, then walked slowly back to the house. Her face was pale and her knees felt uncertain. The cattle crop to fall he could her trunk, and after screwing up her courage, tasted the powder labeled Cyanide.

It was common salt. The girl shuddered. How could any one deliberately poison cattle? But she knew that to Snavely cattle were only a crop. He would not have killed a horse; but if by causing the cattle crop to fall he could gain possession of the ranch, that was another matter.

Snavely had not foreseen that she would lock both boxes in her trunk and so had no opportunity to re-

change the contents. Later, Ann had "poisoned" the barbecue meat with dirty salt, and today the girl had killed a bird with the "liver medicine." Ruth grew weak with fear; if the man would do such things in an effort to rid himself of her, what might he not do? . . . That night when the drunken giant-ess had been goaded to kill her by the voice, Ruth was certain that in some way Snavely controlled that voice.

She now feared him as never before; yet, she must not let him suspect it. If she could only hold out this week, until Old Charley and Will came. . . .

The next afternoon Ruth and David rode through the arroyo north of the barn. When they met the old road, the girl turned toward the gulch, dismounted at the fence and tied the horses.

She went first to the brown bowlder and seated herself. Ruth waited half an hour, while David played about, but she heard no voice. Then, systematically, she began to explore. She looked into every depression, behind every bowlder, and among the scant piles of drift-wood and leaves in the bed of the gulch.

She returned to the rock and seated herself wearily—it was hard walking through the sand. David sprawled on his stomach before the rock, tickling the sand on the edge of a doodle bug cone.

"Mama, what are we doing?" "Just thinking."

Presently David asked, "Do you hear that funny little bird?"

"Oh, David!" For the first time Ruth turned her whole mind on her son. Just then she heard the twitter of a bird. She had heard it off and on for some time, but only as one hears a sound while thinking hard upon something else. The twitter came again and Ruth started, then rose quickly to her feet. There was something strange about the sound of that bird—it was too close, as though the bird was sitting not ten feet away, perhaps even nearer. But there was not a bird in sight.

"David!" Ruth was suddenly excited. "Get up on top of the rock and see if you can see the bird—we must find it, son!"

"Isn't it close, Mama?" David held his hand out before him. "I think he's sitting on my finger, but when I look he's gone!" Slowly, Ruth moved away from the rock, trying, from the infrequent sounds of the bird, to go toward it.

She soon discovered that if she went a few feet to right or left she could not hear the bird at all, although David, behind her on the bowlder said, "Hear it!" at regular intervals. The sound seemed to come from the south in a narrow band. As though she were following an invisible beam of light the girl walked slowly toward the cliff. It was weird: The voice of the bird grew only slightly louder—always, it seemed but a few feet before her face. Ten yards from the cliff a bird flew out of a waist-high bush and darted up the gulch. Ruth ran to the bush. It was a very ordinary bush, rather sparse, differing in no way from any other bush. A foot or so behind it rose the wall of sandstone. To left and right, ran other bushes, growing as close to the wall as they could find earth, none of them tall. Then Ruth saw something which her eyes would have missed six months before—in the bush was a dry stick about two feet tall with a forked top. This stick did not belong to the bush; it had been stuck into the sand like a stake.

She stepped through an opening on the right and came between the

bush and the wall. Just behind the bush was a smooth depression in the sandstone about four feet across and perhaps a foot or more in depth. It was as though some one had pressed a giant basin into the wall when the rock was soft. The lower third of this basin was beneath the surface of the sand. It was a perfectly natural hollow such as are to be found in great numbers, scoured out by wind and water, in the sandstone banks of ravines. But Ruth saw something else: a small flat-topped rock like a footstool lay on the ground a little inside the basin, and before this stone were the marks of boot heels. Some one had recently sat upon this stone. She experimented and found that when seated upon the stone her head came opposite the deepest point of the basin behind her. She called to David to go back to the bowlder and climb on top.

When the boy was in position she spoke in a normal tone. "Hello, David."

"Hello, Mama!" His small voice reached her across the intervening distance.

Ruth lowered her voice to an excited whisper. "Can you hear Mama now?"

David did not reply.

Then she saw that the forked stick which she had already discovered was so placed that by sitting straighter she could just see the boy on the bowlder through the notch. It was like a gun sight. Again she whispered, "Come here, David."

It was uncanny; the boy slid from the rock and plodded toward her through the sand.

As they returned to the house Ruth thought over her discovery. The depression in the rock was a reflector, and by sitting on the stone and sighting through the forked stick, one's mouth was placed at its focus. The sound of the voice was then conserved and directed in a narrow beam to the brown bowlder, as light is reflected from a headlight. That was the secret of the old Indian medicine men. And Snavely had learned of it. He had seen Ruth, Kenneth and David that first day—had watched them struggling along the road toward the ranch. Then he had slipped into the gorge by way of the fissure and had spoken to them. Afterward, he had gone to the corral, told Ann that he would finish milking and that she should go and see who was coming through the gulch.

She was tremendously thrilled over her discovery. She told herself that now she had snavely where she wanted him.

Ruth lay awake late that night, planning how she should prove the origin of the voice to Ann. She came to the conclusion that she would do nothing until Sunday. With Will and Old Charley helping, she could get Ann to come for a ride in the machine on some pretext or other. They would take her to the gulch and show her what that voice was. Then, without returning to the ranch they would all go into town and place the whole thing in Martin's hands.

On Saturday Ruth and David arrived at the mail box later than usual. The girl stayed on her horse while David dismounted and, crawling through the fence, went to the box. He returned with a roll of papers and magazines. "There's a letter here too, Mama," he said, as he held up the roll.

Ruth worked the letter from under the string about the package and looked at it curiously. It was addressed to her old apartment in Philadelphia; the writing was unfamiliar, a child's writing. The ori-

ginal postmark was undecipherable, but as she opened the letter Ruth noticed that it bore a foreign stamp.

As her eyes met the first few words of the crudely written letter, Ruth's expression of mild curiosity was suddenly wiped out. She uttered a cry and her face went white. She sat on her horse like one entranced, lips parted breathlessly, eyes staring at the paper. Both David and Sanchez looked on with interest.

"Mama—?" "David!" Ruth whirled about. "Uncle Harry—this letter—he's alive!"

Ruth returned to the home ranch in an ecstasy of happiness. The whole world had changed; for in that world Ruth Warren felt that all her troubles were vanishing. To be sure, Harry was far away, sick, and in difficulties; but he was alive, Harry, her big brother—the one person she had really depended on all her life—was alive! She told herself that she never had been quite satisfied with the story of his death; it sounded plausible but somehow not like Harry. He wasn't dead—he'd soon be with her on the Dead Lantern ranch.

She felt incredibly young and light-hearted. As she and David neared the barn, chattering and laughing, Ruth fell to thinking of Snavely. She pitied him. Poor, half-crazy, eccentric man—there was nothing to fear from him now. When Harry learned of the things he had done, Snavely would have to go.

Just what she would do at present, Ruth had not decided. First, she would show Snavely the letter. Nothing he could say or do would frighten her now, and once he understood that Harry Grey was coming back to the Dead Lantern, Snavely was forever beaten.

Again she read the letter which she still held in her hand. Harry had been captured by Mexican bandits, had been with them several months, had at last escaped, was badly hurt, and from then until the writing of the letter he had been

cared for at the inaccessible Guiterrez Rancho six days west of Hermosillo. He said that he was dictating the letter to a traveler—the first person he had seen in many months who had any knowledge of English. Harry was unable to write because of a wound, and was still in bed. But his hurts were mending and before long he expected to be up. He requested Ruth to write his partner, Snavely, of the situation and ask him to go to Hermosillo.

Ruth galloped to the ranch house, for she saw Snavely's horse standing by the little mesquite near the back porch.

She entered the front of the house and went through to the rear.

TO BE CONTINUED

## MEDFORD PAGEANT NOW WRITTEN, WORK BEGUN

Preparations for an historical pageant to be presented during Oregon's Diamond Jubilee celebration in Medford next June are rapidly gaining headway, according to Professor Angus Bowmer of the Southern Oregon Normal School at Ashland, author and director of the production, which is planned to have over 400 people in its cast.

The story of the manuscript covers historical events, dating back to days when Indians were in sole possession of the Oregon country, followed by the arrival of early early settlers and establishment of a statehood.

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Opposite P. O. Springfield

## GETTING ALONG By Albert T. Reid

