

SLOT-MACHINE OF THE STORMS

By WILLIAM CALHOUN

(By Short Story Pub. Co.)

"LOOK, Wilson see what I've found!"

Bowen held in the hand a shining five-dollar gold piece which he had just picked up from the rocks.

We were on our annual outing. We had run up the river in a small steamer to the head of navigation. In a large rowboat, loaded with necessary camping outfit, we laboriously continued our course till we reached the wilderness. Here we found an old hunter and trapper named Gibbons, with whom we rested for a night. Gibbons had spent the evening telling tales of his adventures in that region. Just before retiring he told us of the cliff at which we were now snugly camped.

"You'll be apt to like it there. Plenty of game and the best fishin' along the river. A fine spring bubblin' out of the solid rock at the foot of the cliff. Can't recommend you to a better place. Always camp there when I'm up that way. Used to go there for money from the rocks," said Gibbons, warming up to the occasion. "For ten years, after every storm, I found gold coins scattered about on the flat rocks below the cliff. Sometimes there was much, sometimes only a little. I went often in mild weather, but never found gold except when a storm had passed over. Once I stayed a month, but not a thing did I get till a terrible wind came along, after which I found five ten-dollar gold pieces as bright as the blaze in the fire there, and though I watched for two weeks I found nothing else. Another time, when a cyclone had gone through, I found three twenty-dollar pieces. Spent a week tryin' to explain the mystery, but had to give it up. No human hand put that money there. It just rained out of the clouds. One day, when it was blowin' a hurricane, I heard something strike the cliff, as if it had been shot from the sky; then it fell jingling on the rocks below. Known that to happen several times."

"For ten years it was always the same old story, money after a wind and nothin' any other time. Eight years ago it stopped fallin' and, no matter how hard the wind blew, from that day to this no more money has ever been found. I guess it has all rained out. I'll take you there tomorrow."

For a half hour he answered the questions our curiosity prompted, and then we went to our cot. On the morrow Gibbons guided us to the spot and, promising to return in a week, left us. We had established our camp under shelter of the precipitous cliff which overhung the river, eaten our supper, and were leisurely strolling about admiring the romantic surroundings, when Bowen found the money. Our surprise is now easily understood.

Under ordinary circumstances a man is surprised to find gold coins, but, with Gibbons' strange tale fresh in our ears, we stared at each other in speechless amazement. We looked the shining money over and over to make sure. We scanned the bald face of the cliff, glanced at the wild forest and the river, peered into the blue sky above, all in vain, for some clue as to the presence of the money. Then we tried for signs of recent human presence, but none existed. We searched for other coins, but found no more. Finally, we went to our couches in the tent, there to speculate and theorize on a possible explanation of the mystery, until, through sheer exhaustion, we fell into a slumber. The next morning Bowen built a fire while I went to the spring for a pail of water. On my way I passed the edge of the steep cliff and along over the rock floor, level and white as a city pavement. I was returning when my eye caught the glitter of a twenty-dollar gold piece lying at my feet. In my excitement I called to Bowen and together we examined the rock thoroughly and found three pieces. As we had investigated well the evening before, it was clear the coins had arrived in some manner during the night. That any human being would deliberately put them there, even had it seemed possible that one could be near enough, was preposterous.

We went around to the other side of the highland, from which we could reach the top of the cliff, where we found ourselves on a grassy level of perhaps an acre in area. It was a beautiful spot, covered with trees and singularly free from undergrowth. The surface sloped gently away from the ledge, finally forming the floor of the dense forest in the rear.

Gibbons had told us of an Indian trader named Groom who had dwelt there in an early day and whose house was a favorite resort of Indians, trappers, and overland travelers for the far West. When a lad, Gibbons had often seen the great log cabin full of strangers. At last the Indians were removed to other lands, the overland route gradually changed to better paths, and Groom was deserted by his old customers. One day he was found dead. He was buried beneath his hearthstone, and then the locality slowly drifted back to its primitive condition. All that remained of the house was a tall stone chimney, near the edge of the precipice. By this old ruin stood the trunk of what had once been a great sugar tree.

Nothing about the piece, however, seemed to have any possible connection with the gold. The history of the spot gave no explanation of the presence of coins at the base of the ledge fifty years later. Bowen and I examined the chimney, but found naught save the ragged stones. The stubby old sugar tree by it creaked in the breeze. This forsaken acre furnished no trace at all, and we desecrated. We did little else for several days, except to fruitlessly investigate and theorize. Strangely, too, we found no more coins, though we watched persistently.

At the end of the week, according to promise, Gibbons arrived. He heard our experience with interest on only one point, the fact that the phenomenon should recur after years of cessation. To our conjectures he paid little attention.

"No use tryin'," said he skeptically. "I've investigated every nook and cranny. Spent ten years watchin' and pryin', off and on, 'round this old highland, crackin' my brain over the cause. Have sat all night and all day, more time than I'm years old, tryin' to discover the secret, and all I ever learned was to hear the sudden jingle of the metal when it struck the cliff in time of storm and rattled down. It wasn't thrown from the top, for I've heard it while sitting at the foot of the chimney up there in broad daylight. You may study it till you're old, and that's all you'll ever know."

As we discussed the matter a gale began blowing. It grew stronger rapidly and was accompanied by the rumblings of distant thunder. Huge black clouds approached with frightful velocity. In our location under the precipice, protected from the gathering storm, we could watch the trees lash each other like whips.

Suddenly, as if by magic, two gold eagles dropped straight from the clouds overhead and rang resonantly on the stones near. No chance this time for mistaken senses, as three of us witnessed their descent. They came from the storm-laden sky, no doubt at all about it. Then came another and another, and following them a shower of coins. It seemed a dozen or more were jingling around us. A fearful peal of thunder heralded a fresh burst of the angry elements and the wind raged with the fury of demons. We heard a deafening crash overhead and the old chimney came tumbling in a heap to the foot of the cliff, the sugar tree with it. Then the velocity of the wind began to slacken, the sound of crashing timber ceased, and the storm gradually subsided.

When our fears were somewhat allayed we began to reconnoiter. Near the heap made by the fallen chimney we found a distorted tube, resembling the gutters and conductors placed at the eaves of houses. It was battered, rusty and rotten with age and contained several heaping handfuls of coins and a number of musty parchments and papers. On examining the wreckage of the chimney we found that the tube had been carefully placed in a chamber specially arranged for its reception. Two slits had rusted in the sides of the tin, one a few inches from the bottom and the other higher up. It was evident that the heavy winds, shaking the sugar tree and the chimney, had made of the tube a nickel-in-the-slot machine, by forcing coins through the narrow apertures. After the coins had worked down to the level of the higher slit it was eight years before the second and lower one rusted through, thus causing the dropping to resume. As the tube, by the weathering of the chimney, lay inclined, it formed a sort of chute. A coin, once slipping through, slid along the spouting for a few inches and finally shot over the precipice, having the appearance of coming from skyward.

We found papers recording the honorable discharge of Malachi Groom as a veteran of the War of 1812, and a package of letters written by his sweetheart, Cecilia Bliss, concerning whom we learned some strange facts from a faded manuscript. She had been captured by the Indians. On Groom's discharge he had made diligent search and ascertained that she had perished at the stake a few feet from the old sugar tree. He gathered the ashes and buried them where the stake had stood and erected the stone chimney above the spot, adding to it the cabin that he might dwell near her resting place. On the will was the indistinct signature of the old soldier, bestowing the money to the finder, on condition that the letters be laid by Groom's side. Under Gibbons' guidance we reburied the letters beneath the old hearthstone near which the ashes of his sweetheart had reposed for ninety years.

Apt Pupil
Some friends were chatting with Mrs. Carter, the energetic young matron who, more than any other individual, brought the Hollywood bowl into existence. "You remember Betty Stokes? Well, she went abroad to study music and already she's engaged to the son of a very wealthy man."

Mrs. Carter smiled.

"I'm not at all surprised at the news," she said, "for as I remember Betty, she was always very quick at picking up hints."—Exchange.

Peru's Match Monopoly
Matches and similar products are under a government monopoly in Peru. The manufacture and sale of these products, regardless of their class or condition, are under government supervision. The effect of the monopoly is not definitely known yet, as it has not been established very long.

DAIRY FACTS

SANITARY FLOORS FOR DAIRY BARNS

Sanitary floors are a first requirement to a cleanly dairy. Non-absorbent material and without crevices where dirt and filth can lodge is recommended. It should be easily washed and disinfected.

In building a dairy barn floor, all rubbish and refuse within the enclosure should be removed and the floor area graded to the required level, allowing, of course, for the thickness of the floor. The soil should be thoroughly compacted. If it is possible for water to get under the floor at any time, this possibility should be reduced by using a fill of clean gravel, clinders or crushed stone and providing suitable drainage. The gravel or clinder sub-base, if used, must be thoroughly compacted and consolidated by tamping or rolling.

Forms for defining floor slabs, alleys or other areas to be concreted should be of smooth lumber, rigidly braced in line and carefully set to proper grade. The manger curb is usually placed first. It should be not less than four inches thick and is usually made about six inches high on the stall side. Uprights supporting stanchions are of several types. Some are attached to anchors which are set in the curb and others are embedded in the concrete. Feed and litter alleys are usually placed after the curb, then the stall platform and manger are placed.

The length of stall platform, that is, the distance from manger curb to gutter, will depend upon the breed of cattle kept. For Jerseys or Guernseys the average length is about four feet eight inches; for Holsteins about five feet is necessary. The platform should be pitched about one inch from the curb toward the gutter.

The surface of the manger should be finished smooth, with corners carefully rounded to make cleaning out easy and to provide a comfortable surface for the animals to eat from. Litter and feed alleys should be finished with a wood float to secure an even but gritty surface, thus providing secure footing for the animals.

Good Appearing Cows Not Always Most Profitable

In dairying it is entirely possible to get nothing for something. This is the conclusion of the New Jersey state dairy specialist after reviewing records of dairy herds in the Mercer County Cow-Testing association. It was found that though some cows had unsatiable appetites and good appearance they were miserably in their milk output, whereas other cows eating but little more would give four and one-half times as much milk.

Three cows ate \$70 worth of feed apiece in one year and returned their owners 3,292 pounds of milk each. Two other cows each ate \$108 worth of feed and gave their owners 14,817 pounds of milk each. Thus, for 2.1 times as much feed the good cows gave four and one-half times as much milk.

By calculating further, the specialist found that it cost the owners of the poor cows \$2.40 in feed for each 100 pounds of milk, against \$1.13 for an equal amount of milk from the good cows. When labor, housing and haulage expenses were added, it was found that the cost of producing 100 pounds of milk with the poor cows was greater than prevailing sale prices. Hence, these low-yielding animals were eating up the profits made on the high-producers.

This is a clear case, concludes the state specialist, of wasting feed, labor and barn space on worthless cows, or of getting nothing for something.

Save Young Live Stock to Increase Net Profit

Cutting down the high and costly death rate among infant live stock is one of the farm problems for which the farmer must apply the solution himself. The causes of early deaths in live stock fall into three general classes:

1. Conditions little influenced by treatment: Malformation, extreme feebleness or extreme prematurity, certain accidents during birth.
2. Conditions capable of considerable reduction, chiefly through proper hygiene, sanitary isolation, and medical treatment: Tuberculosis, acute respiratory diseases, certain acute contagious diseases, some forms of animal parasitism.
3. Conditions capable of a very great reduction through proper feeding, care, and sanitation: Acute gastrointestinal diseases, colic troubles, prematurity (if not extreme), many forms of animal parasitism.

Failure to Breed

Failure of cows to breed may be due to one of many causes. The chief cause, however, is infection with contagious abortion. This disease brings about changes in the maternal organs which make conception either uncertain or entirely impossible. The treatment consists of manual manipulation of the uterus and ovaries and regular irrigation. A cure can be brought about only by a prolonged course of treatment at a considerable expense to the owner.

ROAD BUILDING

ROAD UPKEEP COST ELEVEN MILLIONS

Ohio will spend close to \$11,000,000 this year in the upkeep of the 10,000 miles of inter-county highways designated as state routes. Of this amount, slightly over \$1,000,000 will be derived from county funds, while the remainder will come from state funds.

In addition to the \$11,000,000 for maintenance, \$124,000,000 is to be spent in new highway construction through the combined efforts of federal, state and county governments. This combined maintenance and construction cost, totaling \$23,400,000 does not represent the total expenditure on Ohio highways for the year, for it does not take into account tens of thousands of dollars spent by counties and townships in the upkeep of roads of local importance. Neither does it take into account the expenditures of cities in paving and maintaining their streets, many of which are used by through traffic.

There are 85,000 miles of public roads in Ohio outside of municipalities and 12,000 miles of streets in Ohio cities. Out of total thoroughfare mileage of 97,000 miles in the state, 10,000 miles comprise the inter-county highway system, 6,000 miles of which are kept up by the state.

When the budget was made up for the maintenance and repair of state highways, the availability of gas tax funds was not yet assured, so the budget was based on funds outside the revenue from the new 2-cent tax on fuel. Gas tax money has begun to come into the state treasury so that at present there is available \$1,700,000 more for maintenance and repair of highways than the budget estimate took into account.

The gas tax revenue will be used in various places over the state as it is needed at points not already provided for in the budget. H. J. Kirk, chief engineer of the bureau of maintenance and repairs, said. In 1925, Kirk estimates, there will be still more money available.

Ohio is enabled to spend nearly twice as much for the maintenance of state routes in 1925 as it was in 1921 and more than \$4,000,000 more than it was able to spend in 1924.

The increased expense is necessary, Kirk points out, because the state is now confronted with the proposition of rebuilding roads constructed years ago, and now worn out or inadequate for present-day traffic.

Wider Roads Are Needed to Handle Motor Flood

The marked congestion of motor vehicles on roads and streets, together with the fact that automobile factories have been turning out cars faster than crews have been building pavement enough to park them, has elicited a lively discussion of the automobile. With a registration of 17,500,000 cars in the United States and a factory output in 1924 amounting to 4,000,000 cars, the problem assumes proportions of first magnitude.

As the Glens Falls (N. Y.) Post-Star views the situation "there can be but one answer to the question—more roads, and that means, very largely wider roads." Quoting further:

"The task of road building which started with the advent of the automobile has only begun. It will not be ended for years to come. There is no other solution. The increase of automobiles cannot be stopped. People will buy them and run them as long as they have money. The highways must be expanded to accommodate the traffic. Traffic cannot be cut down to fit the highways. It is fast overburdening them. The program of road building must be hastened to keep pace with traffic, or confusion will ensue."

The Engineering News-Record, a leading engineering construction journal, believes that no one can see the congestion in our city streets and on our country highways without realizing that "the saturation point of automobile production is not going to be measured by the purchasing power of the people but by the capacity of our highways" and advises the automobile manufacturer to do all he can to help get new roads and streets if he wants to keep his market for automobiles unimpaired.

Surface for Earth Roads

Development of earth roads will be the subject of a nation-wide investigation to be conducted under the auspices of the highway research board. Prof. S. S. Steinberg of the University of Maryland has been made acting secretary of the investigation. The object is to find an inexpensive surface that will carry intermediate traffic at low construction and maintenance cost.

To Relieve Traffic

In order to relieve motor traffic between New York city and Washington, D. C., the Lee Highway association perfected plans for a wide boulevard connecting the Arlington Memorial bridge to be erected over the Potomac and the bridge which is to be erected over the Hudson river connecting Manhattan island and New Jersey at One Hundred and Seventy-eighth street in New York city. Officials of the association are already conferring with government officials on the subject.

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World's Oldest Umbrella.

The oldest umbrella in the world still in the same condition as when it was bought, including the cover, is in the possession of a resident of Hobart in Tasmania. The umbrella was bought in 1779 by a man named William Clevett in the county of Dorset, England, who emigrated to Tasmania. It has been handed down from generation to generation and still belongs to a descendant of the first owner.

California's Boast.

Sixty per cent of the flower-seed crop of the entire world is raised in California; more than a hundred tons of nasturtium seed alone are grown every year. If all the sweetpea seeds raised there were distributed to every man, woman and child in the country, each one would have a fifteen-foot row in the garden, and there would still be several hundred tons for export purpose.

"Chinook Wind"

This is a name given to a strong, warm wind and dry south or west wind descending the eastern slopes of the Rocky mountains into Montana and Wyoming, evaporating or melting the snow and bringing great relief in cold weather. The name was probably given it because it blew from the territory occupied by the Chinook Indians.

Observant Johnny.

"Now, boys," said the school-teacher, "the word novelette means 'a short tale.' You may now write a sentence containing the word." A few minutes later he picked up Johnny Brown's effort, and read aloud: "Yesterday I saw a foxterrier running down our street with a tin can tied to his novel-ette."

Exalted Courage.

True courage is cool and calm. The bravest of men have the least of a brutal, bullying insolence; and in the very time of danger are found the most serene and free. Rage, we know, can make a coward forget himself and fight. But what is done in fury or anger can never be placed to the account of courage.

Hail Only in Summer.

Scientists declare that no true hailstorm was ever recorded in any season but summer. The strange fact is that the hotter the day the bigger the hailstones will be and that semitropical countries may have the largest of all during the few storms there.

Store Well Protected.

Fifty miles of wire are used in the burglar alarm system of a store in London.

Cruel.

A tremendously fat man stepped on a piece of orange peel, floundered about and finally fell into the road. He was arrested for giving a street performance without a license.—London Answers.

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Animals and Blood.
The popular belief that blood produces intense irritation or excitement in cattle has been put to the test. The blood of both horses and cows was brought before the animals, but they remained indifferent or only mildly interested, showing nothing of the reported alarm or anger. It is concluded that the excitement witnessed by the cattlemen was not aroused by the blood but by something accompanying it, such as the sight of wounded companions, or their cries of pain.

Two "Pipes of Pan."

The Pipe of Pan was called the Syrinx, the legend being that the water nymph Syrinx was changed into a reed, to escape from Pan, who loved her. He took the reed, cut it into seven pieces of graduated length, joined them together and fashioned the instrument which he called by her name.

Blacksmith and Scholar.

"The Learned Blacksmith" was the title popularly given Elihu Burritt of New Britain, Conn. He was a linguist, a writer and a social reformer. He was the author of several volumes. He died in 1879.

Fast-Moving Planet.

Jupiter's diameter is about ten times that of our earth, but so quickly does it spin that a day there lasts only nine hours and fifty minutes.

Overcoming Troubles.

Troubles may never come singly, but in meeting one trouble experience is gained for taking care of another. If the law of compensations were better understood disappointments would be less keen. The Lord tempers the wind to the shorn lamb in more ways than one.—Grit.



PILES

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In my new book which may be had FREE upon request, on PILES and other Rectal and Colon disorders, I have reproduced nearly 100 letters from among those received from my thousands of patients. These tell you frankly of their years of suffering of their trying home remedies and even operations, and, finally, of their complete cure by my NON-SURGICAL method. These are from men and women of every station, many of whom you may know. You will learn by reading this book why I can give a WRITTEN GUARANTEE to cure your Piles or return your fee.

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