

The BROWN MOUSE

By HERBERT QUICK

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SYNOPSIS

CHAPTER I—Jennie Woodruff contemptuously refuses to marry Jim Irwin, young farm hand, because of his financial condition and poor prospects. He is intellectually above his station, and has advanced ideas concerning the possibilities of expert school teaching, for which he is ridiculed by many.

CHAPTER II—More as a joke than otherwise Jim is selected as teacher of the Woodruff district school.

CHAPTER III—Jim, in his new position, sets out to make staunch friends of his pupils, especially two boys, Newton Bronson and "Buddy" Simms, the latter the son of a shiftless farmer, Colonel Woodruff, Jennie's father, has little faith in Jim's ideas of improving rural educational methods. His nickname is "The Brown Mouse," in illustration of an anecdote.

CHAPTER IV—Jim's conduct of the school, where he endeavors to teach the children the wonders of nature and some of the scientific methods of farming, as well as "book learning," is commended.

CHAPTER V—Jennie Woodruff is nominated for the position of county superintendent of schools. The school board grows bitter in its opposition to Jim and his innovations.

CHAPTER VI—At a public meeting Jim roundly condemns the methods of teaching in the rural schools, and makes no friends thereby.

CHAPTER VII—A delegation of prominent women condemn Jim's methods of teaching, but he is stoutly defended by his pupils, especially Newton Bronson.

CHAPTER VIII—Jim has Christmas dinner at Colonel Woodruff's, and listening to him, Jennie begins to do some thinking concerning his ability and his prospects.

CHAPTER IX—In the evening Jim, as well as he knows how, courts Jennie, without, however, making much progress, though she is quickly losing her poor opinion of him.

CHAPTER X—Jennie, elected county superintendent of schools, receives so many complaints from people of the district concerning Jim's methods of teaching that she finds herself compelled formally to ask for his resignation. After she has left, Jim is visited by Colonel Woodruff, who strongly urges him to refuse to resign, and offers to back him. Jim agrees to stick, for a while at least.

CHAPTER XI—A meeting of the school board, which had been gathered to "get" Jim, is confronted by Jennie, who upholds him. He conducts an examination of his pupils at the meeting, to prove that he is not neglecting their "book learning," by the introduction of other subjects which he considers of importance. The splendid showing made by the children converts many who had doubted, to his views.

CHAPTER XII—The novel ideas which Jim has introduced have been talked about outside the county, and he is visited by Professor Withers, extension lecturer at the state university, who invites him to deliver an address at the next annual meeting of the Farmers' Institute.

CHAPTER XIII—Professor Withers is impressed by many of the innovations made by Irwin, and so informs Colonel Woodruff and Jennie, somewhat to the astonishment of both. The colonel suggests to Jim that he (the colonel) seek election to the school board, replacing Cornelius Bonner, implacable enemy of Jim Irwin.

CHAPTER XIV—Feigning sickness Newton Bronson, youngster whom Irwin has redeemed from idleness and folly and set on the right path, and who almost worships the teacher, keeps his father from voting at the school board election. Bronson is a friend of Bonner, and would have voted for him. As it is, Colonel Woodruff is chosen for the position, owing to Bronson's absence.

CHAPTER XV—Jim convinces the farmers of the district of the advantages to be derived from a co-operative creamery, and it is agreed to establish one. His rise to a position of leadership in the community, and his responsibility, has made a distinct difference in Jennie's feelings toward Jim, which she is forced to acknowledge to herself.

CHAPTER XVI—In his address at the Farmers' Institute Jim makes a distinctly favorable impression. After the meeting he is offered a position as teacher in another district, with a considerable advance in salary, and agrees to consider it.

CHAPTER XVII—Jim's friends urge him to remain at his present post, leading citizens of the district assuring him that they are "proud of him."

CHAPTER XIX

A School District Held Up.

Colonel Woodruff was on his feet as Jim made his way through the crowd about the door.

"Mr. Irwin is here, ladies and gentlemen," said he, "and I move that we hear from him as to what we can do to meet the offer of our friends in Pottawatomie county; but before I yield the floor, I want to say that this meeting has been worth while just to have been the occasion of our all becoming better acquainted with our friend and neighbor, Mr. Simms. Whatever may have been the lack of understanding, on our part, of his qualities, they were all cleared up by that speech of his—the best I have ever heard in this neighborhood.

More applause, in the midst of which Old Man Simms slunk away down in his seat to escape observation. Then the chairman said that if there was no objection they would hear from their well-known citizen, whose growing fame was more remarkable for the fact that it had been gained as a country schoolmaster—he need not add that he referred to Mr. James E. Irwin. (More and louder applause.)

"Friends and neighbors," said Jim, "you ask me to say to you what I want you to do. I want you to do what you want to do—nothing more or less. Last year I was glad to be tolerated

here; and the only change in the situation lies in the fact that I have another place offered me—unless there has been a change in your feelings toward me and my work. I hope there has been; for I know my work is good now, whereas I only believed it then.

"Sure it is!" shouted Con Bonner from a front seat, thus signaling that astute wirepuller's definite choice



"Tell Us What You Want, Jim."

of a place in the bandwagon. "Tell us what you want, Jim?"

"What do I want?" asked Jim. "More than anything else, I want such meetings as this—often—and a place to hold them. If I stay in the Woodruff District, I want this meeting to effect a permanent organization to work with me. I can't teach this district anything. Nobody can teach any one anything. All any teacher can do is to direct people's activities in teaching themselves. You are gathered here to decide what you'll do about the small matter of keeping me at work as your hired man.

"If I'm to be your hired man, I want a boss in the shape of a civic organization which will take in every man and woman in the district. Here's the place and now's the time to make that organization—an organization the object of which shall be to put the whole district at school, and to boss me in my work for the whole district."

"Dat sounds good," cried Haakon Peterson. "Ve'll do dat!"

"Then I want you to work out a building scheme for the school," Jim went on. "We want a place where girls can learn to cook, keep house, take care of babies, sew, and learn to be wives and mothers. There's somebody right in this neighborhood able to teach anything the young people want to learn.

"And I want a physician here once in a while to examine the children as to their health, and a dentist to look after their teeth and teach them how to care for them. Also an oculist to examine their eyes. And when Bettina Hansen comes home from the hospital a trained nurse, I want her to have a job as visiting nurse right here in the Woodruff District.

"I want a counting-room for the keeping of the farm accounts and the record of our observation in farming. I want co-operation in letting us have these accounts.

"I want some manual training equipment for wood-working and metal working, and a blacksmith and wagon shop, in which the boys may learn to shoe horses, repair tools, design buildings, and practice the best agricultural engineering. I want to do work in poultry according to the most modern breeding discoveries, and I want your co-operation in that, and a poultry plant somewhere in the district.

"I want a laboratory in which we can work on seeds, pests, soils, feeds and the like. For the education of your children must come out of these things.

"I want these things because they are necessary if we are to get the culture out of life we should get—and nobody gets culture out of any sort of school—they get it out of life, or they don't get it at all.

"So I want you to build as freely for your school as for your cattle and horses and hogs.

"The school will make for you—this new kind of rural school—a social life which will be the social center, because it will be the educational center, and the business center of the countryside.

"I want all these things, and more. But I don't expect them all at once. I know that this district is too small to do all of them, and therefore, I want a bigger district—one that will give us the financial strength to carry out the program I have sketched. This may be a presumptuous thing for me to propose. If you think so, let me go. But if you don't, please keep this meeting together in a permanent organization of grownup members of the Woodruff school, and by pulling together, you can do these things—all of them—and many more—and you'll make the Woodruff District a good place to live in and die in—and I shall be proud to live and die in it at your service, as the neighborhood's hired man!"

As Jim sat down there was a hush in the crowded room, as if the people were dazed at his assurance. There was no applause, until Jennie Woodruff, now seen by Jim for the first time over next the blackboard, clapped her gloved hands together and started it; then it swept out through the windows in a storm. The dust rose from stamping feet until the kerosene lamps were dimmed by it. And as the noise subsided, Jim saw standing up in front of the steepled form of B. B. Hamm, one of the most prosperous men in the district.

"Mr. Chairman—Ezra Bronson," he

coated, this reuser's crazy, an iron sound of things, you're all as crazy as he is. If this fool scheme of his goes through, my farm's for sale! I'll quit before I'm sold out for taxes!"

"Just a minute, B. B.!" interposed Colonel Woodruff. "This ain't as dangerous as you think. You don't want us to do all this in fifteen minutes, do you, Jim?"

"Oh, as to that," replied Jim, "I just wanted you to have in your minds what I have in my mind—and unless we can agree to work toward these things there's no use in my staying. But time—that's another matter. Believe with me, and I'll work with you."

"Get out of here!" said the colonel to Jim in an undertone, "and leave the rest to your friends."

Jim walked out of the room and took the way toward his home. A horse tied to the hitching-post had his blanket under foot, and Jim replaced it on his back, patting him kindly and talking horse language to him. Then he went up and down the line of teams, readjusting blankets, tying loosened knots, and assuring himself that his neighbors' horses were securely tied and comfortable. He knew horses better than he knew people, he thought. If he could manage people as he could manage horses—but that would be wrong. Horse management was despotism; man-government must be like the government of a society of wild horses, the result of the common work of the members of the herd.

Two figures emerged from the schoolhouse door, and as he turned toward his home after his pastoral calls on the horses, they overtook him. They were the figures of Newton Bronson and the county superintendent of schools.

"Dat wants you back there again," said Newton.

"What for?" inquired Jim.

"You silly boy," said Jennie, "you talked about the good of the schools all of the time, and never said a word about your own salary! What do you want? They want to know?"

"Oh!" exclaimed Jim in the manner of one who suddenly remembers that he has forgotten his umbrella or his pocket-knife. "I forgot all about it. I haven't thought about that at all, Jennie!"

"Jim," said she, "you need a guardian!"

"I know it, Jennie," said he, "and I know who I want. I want—"

"Please come back," said Jennie, "and tell papa how much you're going to hold the district up for."

"You run back," said Jim to Newton, "and tell your father that whatever is right in the way of salary will be satisfactory to me. I leave that to the people."

Newton darted off, leaving the schoolmaster standing in the road with the county superintendent.

"I can't go back there!" said Jim.

"I'm proud of you, Jim," said Jennie.

"This community has found its master. They can't do all you ask now, nor very soon; but finally they'll do just as you want them to do. And, Jim, I want to say that I've been the biggest little fool in the county!"

(To be continued)

SPRAYING IS NOT HARMFUL

There is No Danger if Proper Methods of Eradicating Pests are Used.

A good many people have asked the question, "Will fruits and vegetables which have been sprayed be dangerous to use?"

It can be said that if they use the methods recommended for the different pests by the Department of Agriculture and the experiment stations there will be no danger. Of course in some instances, simply because of heavy spraying or spraying late in the season, there may be comparatively large quantities of spray material stuck to the fruit and vegetables at harvest time, especially where such products are grown in a dry climate. When heavy coatings of spray material are found, washing and wiping will remove much of this, usually almost all of it, and peeling will remove every bit.

Considerable fear has been expressed by some that spraying of fruits and vegetables might leave enough arsenate of lead or copper on the surface to be injurious to any one who might eat the fruit.

Right in this line experiments have been undertaken by the United States Department of Agriculture to determine whether there might be left on such fruits and vegetables which are sprayed enough chemicals of a poisonous nature to be injurious.

Are Hiccups Rheumatism?

That hiccups may be due to rheumatism is the contention of Dr. Martin J. Chevers, a member of the British Medical Association and a well-known Manchester physician.

"I have never failed to cure the most obstinate case by a few doses of antirheumatic medicine," Doctor Chevers states in a letter to the British Medical Journal. He admits that morphine may relieve the spasms but adds that it does not go to the root of the cure.

His suggestion is particularly timely in view of the reported "hiccups" epidemic in France, which, it has been suggested, must mean that "hiccups" are infectious. One of the cures used in France is to apply severe pressure to the eyeballs.

Adopted by Bluejackets.

In the midst of the quaintness of old Stamboul—the Turkish quarter of Constantinople—stands one of the most interesting modern architectural

at the work—a home for blind refugees from the burned city of Smyrna. It is supported by American sailors—the crew of the U. S. S. Edsall, a destroyer of Admiral Long's squadron. Twice each month, on the 15th and the 30th, when the crew is paid, each officer and man contributes his share to the support of the orphanage. It was through the efforts of Commander Halsey Powell of the Edsall that Smyrna was evacuated without tremendous loss of life.—McClure's Magazine for July.

Advertise in the Herald.

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Old Helicopter Model

A model of a helicopter from plans drawn 80 years ago by Sir George Cayley was constructed recently by Paul Gerber, custodian of airplane models in the National museum at Washington. The design, although conceived years before an airplane flew, is strikingly similar to those of recent helicopters, and aeronautical engineers assert that with a few modifications based on modern aircraft principles a large machine constructed on the original plans undoubtedly would fly.—Popular Science Monthly.



Put an End to Guesswork

When you transfer an amount of money to another person, for any purpose, you are entitled to a record of the transaction that is clear on all points—the date, the amount and to whom paid.

Keep a reasonable amount to your credit in a checking account with the First National Bank. Pay with your personal check on the Bank. Then you will be sure at all times. Your checks will provide an accurate, reliable record of disbursements.



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