

A Tenderfoot's Wooing

By CLIVE PHILLIPPS WOLLEY

(Author of "Gold, Gold in Cariboo," Etc.)

CHAPTER II.—(Cont'd).

It was all so simple and so quickly done when you knew how to do it, but it was annoying to have worked for half an hour to no purpose.

"I don't seem to be much good," said Mr. Anstruther.

Mrs. Rolt laughed and shook her head at the cowboy.

"Jim," she said, "you are an old bear. Why didn't you tell Mr. Anstruther what kind of sticks to cut?"

Jim grinned. "I guessed he'd have known that much."

"How should he? He has not had to chop wood before."

"You don't say! Is it all coal over there?"

Mrs. Rolt ignored the question.

"You play fair, Jim. You've got to show Mr. Anstruther how to do things. If you don't, I'll go home."

"Right away?"

"Yes, right away."

"Stop and have its dinner first," he said, with impudent coaxing, and handed her a dish of bacon, the rashers cut as thin and as daintily toasted as if they had been prepared by a professional cook.

"Won't you have some, Miss Clifford?"

To the younger woman his manner was deferential, if not nervous, and, seeing her advantage, womanlike, Miss Kitty looked at the bacon and sniffed.

"It's too greasy, Jim. I wonder if you would toast some of it a little more for me, Mr. Anstruther?"

Frank hurried to obey her, but the fire had been knocked together to make a blaze, and the little flames which shot out, burned his fingers and smoked the bacon, but would not toast.

"Half a shake, partner. Let me fix that fire for you. Now, go ahead."

A couple of touches in the right place from Jim's toe had created a glowing hollow, over which the bacon curled and sizzled merrily, but again it was Jim's doing and not Frank's, so that Kitty's pretty brow was bent, and though she laughed, there was a strong under-current of annoyance in her laugh when Mrs. Rolt began innocently to hum that popular air—

"Hasn't Jim left any plates for you?" we asked.

"Fifty-three, Mrs. Rolt; that's the trouble. I've not had pluck enough to tackle them yet. Come, and I'll show you," and he took us to a pile as high as that, all dirty on both sides.

"Jim had had a clean side for one hundred and six meals. After that he let the house and the crockery. Here, Pretty Dick, wash these things, please, and make them good and clean."

When the laugh against Jim had died out, and the Indian had carried off the crockery, Mrs. Rolt drew them all round the fire. The hail had stopped for a little while, and no wind touched them under the fly which Jim had rigged up on the lea side of the hut. With a good bed of pine brush on the ground, and a great fire of logs in front, there is no place cosier than a fly. Like a great reflector it catches all the light and heat, and yet it gives you all the benefit of the sweet fresh air.

That interior made a pretty contrast to the drear and lonesome uplands, in which there were nothing but grey shadows and silence, the ruddy glow of the firelight throwing out the pretty figures of the women, and the smokers prone at their feet, in strong relief.

Handsome as Polly Rolt was in a half-boyish, half-matronly way, the go and dash of the sportswoman tempered by a few years of happy married life, it was no wonder that the men's eyes passed her pure profile to dwell on bonny Kitty Clifford. Even the Chinaman, who cooked for the ranche, worshipped her. She had been worshipped by everyone all her small, spoilt life.

From the crimson Tam o'Shanter, which she had unearthed from her saddle bags, to her gleaming gum boots, she was as dainty a little apple of discord as ever fell between two men.

On anyone else, gum boots would have been a horror, shapeless, huge, mud-bespattered. On her they only made you wonder where gum boots so astoundingly small and smart could have been made. Besides, they suggested an apology, if one were needed, for the extreme brevity of Kitty's skirts.

Vaseline Capsicum

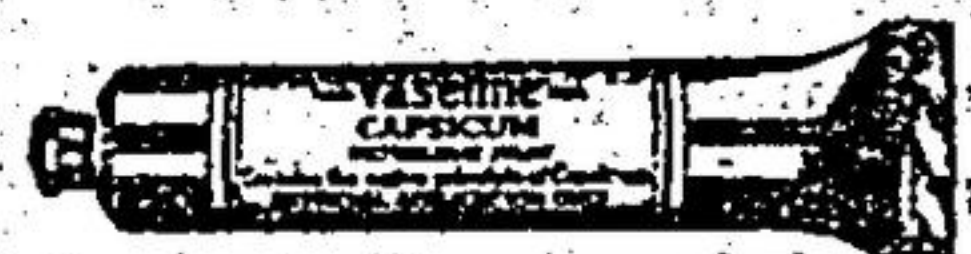
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"All right, Jim, it's only Mr. Anstruther's English frills. Where we breathe we smoke in B.C., my husband says. He is my law. But must I give you a lead?" and without waiting for an answer she began to sing the "Old Swanee River" in a rich contralto voice, which gave to the words an infinite pathos as they died away in that homeless waste.

By a camp fire a song must have a chorus; without it the gregarious instinct of man is unsatisfied. Perhaps man sings, in part, because he is a little afraid of nature's silence, and of all choruses those French-Canadian choruses, roaring, rollicking, boating ditties, of which Jim sang one or two, have done more to hunt the blue devils from the rivers of lower Canada than anything else in the world.

They are full of a spirit of a recklessly daring people, and Jim sang them with the spirit of an old-time voyageur, and an accent which if not Parisian, was at least not London. It was noticeable in Jim that though his English was apt to stumble and wander into all sorts of by-ways of slang, his French was good enough, and his English vocabulary at least as ample as an Englishman's. It was only the constantly recurring phrases of every-day life that he and those of his kind played the monte-bank. It was well for the more scholarly Anstruther perhaps that he did not follow the cowboy in any foreign tongue. Instead he sang them "The Hounds of the Meynell," and for the first time during that picnic Frank Anstruther placed himself, and was

"Oh, I suppose you would learn to ride."

"Thank you. I thought that was the one thing I could do."

"On schooled horses. You haven't tried a buck jumper yet."

"Yes he has, though, put in Combe, looking up from the plug he was whittling.

"And you did not give us a chance of seeing the show! That was mean, Jim."

"There wasn't much of a show."

"Well, I'm not sure that you would do much better yourself over a post and rails," said the girl hotly. "It all depends on what you are used to. I suppose you put him on Job. That brute would throw anyone but a broncho buster."

"Didn't throw Mr. Anstruther anyway."

"What! Did not Job get him off?" The girl's whole face lit up with pleasure and pride in her friend.

"Wasn't to be done unless that cayuse had shed his hide," said Jim quietly. "Your friend can ride," and if Jim put a little too much stress upon "your friend" the admission that he could ride was very hearty and generous for a cowboy who was jealous.

The girl knew it; knew, too, that horsemanship was Jim Combe's great gift, and for a moment her eyes dwelt seriously on that big loose figure in shaps, that old friend who had taught her so much, and borne with her so long. If only he could speak English, if only he was not "so Canadian," would he not be the better man of the two?

A year ago, before she had been dazzled by the glamor and luxury of the Old Country, she would have been able to answer. Now she hesitated.

"After Combe's testimonial, which I appreciate, do you think I shall ever make a cowboy?" persisted Anstruther.

"Riding is not all. It may make a cowboy. I was thinking rather of a Western man."

"And your ideal of a Western man is a high one?"

"Just the highest. Your best Westerner is the best that can be made out of the best English material, tempered by such a life as man ought to lead."

They were getting into deep water, and Mrs. Rolt was not sorry to see Combe reappear, carrying a huge load of brush, boughs of young pines, which he waved one at a time through the smoke of the camp fire until most of the rain drops had left them.

With these he vanished into the cabin and after a long absence, returned to announce, "bed time, ladies. I'm afraid that your bed isn't what it might be, but with your slickers over that brush, and your blankets, it will be dry enough. Don't worry to turn out till

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Value of Grain Screenings.

During the fall and winter, there will be cleaned out of western-grown grain at the terminal elevators at Fort William and Port Arthur, material amounting to probably 100,000 tons. These cleanings consist of from 40 to 60 per cent. of small and shrunken kernels of wheat, oats, barley and flax. The rest is made up of 25 or 30 kinds of western weed seeds. Wild buckwheat, lamb's quarters, and wild oats occur in largest numbers; among the mustards are wild mustard, hare's ear mustard, ball mustard, stinkweed, tumbling mustard, worm-seed mustard, western and round-seeded false flax, common peppergrass, and the wallflowers. Some of these are recognized as among our most troublesome weeds.

The elevators reclaim as much of the domestic grain as possible to mix with their feed grades. The larger proportion of the remainder is shipped to the United States, but much of it finds its way into Eastern Canada, where it is mixed with grain and ground up as chop feed.

Much of the material constituting the screenings is of excellent feeding value, as shown by the results of feeding experiments at the Central Experimental Farm last winter. We should not, however, encourage the feeding of screenings in Eastern Canada if it is going to mean the spread of the western weeds whose seeds are contained in it.

Danger of Spreading Weeds.

The danger of spreading weeds through the use of feeding stuffs containing vital weed seeds is not sufficiently realized. A farmer in Alberta who has kept his

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