

The Cow Puncher

BY ROBERT J. C. STEAD

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Synopsis of Preceding Chapters.

Dr. Early, famous specialist, and his daughter Irene, meet with an accident while on a morning trip in the cabin of the Elton ranch where dwell David and his dissolute father. The girl and boy promise to meet again in the future. After his father's drunken death David goes to seek his fortune in town and loses all his money at a pool table. He spends an evening with Conward, his poolroom acquaintance, and two actresses and takes liquor for the first time. Next morning he speaks from a drunken sleep resolved to amend. He is attracted by the singing of a choir girl in a church when he attended a Socialist meeting. When delivering a sermon at the home of Mrs. Conward, he receives a position in return for occasional services as a coachman. The first evening he discovers the choir girl in Mrs. Duncan. Under his tutor's careful direction, David's education begins. He becomes a reporter on the Elton. One Sunday he told Edith the story of his life and his compact with Irene. Conward drops in with talk about industrial developments and Mrs. Conward's imagination. They form a real estate partnership. A boom follows, making David a millionaire, but he variously distrusts his partner, Roberta Morrison, compiler of the woman's magazine. Conward comes to his office one evening and Dave orders dinner.

CHAPTER XI—(Cont'd.)

Suddenly, from a sharp bend in the road, flashed the lights of an approaching car. Dave was able to switch his own lights on again only in time to avoid a collision. The oncoming car lurched and passed by furiously, but not before Dave had recognized Conward as the driver. Back on its trail of dust floated the ribald notes of half-intoxicated women.

"Close enough," said Dave, when the dust had settled. "Well, let us jog back home."

"I suppose it does. But I don't know many girls. I don't know any girl very well, except you, and you wouldn't have me."

"No, I wouldn't," she answered frankly. "I like you to walk. You know other girls, and you could get to know more if you wanted to. There's Edith Duncan, for instance."

"Edith is a fine girl. The Duncans are wonderful people. I owe to them almost everything. But as for marrying Edith—"

"Why not?"

"I don't know. I never thought of it that way. She's a fine girl."

"None better," said Bart, with decision. "Dave, I'm not much on orthodox religion, as you know, but that girl's got something on me. She has a voice that would make her famous on the stage, but she uses it all the time, as she says, in the service of the King. I think she's narrow of that point, but I know she's sincere. Edith has had a great sorrow, and it makes her nobility stand out, pure and wonderful, like a white gem in a black setting. It seems to be the fact that one must rub shoulders with sorrow before he really begins to live. And any afternoon you can find her down in the children's ward, singing with that wonderful voice to the little sufferers."

"I know about her sorrow," said Dave, as though confessing a profound secret. "She told me about her sorrow when she was killed."

"What was it?"

"Oh, I don't know. I think she was in love with some fellow, and he had her killed."

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he was powerfully drawn toward her. He knew—that she would have most strenuously denied—that her masculinity was a sham. Her defiance of convention—rambling like a fellow in the cabin of the Elton ranch—her occasional profanity and occasional cigarette—there were but the cloak from which her own deep womanhood shone for ever peering forth. He felt impelled to kiss her. He wondered if she would be angry; if such a familiarity would obstruct their growing friendship. He felt sure she would not be angry, but she would probably think him foolish. And man cannot endure being thought foolish by women.

"Oh, I almost forgot," she said as they parted, as though she really had forgotten. "I was at a reception to give when a beautiful woman asked for you. Asked me if I had ever heard of Mr. Darts-Elden."

"What, Dave Elden, the millionaire?" said. "Everybody knows him. He's the beau of the town, or could be, if he wanted to." Oh, I gave you a good name, Dave.

"Thank you," that was decent. "Who was she?"

"She said her name was Irene Hardy."

CHAPTER XII.

Upon the return of Irene Hardy to the East it had slowly become apparent to her mother that things were not as they once had been. There were various vague stirrings of uneasiness, but perhaps the most alarming manifestation was the strange silence in which the girl enveloped herself. It seemed as though she had left part of her nature behind—had outgrown it, perhaps—and had created about herself an atmosphere of reserve foreign to her earlier life. It seemed as though the high loneliness of the great plains had settled upon her. The old virility had been sobered; the gaiety of her girlhood had ripened into a poised more disturbing to Mrs. Hardy than any conventional excess could have been. She sought her own company; she tolerated social engagements in which she had previously found delight. And, most sinister of all, she showed no disposition to encourage the attentions which were ready enough in the offering.

"Whatever has come over Irene?" said Mrs. Hardy to the doctor one evening when their daughter had been particularly indifferent to a theatre invitation. "She hasn't been the same since she came home. I should not have let her go West alone."

The doctor looked up mildly from his paper. It was the custom of the doctor to look up mildly when Mrs. Hardy made a statement demanding some form of reciprocity. From the wide initiation into domestic affairs which his profession had given him, Dr. Hardy had long since ceased to look for the absolute in woman. He had learned to accept her in the man. He realized that in Mrs. Hardy he did not possess a perfect mate, but he was equally convinced that in no other woman would he have found a perfect mate, and he accepted his lot with the philosophy of his sixty years. If Mrs. Hardy, in some respects, failed to measure up to his standard of the ideal, he found it true nevertheless that she had many admirable qualities. Granting that in his matrimonial adventures he might possibly have done somewhat better, fairness compelled the admission that he might also have done very much worse. And being, as has been hinted, something of a pessimist, he sought, whenever possible, to harmonize his life with hers; and when that was impossible, at least to keep what pressure he might upon the soft pedal. So instead of reminding his wife that Irene had not been alone when she went West he remarked, very mildly, that the girl was growing older.

Mrs. Hardy found in this remark occasion to lay down the book she had been holding, and to sit upright in a rigidity of intense disapproval. Dr. Hardy was aware that this was entirely a theatrical attitude, assumed for the purpose of imposing upon him a proper humility. He had experienced it many, many times. And he knew that his statement, notwithstanding its obviousness, was about to be challenged.

"Dr. Hardy," said his wife, after the lapse of an appropriate period, "do you consider that an intelligent remark?"

It has the advantage of truthfulness," returned the doctor, placidly. "It is susceptible of demonstration."

"I should think this is a matter of discussion," returned Mrs. Hardy, standing in a somewhat unbecoming attitude of becoming exasperated by her husband's good humor. She had none of his philosophy, and she mistook his even temper for indifference. "Irene is our only child, and before you put your eyes you see her—you see her!" Mrs. Hardy's fears were too nebulous to enable her to complete the sentence.

"Yes, I see her," the doctor admitted. "That is, I did see her at dinner. Then, relating, 'But, seriously, what reason have you for uneasiness about the child?'"

"Reasons enough. She behaves so strangely. Do you know, I begin to really do begin to suspect that she's in love."

It was Dr. Hardy's turn to sit upright. "Nonsense," he said. "Why should she be in love? It is the unfortunate limitation of the philosopher that he so often leaves irrational behaviour out of the reckoning. 'She is only a child.'"

"She will be eighteen presently. And why shouldn't she be in love? And the question is—who? That is for you to answer. Whom did she meet?"

"If you would find a Hamlet at the root of this melancholy you must ask our Ophelia. She met one one with me. My accident left me to enjoy my holiday as best I could at ranch deep in the foothills, and Benjie stayed with me there. There was no one else."

"No one? No ranch men, cowboys or whatever. Think I have heard—with nice disdain."

"No. Only young Elden."

"Only? Who is this young Elden?"

"But he is just a boy. Just the son of the old rancher of whom I have told you."

"Exactly. And Irene is just a girl."

Dr. Hardy, you are all very well with your fevers and your chills, but you can't diagnose a love case worth a cent. An epidemic would break out under your very eyes and you blissfully unconscious. What about this young Elden? Did Irene see much of him?"

"The doctor spread his hands. 'Do you realize that there were four of us at that ranch—four only, and no one else for miles? How could she help seeing him?'"

"And you permitted it?"

"I was on my back with a broken leg. We were guests at their home. They were good Samaritans to us, I couldn't chaperon her. And, besides, they don't do things that way in that country. You don't understand. It's altogether different."

"And," said Mrs. Hardy, leaning forward, and the word was ominous for she used his Christian name only in moments of crisis, "was Irene ever with this young man—alone?"

"The doctor arose to his feet and under heavily upon the rich carpeting. 'I told you you don't understand. It's protested. 'The West is not the East. Everything is different.'"

"I suppose human nature is different," she interrupted, meaningly. Then her head fell upon the table and her hands went up about her hair. It had been worn hair once, but was now thin and streaked with grey. "Oh, Andrew," she wept. "We are ruined. That, we should ever have come to this!"

It was now Dr. Hardy's turn to become exasperated. There was one thing his philosophy could not endure. That was a person who was not, and would not be, philosophical. Mrs. Hardy was not, and would not be, philosophical. She was an absolutist. With Mrs. Hardy things were right or things were wrong. Moreover, that which was done according to rule was right, and that which was not done according to rule was wrong. It was apparent that the acquaintance of Irene and Dave Elden had not been according to rule.

(To be continued.)

What a Scolding Once Did.

"What was your first invention?" somebody asked Prof. Alexander Graham Bell a few weeks before his recent death.

"That takes me back a long way," he replied. "I was a schoolboy. My father, who was a teacher of elocution, had a pupil of my own age, named Benjamin Hardman, who had been sent to him to be cured of stammering. He and I were playmates and great chums. His father owned a flourmill near Edinburgh, and Benny and I spent a good deal of time there, playing about."

"As boys will do, we managed to get into a lot of mischief, and one day Benny's father called us into his office and read us a rather severe lecture. Said he, 'If you have so much extra steam to blow off, why don't you turn it to some account? Why not try to do something useful?'"

"I asked him what he meant by that, and he picked me up, he picked up what he could do in a handful of wheat and a nail brush, and the idea appeared to work well."

"Then it occurred to me that there was in the mill a rotating machine, used for other purposes, which if lined with brushes, might do the business. Wheat, thrown into it, would be dashed against the brushes as the machine revolved, and thus the husks would be torn off."

"I took the idea to Mr. Hardman, who ordered it to be tried. It proved a success, and the process was permanently adopted in the mill."

A Resignation.

The clumsy girl, who had been acting as waitress for the Jenkins family, had broken dish after dish, and at last the mistress of the house spoke to her decidedly.

"If you break any more china or glass, Mary, I shall be obliged to dismiss you," she said, "for I cannot afford to keep you."

"That very night at dinner there came the sound of a fearful crash from the butler's pantry."

There was a moment of deathly stillness, and then Mary appeared, removing her apron as she emerged from the closet.

"The plates and all is in binders, mum," she said, calmly, "and I'm off!"

A Grievance.

Tomy had been punished.

and the worst is yet to come



Sixty Miles of Books.

With its five million odd printed volumes, the British Museum Library can claim the distinction of being the largest in the world, so far as the number of books is concerned. Indeed, over sixty miles of shelves have been called into requisition to accommodate them.

The library was started in 1557, since when it has grown by enormous strides, absorbing vast and wealthy collections of books, such as the Old Royal Library, the King's Library, a magnificent treasury containing 65,250 volumes besides pamphlets, the Grenville Library, and many large special collections, not to mention the multifarious stores of books in papyrus and inscribed tablets from the ancient libraries of the East.

The catalogue, which is a bare alphabetical list of books, gives on the best means of realizing the stupendous extent of the collection. It consists of 1,500 folio volumes, each as big as one can handle with any facility, which are arranged on both sides of a series of cases describing an acre ninety yards in length.

The Reading Room of the Library, a magnificent circular hall with a dome 106ft. high and 104ft. in diameter, only two feet less than the dome of St. Peter's, Rome, provides accommodation for 500 readers. As the library enjoys the right to receive a copy of every publication issued in England, its collection is being added to at the rate of 100,000 volumes a year, and it has had to construct a special repository at Hendon to hold some of its treasures.

Why Handkerchiefs Are Square.

A handkerchief means literally a kerchief for the hand, the kerchief itself being a small sort of a shawl. Handkerchiefs originated in Italy, whence they gradually spread over Europe.

All shapes and sizes were used, till one day in the last era of the glories of the old French Court Queen Marie Antoinette remarked how much nearer it would be if only square-shaped handkerchiefs were made.

So, on the 2nd of January, 1785, a Royal decree went throughout France that "the length of handkerchiefs shall equal their breadth."

Easy to Answer.

Billy was in tears when he came home from school.

"Teacher whipped me because I was the only one who could answer a question she asked the class," he sobbed.

His mother was indignant.

"Why, I'll see her about that! What was the question, Billy?"

His eyes lighted reminiscently.

"She wanted to know who put the glue in her ink-bottle!"

Can You Find Your Name Here?

Many people nowadays know the meanings of their Christian names, and they are chosen as a rule because they sound nice.

Popular Salads.

In the arrangement of salads there is quite as much opportunity for artistic expression as there is in a piece of lovely embroidery. A beautifully arranged salad does to a meal what trimmings does to a dress and besides the looks, salads are appetizing, nourishing and really necessary.

The secret of preparing appetizing salads is to combine the right fruits or vegetables, serve cold as possible and arrange attractively. The salad course is served on individual salad plates or from a salad bowl or round platter. It is usually placed on the table at the beginning of the meal. For more formal occasions some hostesses prefer to serve the salad from the platter on which it is arranged, letting it fill the place of a separate course.

Macedoine salad—1 c. diced celery, 1 c. diced carrots, 2 c. cooked peas, 2 c. cooked cauliflower, French dressing. Arrange lettuce leaves on a round platter. Heap the diced celery in the centre, surround with a ring of carrots, then a ring of peas and finish with a border of cauliflower. Care should be taken not to break the cauliflower into too small pieces or let it mash in cooking. Sprinkle evenly with French dressing and serve from the platter at table. Each serving will consist of a lettuce leaf and a small portion of each vegetable.

Poinsettia salad—Cut medium sized tomatoes crosswise into eight sections. Spread apart and place cheese ball in centre. Serve on lettuce leaf with French or boiled dressing.

Waldorf salad—Mix equal quantities of apple and celery and moisten with mayonnaise. Garnish with nuts or strips of green peppers or pimiento. Serve on lettuce leaf. In apple season, a very attractive way to serve this salad is to hollow out red apples, fill the cavity with the salad and top with the dressing.

Stuffed celery—Cut off tops and scrub celery stalks well with vegetable brush. Fill the hollow in the stalk with a mixture of cottage cheese and boiled dressing. Sprinkle with paprika. Serve on lettuce leaf. Chopped nuts may be used in the cheese mixture, if desired.

Combination salad—1 cucumber, 1 green pepper, 2 medium sized tomatoes, radishes, lettuce. Arrange lettuce leaves on salad plate. Place tomato slices in centre and surround with thin slices of cucumber and radish. Garnish with a radish rose and sprinkle with French dressing.

Radish roses are made by cutting the radish in eighths, just through the skin, and peeling back this skin to the base or stem end. These sections of peel form the petals of the rose, and the white centre of the radish represents the centre of the rose.

Cabbage-and-peanut salad—Shred firm white cabbage very fine and mix with chopped peanuts in the proportion of half a cup of peanuts to a small head of cabbage. Moisten with mayonnaise dressing. Serve on lettuce leaf.

Raw Cabbage-and-onion salad—Chop fine the heart of a tender cabbage and lie for an hour in slightly salted, cold water. Chop onion, in quantity according to the onion-taste of the family. Make just enough French salad dressing to season the whole. Drain the cabbage and dry on a clean towel. Toss cabbage, onion and salad dressing lightly together. Serve on lettuce or cabbage leaves.

Boiled dressing—1 tsp. sugar, 4 tsp. salt, 1 tsp. mustard, 1 1/2 tsp. flour, few grains cayenne, 1 egg, 3 c. milk, 1/4 c. weak vinegar, 1/2 c. melted butter. Measure dry ingredients and mix well in pan in which dressing is to be cooked. Add slightly beaten egg, milk, add vinegar slowly while stirring, and melted butter. Cook over boiling water, stirring all the time, until mixture thickens, or about five minutes from time water begins to boil.

Stuffed date salad—Sift dates open at side and remove stones. Fill the cavity with a mixture of cottage cheese, chopped nuts and boiled salad dressing. Arrange on salad plates five of these stuffed dates on a nest of crisp lettuce leaves. Serve cold with French dressing.

Mayonnaise dressing—1 tsp. each, mustard, salt, sugar; few grains cayenne, 2 egg yolks or 1 egg, 2 tbsp. each, vinegar, lemon juice, 1 1/2 c. olive oil. Mix dry ingredients, add egg yolks and when well mixed add oil gradually, drop by drop at first. Beat

flowers that tell the time. There are several varieties of plants which foretell changes in the weather, while not a few of them enable us to tell the time of day often with increasing accuracy.

When the flowers of the common chickweed expand fully, no rain need be anticipated for four hours or more. But should its small flowers be half concealed, it is advisable to prepare for rain.

When the flowers of the Siberian snow white remain open all night, it is a sign that rain will fall the following day.

If by seven o'clock in the morning the African marigold has not opened its petals, prepare for rain during the day. The scarlet pimpernel and the convolvulus always fold their leaves upon the approach of wet weather.

The flowers of the alpine willowgrass, the feverfew, and the wintergreen have a peculiar habit of hanging down during the night as if they were asleep. This act serves to protect the fertilizing dust from injury by mist or rain.

In addition to these there is a variety of flowers that close and open at certain hours with remarkable regularity.

The flowers of the goat's beard open every morning at dawn and close regularly about noon.

In the Malay States there is a four o'clock plant which opens its flowers at four o'clock in the afternoon and

closes them exactly twelve hours later.

The flower of the common dandelion possesses a peculiar means of "hitting itself" from the power of the sun. It closes its petals entirely when the heat becomes excessive. It has been observed to open in summer at half-past five in the morning, and to collect its petals towards the centre at about nine o'clock at night.

Something Saved.

Mary's mistress, awaiting tea, heard a loud crash in the next room. The lady shivered and rang the bell to call Mary in.

"What was that?" she asked. "I tripped on the rug and the loadings fell, ma'am."

"Did you manage to save anything?"

"Yes, ma'am. I kept hold on the tray all right."

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