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The COUNTRY GENTLEMAN

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A JOURNAL FOR THE FARM, THE GARDEN AND THE FIRESIDE

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No. 23

BLOWING ABOUT IOWA

'Tis a Star-Spangled Tale of Achievements Her Citizens Relate

By Harry R. O'Brien

FARMER IOWAY, hale, hearty and well fed, sat by the sitting-room table one Thursday night recently and, having exchanged his gum boots for his slippers and lighted up his old cob pipe, he reached for his copy of THE COUNTRY GENTLEMAN which had arrived that day.

He hitched his chair round so that it would bring the light over his left shoulder and settled down for a comfortable evening. Across the table from him good Mother Ioway sat darning the family hose. His broad acres were creaking with growing pains, his barn was newly painted, his silos tall, his house with its electric equipment and its running water as good as a city man ever owned, his son John, happily married, was living on the farm down the road.

All was peace and content in this household.

He opened the paper, and as he leafed it through his attention was caught by an article headed Illinois, by John R. McMahon. He began to read. Before long he was sitting up in his chair and reading more rapidly. As he approached the end he began to sputter. Here was an article telling all about the wonders of Illinois—what a great state it is, how its fertile acres produce such a quantity of food that it takes 48,000 bales of toothpicks to clean what's left out of the nation's wisdom molars.

Illinois great? The very idea! As he finished the article he burst forth:

"Illinois? Pish, posh! Why look here, Mary," he said to Mother Ioway, "within the last two years the nation has needed two secretaries for the United States Department of Agriculture and it has come to Iowa for both of them—for E. T. Meredith and Henry C. Wallace. Or considering Tama Jim Wilson, too, Iowa has furnished three out of the last four secretaries that the nation has had. Where else should we go for them, I'd like to know?"

Then Farmer Ioway went on to recall that, in addition to furnishing, within the past two years, the services of these two distinguished citizens to the nation's agriculture, Iowa temporarily loaned Dr. R. A. Pearson, president of Iowa State College, as assistant secretary during the wartime emergency.

A Notable List

NOW again it has loaned Dr. E. D. Ball, one of the well-known scientists of the college at Ames, as another assistant secretary. A former noted assistant secretary who served for many years was Willett M. Hayes, and he, too, came from Iowa.

In these same two years Iowa has furnished the first president and secretary of the American Farm

Bureau Federation in the persons of J. R.

Howard and J. W. Coverdale. It has supplied Dean C. F. Curtiss, of Iowa State College, as president of the International Livestock Exposition, Carl N. Kennedy as the first president of the National County Agents' Association, Knute Espe as the first president of the National Federation of Coöperative Livestock Shippers, W. I. Drummond as chairman and director of the International Farm Congress, Mrs. Fannie M. Klinck as president of the Farm Women's National Congress, as well as the president and the secretary of both the National Horticultural Congress and the Corn Belt Meat Producers' Association.

During this same period Iowa has loaned to the livestock men of America Wayne Dinsmore as secretary of the Horse Association of America and the Percheron Breeders' Association, Charles Irvine, of Ankeny, as president of the American Belgian Breeders' Association, H. C. Weaver, of Wapello, as president of the American Shorthorn Breeders' Association, Dean Curtiss as president of the American Berkshire Association, and renewed its loan of Charles Gray as secretary of the American Aberdeen-Angus Association.

More Famous Sons

ON TOP of these Iowa is now supplying either the president or secretary for the American Polled Hereford Breeders' Association, the American Polled Shorthorn Breeders' Association, the International Shropshire Registry Association, the Suffolk Sheep Association, the American Tamworth Swine Record Association, the American Yorkshire Club and the National Spotted Poland-China Association. You can add to your list the American Society of Agricultural Engineers.

The records also show that during the past two years Iowa has furnished Montana

with a president of its state college, Pennsylvania with a state secretary of agriculture, Purdue University with a director of its agricultural experiment station, and both the University of Arkansas and the Florida College of Agriculture with a dean and director. She has sent T. H. MacDonald to Washington from the Iowa State Highway Commission, to be the chief of the Office of Public Roads and supervise the highways of the nation, and James E. Davis as Director General of the Federal Railway Administration, to supervise the railroads of the country over which Iowa's farm products are to be hauled to market.

Dr. L. H. Bailey, of New York, has recently issued a revised edition of his "Rus" or Agricultural Who's Who, in which there



A Rugged Bit of the Iowa State Park in Delaware County

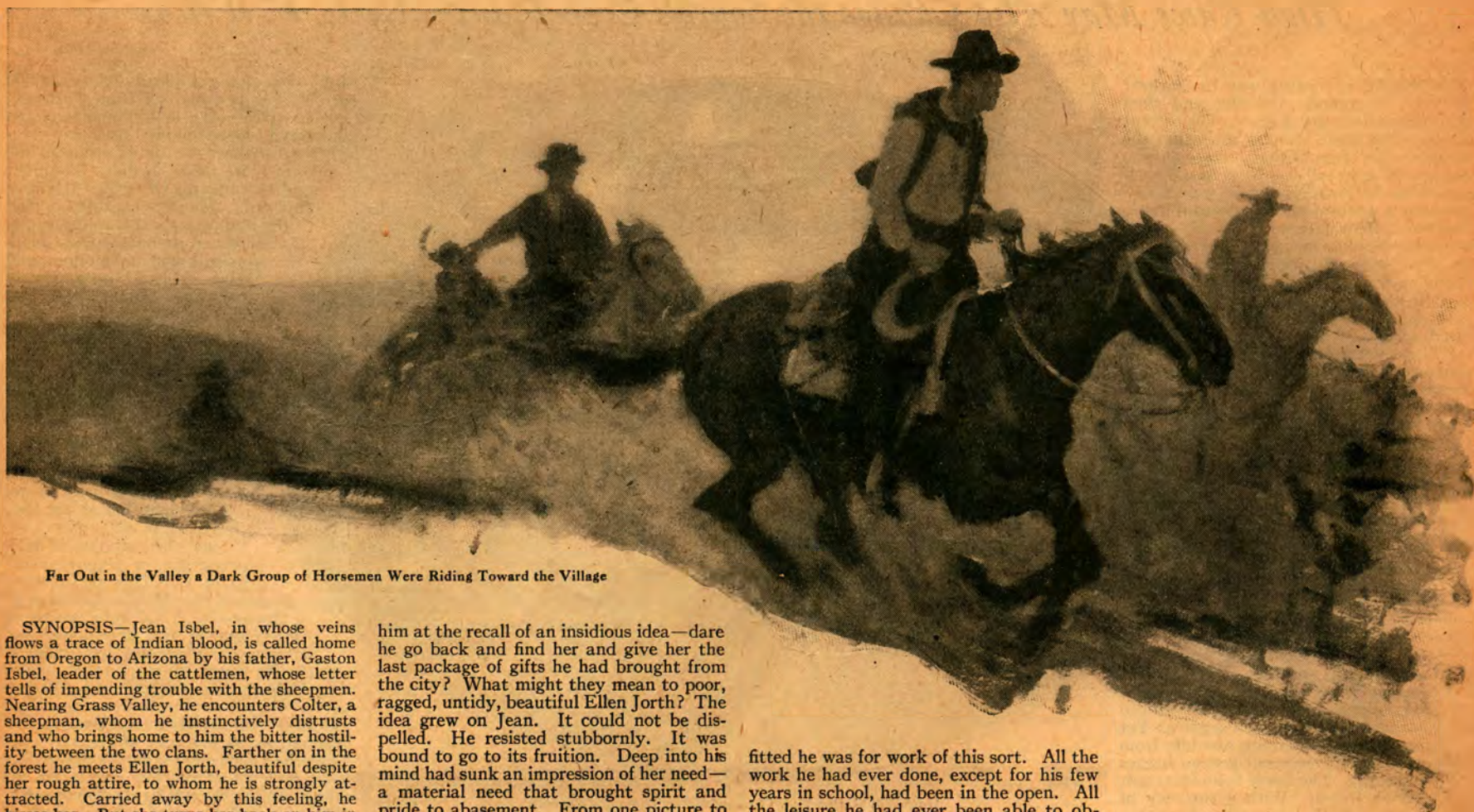


This State Park View Shows How Iowa Preserves Her Beauty Spots

TO THE LAST MAN

By Zane Grey

ILLUSTRATED BY FRANK SPRADLING



Far Out in the Valley a Dark Group of Horsemen Were Riding Toward the Village

SYNOPSIS—Jean Isbel, in whose veins flows a trace of Indian blood, is called home from Oregon to Arizona by his father, Gaston Isbel, leader of the cattlemen, whose letter tells of impending trouble with the sheepmen. Nearing Grass Valley, he encounters Colter, a sheepman, whom he instinctively distrusts and who brings home to him the bitter hostility between the two clans. Farther on in the forest he meets Ellen Jorth, beautiful despite her rough attire, to whom he is strongly attracted. Carried away by this feeling, he kisses her. But she turns her back on him in scorn when he speaks his name, for the girl is the daughter of the chief of the sheepmen. Jean is warmly greeted by his father, his sister, Ann, his half brothers, Bill and Guy, their wives and children and by Andrew Colmor, Ann's fiancé. That night, learning of a recent attempt to assassinate his father, he takes up a post in a clump of cedars, accompanied by Shepp, a dog.

III

JEAN mumbled a good night and stood watching his father's shining white head move away under the starlight. Then the tall, dark form vanished, a door closed, and all was still. The dog Shepp licked Jean's hand. Jean felt grateful for that warm touch. For a moment he sat on his roll of bedding, his thought still locked on the shuddering revelation of his father's words, "They're shore goin' to kill me." The shock of inaction passed. Jean pushed his pack into the dark opening and, crawling inside, he unrolled it and made his bed.

When at length he was comfortably settled for the night he breathed a long sigh of relief. What bliss to relax! A throbbing and burning of his muscles seemed to begin with his rest. The cool, starlit night, the smell of cedar, the moan of wind, the silence—all were real to his senses. After long weeks of arduous travel he was home. The warmth of the welcome still lingered, but it seemed to have been pierced by an icy thrust. What lay before him? The shadow in the eyes of his aunt, in the younger, fresher eyes of his sister—Jean connected those with the meaning of his father's tragic words. Far past was the morning that had been so keen—the breaking of camp in the sunlit forest, the riding down the brown aisles under the pines, the music of bleating lambs that had called him not to pass by.

THOUGHT of Ellen Jorth recurred. Had he met her only that morning? She was up there in the forest, asleep under the starlit pines. Who was she? What was her story? That savage fling of her skirt, her bitter speech and passionate, flaming face—they haunted Jean. They were crystallizing into simpler memories, growing away from his bewilderment, and therefore at once sweeter and more doubtful. "Maybe she meant differently from what I thought," Jean soliloquized. "Anyway, she was honest." Both shame and thrill possessed

him at the recall of an insidious idea—dare he go back and find her and give her the last package of gifts he had brought from the city? What might they mean to poor, ragged, untidy, beautiful Ellen Jorth? The idea grew on Jean. It could not be dispelled. He resisted stubbornly. It was bound to go to its fruition. Deep into his mind had sunk an impression of her need—a material need that brought spirit and pride to abasement. From one picture to another his memory wandered, from one speech and act of hers to another, choosing, selecting, casting aside, until clear and sharp as the stars shone the words, "Oh, I've been kissed before!" That stung him now. By whom? Not by one man, but by several, by many, she had meant. Pshaw! He had only been sympathetic and drawn by a strange girl in the woods. To-morrow he would forget. Work there was for him in Grass Valley. And he reverted uneasily to the remarks of his father until at last sleep claimed him.

A cold nose against his cheek and a low whine awakened Jean. The big dog Shepp was beside him, keen, wary and intense. The night appeared far advanced toward dawn. Far away a cock crowed; the near-at-hand one answered in clarion voice. "What is it, Shepp?" whispered Jean, and he sat up. The dog smelled or heard something suspicious to his nature, but whether man or animal Jean could not tell.

THE morning star, large, intensely blue-white, magnificent in its dominance of the clear night sky, hung over the dim, dark valley ramparts. The moon had gone down, and all the other stars were wan, pale ghosts.

Presently the strained vacuum of Jean's ears vibrated to a low roar of many hoofs. It came from the open valley, along the slope to the south. Shepp acted as if he wanted the word to run. Jean laid a hand on the dog. "Hold on, Shepp," he whispered. Then, hauling on his boots and slipping into his coat, Jean took his rifle and stole out into the open. Shepp appeared to be well trained, for it was evident that he had a strong natural tendency to run off and hunt for whatever had roused him. Jean thought it more than likely that the dog scented an animal of some kind. If there were men prowling round the ranch, Shepp might have been just as vigilant, but it seemed to Jean that the dog would have shown less eagerness to leave him, or none at all.

In the stillness of the morning it took Jean a moment to locate the direction of the wind, which was very light and coming from the south. In fact, that little breeze had borne the low roar of trampling hoofs. Jean circled the ranch house to the right and kept along the slope at the edge of the cedars. It struck him suddenly how well

fitted he was for work of this sort. All the work he had ever done, except for his few years in school, had been in the open. All the leisure he had ever been able to obtain had been given to his ruling passion for hunting and fishing. Love of the wild had been born in Jean. At this moment he experienced a grim assurance of what his instinct and his training might accomplish if directed to a stern and daring end. Perhaps his father understood this; perhaps the old Texan had some little reason for his confidence.

EVERY few paces Jean halted to listen. All objects, of course, were indistinguishable in the dark gray obscurity, except when he came close upon them. Shepp showed an increasing eagerness to bolt out into the void. When Jean had traveled half a mile from the house he heard a scattered trampling of cattle on the run and farther out a low, strangled bawl of a calf. "A-huh!" muttered Jean. "Cougar or some varmint pulled down that calf." Then he discharged his rifle in the air and yelled with all his might. It was necessary then to yell again to hold Shepp back.

Thereupon Jean set forth down the valley and tramped out and across and round, as much to scare away whatever had been after the stock as to look for the wounded calf. More than once he heard cattle moving away ahead of him, but he could not see them. Jean let Shepp go, hoping the dog would strike a trail. But Shepp neither gave tongue nor came back. Dawn began to break, and in the growing light Jean searched round until at last he stumbled over a dead calf, lying in a little bare wash where water ran in wet seasons. Big wolf tracks showed in the soft earth. "Lofers," said Jean as he knelt and just covered one track with his spread hand. "We had wolves in Oregon, but not as big as these. Wonder where that half-wolf dog Shepp went. Wonder if he can be trusted where wolves are concerned. I'll bet not, if there's a she wolf runnin' round."

JEAN found tracks of two wolves and he trailed them out of the wash, then lost them in the grass. But, guided by their direction, he went on and climbed a slope to the cedar line, where in the dusty patches he found the tracks again. "Not scared much," he muttered as he noted the slow-trotting tracks. "Well, you old gray lofers, we're goin' to clash." Jean knew from many a futile hunt that wolves

were the wariest and most intelligent of wild animals in the West. From the top of a low foothill he watched the sun rise, and then no longer wondered why his father waxed eloquent over the beauty and location and luxuriance of this grassy valley. But it was large enough to make rich a good many ranchers. Jean tried to restrain any curiosity as to his father's dealings in Grass Valley until the situation had been made clear.

Moreover, Jean wanted to love this wonderful country. He wanted to be free to ride and hunt and roam to his heart's content, and therefore he dreaded hearing his father's claims. But Jean threw off forebodings. Nothing ever turned out as badly as it presaged. He would think the best until certain of the worst. The morning was gloriously bright, and already the frost was glistening wet on the stones. Grass Valley shone like burnished silver dotted with innumerable black spots. Burros were braying their discordant messages to one another; the colts were romping in the fields; stallions were whistling; cows were bawling. A cloud of blue smoke hung low over the ranch house, slowly wafting away on the wind. Far out in the valley a dark group of horsemen were riding toward the village. Jean glanced thoughtfully at them, and reflected that he seemed destined to harbor suspicion of all men new and strange to him.

ABOVE the distant village stood the darkly green foothills leading up to the craggy slopes and these ending in the Rim, a red, black-fringed mountain front, beautiful in the morning sunlight, lonely, serene and mysterious against the level sky line. Mountains, ranges, distances unknown to Jean always called to him—to come, to seek, to explore, to find—but no wild horizon ever before beckoned to him as did this one. And the subtle, vague emotion that had gone to sleep with him last night awoke now hauntingly. It took effort to dispel the desire to think, to wonder.

Upon his return to the house he went round on the valley side, so as to see the place by light of day. His father had built for permanence, and evidently there had been three constructive periods in the history of that long, substantial, picturesque log house. But few nails and little sawed

lumber and no glass had been used. Strong and skillful hands, axes and a crosscut saw had been the prime factors in erecting this habitation of the Isbels.

"Good mawnin', son," called a cheery voice from the porch. "Shore we-all heard you shoot, an' the crack of thet forty-four was as welcome as May flowers."

Bill Isbel looked up from a task over a saddle girth and inquired pleasantly if Jean ever slept of nights. Guy Isbel laughed, and there was warm regard in the gaze he bent on Jean.

"You old Indian," he drawled slowly. "Did you get a bead on anythin'?"

"No. I shot to scare away what I found to be some of your lofers," replied Jean. "I heard them pullin' down a calf. An' I found tracks of two whoppin' big wolves. I found the dead calf too. Reckon the meat can be saved. Dad, you must lose a lot of stock here."

"Wal, son, you shore hit the nail on the haid," replied the rancher. "What with lions an' bears an' lofers—an' two-footed lofers of another breed—I've lost five thousand dollars in stock this last year."

"Dad! You don't mean it!" exclaimed Jean in astonishment. To him that sum represented a small fortune.

"I shore do," answered his father. Jean shook his head as if he could not understand such an enormous loss where there were keen, able-bodied men about.

"But that's awful, dad. How could it happen? Where were your herders an' cowboys—an' Bill an' Guy?"

BILL ISBEL shook a vehement fist at Jean and retorted in earnest, manifestly hit in a sore spot:

"Whar was me an' Guy, huh? Wal, my Oregon brother, we was heah, all year, sleepin' more or less about three hours out of every twenty-four, ridin' our boots off, an' we couldn't keep down thet loss."

"Jean, you-all hev a mighty tumble comin' to you out heah," said Guy complacently.

"Listen, son," spoke up the rancher. "You want to have some hunches before you figure on our troubles. Thar's two or three packs of lofers, an' in wintertime they are bad to deal with. Lions thick as bees, an' shore bad when the snow's on. Bears will kill a cow now an' then. An' whenever an' old silvertip comes moseyin' across from the Mazatzals he kills stock. I'm in with half a dozen cattlemen. We all work together, an' the whole outfit cain't keep these varmints down. Then two years ago the Hash Knife Gang come into the Tonto."

"Hash Knife Gang? What a pretty name!" replied Jean. "Who're they?"

"Rustlers, son. An' shore the real old Texas brand. The old Lone Star State got too hot for 'em, an' they followed the trail of a lot of other Texans who needed a healthier climate. Some two hundred Texans round heah, Jean, an' maybe a matter of three hundred inhabitants in the Tonto all told, good an' bad. Reckon it's about half an' half."

ACHEERY call from the kitchen interrupted the conversation of the men.

"You-all come to breakfast."

During the meal the old rancher talked to Bill and Guy about the day's order of work, and from this Jean gathered an idea of what a big cattle business his father conducted. After breakfast Jean's brothers manifested keen interest in the new rifles. These were unwrapped and cleaned and taken out for testing. The three rifles were of forty-four caliber, the kind of gun Jean had found most effective. He tried them out first, and the shots he made were satisfactory to him and amazing to the others. Bill had used an old Henry rifle. Guy did not favor any particular rifle. The rancher pinned his faith to the famous old fifty-caliber single-shot buffalo gun, mostly called needle gun.

"Wal, reckon I'd better stick to mine. Shore you cain't teach an ole dog new tricks. But you boys may do well with the forty-fours. Pack 'em on your saddles an' practice when you see a coyote."

Jean found it difficult to convince himself that this interest in guns and marksmanship had any sinister propulsion back of it. His father and brothers had always been this way. Rifles were as important to pioneers as plows, and their skillful use was an achievement every frontiersman tried to attain. Friendly rivalry had always existed among the members of the Isbel family; even Ann Isbel was a good shot. But such proficiency in the use of firearms, and life in the open that was correlative with it, had not dominated them as it had Jean. Bill and Guy Isbel were born cattlemen—chips of the old block.

Jean began to hope that his father's letter was an exaggeration and particularly that the fatalistic speech of last night, "They're shore goin' to kill me," was just a moody inclination to see the worst side. Still, even as Jean tried to persuade himself of this more hopeful view, he recalled many references to the peculiar reputation of Texans for gun throwing, for feuds, for never-ending hatreds. In Oregon the Isbels had lived among industrious and

peaceful pioneers from all over the States. To be sure the life had been rough and primitive, and there had been fights on occasions, though no Isbel had ever killed a man. But now they had become fixed in a wilder and sparsely settled country, among men of their own breed. Jean was afraid his hopes had only sentiment to foster them. Nevertheless, he forced back a strange, brooding mental state and resolutely held up the brighter side. Whatever the evil conditions existing in Grass Valley, they could be met with intelligence and courage, with an absolute certainty that it was inevitable they must pass away. Jean refused to consider the old fatal law that at certain wild times and wild places in the West certain men had to pass away to change evil conditions.

"Wal, Jean, ride round the range with the boys," said the rancher. "Meet some of my neighbors, Jim Blaisdell in particular. Take a look at the cattle. An' pick out some hosses for yourself."

"I've seen one already," declared Jean. "A black with white face. I'll take him."

"Shore you know a hoss. To my eye he's my pick. But the boys don't agree. Bill 'specially had degenerated into a fancier of pitchin' hosses. Ann can ride that black. You try him this mawnin'. An' son, enjoy yourself."

IV

TRUE to his first impression, Jean named the black horse Whiteface and fell in love with him before ever he swung a leg over him. Whiteface appeared spirited, yet gentle. He had been trained instead of being broken. Of hard hits and quirts and spurs he had no experience. He liked to do what his rider wanted him to do.

A hundred or more horses grazed in the grassy meadows, and as Jean rode on among them it was a pleasure to see stallions throw heads and ears up and whistle or snort. Whole troops of colts and two-year-olds raced with flying tails and manes.

Beyond these pastures stretched the range, and Jean saw the gray-green expanse speckled by thousands of cattle. The scene was inspiring. Jean's brothers led him all round, meeting some of the herders and riders employed on the ranch, one of whom was a burly, grizzled man with eyes reddened and narrowed by much riding in wind and sun and dust. His name was Everts, and he was father of the lad whom Jean had met near the village. Everts was busily skinning the calf that had been killed by the wolves.

"See heah, you Jean Isbel," said Everts. "It shore was about time you come home. We-all heahs ye hev an eye fer tracks. Wal, mebbe you can kill Old Gray, the lofer thet did this job. He's pulled down nine calves an' yearlin's this last two months thet I know of. An' we've not hed the spring round-up."

Grass Valley widened to the south-east. Jean would have been backward about estimating the square miles in it. Yet it was not vast acreage so much as rich pasture that made it such a wonderful range. Several ranches lay along the western slope of this section. Jean was informed that open parks and swales and little valleys nestling among the foothills wherever there was water and grass had been settled by ranchers. Every year a few new families ventured in.

BLAISDELL struck Jean as being a lionlike type of Texan, in his broad, bold face, his huge head with its upstanding tawny hair like a mane and in the speech and force that betokened the nature of his heart. He was not as old as Jean's father. He had a rolling voice with the same drawling intonation characteristic of all Texans and blue eyes that still held the fire of youth. Quite a marked contrast he presented to the lean, rangy, hard-jawed, intent-eyed men Jean had begun to accept as Texans.

Blaisdell took time for a curious scrutiny and study of Jean that, frank and kindly as it was, and evidently the adjustment of impressions gotten from hearsay, yet bespoke the attention of one used to judging men for himself and in this particular case having reasons of his own for so doing.

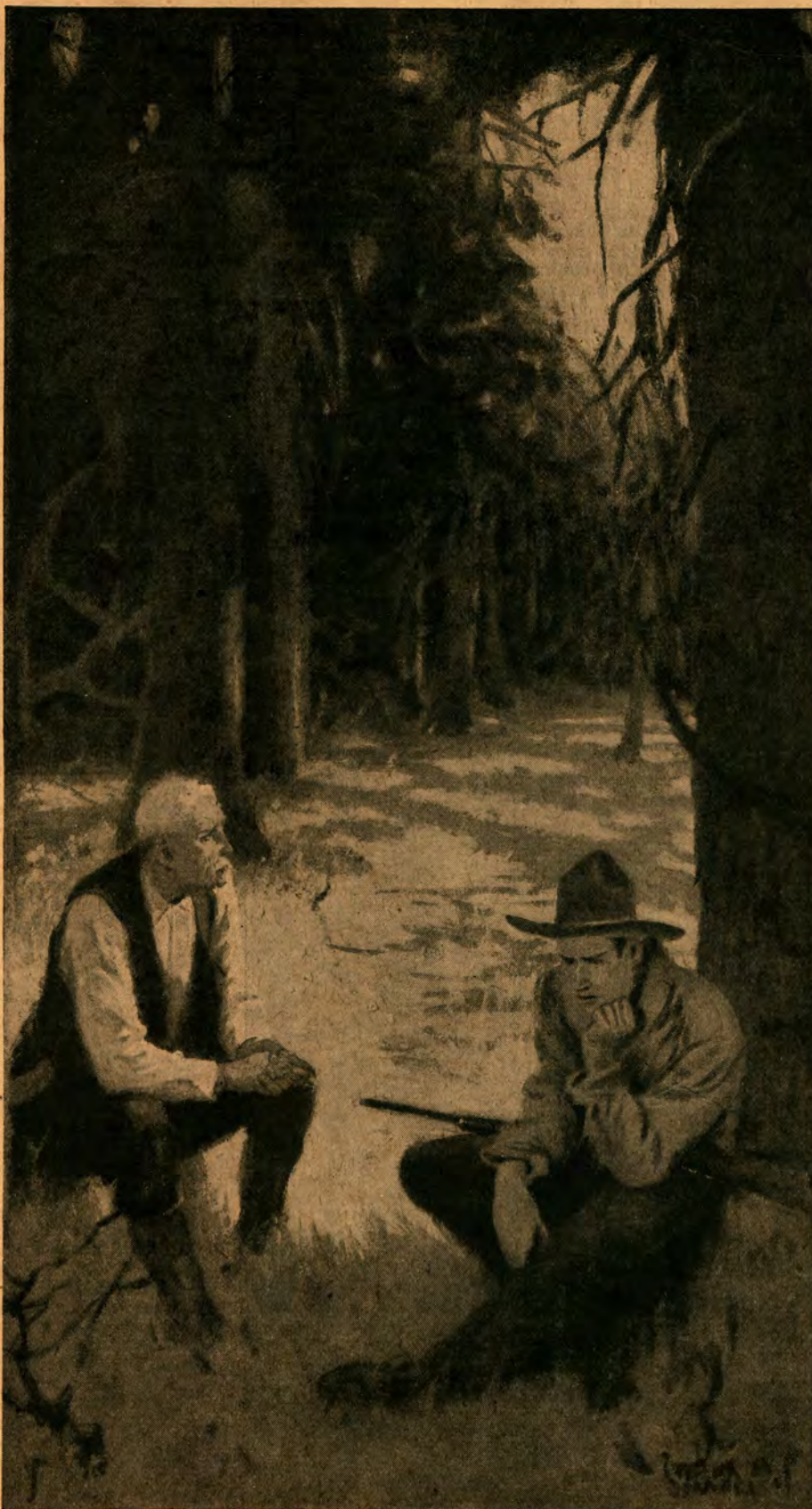
"Wal, you're like your sister, Ann," said Blaisdell, "which you may take as a compliment, young man. Both of you favor your mother. But you're an Isbel. Back in Texas thar are men who never wear a glove on their right hands, an' shore I reckon, if one of 'em met up with yu sudden, he'd think some graves had opened an' he'd go for his gun."

Blaisdell's laugh-pealed out with a deep, pleasant roll. Thus he planted in Jean's sensitive mind a significant, thought-provoking idea about the past-and-gone Isbels.

His further remarks, likewise, were exceedingly interesting to Jean. The settling of the Tonto Basin by Texans was a subject often in dispute. Blaisdell's own father had been in the first party of adventurous pioneers who had traveled up from the south to cross over the Reno Pass of the Mazatzals into the basin.

"Newcomers from outside get impressions of the Tonto accordin' to the first settlers they meet," declared

(Continued on Page 24)



"Son, if I Could Hev Looked Forward to Anythin' But Blood Spillin' I'd Never Hev Given You Such a Name to Uphold"

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To the Last Man

(Continued from Page 5)

Wal, I've not known men fer nothin'. They just stood stiff an' looked at each other. Your dad was aboot to draw. But Jorth made no sign to throw a gun."

Jean saw the growing and weaving and thickening threads of a tangle that had already involved him.

"THE other day back up in the woods on the Rim I ran into a sheepman who said his name was Colter. Who is he?"

"Colter? What'd he look like?"

Jean described Colter with a readiness that spoke volumes for the vividness of his impressions.

"I don't know him," replied Blaisdell. "But thet only goes to prove my contention—any fellar runnin' wild in the woods can say he's a sheepman."

"Colter surprised me by callin' me by my name," continued Jean. "Our little talk wasn't exactly friendly. He said a lot about my bein' sent for to run sheep herders out of the country."

"Shore thet's all over," replied Blaisdell seriously. "You're a marked man already."

"What started such rumor?"

"Shore you can't prove it by me. But it's not taken as rumor. It's got to the sheepmen as hard as bullets."

"A-huh! That accounts for Colter's seemin' a little sore under the collar. Well, he said they were goin' to run sheep over Grass Valley, an' for me to take that hunch to my dad."

Blaisdell had his chair tilted back and his heavy boots against a post of the porch. Down he thumped. His neck corded with a sudden rush of blood.

"The hell he did!" he ejaculated.

Jean gauged the brooding, rankling hurt of this old cattleman by his sudden break from the cool, easy Texan manner. Blaisdell cursed under his breath and then relapsed to his former state. He laid a brown hand on Jean's knee.

"Two years ago I called the cards," he said quietly. "It means a Grass Valley war."

NOT until late that afternoon did Jean's father broach the subject uppermost in his mind. Then at an opportune moment he drew Jean away into the cedars out of sight.

"Son, I shore hate to make your home-comin' unhappy," he said, "but, so help me God, I hev to do it!"

"Dad, you called me prodigal, an' I reckon you were right. I've shirked my duty to you. I'm ready now to make up for it," replied Jean feelingly.

"Wal, wal; shore that's fine spoken, my boy. Let's set down heah an' have a long talk. What did Jim Blaisdell tell you?"

Briefly Jean outlined the neighbor rancher's conversation. Then Jean recounted his experience with Colter and concluded with Blaisdell's reception of the sheepman's threat. This news of Colter and his talk never struck even a spark from Gaston Isbel.

"Wal," he began thoughtfully, "reckon there are only two points in Jim's talk I need touch on. Thar's shore goin' to be a Grass Valley war. It'll go down a black blot on the history page of the Tonto Basin as a war between rival sheepmen an' cattlemen. Same old fight over water an' grass! Jean, my son, thet is wrong. It'll not be a war between sheepmen an' cattlemen, but a war of honest ranchers against rustlers maskin' as sheep raisers! Mind you, I don't belittle the trouble between sheepmen an' cattlemen in Arizona. It's real an' it's vital an' it's serious. It'll take law an' order to straighten out the

grazin' question. Some day the Government will keep sheep off cattle ranges. So get things right in your mind, my son. In this fight thet'll wipe out some of the Isbels—mebbe all of 'em—you're on the side of justice an' right."

The old rancher wiped his perspiring face and breathed deeply. Jean sensed in him a tremendous emotional strain.

"Now next take what Jim said about your comin' to chase these sheep herders out of the valley. Jean, I started thet talk. I had my tricky reasons. I know these greaser sheep herders, an' I know the respect Texans hev for a gunman. Some say I bragged. Some say I'm an old fool in his dotage, ravin' about a fav'rite son. True, son, I talked with a purpose, but shore I was mighty cold an' steady when I did it. My feelin' was thet you'd do what I'd do if I were thirty years younger. No, I reckoned you'd do more. For I figgered on your blood. Jean, you're Indian an' Texas an' French, an' you've trained yourself in the Oregon woods. When you were only a boy of twenty few marksmen I ever knew could beat you, an' I never saw your equal for eye an' ear, for trackin' a hoss, for all the gifts thet make a woodsman."

"WAL, rememberin' this an' seein' the trouble ahead for the Isbels, I jest broke out whenever I had a chance. I bragged before men I'd reason to believe would take my words deep. Not long ago I missed some stock, an' happenin' into Greaves' place one Saturday night, I shore talked loud. His barroom was full of men, an' some of 'em were in my black book. Greaves took my talk a little testy. He said:

"Wal, Gass, mebbe you're right about some of these cattle thieves livin' among us, but ain't they jest as liable to be some of your friends or relatives as Ted Meeker's or mine or anyone round heah? That was whar Greaves an' me fell out. I yelled at him, 'No, by heaven, they're not! My record heah an' thet of my people is open. The least I can say for you, Greaves, an' your crowd is thet your records fade away on dim trails.' Then he said, nastylike, 'Wal, if you could work out all the dim trails in the Tonto you'd shore be surprised.' An' then I roared. I swore the trails he hinted of would be tracked to the holes of the rustlers who made 'em. I told him I had sent for you an' when you got heah these slippery, mysterious thieves, whoever they were, would shore hev to pay. Greaves said he hoped so, but he was afraid I was partial to my Indian son."

"Then we had hot words. Blaisdell got between us. When I was leavin' I took a partin' fling at him. 'Greaves, you ought to know the Isbels, considerin' you're from Texas. Mebbe you've got reasons for throwin' taunts at my claims for my son Jean. Yes, he's got Indian in him, an' thet'll be the worse for the men who will hev to meet him. I'm tellin' you, Greaves, Jean Isbel is the black sheep of the family. If you ride down his record, you'll find he's shore in line to be another Poggin or Reddy Kingfisher or Hardin' or any of the Texas gunmen you ought to remember. Greaves, there are men rubbin' elbows with you right heah thet my son is goin' to track down!'"

JEAN bent his head in stunned cognizance of the notoriety with which his father had chosen to affront any and all Tonto Basin men who were under the ban of his suspicion. What a terrible reputation and trust to have saddled upon him!

"Son, if I could hev looked forward to anythin' but blood spillin' I'd never hev given you such a name to uphold," continued the rancher. "What I'm goin' to tell you now is my secret. My other sons an' Ann hev never heard it. Jim Blaisdell suspects there's somethin' strange, but he doesn't know. I'll shore never tell anyone else but you. An' you must promise to keep my secret now an' after I am gone."

"I promise," said Jean.

(TO BE CONTINUED)



CHAFF

Pretty Poor

A SMALL girl of five was walking with her mother in the Public Garden in Boston. The Washington monument attracted her attention and she inquired, "What is it, mamma?"

"That is a statue of George Washington," replied the mother.

The child regarded it critically for a few minutes; then she shook her head and said gravely: "Washington didn't take a very good statue, did he, mamma?"

The Obstacles

"I KNOW," the village merchant said, "that prices must come down, Or else the farmer folks will do their trading out of town; They'll send their hard-earned money off and get their stuff by mail, And buy from them durned city scamps that ought to be in jail. I know the trade is being killed by all us retail sellers, But I am waiting, like the rest, upon the other fellers."

—Tennyson J. Daft.

The Modern Version

HOW oft of yore we used to hear it,
The saying, "If the shoe fits wear it."
But if the shoe just fits with ease
The modern maiden's words are these:
"Give me one size smaller, please."

—Robert Morrill Adams.

Well Concealed

"YOUR trouble," consoled the optimistic friend, "may be a blessing in disguise."

"Well," sighed the afflicted one, "all I've got to say is it's the cleverest disguise I ever saw."

A Reasonable Question

"I INTEND to buy a motor car just as soon as I can afford it," said Poorfeller. "Why wait until then?" queried old Gaunt N. Grimm. "Nobody else does."

His Desire

"WE WILL do our best, Mr. Sprawl, to make you feel at home here," smiled the hotel clerk, who had acquired the idea that it pays to be good and kind to all.

"You needn't to mind, sir," replied Sanford Sprawl, of Puxico. "That's just what I came away from home to get a change from. What I want is to feel like I'm at a hotel."



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Uncommon

"OH, WHAT is so rare as a day in June?" remarked the

college student, who was spending his vacation in the employ of Ezra Jenkins.

"Well," stated Ezra with conviction, "a team that'll hitch themselves up to the hayrake and go to work while their driver is quotin' poetry is just about as rare, if not a leetle mite more so."

His Probable Identity

"PS-S-S-ST! Listen!" eagerly said He-loise, of the rapid-fire restaurant. "I just heard Charmian is married again!"

"Gee!" returned Claudine, of the same establishment. "Who'd she hook this time?"

"D'know his name. Some innocent bystander, I s'pose likely."

By Comparison

"DOBBINS is a great comfort to me." "I don't see how you can say that. He's the most tiresome chump I've ever met."

"That's just it. Although I don't amount to much, every time I look at Dobbins I feel that I could amount to less."

The Catastrophe

"THERE was a fire in town last night, wasn't there?" inquired a recently arrived guest.

"Yes," replied the landlord of the Allegash tavern. "Pretty serious one too. The Palace billiard parlor burnt down and rendered fully fifteen able-bodied young men homeless."

As it Sometimes Happens

AN UNFORTUNATE man, possessed of a comfortable competency, evidenced various eccentricities, and so his loving relatives tenderly escorted him to a famous neurologist. The latter viewed the patient from different points of the compass, and in due course passed him on to a psychopathologist. This polysyllabic expert subjected him to an exhaustive analysis, and presently shucked him off onto a psychiatrist. The latter had hardly more than begun his investigation when the patient lost the most of his money. Thereat his kin turned

him loose, declaring that they had no more time to waste on a darned old crank. And he fell into the hands of a shabby plug of an unknown general practitioner, who gave him a few doses of bitter stuff and cured him for a dollar and sixty cents.

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