

# TWO-BITS AND A NICKEL.

By H. WALTER BURR.

"Ob, this is grand!" exclaimed George Casey, as he paused for a few moments to enjoy the embracing air and scenery. All about him the mountains lay in tumbled heaps, farther away the foothills sloped gracefully downward, and still farther down in the valley and out over the mining camp he could see the old trail that stretched away in the westward. He was new to these scenes, having recently come to Wyoming from his home in Boston, and he was drinking in the atmosphere of the new life to the fullest.

"Y-a-s," drawled the girl as she overtook her companion; "but I'm a thinker as how we better start for home. It's a-gettin' party late, an' we're some twenty miles from town. We can't march more than get there by dark."

"Two-bits," said George, tauntingly, "I believe you're a coward. Here you were born and raised in this country, and you're scared about being out in the hills after dark. Now, I'm a tenderfoot, and yet I wouldn't be afraid to wander all over these hills from now until morning."

George Casey was indeed a tenderfoot, but this was not the worst of his failings. Raised in a wealthy family, he had been everything a father could possibly wish for his father's house to suit himself. That he was the most important portion of the family, he did not for a moment doubt, and it was his greatest desire that others should share that opinion with regard to him. When he found that he was to spend the summer in Wyoming looking after some mining interests, he determined that of all other things he would show the people there that he was one tenderfoot that was not so tender after all. The few friends whom he had made on first arriving at Cold Springs, had soon tired of his lordly ways and the only one who continued to accompany him on his various journeys over the hills was Two-bits, who followed him around like a faithful dog.

Nobody could tell where Two-bits got her name. She was a rough, uncouth girl of fourteen years, but she had a certain air of her birthplace. The high cheek bones and swarthy features told of Indian blood—a fact of which she was proud. No two characters could possibly have been more opposite than those of George Casey and Two-bits. She had always been accustomed to riding with roughly dressed, brown-featured, bow-legged cowboys, who treated her like one of their own kind, and sometimes enjoyed teasing her for the amusement of the gang, but her education had been awakened in her for this smooth-shaven, well-dressed, polite young gentleman who had come from the hills of which she had heard such wonderful stories. She had dreamed of such individuals but had never seen one before. He appreciated the fact that she admired him, and since no one else in that immediate vicinity seemed to share the feeling, he gladly allowed her the monopoly of it.

So the two had formed a sort of social system all their own, with just two classes—master and vassal.

"N-a-s," she drawled, "I ain't no coward, neither. But I tell you, we can't go back the way we come, fer it's too long round. We got to go straight back toward the Springs, an' it's a good four hours' walk. Mebbe yer don't know that them them hills jest above the camp has got fire all under em. They're great big cracks that, there is so warm yer can hardly bear yer hand in 'em. Mebbe yer wouldn't like ter fall down one of 'em into the fire."

"Ho, ho, ho!" laughed the tenderfoot; "such a ghost story. Now Miss," he added, "do yer see that big pile of rocks yonder? Well, that's the highest place there is around here, and I'm going to go there."

"Huh!" muttered Two-bits. "Yer bent neither. A while back yer thought this was the highest—ber yer are, an' that's the highest. It'll be the same way when yer git that the highest will be just beyond him, I tell yer, it's time to go home."

"Go home, then, if you want to, and are afraid. I'm going on. It isn't more than a mile farther."

"It's all of five miles!" she declared; but the master started along, and the faithful slave followed obediently, if he were going, there was nothing for it but that she must accompany him. They trudged along in silence for half an hour, and still the peak seemed as far away as ever.

"Confound it!" said George, at last, "if we had not stopped so long to talk about it, we could have been there before this. I suppose it's too late to go any farther."

Had Two-bits been more cultured and learned, it is likely she would have said, "I told you so." But she only turned as

Then he remembered that she had not been in the best humor, and decided that she would probably enjoy the sport as much as any.

"Hello!" called a voice. "Where are yer, Mr. Casey? It was the voice of Two-bits, and it was sweet music in his ear.

"Right this way, Two-bits," he answered. "Have you brought help?"

"She went yer the other side of the gulf, and thrusting a stout plank out toward him she drawled:

"Y-a-s. There's er help. Did yer think I was a-goin' ter give yer away for the game? Yer would never a-heard the last of it. I guess we ken make it all right with this here." Then, making sure the plank was resting securely on either side, she ordered, "Now, git spry, and don't waste no time. Hop across, I tell yer!"

As they came to the last crevice where the board was necessary, George paused.

"Well," drawled Two-bits, as she waited, with arms akimbo, "this is the last one. Yer goin' to give up now? If yer do, I'll leave yer, fer good, dead sure."

"Two-bits," said George, and there was considerable pathos in his voice; "Two-bits," he repeated, "will you forgive me for calling you a coward? You are the bravest girl I ever knew, and you've been real kind to me to-night. Will you forgive me?"

"Aw, come along with yer," said the girl, greatly embarrassed. "It's my plin'er feller in the east that talk ter bear yer heads roar half the time, and don't mean what yer say."

They neared the town, walking side by side. The board had been thrown away, and from their appearance no one would have known that anything out of the ordinary had occurred. As he left her at her own door he pressed her hand tightly, and said:

"You are a brave girl—a regular little heroine."

Next day she found a pony tied to the post in front of her mother's house, and on the beautiful saddle which it bore, was a note which read:

"This is Nickel, a present to Two-bits. The brave little girl who was good to a coward."

### TO ENTERTAIN LONGWORTHS.

Ambassador Reid and Wife will Present Young Couple to England's Court.

The Longworths will be guests, while in London, of the American—ambassador and his charming wife.

Refreshed by her long vacation, Mrs. Reid has returned to the Court of St. James with her hands full of preparations for King Edward's first drawing



MRS. WHITLAW REID.

room of the season, to be held May 25, at which she will present many American women, some of whom will be her guests.

Naturally, the presentation most important to the American colony in London this season will be that of Mrs. Nicholas Longworth, President Roosevelt's daughter. During their stay in London, Mr. and Mrs. Longworth will be the guests of the Reids at Dorchester House, where the suite occupied by the ambassador and his wife will be at the disposal of the Longworths. To add to the attractiveness of these rooms, some choice boudoir furniture has recently arrived from France to lend a fresher bridal beauty to them.

### Exiled Queen Ranavalo.

Among the members of the ruling families of the world, most of whom have known many sorrows, there are few figures so pathetic as that of Ranavalo, the ex-Queen of Madagascar, who is now on a visit to Paris, and who since 1897 has been a queen without a throne, living in Algiers on the charity somewhat grudgingly vouchsafed her by the French Government.

Ranavalo is now forty-four, and, although her complexion inclines to a dusky shade, she is by no means unattractive. She possesses a distinctly good figure, dresses with much taste, and wears her clothes with distinction. She ruled over Madagascar for fourteen years, and like the two queens who preceded her, became the wife of the Prime Minister. When she began her reign the country was at war with France.

### Chinchillas Becoming Scarce.

The chinchilla, the little rat-like animal which produces the popular fur, is in danger of extinction.

The chinchillas were formerly found in great numbers in the high ranges of the Andes, in Bolivia and Chili, but owing to the demand for their skins they have been ruthlessly hunted, in season and out of season, and the Chilean Government finds it almost impossible to enforce a law which has been passed for their protection.

The exports from Coquimbo, the principal port for this trade, amounted last year to twelve thousand dozen skins, and the prices paid were almost double those of the previous year.

### Joke on Time.

A Pennsylvanian named Weeks, with a chronic habit of pilfering watches, has been given the Time of his life by the judge, who sent him up for ten years.—New York Evening Mail.

What is the difference? He is no friend of Hours.—Washington Post.

Wait a Minute. We Second the motion.—Chicago Tribune.

Year! Year! What's all this about anyway?—Wichita Eagle.

This squib has been going the rounds so long, that it appears to us a little Decade.

### Most Blessed of Emotions.

Oh, toiling hands of mortals! Soon, soon it seems to you, you must come forth on some conspicuous hilltop, and but a little way further, against the setting sun, descry the spires of El Dorado. Little do ye know your own blessedness, for to travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive, and the true success is to labor.—Robert Louis Stevenson.

### The Newest Wearing Apparel.

The Princess gown occupies the centre of fashion's stage for spring and summer, and will doubtless go to mill and to meeting during the coming months. It appears in all sorts of gowns from the exquisite creations for evening to the walking skirt and its accompanying bolero, but there are those who cannot and will not wear this style of garment, and for these there are very pretty skirts, cut circular, and flaring widely about the lower edge. These skirts are constructed from all sorts of materials, even to the thinnest of summer fabrics, and if properly made they will not necessarily give much trouble by sagging. However, for the skirt of washing stuff, the gored models are so much more satisfactory and patterns for these can be obtained with the modish flare about the bottom.

The vogue of the circular skirt has led to the fashion for flat skirt trims. These sometimes take the form of stitched bands of the material or silk, wide braids of one or several kinds are often interlaced in design about the bottom. Another mode of skirt trimming much used is consecutive rows of shaped flounces, one overlapping the other and often ending at each side of the front panel. One might almost say that the front panel in unbroken length from waistband to hem prevails in the majority of gowns.

When bands of the same fabric as the skirt are put on as trimming they are usually piped with a contrasting color; the tunic and flounce being often suggested by the manner in which these are applied.

As for coats, the bolero is in high feather this year, and figures in all varieties of wear from the ornamental to the useful. As an ornament it appears in the negligee of the morning as well as upon the evening toilette. The little lace and embroidered boleros are to be much worn with soft silk and summer gowns and will prove very fetching adjuncts to the toilette. Every woman and girl will do well to provide herself with several lingerie waists for nice wear. These little boleros are very important in the wardrobe, no matter how meagre or sumptuous it be. They can be had in a great variety of styles and in all of the sheer summer fabrics. Those embroidered, or inset with lace, are very dainty and considered quite suitable for any occasion where one needs to look well. On cool days they can be worn over a slip of pink, blue or lavender and be very pretty and becoming. Many of these waists are made with elbow sleeves but they can be had with the long sleeves—and some of the newest imported boleros are made with sleeves which end in a long point over the hand.

In materials, no one will go astray in purchasing voile and linen for her spring and summer gowns. There are linens of all kinds from the sheer handkerchief qualities to the fine unbleached linens. Then there are soft cashmeres, raw silks, mohairs and colliennes as well as the immortal serge. White is promised much vogue for summer, and mixed with black it is very smart for the new suits. These suitings are mostly in small checks, or stripes.

### Was a "Nonymous" Letter.

A certain Congressman from Virginia has long retained in his employ a colored man by the name of Ezekiel. One morning the master started for the Capitol, leaving behind him a letter he had forgotten. Sometime in the afternoon he remembered the communication, and as it was of some importance, he hastened back home only to find that the letter was nowhere to be seen in his library. He had a distinct recollection that it had been left on the table. He summoned Ezekiel and asked if he had seen it.

"Yassah, yo' left it on yo' table."

"Then where is it now?"

"I milled it, sah."

"You milled it? Why, Zeke, I had not put the name and address on the envelope?"

"Jes' so, sah! I thought it was one of dem nonymous communicationss."

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She came to the other side of the gulf.

doggedly as before, and followed him back toward the camp.

The sun had gone down, and soon the long twilight was drawing to a close. Now and then the howl of a coyote was heard far out over the hills, and in another direction the answering wail of its mate. The echo made the whole region take up the sound, until it seemed that in the midst of a lone traveler must be in the midst of an entire pack of the creatures.

"Yer may as well let me take the lead," said Two-bits; and not waiting for his consent, she pushed her way ahead of him. He had called her a coward, and she would show him that she was not one.

He willingly took his place behind the guide, for he felt safer when he knew that she had taken the responsibility of leading. He secretly wished that he had taken her advice and started home sooner, but he would not admit it to her.

"Yer'll get ter hustle faster'n that," she remarked, "er it'll be all up with us when