

A Tenderfoot's Wooing

By CLIVE PHILLIPPS WOLLEY
(Author of "Gold, Gold in Cariboo," Etc.)

CHAPTER I.

"I am afraid that you are a poet, Miss Clifford."
"What do you mean, Mr. Anstruther?"
"To be polite to a young lady with an imagination. Did you not tell me when I was in Larkshire, that it never rained in British Columbia? Don't you remember how blue your skies were when you were six thousand miles away from them? May I be permitted to ask if this is a fair sample of your Eden?"

The speaker, a tall, slight man, of not more than twenty-three, stood beside an up-country cart, the collar of his waterproof coat turned over his ears, a wet cigarette drooping from his lips, and an icy sleet storm driving into the back of his neck, in spite of his endeavors to keep it out.

Every line of his thin, well-bred face expressed discomfort and disgust, whilst the smartness of his get-up emphasized the roughness of his surroundings. The ladies he was addressing, in spite of the disadvantages of sex, seemed infinitely more in their element than he did.

"Does it never rain in England, Mr. Anstruther?"
"Yes, but we admit it, though I never saw anything like this in that much-maligned country. I suppose this is what you call a blizzard," and he dug his heel irritably into his quarters more emphatically upon the slanting ledge.

At this moment a man rode up on a ragged-looking cayuse, plain headed, and not too straight in the shoulder, but quick and handy as a cat.

This man looked at the speaker with a scarcely concealed sneer upon his weather-stained face.

"It's good, saying here, Mrs. Rolt," he said to the girl's companion. "This won't let up before dark, and it's going to turn cold. Shouldn't wonder if we got the blizzard that gentleman talks about."

"How far is it to Brown's, Jim?"
"Can't say exactly. Pretty Dick says we are off the trail. I guess he's right."

"What is this then that we have been following?"
"A watering trail, seemingly. I've not been this way myself for years, but the tracks all break up different ways a bit farther on."

The month was early October and in October the weather may be perfect upon the northern cattle lands or it may not. There is a whisper-always, sometimes a threat of winter in the air. Even in summer, in spite of the glorious sunshine you cannot quite forget that winter reigns here at least half the year.

That morning, the long, undulating uplands had been stretches of sunlit purple, royal in coloring, boundless in extent, with fair brooklets of pure gold where the cottonwoods shed their leaves in the little wet gullies; now, in the grey of coming night, these uplands were wild, colorless and desolate as a stormy sea, void and without shelter.

It was a dreary outlook for the two women in an open rig, drawn by two utterly worn-out horses, but it was Mr. Anstruther who resented it.

"Do you mean to say, Combe, that you don't know where we are?" he asked impatiently.

"We ain't in England, Mr. Anstruther, and we forgot to order mile-stones when we rode over you were coming," retorted the other, his coloring ringing.

"No, we're not in England," Mrs. Rolt put in hastily. "We are in Jim's own country, and if we are off the trail for a moment, it does not matter a little bit. Which way, Jim?"

Jim's face relaxed at once. Like a high-spirited horse, he flinched at the least touch of the curb, but the light hands of his Boss's wife could do what they liked with Jim Combe, the foreman of the Risky Range.

"I'm afraid we can't make camp to-night where we meant to. I got fooled by the weather myself. Didn't calculate on a rainstorm before morning, but I know you won't hunt if you do get wet. You can't hunt and keep dry all the time. If you let the Indian drive and follow me, I'll get you to Riley's cow camp in no time. It's rough shelter and bad going, but it's better than this," and he shook his bridle and moved on ahead of the cart.

"Do you mind very much, Kitty?" Mrs. Rolt asked her friend.

"Not a bit, dear, if you can keep the peace between those two. They're just spoiling for a row. What a vile temper Jim has developed since I went back to the Old Country. It's not like him."

Mrs. Rolt smiled mysteriously behind the folds of her hood, but she spoke only to the horses.

"Get up, mare. Keep close to Jim. He can see through anything."
Kitty looked a question, but Mrs. Rolt's face was so innocent of any arriere pensee that the girl said nothing, but just cuddled down into her wraps to endure, and as might be, the long and dreary drive over broken prairie, into and out of ravines, which by daylight would have seemed to English people quite impossible for any wheeled vehicle.

However, ranche horses and ranche rigs are used to such work, and the Rolt's pair scrambled safely through the ravines, though the cart swayed at perilous angles sometimes, and the water slopped about on the floor of the cart, making it impossible to keep their feet dry.

After an hour of this the horses began to balk badly, and the cold increased, so that what had been sleet became hail, stinging like the lash of a whip.

"Do you really think that it is any good to go on, Mrs. Rolt?" asked Anstruther, speaking for the first time since his spar with Combe. He was wet to the bone by this time, had lost all confidence in Aqua-Scutum, and had gone down two or three times, his big English hunter being as much at sea in this country as its rider.

"Do you think that it is any good to stop here, Mr. Anstruther?"
The figure only half visible in the darkness ahead, reined in his horse and waited. He was too far in front to have heard, and yet Mrs. Rolt was afraid. Jim's hearing, like all his faculties, was keen as that of a wild thing.

"I don't believe that that fellow knows a bit where he is," muttered Anstruther angrily.

"I don't suppose that he does exactly, but he will find his way if we let him alone. None of us could do that in this darkness."

"You trust him wonderfully, Mrs. Rolt."
"We have known him a long time. Haven't we, Kitty?"

But the girl had nothing to say. Perhaps her sympathy and her experience were not at one. Anstruther growled something under his breath, and the procession moved on again at a foot's pace.

"Well, your horses seem to have had enough of it, if you have not, Mrs. Rolt," he said at last, as the pair balked resolutely at the foot of an exceptionally steep pitch. "Get up, you brutes," and the angry man laid his whip savagely across the quarters of the nearest horse.

It winced but stood still.

Again the whip fell, and the horses backed so that the cart nearly turned over.

"Stop that, Mr. Anstruther."
There was an angry ring in the lady's voice, but he was too savage to notice it.

"Pardon me, Miss Kitty and yourself cannot stay here all night. The brutes must be made to go," and dismounting, he proceeded to make them.

But he was hardly on his feet sooner than Mrs. Rolt was out of the cart, and as his hand rose with the whip, she was caught by the wrist, and held as firmly by those thin white fingers as if it had been a man who held him.

"Where have you put Ruddygore?" Anstruther asked Combe.

"In the corral with the others. Why? Do you want him inside?"
"On such a night Anstruther might have been forgiven for thinking that the hut was none too good for his well-bred hunter. It certainly was not as good as the loose box to which he had been taken, but Anstruther saw that there was no help for it. Ruddygore would have to take his chance with the rest."

"Well, what can I do to help?"
"You don't have to do anything. Just make yourself pleasant to the ladies. I'll be through in a minute."

"You might cut some wood for us, Mr. Anstruther," called Kitty from the doorway. "I should love a great roaring fire. I am just perished, aren't you, Mary?"

Anstruther picked up the axe a little doubtfully, and looked helplessly around for something to chop.

"There are some pines in that last gully we passed through," suggested Mrs. Rolt.

Through the dark and not quite certain of his direction, the unhappy tenderfoot splashed his way, and once in the gully put his back into the work. It was not his fault that the axe never hit twice in the same place; it was to his credit that he kept on hammering, until at last a green pine seven or eight inches in diameter, yielded to his perseverance.

With infinite toil he trimmed it, cut it into lengths, and then packed it back in three trips to the cabin.

Jim had been waiting for the last two trips; and as soon as Anstruther put his axe down, he took it up and disappeared for five minutes, bringing back a huge burnt "stick" on his shoulder.

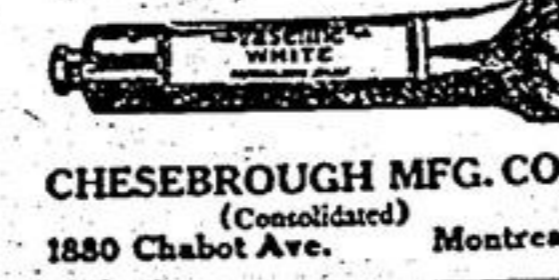
There was rather more wood in that burnt "stick" than Anstruther had brought in his three trips.

With half a dozen deft strokes from Anstruther's green pine, for fire-dogs, tossed all the rest of that gentleman's hard-earned loads out of the way, chopped, split, and kindled his own dry log, hung the billy on an improvised gallows, and began to cut the bacon.

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If skim milk is added to the ration fed to young chickens it will increase the consumption of other foods given. Feed which has been allowed to get wet will ferment or sour readily and cause intestinal disorders. Don't feed it to your stock.

During the years when corn brought a very low price, cattle feeding could be conducted on very loose principles and still pay fair profits, but conditions have since changed and methods must be varied to meet the new conditions in beef production. We are forced to adopt more economical methods of production.

Our whole system of cattle feeding has been largely built up upon cheap grain foods and we have been making but little use of forage and hay in the production better methods of producing their beef and not go out of business for the reason that grain foods are high.

Pork production returns to the soil the grain food elements that are consumed by the hogs, but cattle and sheep feeding make possible the use of clover, alfalfa and corn fodder and return them to the soil in a manner that will encourage the growth in the crop rotations and thus preserve the fertility of the soil.

The men who are most interested are the ones who raise their own feeders and make a practice of taking the very best care of their animals. No man can go out and buy the class of young feeders that are demanded in the production of baby beef.

The advocate of baby beef has as his chief argument that young and growing animals make cheaper gains than older ones or that the cost of a pound of gain increases with the age of the animal. This law is well established, and is primarily due to the fact that growth and lean meat requires less food for its production than does fat, for lean meat is a watery tissue compared with fat and is a less concentrated product. Fat is the most concentrated animal product we have.

For generations English farmers have made extensive use of dwarf Essex pigs as a food. This plant is very rich in starch and sugar and the seed is sown like rutabaga turnips and cultivated, without thinning.

Experiment at the Kansas and Indiana stations show that the continued feeding of moly corn to horses, causes nervous and intestinal troubles of a serious nature.

A ration consisting of two thirds corn and one third bean meal may be used to dairy cows with good results.

A feed of roots, especially carrots, is greatly relished by the colt, if when they are cut up, a little oil meal is scattered over them.

Good protein hay from clover or cow peas, combined with some nice corn stover (stover is simply the stalk without the ear, and may be used whole or shredded) will make a satisfactory roughage for feeding young heifers.

A limited amount of silage may be fed with satisfaction to sheep—say about ten pounds per head each day. But it should be fed in connection with some dry roughage, such as clover or alfalfa hay or even mixed hay and straw.

In very cold weather the sheep should have plenty of clover hay or corn fodder or such other roughness as is available on the farm. The ewes should be kept in a good, thrifty condition in order that the offspring may be healthy and vigorous.

A Word in Season.

Barnyard manure has a value on the farm aside from that as a fertilizer. It improves the physical conditions of the soil and makes it easier to handle. Its decay produces heat and its presence aids chemical and bacterial processes. Moreover, it absorbs and holds a large amount of water and helps to aerate the soil. The benefits of these indirect aids to plant growth are in some cases worth as much as the fertilizing power of the manure.

When it is added that barnyard manure is worth at least \$2.50 a ton, and that each farm animal produces from five to seven tons per year, it is easy to see that as a fertilizer the material should not be wasted.

And yet it is. On the average Canadian farm only fifty per cent of the fertilizing value of manure ever reaches the soil. The other fifty per cent of value is lost by leaching and fermentation, consequent upon improper handling. We have even known seemingly intelligent farmers to waste the manure produced on the farm, and then turn around and buy commercial fertilizer to make good the drain on their soil. The best practice is to haul the stuff directly to the fields from the stable. Where this practice is not followed, provision should be made to preserve all the

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House-Cleaning for the Cow.

Before the dairy cow is taken from the pasture, the barn should be thoroughly and systematically cleaned. All colwells should be brushed down and the walls and ceiling should be white-washed or painted some light color. Either whitewash or paint will give a clean surface and make the whole stable look lighter and brighter. It might be well, too, to put in a few extra windows.

NOT CONQUERED.

Belgian Priest Has Fun at Germans' Expense.

The Germans in Belgium (says a correspondent) are continually being reminded that though they have invaded the country they have not conquered it. For a good many months a brave country priest in the environs of Liege has had to billet a number of Prussians. He does not like them, being gifted with a sense of humor and philosophy, he puts up with them and exercises his wit at their expense. He has a reply to everything, and although the Germans do not always enjoy his repartee, they forgive him for relieving their dull moments. The other day a little pig strayed into the drawing-room where the priest and his unwelcome guests were together. "Ah, monsieur," said one of the invaders, "say something funny about this little animal." The priest, assuming the tone of an apostle, gave them this quotation:—"He came to his brethren, and his brethren received him not."

ARM STUMP GRAFTED ON.

Surgeon Supplies Wounded Officer With Movable Bone.

A new arm stump has just been grafted upon the body of a British officer, who lost both arms in action and came back recently with a group of exchanged prisoners from Germany. His arms were amputated so close to the shoulder as to leave no stumps. One of the most brilliant of London's surgeons has now built out a new stump, to which an artificial arm may be attached. He did this by taking out a piece of bone from the patient's body. Muscles were attached to the bone, so the stump can be guided.

Cheap Enough.

"I think I'll spend a month in Paris."

"How the deuce can you afford it in these hard times?"

"I can't—but I can afford to think about it."

Her Own Handiwork.

Wife (angrily)—I think you're the meanest man that ever was.

Hub—That's hard on yourself, my dear. According to your mother, you have been the making of me.

FROM SUNSET COAST

WHAT THE WESTERN PEOPLE ARE DOING.

Progress of the Great West Told in a Few Pointed Paragraphs.

Moose are very plentiful at Long Lake, Alberta.

New Denver has been importing horses from the east. Trains are now running between Vancouver and Clinton.

The Chinamen at Lethbridge have given \$95 to the Patriotic fund. The snowfall on the coast is the heaviest known in many years.

Greenwood council is buying the city's wood supply at \$1.74 a rick. Last month ripe raspberries were picked in a garden at Chilliwack.

The skin of a silver fox was recently sold at Fort Fraser for \$260. More than five feet of snow has fallen in Rossland since November 8th.

Staples Lumber Co., at Wycliffe, have 150 men working in the bush this winter.

The vegetable evaporating plant is now operating at Grand Forks, employing 50 men.

The depth of snow at Glacier is rapidly increasing with almost continuous snowfalls.

Customs house business is so heavy at Trail that another clerk has been added to the staff.

Cougars are causing trouble to the deer near Penticton and coyotes are also a nuisance.

Six thousand dollars is in sight for Kaslo's contribution to the Canadian Patriotic Fund.

Mr. Roux, a Fernie hunter, last week brought in two deer as a result of a six hour hunt.

Sawmills in various parts of the Fraser valley are closed owing to the severity of the winter.

The police in Fernie are rounding up the hoboes. The other night about 20 around the coke ovens were taken in.

At Prince George, H. Yewdall, of Winnipeg, was fined \$20 for attempting to ship furs out of the province without a permit.

The dredge King Edward is at present busy removing sand bars and deepening the river channel between Lulu and Sea Islands.

Acres of ice are now floating on the river at Fraser River, impeding traffic. Conditions are worse than they have been for some years.

Over at Okanagan Falls there are plenty of coyotes and Chas. Stewart has already gathered in over a dozen. The bounty is lower this year.

It is estimated that during the past four months Creston Valley ranchers have received \$10,000 for cattle, hogs, and poultry. In addition to the fruit industry this will round out a good year for the valley.

LAMB IN THE MIDST OF WOLVES

Remarkable That Britain Has Done So Well in the War.

The last few days have yielded at least two more to the already substantial heap of reasons that combine to demonstrate how innocent the Allies were of the desire to go to war with the Central Powers, says the Ayrshire (Scotland) Post. Not till the other day was there the slightest co-ordination of the Chief Military Staffs of the four Entente Armies, even yet their union for a common end cannot be said to be fully consummated. And not till Monday was it announced that the Ministry of Munitions had absorbed the Ordnance Board of the War Office. The latter clung tenaciously to its own independent existence. Two months back it grudgingly gave up Woolwich Arsenal and the Enfield factory to Mr. Lloyd George. One of the many anomalies that existed was that there were two Inventories Boards where there should only have been one. The miracle is that with separate independence for each higher Command, and with dualism at home where there should have been fusion, we have done so well as we have done. The results may reasonably be expected to make good in the field. What strikes the looker-on, however, is that it should have taken fifteen months to bring them about. Germany had not to grope about, she as the Allies have had to do. She made short work of the independence of her own Allies in turn. Austria had to fall into line, so had Turkey, and Bulgaria, and their joint campaign had worked like machinery. But then, she had taken five and twenty years to perfect her plans of campaign, because she meant to fight, whereas the entente Powers had to be roused to bellicosity by a cataclysm that shook the world, and forced into method by circumstances with which they had never laid their account. And yet Germany declares that she was the lamb in the midst of the wolves!

That "Funny Bone" Tickle.

The tickling, tingling sensation that follows bumping the sharp corner of the elbow is the result of striking one of the large trunk nerves that run through the arm to the wrist. At the point of the elbow this nerve lies over the "bone." The sensation is painful rather than funny, but because it "tickles," the bone is spoken of as the "funny bone."

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