



CHAPTER IX—Continued.

"You don't learn anything, Riles, do you? You don't know anything more about making money than you did 20 years ago."

"Well, maybe I don't, and maybe I do, but I can pay my way, and I can go back to Plainville when I like, too."

"Don't get hot," said Gardiner, with unshaken composure. "I'm just trying to put you wise to yourself. Don't make any difference to me if you spend your whole life sod-busting; it's your life—spend it any way you like. But it's only men who don't know any better that go on to the land nowadays. It's a lot easier to make a living out of farmers than out of farming."

"Well, p'raps so, but that's more in your line. I never—"

"That's just what I say—you never learn. Now look at me. I ain't wearing my last suit, nor spending my last dollar, either, and I haven't done what you'd call a day's work since I came west. There's other things so much easier to do."

"Meanin'?"

"Oh, lots of things. Remittance men, for instance. These woods are full of them. Chaps that never could track straight in the old ruts, and were sent out here where there aren't any ruts at all. They're not a bad bunch; brought up like gentlemen, most of 'em; play the piano and talk in three or four languages, and all that kind of stuff, but they're simply dangerous with money. So when it comes to hand, in the public interest they have to be separated from it."

"Sounds interestin'," said Riles.

"Tis, too, especially when one of 'em don't take to the treatment and lays for you with a gun. But my half's all there. That's what comes of wearing a tall hat."

"Tell me," said Riles, his face lit up with interest, "how d'ye do it?"

"I wouldn't do you any good," said Gardiner. "You've steered too many plow handles to be very nimble with your fingers. But here's often other game to be picked up, if a man knows where to look for it."

"Well, I wish I knew," Riles confessed. "Not anythin' crooked, y' know, but something like—well, something like you're doin'. I've worked hard for ev'ry nickel I ever made, and I reckon if there's easy money goin' I've a right to get some of it."

"Now you're beginning to wake up. Though, mind you, some of it isn't as easy as it looks. You've got to know your business, just like farming or anything else. But you can generally land something to live on, even if it ain't a big stake. Take me now, for instance. I ain't doing anything that a preacher mightn't do. Happened to fall in with a fellow who owns a ranch up the river here. Cleaned him empty one night at cards—stood him up for his last cent, and he kind o' took a notion to me. Well, he's the son of a duke or an earl, or some such thing, and not long ago the governor goes and dies on him, leaving him a few castles and bric-a-brac like that and some wagon loads of money. So he had to go home for the time being, and as he wanted someone to run his ranch, who should he think of but me. Suppose he thought if I happened to bet it at poker some night I wouldn't lose it, and that's some consideration. He's got 1,000 acres or so of land up there, with a dozen cayuses on it, and he gives me 25 pounds a month, with board and lodging and open credit at the trading company, to see that it doesn't walk away in his absence. Besides that, I hire a man to do the work, and charge his wages up in the expenses. Got a good man, too—one of those fellows who don't know any better than work for a living. By the way, perhaps you know him—comes from Plainville part—Travers his name is?"

"Sure," said Riles. "He worked for Harris, until they had a row and he lit out. It kind o' balled Harris up, too, although he'd never admit it. If he'd Travers there it'd be easier for him to get away now."

"Where's Harris going?"

"He ain't goin'; he's comin'. Comin' out here in a few days after me. I'm his kind o' advance guard, spyin' out the land."

"You don't say? Well, see and make him come through with the expenses. If I was traveling for Jack Harris I wouldn't be sleeping in a hen coop like this. He's worth yards of money, ain't he?"

"Oh, some, I guess, but perhaps not so much more'n his neighbors."

"Nothing personal, Riles. You've got to get over that narrowness if

you're going to get into the bigger game I've been telling you about. I don't care how much you're worth—how much is Harris bringing with him?"

"Couple of hundred dollars, likely."

"I wouldn't show my hand for that. How much can he raise?"

"Well, supposin' he sold the old farm—"

"Now don't do any reckless supposing. Will he sell the farm?"

"Sure, he'll sell it if he sees something better."

"How much can he get for it?"

"Thirty or \$40,000."

"That's more like a stake. Hiram, it's up to you and me to show him something better—and to show it to him when he's alone. * * * You're tired tonight. Sleep it out, and we'll drive over to the ranch tomorrow together. We ought to pick something better than a homestead out of this."

Notwithstanding the exhaustion occasioned by his journey Riles was early about. The unexpected meeting with Gardiner, the latter's evident prosperity, and his frank contempt for men who made their living by labor, had left a deep impression upon Riles. He had no idea by what means Gardiner proposed that they should possess themselves of Harris' money, and he felt some doubt about any such attempt being rewarded with success. Nevertheless, Gardiner seemed to think the matter a simple one enough, and Gardiner's good clothes and good cigars were evidence of his ability to carry his plans into effect.

Riles breakfasted as soon as the dining room was opened, eating his meal hurriedly, as he always did, albeit the French-fried potatoes, to which he was unaccustomed, could be poised on his knife only with considerable effort. Then he sat down in an arm chair on the shady side of the hotel to wait for Gardiner. He had suddenly lost his interest in the free lands which had been the purpose of his journey.

It was almost noon when Gardiner appeared on the scene. "You don't hurt yourself in the mornin's," was Riles' greeting.

"Don't need to," he answered cheerily. "Besides, I'd a long session after I left you last night. No, no particulars at present. I told you you had spoiled your hands for that kind of work. How d'ye like this air? Isn't that something worth breathing?"

"Good enough," said Riles, "but I didn't come out here for air."

"No, you came for land. I'm surprised you're not out bouncing over the prairie in a buckboard long before this."

Riles shot a quick glance at Gardiner. But he was puffing a cigar and drinking in the warm sunshine with obvious satisfaction.

"So I might o' been, but I thought we kind o' made a date last night, didn't we?"

"Did we? Oh, yes; now I remember. But I thought perhaps you'd feel different about it in the morning. A man generally does. I won't hold you to anything you said last night, Riles."

Riles could not recall that he had said anything that committed him in any way, but Gardiner's tone implied that plainly enough.

"I ain't changed my mind," he said, "but I don't know 's I said anything bindin', did I? I thought we was goin' to drive out to your place today and talk things over."

"Well, I just didn't want you to lose any time over me if you thought things wouldn't work out," said Gardiner. "It takes more nerve, you know, than hoeing potatoes. But you're welcome to the hospitality of the ranch, in any case. I came in on horseback, so we'll get a team at one of the stables and drive out."

In a short time they were on their way. The road skirted the river, threading its way through the narrow belt of cotton woods and evergreens that found footing in the moist soil of the valley.

"It's all right, Riles," Gardiner was saying. "If you're prepared to stay with the deal we can pull it through—no doubt about that. That is, if Harris will sell his farm and come out here with the cash in his jeans. If he won't do that, you better get busy on your homestead proposition right away."

"He'll do it all right, if he sees somethin' worth while. But Harris's no spring chicken, and you'll have to show him somethin' t' his likin' before he loosens up."

"I don't care whether he loosens up or not," said Gardiner. "All I care is that he brings the money, and brings

it in bills. No month's back, mind you. Get the cash on him, and I'll do the loosening up, if it comes to that."

Riles was so alarmed at the sinister turn of the conversation. He had no companion, and the man who had entrusted him with the important mission, but he had considerable respect for the force, if not the principle, of the law.

"You don't mind that you'd do anythin'—anythin'—but wasn't right?" he said. "I wouldn't want to get mixed up in no scrape, y' see."

"You mean you do or Harris' coin your skin than mine?"

Well, there's nothin' wrong— you ought to know me better than that. It will be clean and above board, and no starris is unfortunate helped, but if nobody's to blame for that. Of course, if you're afraid to take a sportsman's chance for one of \$40,000, call the deal off. I've got lots of other fish to fry."

"You don't understand perfectly. You wouldn't mind Harris' money served on a silver platter and wrapped in tissue paper, would you?"



"I Won't Hold You to Anything You Said Last Night, Riles."

else to take the chances. Now, there won't be any chances to speak of, but what there is you take your share. If that's a bargain it's a bargain, and if it isn't we'll talk about the weather. What d'you say?"

"It's a bargain," said Riles, "provided your plan'll work out."

"It's got to work out. It's like going up in a balloon—if it doesn't work out it's all off with the engineer. You got to take the chance, Hiram, and then make good on the chance."

Riles chewed vigorously at his tobacco. "Explain how you're goin' to pull it off," he said, "and then I'll tell you yes or no."

"Not on your life," said Gardiner. "I don't show my hand until I know who's sitting across."

There was silence for one-half a mile, while Riles turned the matter over in his mind. He was naturally a coward, but he was equally a money-grabber, and it was one instinct against the other. Avarice won it, and at length he extended his hand to Gardiner. "I'm hon anythin' you're in on," he said.

"That sounds like it," said Gardiner, with enthusiasm. "Now the whole

thing's simple as A B C, and not half as dangerous as running a traction engine or breaking a broncho. It all rests on getting him out here with the money, and that's where you come in. I don't mind telling you if it wasn't for the help you can give there I'd handle the job myself, and save dividing the proceeds."

"Yes, that's the point, all right," said Riles, somewhat dubiously. "How're we goin' to get him out here with all that money?"

"Think, Riles," said Gardiner, puffing complacently at a fresh cigar. "Think hard."

Riles wrinkled his forehead and spat copiously at the front hub, but the inspiration would not come. "I give it up," he said at last. "You'll have to plan it, and I'll carry it out."

"That's what comes of hard work, Hiram; you lose all your imagination. Right now you haven't any more imagination than a cabbage. Now, I could suggest a dozen schemes to suit the purpose if I had to, but one will do. Suppose this:

"These mountains up here are full of coal—more coal than can be burnt in a million years. It's a bad road in, but once you get there you'll see it lying in seams, 10, 15, 20 feet thick, and stretching right through the rocks as far as you will like to follow it. That coal's going to make a bunch of millionaires some day, but not until you can get at it with something bigger than a cayuse. But railroads come fast in this country, and there's no saying how soon a man might cash in if he invested just now."

"You ain't goin' to wait till a railroad comes, are you? We'll like enough be dead by that time."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Seeing Through Other's Eyes.

We all have our natural tendency toward a bias of one sort or another. When we see through other's eyes we also add their bias to our own. There is a possibility that one bias will counteract the other. If so it is well. It is also possible that one bias will add very greatly to another. Then what an unfair verdict you must render. Poor judgment is sure to follow and shame will lay at your door before you dream it possible. Yet most of us are to more or less extent guilty of the habit. It's so easy to take our start from where others leave off. We are compromised to the extent that we lean on their judgments. It isn't fair and often leads to sorrow.

Don't make too much fun of the other fellow's glasses. He may be badly biased, but then you have no means of knowing how you look in his eyes. We are all more or less influenced by our heredity and environment. So the wise thing is to get all the facts possible before we pass judgment.

Cow Had Novel Ride.

Motorists of Williamsport, Pa., waiting at a railroad crossing for a train to pass, found out the reason why the pilot of a locomotive is called a cowcatcher. On that part of the engine a middle-aged cow sat, taking in the view, if not enjoying the ride. When the motorists signaled the engineer the train stopped and the cow was assisted from her perch, none the worse for her experience. Where and how she was picked up, the train men did not know.

On Peruvian Railways.

The railways of central Peru spread out in a Y, at the right-hand end of which is Huancayo, something more than 200 miles from Lima. At every railroad station, old women crowd through the cars selling the favorite nectar of the Incas, all purchasers drinking from the same cup, and generally several from the same filling. Nearly every traveler has his own supply of a more potent native beverage.

What men want is not talent; it is purpose; in other words, not the power to achieve, but the will to labor.—Bulwer.

JEWELS USED IN WATCHES

Hard Substance Is Needed to Withstand the Constant Friction Which Wears Any Moving Parts.

The principal reason for the deterioration of any piece of machinery is because the constant friction wears away the moving parts and interferes with the regularity of the mechanism. A watch, being a machine in which absolute uniformity of speed is essential, it is necessary to reduce this friction to a minimum—either through constant oiling or the use of ball bearings or some very hard material which will withstand the wear and tear of constant friction. The first two of these methods are not feasible in so small a piece of machinery as a watch, so certain very hard jewels are placed at various points to counteract the rubbing caused by the moving parts.

Watches are generally equipped with 7, 15, 18, 21 or 23 jewels, the 15 and 17-jewel types being the most popular. Intrinsicly, the jewels used in the manufacture of watches are of little value, but from the standpoint of service and the specific purpose which they serve they are invaluable. The jewels usually used in watchmaking are the hardest of the precious stones, diamonds, sapphires and rubies, and of these the most generally used is the sapphire, which combines hardness with comparatively reasonable price.

Vegetation Carpets Sudan River.

The search for convenient ways of transportation by which the products of the Sudan may reach the outer world attracts attention to a remarkable phenomenon of vegetable life on some of the head waters and tributaries of the Nile. This consists of enormous growths of papyrus and other plants, completely covering the streams and forming carpets of vegetation two or three feet thick, beneath which flows the water. Navigation by small boats is, of course, prevented by this obstruction, which is in places supplemented by vines and overhanging plants that arch the streams from bank to bank. Heavy floods occasionally sweep away the accumulation of plants, but they are quickly reformed.

Spend less time doing penance and more in improving your conduct.

POULTRY

BACK-YARD FOWLS WILL PAY

St. Louis Woman Writes Department of Agriculture of Her Success With Hen Flock.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

During the war and since the United States Department of Agriculture has encouraged the keeping of a poultry flock in the city back-yard as one of the best means of cutting the high cost of living.

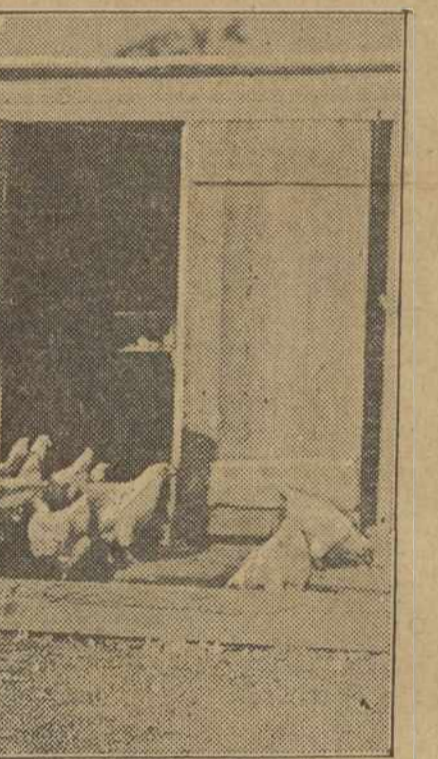
When proper care has been given the flock the results in most instances have been very gratifying. A woman living in St. Louis recently wrote the department concerning the success that attended the efforts.

"I hear people say hen's don't pay, but surely they cannot have kept accounts and records. I have had a small flock of 24 hens in my city back-yard since the government urged us to get into the game three years ago. The following are the results for the year ending October 31, 1920: My entire feed bill, the grain being bought at retail, amounted to \$66.74.

"My entire egg production was 3,603 eggs, or 300 1/4 dozens, the retail market value of which, taken from month to month, was \$189.30. Deducting \$66.74 from the above \$189.30 leaves me a net profit of \$122.56 for my work and investment.

"We used all the newly laid eggs we wished for our own table and the balance went to our neighbors, who are more than anxious to get them even at top store prices. The last 12 months, when feed was unusually high, the cost of egg production averaged 22 1/4 cents per dozen, and the lowest market price for eggs was in May and June, when they sold for 50 cents per dozen.

"I will add that all our hens are leg-banded and trap-nested. The hen house is eight feet square and the hens are confined all the year round to a run eight feet wide and 50 feet long. Starting in August I begin culling and killing the older ones and the poorest layers which have a rec-



Gratifying Results Can Be Obtained From Small Flock if Given Proper Care and Feed.

ord of 15 eggs or less per month, and in October I renew the flock by adding one dozen new spring pullets. These pullets now, in November, are all laying and will continue laying through the winter, while my older hens get through molting.

"Keeping the hens and surroundings scrupulously clean and feeding a balanced ration at regular intervals is the secret of success with a back-yard flock."

CAPONIZED TURKEY IS QUIET

Of Considerable Advantage in Getting Them in Excellent Condition for Marketing.

Very little has ever been done in the way of caponizing turkeys, but when it has been tried the capons were found to be much quieter in disposition and less likely to range over a wide area than the toms, and this character should be of considerable advantage in getting them in condition for the market.

AVOID ROUP-INFECTED EGGS

Select Eggs From Flock Which Has Not Been Infected Wherever It Is Possible.

It is not advisable to set eggs from a flock that has been infected with roup. If at all possible, by all means select hatching eggs from another flock which has not been so infected or from hens which have never had the disease.