The Homesteader

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By ROBERT J. C. STEAD

Author of "The Cow Puncher," Etc.

CHAPTER X—Continued.

—16—

Harris met his son on the platform. "What d'ye think, Dad? A letter from Riles." He drew the crumpled missive from its envelope. "Looks like a laundry ticket," he said, "but I figured it out, and he wants you to sell the farm and buy a coal mine."

Harris read the letter through, not without some difficulty. At first he was inclined to laugh, but the earnestness of Riles impressed him through the makeshift English.

"What d'ye think of it, Dad?" said the younger man, at length. "Of course we don't know anything about coal, but then—"

"It must look good to Riles or he wouldn't want to put any money in it," commented Harris, after a few minutes' reflection. "Riles is pretty cautious. He's got money in the bank drawin' three per cent; he's afraid to lend it out among the farmers. And he ain't easy talked into a new scheme, either."

"D'ye suppose we could sell the farm?" The idea of a big, profitable speculation suddenly appealed to Allan with much greater force than the prospect of three years on a homestead. He knew that vast sums of money had been made, and made quickly, in the Far West, but he had never before thought of himself or his father sharing in this sudden wealth.

"D'ye suppose we could sell the farm?" he repeated. It began to seem that the short-cut to wealth hinged on the possibility of selling the farm.

"I guess we could sell it, all right," said Harris. "Maybe not for that much cash, but we can get cash on the agreement, if we need it." He was not a man to act precipitately, or risk all on a single throw unless he were very, very sure of the result.

"Of course, maybe it's all right," he continued. "But it's a good thing to buy your buggy before you throw away your cart. If this thing's as good as Riles says, it will keep until we can see it for ourselves. If it don't, somethin' else'll turn up."

"Yes," said Allan, "but if we find it's all right when we get there, and we've only a few measly hundred dollars along, we'll want to kick ourselves all the way home. Lots of fellows are making big money just because they had some capital to work with, and why shouldn't we do it, too? Couldn't you fix it some way to get the money without coming back, if everything looks all right? That'd save time and expense, too."

"There's something in that. There's time to see Bradshaw yet before the train comes. We'll kind o' leave it standin' in his hands."

They made a hurried call on Bradshaw, and asked him to be on the lookout for a buyer for the farm.

"Mind, I'm not actu'lly puttin' it up for sale," Harris cautioned him, "but I want you to keep your eye open for a buyer. Forty thousand dollars takes the whole thing as a goin' concern, an' the more cash the better. Get a line on the buyer if you can, and if I send you word to sell, you sell, and if I don't send you word, don't do anythin'. You understand?"

The lawyer wrote something on a sheet of paper. "This is a power of attorney, which will enable me to complete the documents without the delay of sending them to you, if you should decide to sell," he explained. Harris signed the paper, and Allan witnessed it.

With this understanding the journey westward was undertaken, and completed without event of importance.

Riles met them on the station platform. He had met every train for a week, as it had been agreed that it would be better that the Harisses should not visit Gardiner's ranch until plans were more fully developed. Jim was still there, and Gardiner insisted that Jim should not meet Harris at present. He allowed Riles to think that he feared trouble if former employer and employee should meet; as a matter of fact, he feared that if their coal mine proposition should reach the ears of Travers the young man would attempt to dissuade Harris from having anything to do with it, or at least would urge a fuller investigation than might be desirable. Besides, he meant to make of Travers an unwitting party to the affair.

Riles, in overalls and shirt-sleeves, leaned against the iron rail at the back of the station platform, his big hands stuffed in the bulging band of his trousers, and his under-jaw busy with an ample ration of tobacco. He watched the passengers alighting from the train with little interest; he had no particular expectation of meeting Harris on this occasion, and, if the truth be told, he had little desire to meet him. Riles had no pangs of conscience over his part in the plot against his old neighbor, but he had an uneasy feeling of cowardice. When suddenly his eye fell on Harris and his big, strapping son, his first impulse was to slip away in the crowd before they should notice him. But it was only for a moment; the next, Harris was calling, "'Lo, Hiram," and the two were shaking hands as old friends met in a far country.

"Didja get my letter?" asked Riles, ignoring the commonplaces with which it was their custom to introduce any important topic. "Didja sell the farm?"

"I got the letter, Hiram, but I didn't sell the farm. Thought we'd just have a look over this coal mine before goin' into the business altogether."

"H-s-h. Throttle your voice down. This place is full of men on the lookout for somethin' like that, an' you can't keep it too dark until it's all settled."

"Well, ain't we going to put up somewhere?" said Allan, breaking the silence that followed Riles' warning.

"There ought to be an Alberta hotel here, somewhere. I saw one in every town for the last two hundred miles."

"I got that beat," said Riles, with a snicker. "Boardin' on a lord, or duke, or somethin'."

"Don't say?"

"Yeh. You mind Gard-ner? Him 'at lit out from Plainville after that stealin' affair?"

"The one you got credit for bein' mixed up in?" said Allan, with disconcerting frankness. "A lame kind of a lord he'd make. What about him?"

"Well, he struck a soft thing out here, fo' sure. This lord I'm tellin' you about's gone off home over some bloomin' estate or other, an' Gard'ner's running his ranch—his 'bloody-well rawnch' he calls it. Gets a good fat wad for ridin' round, an' hires a man to do the work. But it was Gard'ner put me on t' this coal mine deal."

"Let's get settled first, and we'll talk about Gardiner and the mine afterward," said Harris, and they joined the throng that was now wending its way to the hotels.

"How's your thirst, Hiram?" inquired Harris, after he had registered.

"Pretty sticky," confessed Riles. "But they soak you a quarter to wash it out here."

"Well, I got a quarter."

"A quarter apiece, I mean."

"Well, I got a quarter apiece," said Harris. "Come on."

Riles followed, astonishment over Harris' sudden liberality, and misgiving as to how he himself could avoid a similar expenditure, struggling for uppermost place in his mind.

"Pretty strong stuff they have here," he said, after Harris and Allan had "set 'em up" in turn. "Keel you over if you don't watch it."

"Does taste kind o' snaky," said Harris. "Guess that's enough for this time. Now come upstairs and tell us all about this deal you have on."

When the travelers had thrown off their coats and vests, and all were seated in the little bedroom, Riles cleared his throat.

"Well, there ain't much t' tell yuh more'n I said in m' letter," he started. "As I said, it's Gard'ner you'll have t' thank for this thing, good or bad. I ain't a coal miner, an' I told him that, an' I told him you wasn't neither, but he says that don't make no difference. He says there's all kinds o' money in it, an' I reckon that's what we came out here for, ain't it?"

"Yes, provided the thing's sound," said Harris. "Anyone can see with half an eye that there's easier ways



"Does Taste Kind o' Snaky," Said Harris.

of making money than bustin' up this prairie sod for it. But you and me've worked hard for what we've got, Hiram, and we want t' go mighty careful about spendin' it."

"I suppose you've sent home word to sell your farm, have you?" put in Allan. "You'll be chipping in at the same time?"

"Oh, yes, I'll be chippin' in. Of course. But I didn't just say to sell the farm yet. I'll have t' get back an' straighten things up some first. You see, I thought you'd get my letter before you left, an' you could kind o' make your deal then, an' your payment would hold the bargain bound until I could sell mine, y' see, Harris?" Riles was beginning to address himself mainly to the older man.

"Don't take me up wrong," said Allan. "I'm in on this along with Dad, if he's in; an' if he's out, I'm out. But I was just kind o' curious about it."

"It's all right, it's all right," assured Riles, with great magnanimity. Inwardly he was cursing Gardiner for having left this task to him. He was suspicious of a trap in the simplest question, and feared that any minute he might find himself floundering in a mesh of contradictions.

"Where is this coal mine, and who's got it?" said Harris.

"I ain't saw it myself," admitted Riles. "They're awful p'tic'lar about lettin' people see it," he continued, with a sudden flash of inspiration. "It's so valu'ble, y' know."

"Fraid somebody'll bring it home in their pocket, I suppose," said Allan.

Riles pretended to laugh heartily.

"But where is it?" insisted Harris. "Is there a railroad near, or how do you get at it?"

"It's up in the mountains, an' that's all I can tell you; but it's all right, an' there's a pile o' money in it. I guess I better bring Gard'ner down in the morning, an' he'll explain all about it. Y' see, he knows the fellow 'at owns it, an' I don't, an' he'll be able to tell you. That is, if you're goin' in on it. Gard'ner won't say much unless he knows you're goin' in on it."

"Well, he'll have to say a good deal before he knows," said Harris. "I ain't buyin' a pig in a poke. He's got t' show me, and then if it's all right, why, it's all right."

"Oh, it's all right," said Riles, although inwardly he felt little enthusiasm over the attitude of either father or son. He was annoyed that Allan should be present. On the whole, it would be better to leave the rest of the explaining to Gardiner.

"What d'ye think of it, Dad?" said Allan, when Riles was gone.

"May be all right," said Harris. "Wouldn't be surprised but it is. At the same time, I ain't goin' to put a cent in it till I'm dead sure. And anyway, there's no use lettin' Riles think we're keen on it."

"That's what I think. You think Gardiner's all square in it?"

"I don't know. Likely he's getting a fat commission from somewhere, but that's fair enough, if he makes the deal. But he won't see any o' our money till I have the opinion of the best lawyer in town. That's all we can say till we see it."

"What d'ye say if we sell the old farm anyway, an' then if this mine business don't look good, we'll plunk it into farm land?"

"Might do worse," his father agreed. "We'll have a look round for a day or two, anyway."

In the afternoon Gardiner and Riles drove into town and met the Harrises in the waiting room of the hotel. Gardiner's greeting was friendly, but not overfamiliar, as became a man who had recently suffered some reflection on his character. He shook Harris and Allan by the hand, inquired after the cattle and the crops, but discreetly avoided family matters, having learned from Riles that all had not been going smoothly in their domestic affairs. Gardiner knew a little room at the back of the bar, to which he escorted his guests. Having ordered a bottle and glasses on the table, he turned the key in the door.

"You can't be too careful," he explained. "You know, the walls have ears, and if it gets out that this coal mine can be picked up at the price we have on it, it will be taken before night. I understand your money is not here yet, Mr. Harris?"

"No. Not started, I guess. The fact is, I haven't sold the farm."

"Well, I don't want to hurry you, but you've got to act quickly, or not at all. Of course, we don't figure on taking any chances. Our idea is to turn the property over at once, at a good profit. That's the way you feel about it too, isn't it?"

"I'm not a coal miner."

"Exactly. Neither are the men who own most of the mines of this country. There comes a time, Mr. Harris, when we realize that we don't have to get down with pick and shovel to make ourselves some money—in fact, the man with pick and shovel hasn't time to make any real money. I am glad you feel like I do about it, for I have already taken the liberty of putting the proposition up to a New York syndicate."

"You mean if we don't come through, they will?"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

EASTERN CANADA UNDER ICE

Professor Asserts It Was Covered a Mile Deep Forty Thousand Years Ago.

Prof. A. F. Coleman of the faculty of applied science and engineering of the University of Toronto, whose hobby is studying the ice age, and who has toured many countries in his research work, believes the ice age was present in Canada about 40,000 years ago. As a result of his inspection of the rock and mountains of the territory of Gaspe, in eastern Canada, where there are valuable fishing grounds, he had been convinced that the ice which has covered that part of Canada to a depth of about a mile, never passed over that portion of eastern Canada.

The Shick-Shock mountains, which are really a continuation of the Appalachian range, are the backbone of Gaspe, and the highest land of eastern Canada. Professor Coleman did find, however, that a great glacial sheet had filled the Gulf of the St. Lawrence. He has also found that the front range of the Rocky mountains has been pushed seven miles into the prairie.

Professor Coleman was probably one of the first scientists to visit Gaspe, despite the fact that the French landed there centuries ago.

In a Quandary.

A young newspaper man of Kokomo wrote a short story and sent it to a magazine. In due time there came back to him one of those gloom distributors called rejection slips. It ran somewhat like this:

"We have read your story and are sorry to say it is not suited to our needs. Red Book, Blue Book, Green Book."

The young newspaper man looked at the slip and then at his story.

"Well," he said, "I don't know what color to play now."

A Slight Compensation.

"A man in these times can be well roasted."

"But he can't be stewed."

Don't forget that a shallow brain often operates a fluent tongue.

OUR FEATURE SECTION

Department Devoted to Attractive Magazine Material

LAST NIGHT'S DREAMS

—WHAT THEY MEAN

DID YOU DREAM OF MONEY?

WHEN it comes to a matter of money the oracles seem to dispute over "filthy lucre" just as ordinary mortals are apt to do. Some of them say that to dream of finding money is a bad sign, indicating losses; and dreaming of losing money is a good sign, indicating gain; probably working on the "dreams go by contraries" hypothesis. But the best and most eminent authorities do not agree to this. Some of them admit that to dream of finding money signifies worries, but declare that out of these temporary worries great good will come; while others content themselves with the statement that to dream of finding money is lucky. All agree that to dream of losing money is a sign of good business, though one authority darkly hints that you may have a spat with your wife—if you have one—after such a dream. As to dreaming of saving money, there are two schools—the optimists and the pessimists. The optimists declare that to dream that you are saving up money means that you will have comfort and plenty, while the pessimists think it portends losses. The weight of opinion seems to be on the side of the optimists. If you dream that you are swallowing money look out for yourself; for if you don't you will become so penurious and money-grabbing that you will almost, if not quite, commit fraud to get it. So if you get this warning loosen up the purse-strings. If you dream of counting money you are liable to have a dispute over a bill. In effect it seems lucky to dream about money, but you are warned not to be too much of a millionaire in your dreams, for if you are too disgracefully rich in Dreamland your fortune will be only moderate in real life.

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SCHOOL DAYS



The night the picture cord broke

THE GIRL ON THE JOB

How to Succeed—How to Get Ahead—How to Make Good

By JESSIE ROBERTS

WELFARE WORK

IT IS certain that welfare work in the big industrial and commercial enterprises is going to see a great expansion. It has been proved that it pays. And once that proof is recognized, no plant that has a forward looking policy is going to be without its welfare department, and its trained welfare expert. This work is especially suited to women, and it is up to a woman who wishes to enter the field to get her necessary training and then go out after the job. She will land it, for the supply of good welfare workers is far below the growing demand.

It is becoming generally known to even the most reactionary of employers that a contented body of workers is their safest and soundest asset. The woman who is able to reconcile differences between the employees and the employer, who can explain the one to the other, is often able to avoid a disastrous strike.

Of course, such a woman must understand the proper installation of rest-rooms, the managing of luncheons at cost, the proper airing and warming of the workrooms. But even more necessary is it that she should have the power to win the confidence and respect of those for whom she works. She must be known to be fair and just, and she must join sympathy and humor in her makeup if she is to succeed in making both sides believe in her.

"You've got to be human clear to the marrow of your bones," one woman who has the welfare of a thousand employees in her charge said to me. "There isn't a job in the world I would change for this one, but make no mistake, it's full of pitfalls and it's hard work! The girls here come to me when they won't go to their own mothers with their troubles, because they know there isn't a thing I wouldn't do for them if it's right to do it. And I feel every day that I'm doing something worth while."

Any woman would feel the same. And women who have the type of personality that will tell in welfare work should train for it—it is really a great opportunity.

(Copyright.)

Not New.

"I suppose aviation will bring in the making of rules in the air."

"The theatrical managers have already done that. They have long been laying out star routes."

Mother's Cook Book

And this for comfort thou must know,
Times that are ill won't still be so;
Clouds will not ever pour down rain;
A sullen day will clear again.
—Herrick.

SALADS AND SALAD DRESSINGS.

A SALAD which may be made in almost any season and one of which the ingredients may be found in any home supply is the following:

Raisin Salad.

Cut one-half cupful of raisins with the shears into fine pieces, cut up one cupful of celery and one cupful of apples in small bits, combine with one-fourth cupful of mayonnaise dressing one-half hour before serving; add one-half cupful of broken walnut meats and serve on lettuce leaves.

Almond Salad.

Take one-half cupful of mild vinegar, if strong, dilute it with water, using the half cupful of diluted vinegar, add three-fourths of a cup of sugar and cook until it spins a thread. Soak two tablespoonfuls of gelatin in one cupful of pineapple juice and dissolve in the hot sirup, grind one-half cupful of sweet cucumber pickles through a meat grinder, add with two-thirds of a cup of diced pineapple and one-half cupful of blanched, shredded almonds. Mix well and mold. Serve cold with mayonnaise dressing.

A most economical dressing may be made using corn oil in place of the olive oil; the dressing is fully as good to look at and better to the taste for those who do not enjoy the delicious flavor of olive oil.

Sour Cream Drop Cookies.

Take one cupful of sugar, one-half cupful of shortening, one-half cupful of sour milk, one beaten egg, two and one-half cupfuls of flour, one-half teaspoonful of soda. Mix in the order given, first beating the shortening to a cream. Drop from a spoon upon a buttered sheet. Bake in a moderate oven.

Fruit Salad.

Combine the pulp of two oranges and one grape fruit, three slices of pineapple, all finely divided. Dilute one-third of a cupful of honey with the juices from the orange and grape fruit and serve two tablespoonfuls over each portion. Wash, stone and cut into strips six dates. Arrange them in the form of a daisy on the top of each. For the centers, soak coconut in pineapple juice and color with yellow fruit coloring. Serve cold.

Nellie Maxwell

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THE ROMANCE OF WORDS

"MASCOT."

ONE of the most general of superstitions the world over is that a child born with a "caul" or membrane over the head is not only a soothsayer but an extremely fortunate person. In Scotland, as well as in France, the caul itself is regarded as bringing good fortune to anyone who possesses it, and high prices have been paid for these unusual appendages.

The French word for a child born in this manner is "masque," meaning "masked," a word which is analogous to the Latin "masca," for sorcerer—which possibly explains the connection between the caul and power attributed to those born with it. It was from the French masque, with a slight change of final syllable, that the English "mascot"—meaning a lucky-piece—was derived. After being used for years by gamblers and others of a superstitious nature, the word was finally introduced into literature by Audran, in his opera "La Mascotte," in which the term designates the messengers of the power of God, sent to counteract the influence of the power of evil.

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THE WOODS

BY DOUGLAS MALLOCH

JIM.

If you go to the lake
An' you follow the road
As it turns to the west
Of the mill,
Till you come to a stake
A surveyor has throwed
Like a knife in the breast
Of the hill,
An' you follow the track
Till you come to a blaze
By the side of the same
In a limb,
You will light on a shack,
In the timber a ways,
Of a party whose name
It is Jim.

In a day that is flown,
'Mid the great an' the grand,
In a time when his hair
Wasn't gray,
He was commonly known
By a fancier brand
In a city back there,
So they say.
But it's Jim, only Jim,
Is the name that he gives,
When you happen to bring
Up the same;
It is plenty for him
In the woods where he lives,
Fer the man is the thing,
Not the name.

By the gleam of his eye,
Thet is steady an' clear,
By the way he will look
At you square,
You will know thet they lie
Who would make it appear
He was maybe a crook
Over there.
In the church I have stood—
Heard of preachin' a lot
Thet I never could much
Understand;
An' yet never the good
From a sermon I got
Thet I got from a clutch
Of his hand.

I have half an idee
Thet, if back you could turn
To the start of the trail
For a spell,
Thet a woman you'd see,
Thet a lot you would learn—
Thet the regaler tale
It would tell
Of a fellah too fond,
Of a woman too weak,
Of another who came
To her door—
Then an endless beyond,
Lips thet never must speak,
An' a man but a name
Evermore.

If you go to the town
An' you follow the street,
To a mansion of brown
By the glitter an' glow
Of the night,
Where the music is sweet
An' the lute whispers low
To the night,
In the dark of a room
At the end of a hall,
Where the visions of old
Flutter in,
There she sits in the gloom,
She, the Cause of it all,
In the midst of her gold
An' her sin.

If you go to the lake
An' you follow the road
As it turns to the west
Of the mill,
Till you come to a stake
A surveyor has throwed
Like a knife in the breast
Of the hill,
An' you follow the track
Till you come to a blaze
By the side of the same
In a limb,
You will light on the shack,
In the timber a ways,
Of a party whose name
It is Jim.

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Daddy's Evening Fairy Tale

BY MARY GRAHAM BONNER

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QUEER CREATURES.

"They say we're queer," said a rattlesnake in the zoo. "They say that people are surprised because some of us are somewhat pinkish in color and that such a color is queer for us to have and for all the alligators to have.

"But they're ignorant when they say that, for they do not know that we come from the South, in a part of the country where the banks of the river and the shores of the lakes and streams are of red clay. And we have, as families, taken some of the color to ourselves.

"I don't mean, of course, that the color has run off on us. But in the years our families have lived in these parts we have taken on some of the ways and some of the colors of these homes.

"And when I speak of these parts and these homes, I mean the ones we have come from and not where we are now, for now we are in the zoo.

"Where we come from there are curious little bugs which, if they get the chance, will lay their eggs on people's hands if they're off in the swamps hunting for snakes such as we are.

"To be sure, there aren't many people who go and look for us for the zoos. The whole world isn't so fond of snakes as it might be.

"These little creatures I was speaking of are called ticks, and there are red bugs in the swamps, too, that are annoying little creatures to folks.

"The zoo people brought along with them a cotton-mouthed moccasin, and some folks don't think any more of that than if they'd brought along a pussy cat."

"They say," the diamond-backed rattler announced, "that I am one of the few snakes who is too smart to be ever caught by an unexpectedly cold winter. I am smart.

"The southern rattler usually spends his winter in the holes of pine trees and covers himself with a blanket of warm pine needles.

"Ah, there are so many snakes in the country that it is a joy!

"There are copperheads which are poisonous, and others which are not, such as the king snakes, and there are the black water snakes and the red-bellied water snakes, the ring-necked snakes, the scarlet snakes, the hog-nosed snakes, the black snakes, the scarlet snakes, the chicken snakes, the rat snakes and the coach whips.

"All of these lived where we used to live, and doubtless there are many of the different families living there now.

"How interesting they all are!"

"Ah," said an alligator, "they brought me along and my handsome



"We're Delightful Creatures."

neighbor here, and they brought lizards and toads and other delightful creatures.

"Some would call use queer creatures, but we say we are delightful creatures.

"Ah, when I was caught at first I was mad. They wouldn't let me do anything with my great jaws, and I had been making such a noise with them at first.

"Then I had slashed and swished my tail about and thrown mud at the faces of the people who were trying to catch me, but still they caught me.

"And now I'm happy, for I lie here on this side of my pool as I used to lie on the mud bank where my home was."

"The cotton-mouthed moccasin," said the rattlesnake, "is far meaner than I am. He won't warn people that he is going to strike. But I will. I will give a rattle and warn them. Then it is up to them to try to catch me or to leave me.

"I sit up, coiled about in the marshy grass, and then I am ready to strike. They teased me with a stick until I coiled up, though, and then when I was ready to strike they covered me with a box, caught me and brought me back here. I dropped poison around that box in enough quantity to kill any number of people, but the ones who caught me seemed to know my ways, and avoided or didn't get near the poison, nor did they give me the chance to poison them.

"Yes, we're queer, we reptiles, but some of us are beautiful and all of us are interesting, and quite a few of us are poisonous, which is about the nicest of all."

Watch for Pleasant Things.

Keep on the watch for pleasant things, but don't worry for fear your troubles will take you by surprise.

No, He Feels Just "So-So."

First Class—I got a frightful stitch in my side at the rally the other night.

Second Class—Yes, that's the worst of being "hemmed" in by the crowd.—Boys' Life.

Following Directions.

Teacher—"Johnnie, you hurry on in here or I will mark you tardy."

Johnnie—"Didn't you see that sign out there. It says, 'Public School Go Slow.' I don't want to get put in jail."

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