

Widow versus War.

THE MAN WITH THE GRAY GOATEE WAS READY FOR ANY EMERGENCY.

The man with the gray goatee slid silently along the counter and looked cautiously around when the drug clerk, Kyrie Bellow's, bangs appeared on the other side.

"Say," he whispered hoarsely, "do you keep any real good hair dye?"

"Sure," said the clerk.

"And you know something about this here war ther're goin' to have in Brogglio?"

"Oh, the imbroglio with Spain, I suppose you have reference to?"

"Yes, that's the way it's headed in the papers. D'ye think they're goin' to fight?"

"Not very likely to. Going to dye one way or another, are you?"

"Say, that's pretty good. I caught on all right. But I ain't jokin'. Wuz you ever married, young man?"

"No."

"Well, maybe you can help me out anyway. There's a widow moved on to the next farm to mine, and she peeps over the fence at me every time I peep over the fence at her. Now, ef I dyes my hair and whiskers, I catches her. I'm 56 years old and exempt from war service; but I kin dye down to 41 ef it's the real blue shiny kind. Dyed up proper, with a seegar and new galleres on, I don't know but what I might pass fer 38."

"I see," said the drug clerk. "You are afraid if you do this you will have to go to war, if there should be one."

"No, you ain't quite got the idee. You see, married men's exempt from sarvin' in the war too. Ef it turned out that the widow wuz too much fer me, and I felt like takkin' Spain fer a change, they would n't let me jine the army on account of bein' married."

"But you could volunteer," suggested the clerk.

"Now you're gittin' to ther' pint. That's what I wanted to know. Ef ther' widow makes it too hot fer me, I kin jest give er whoop and grab my musket, and light out fer Spain with the rest of the boys?"

"Certainly."

"And she couldn't have me furloughed or subpoenaed and brought back?"

"No."

"Then you can give me a bottle of the best hair dye you've got. I'm goin' to give ther' widow a chance, and ef she makes things unpleasant, them Spaniards'll think a cyclone turned loose on 'em when they hear me hollerin down ther' road.—*Detroit Free Press.*

Just in Time.

There were seven or eight men in the saloon playing dominoes, and when Brimstone Bill came in with fire in his eye and ordered them all up to take a drink, they crowded to the bar in a hurry. Bill had the town bulldozed, and he knew it. He was very, very bad, and had eight notches cut in the handle of his six-shooter.

"I turns this town wrong side out to-night," he said, "and hangs it up prompt at 4 a. m. to let the paint dry. Before I begins everybody liquors, and I politely requests that every sneakin' covone of you steps to the bar and takes a drink."

All obeyed but one man. He was of medium size, neatly dressed, and had a cool, calm eye and a square jaw. He remained seated by the stove, reading a paper. Brimstone Bill struck his fist upon the bar.

"I don't mean to exclude nobody from my invitation," he shouted, "You drinks with me or you feeds coyotes. Which shall it be?"

The men at the bar whispered among themselves that the man was a stranger in town, and wondered where Bill would hit him. The stranger turned his head and looked Brimstone Bill straight in the face. His countenance was as unmoved as if he were gazing at a work of art, instead of at the worst man in the gulch. There was a quiet, untroubled, ominous gleam in his eye.

"Air ye comin', ye wolverine?" thundered the Terror, reaching a hand to the side of his belt.

The stranger suddenly dropped his paper, rose quickly to his feet, drew something with a long, shining barrel from his pocket and started for Brimstone Bill.

Brimstone Bill wavered for an instant, and then abdicated his position as terror of the gulch. It was the coolest thing he had ever been up against, and he turned and fled ignominiously into the street.

The stranger leaned over the bar, placed his tin ear trumpet to his ear, and said:

"Was that gentleman speaking to me?"

"He was," said the bar-tender.

"What did he want?"

"He wanted to set 'em up."

"Is he good?"

"I guess."

"Then give me a long whisky with a dash of bitters. This deafness of mine is always throwing me behind time."

Cattle Individuality.

Cows have their individuality somewhat as people have theirs. Some require a little more of one thing and others of another. One cow may be able to digest a great deal more food, or food of another kind, than can another cow. This is why I say common sense should rule. Get acquainted with your animals, and learn to know their particular or individual needs. Find out for yourself the eating and digestive capacity of each animal, and then give the rations accordingly. When the cow gives her full ration of milk, without either losing in flesh or getting fat, and as long as to all appearances she in good health and her functions perfect, your rations must be all right and properly balanced. If the animal gets fat, you will have to reduce the amount of cornmeal in the grain mixture; if she gets thin, you can add cornmeal and also increase the number of pounds in the daily allowance, or the grain mixture, if the cow's bowels are too loose, reduce the quantity of oilmeal, adding more bran (feeding dry); if the animal is rather costive, you can give more oilmeal, and the bran in the form of mash or scalded slops. If the cow eats her ration, then lies down contentedly to chew her cud, she probably receives as much as necessary. If she remains standing, apparently waiting or calling for more food, you can somewhat increase the ration. All these are general rules, but they are safe ones if applied with good judgment. A cow that has as much of the meal mixture as she can made good use of for the best results may be given all the good, bright straw she wants, and she will not be likely to eat more of it than is good for her. Of course, a cow should have water several times a day—and surely it would be an advantage if she could get at it any time she desires. I like to give the water slightly warmed during very cold weather.—*Farm and Fireside.*

Potatoes For Eggs.

A mess of two-thirds boiled potatoes and one third meal and bran is recommended as a good food for laying hens in Practical Poultryman, which says: Owing to the immense quantity of potatoes raised last year and the cheapness at which they could be bought, we thought it advisable to try the use of them as a steady diet for fowls. We have seen them advocated as a once-a-week ration with good results, but didn't know what the results would be if fed daily. Some thought it would be a failure; we were told that there was too much starch in potatoes for a steady diet, and that the continual feeding of them would result in cholera; but determined to try it. The day before they were wanted to feed, they were placed in a kettle on the stove and there allowed to cook and boil until they were soft and mealy. In the morning they were again placed on the stove and heated thoroughly through. They were then mashed and enough water left in to make the mess very thin. It was then thickened with meal and bran until of the right texture, making about two-thirds potatoes and one-third meal and bran. The fowls were perfectly ravenous over it, and other food would hardly be touched if given all they wanted of the potatoes. A good big feed of this in the morning sufficed for the day, but they were also given a light feed of grain at night. The diet was kept up all winter, and now no heavier weighing lot of birds of the same breed can be found in any man's yard.

Comfort on the Farm.

The lack of comfort in the home of a farmer is not, as a general rule, so much the result of necessity as of neglect; nor is it true that man or beast is better off without it. A lot of chink holes in the barn may be all right for ventilation in summer, but they bring discomfort to the animals and cost a deal of grain when winter's blasts are on. Discomfort is a source of weakness and a hindrance to development. The word comfort means to strengthen much, to encourage, to invigorate. These certainly are great aids to better life and furnish encouragement for successful effort. The cow will yield more and better milk if she finds comfort in her stall and pasture. The steer will lay on more pounds if made comfortable. Carried to its fullest meaning, comfort is not to be associated with effeminacy or the weakening of body or mind. So essential is this factor that neither man nor beast can accomplish the whole quota of labor without it. Securing comfort, then, in our homes and barnyard, does not mean extravagance or an investment that will not give good returns. If a windmill is a luxury then a pump is one also, for the water might be lifted with a rope. Perhaps the cynic may call the well an extravagance, for the water might be carried several miles from some creek or spring. The farmer who can afford it and does not have a comfortable home is not a first-class citizen.



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