THE LOST FRONTIER

Charles Allen McConnell

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By

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DEDICATION

To his eldest son, Dr. William Thomas McConnell, whose first outlook upon life was from a little claim shack upon the uttermost edge of The Lost Frontier, this volume is lovingly dedicated by The Author.

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CHAPTER I

NEW TIME ARRIVES; OLD TIME DEPARTS

Ever since the beginning of the month of Short Days, North Wind had been bringing the snow, creeping and singing over the frozen earth, to hurl it at length into the deep canyon, where, hundreds of feet below the level surface of the prairie, ran the waters, never satisfied to flow quietly through their channel, but tearing at the earth, now on this side, now on that, like an enraged animal seeking escape. Just now, however, it was quiet enough, for above it, locking it in with bands like iron, was a covering of ice four feet thick, and above that drifts of snow which North Wind had heaped up in its rude sport.

Yes, Big Muddy was quiet now, but when the month of Long Days should come, then beware! for it would arise from its bed of sleeping, and rage, and roar, and it might be, rush out over the land, from bluff to bluff, for something upon which to test its strength.

Now, in this time of Even Days, North Wind knew that his sport was about over, for his enemy, South Wind, would soon return to drive him back to the land of Heaven-springing Lights. And so today he peered over the edge of the great, wide canyon, and noted with joy the coulees packed with snow, which he had chased down there, so high that the tops of great cottonwood trees were in places just showing above the surface. North Wind laughed hoarsely: "Ah, hah! You won't all get out of there before the moon of Long Days."

Snow-filled coulees were not all that North Wind saw, as he peered over the edge of the bluff. Out upon a level

place, where in time long past, the great river had set itself to farm-making, there was a house built of lumber, with real glass windows, and a brick chimney, from which just now the smoke was rising in white curls. A few rods away was another house; but not at all like the square house of wood. This was a tiny, round house, with a peaked top, and it was made of the skins of animals sewed together. There was no white smoke-wreath circling the chimney, for there was no chimney, and indeed, the little fire of small sticks on the dirt floor in the center of the house seldom sent up a smoke that reached as high as the crossed poles at the top of the tepee. For that was what the little house was; an Indian lodge.

From the larger house, built of lumber, there came running down to the skin-covered house a brown-faced lad, clothed like any white boy, in coat and trousers, cap and mittens. But he was not quite a white boy yet, for upon his feet were soft buckskin moccasins. He had been willing to go a long way into the queer and uncomfortable paths of the white faces, but one day's trial of the stiff, pinching, clumsy, leather boots of the Agency store had satisfied Little Coyote that, as to feet, at least, the red man was radically different from the white.

Little Coyote's father, Kicking Horse, lived in the wooden house with Little Coyote's mother and Happy Sky, the baby. The baby was not strapped to a board, as her mamma had been in her babyhood, but slept in a brown, leather-lined perambulator; for the New Time had come to the Great Sioux Nation, and Old Times were being discarded. Mrs. Kicking Horse herself wore a red plush cloak whenever she went to the Agency store, or when, occasionally, the family attended the gathering at the schoolhouse, where the man, with the long black coat and white cloth about his neck, came to tell of the way of the Great Spirit. About the home, Mrs. Kicking

Horse preferred the black-and-yellow-striped blanket to wrap about her ample form.

The father of Little Coyote, Kicking Horse, was a great personage. Did he not wear the blue clothes and bright yellow buttons of the white warriors? Did he not carry a gun and patrol the border of the Reservation from the big cottonwood tree opposite Medicine Rock to the ferry below the Agency? And had he not been put there by the Great White Father at Washington, who trusted him to keep out the bad white men, and as well, to keep the Indians themselves from straying across the river without a pass from Little Father, the agent? Kicking Horse was a very important personage.

What a pity that Grandfather Standing Elk did not seem to appreciate that fact. Grandfather would not even come into the new wooden house to sleep or to eat. He lived in the skin-covered tepee by himself, and would sit silent for hours, staring straight ahead, and without moving for so long that the fire in his pipe would go out.

Once Little Coyote asked the old man what he had been looking at, and Standing Elk, fixing his eyes upon the lad, had, with sorrowful dignity, replied, "Things which you will never see."

Today, Little Coyote was bound for the tepee for a chat with Grandfather. Teacher—she of the yellow hair and violet eyes—had much strange wisdom, but it was mostly wisdom of the Now. In the Things That Are Past, old Grandfather Standing Elk was of course more at home. It was about Past things that Little Coyote wanted to know today, for Teacher had promised the school children, brown and white, that when the Days of Bloom should come to the plum thickets, they would go for their holiday excursion across the Big Muddy to Medicine Rock.

Why was that great, flat rock, high up on the east side of the canyon, "Big Medicine" to the Sioux; and why did his people yet steal away in time of ripe buffaloberries to leave their offerings of beads and fruits and dried meat? Teacher did not know, but Grandfather would know, for Grandfather was a part of the Old Time, when things happened that could no longer be seen.

And that was what North Wind, peeping over the bluff, saw—a brown-faced boy kicking aside the snow with his sturdy legs, going down from the big, square, wooden house to the little, round, skin-covered tepee to hear the story of the Bear and the Woman and the Man, who left their footprints upon the great rock, high up on the side of the hill.

"Grandfather, tell me the tale of the Bear and the Woman and the Man," requested the lad, when at length the old man consented to recognize the boy's entrance into the lodge. "Teacher is going to take us across to Medicine Rock when the plum trees bloom, and show us the footprints of the Bear chasing the Woman and the Man."

The thin face of the ancient Indian drew up in indignation. "Let the paleface squaw tell the story of the Bear that chased the Woman and Man. But that is not the story of Medicine Rock. Unseeing eyes have these palefaces. Upon that Rock the Woman and Man chased the Bear."

"But how do you know, Grandfather?" The heart of Little Coyote beat with loyalty to the yellow-haired teacher, yet Grandfather was of the Old Time, and he would know.

"Let the white squaw tell the tale," grumbled the old man.

"No, Grandfather, no!"

The old man sat for a full minute in silence, the boy also silent, but expecting. Then he who had lived in the

Past blew a puff of smoke from his pipe to the North, to the East, to the South, and to the West, and in the high-pitched chant of the storyteller began:

"See, there is the track of Great Bear across the rock; there upon one huge footprint is the track of Woman; here again the heel-track of Bear is blotted out with the footprint of Man.

"Great Bear was the son of North Wind, and lived at the place where the river falls down from the sky over the top of a mountain. Here he spent many happy days splashing in the deep pools, catching the silly fish that tried to climb the river up over the mountain. But when his coat of fur had grown long and grey, Great Bear grew lonesome; he wanted companionship, someone who would admire the strength of his great arms and the gloss of his fur. All day the river sang, 'Come away, come away; follow me!' And so it happened that Great Bear set out upon a journey. When he grew tired with walking, he would swim out to a floating log, and lifting his great, bushy tail for a sail—"

"But, Grandfather, Teacher says that bears have no tails, and—"

The old man dropped his voice from the chant pitch, and fixing his eyes upon the now abashed lad said severely, "Let Teacher tell the rest."

"No, Grandfather, no!" wailed Little Coyote.

There was a long silence in the lodge; the old man communing again sorrowfully with the Things that Never Again Would Be, the lad silent, but still expectant.

"In the beginning the Great Spirit gave tails to all creatures," resumed at length the chant of the old man. "It was in the time of ripe plums and buffalo-beans that Great Bear reached this place. There was no deep canyon then; the river ran along high above, upon the surface of the prairie, and the trees were in little clusters

about the upspringing waters. Great Bear had fared well upon the fruit, and had ventured out a little way upon the prairie, where grew the tender buffalo-beans, as rich and toothsome as the marrow in Elk's thigh bones, when suddenly he lifted his head at a Voice ringing clear and sweet, from a little thicket of plum bushes, a short distance down the river.

"The heart of Great Bear leaped riotously. There in the Voice, spake Companionship; there was Love. As he cautiously neared the thicket, there stepped forth the most beautiful creature he had ever seen—a Maiden, brown-skinned and tall, yet slender as the swaying willow. Great Bear arose upon his hind feet. He, too, would walk erect like this beautiful creature; and before the Maiden was aware of his presence, Great Bear had enfolded her in his strong arms, and was pressing her to his shaggy breast.

"The Maiden made no outcry; she, too, that very day, had asked the Great Spirit for Companionship and Love, and that morning had gone forth singing, not understanding the meaning of the answer—nor does any maiden know. But the claws of Great Bear pressed too closely the tender flesh, and she pushed the shaggy creature back.

"For a while they sat and looked at each other, the one admiring, the other doubting. Finally the Maiden spoke: 'Great Bear, your long claws hurt my back. I must cut them off.' And Great Bear held out his paws, one by one, while the Maiden trimmed the toes to harmless cushions. It was ever thus with maidens," mused the old man.

"Then spake the Maiden again: 'Great Bear, you must always walk erect if you would go with me. That great, bushy tail will be in your way; it must come off.'

"Great Bear looked at his beautiful tail, then at the beautiful Maiden, and sighed. 'Well,' he finally responded, 'tie your robe about my eyes so that I shall not see the sorrowful deed done, and for you I will suffer even that loss.'

"So the Maiden fastened her robe about the eyes of the Great Bear, and with one swift stroke of her sharp knife the great tail lay at her feet. Even with the roar of pain from Great Bear, as he strove unavailingly to tear the covering from his eyes with his claw-shorn paws, there came an answering shout from beyond the plum thicket that made the heart of the Maiden, in its turn, leap and race and struggle, for at last she recognized the Voice of Love.

"It was good medicine the Young Man had made that morning as he set out from his lodge upon his day's quest, but never had his dreams pictured anything so beautiful as the brown-skinned creature that met his eyes. Then he beheld the struggling form of Great Bear from whom the beautiful creature must be in danger. Quickly cutting some thorny limbs from the plum bushes, he rushed to her defense. A shower of blows rained upon the back of the helpless, blindfolded Great Bear, the Maiden adding the full strength of her arm to the punishment—for such is the way with women—until the despoiled animal was forced to turn and run for his very life.

"Hand in hand the Young Man and the Maiden chased the fleeing creature across the mud flat, out over the upper prairie, away back to the place where the river falls from the sky over the mountain.

"When North Wind had torn from the eyes of his son the hateful bandage, roaring and storming at the evil which had been put upon him, he rushed down, blowing upon the prairie, until the mud flats turned to stone, and the footprints of the Bear and the Woman and the Man

became fixed. But little cared the Young Man and the Maiden, for they were sheltered in the lodge of skins where they dwelt with Companionship and Love, and where they became the parents of all the Sioux.

"Yes, North Wind persuaded the Great Spirit to restore Great Bear's claws, lest he again be blinded, but his beautiful tail was lost forever."

For a moment the lad sat thinking, then: "But, Grandfather, Teacher says that in the stone the claws of the Bear—"

The old man heeded not; already he was back again among the Things Which Had Been, But Could Not Be.

CHAPTER II

THE LOST FRONTIER

I have endeavored, for my own satisfaction, to analyze the way of a frontier—or rather, the why of the frontiersman. I have gone back to the first rock-bound, inhospitable frontier of the New World, besieged by a small handful of stern-faced men, and their no less courageous womenfolk, to be told that in the driving back of this frontier would be found religious, and perhaps civil, liberty. I have seen the barriers of the Alleghenies yielding up their fertile valleys to the Scotch-Irish and Dutch. Then the Crossing of the Virginians with Boone and his kind, to drive back the frontier beyond the Cumberlands of Kentucky and Tennessee. Across the beautiful Ohio the line of mystery retreats, past old Vincennes and Kaskaskia, ever westward, until it pauses but for a day at the Father of Waters. Then desperately defended at Spirit Lake, and New Ulm, and Lake Shetek, by the remnant of a race whose doom it was to face a rising sun, the frontier halts for a generation at the plains of Minnesota, Iowa, and Nebraska.

Why have men ever pushed on and out into the wilderness? Has it been merely a search for wealth? No, for surer competence was to be found where men gather. Was it to escape contact with their own kind? Not so, for nowhere is the term neighbor more fraught with meaning than upon the frontier. Surely the border line held little of ease, or of such pleasures as civilization has made a necessary part of life.

Has not the steady march against the frontier been humanity's defiance of the difficult, the desperate; its

opportunity for high courage; its school for that quality of manhood which we call American?

And now that the frontier is forever lost, what next? May it not be that the restlessness which we now feel tossing humanity has its springs in the lost frontier, springs which must have an outlet—and shall have, when men adjust themselves to new conditions, and, with the same spirit which pushed their forefathers onward and ever onward, set themselves to the conquest of a frontier of things spiritual?

"The Indian lands of Dakota, east of the Missouri River, are soon to be opened to homestead settlement."

This dispatch from Washington, carried by the Associated Press, set the country aflame. Days of '49 come again! Wealth, adventure, romance—danger, struggle, hardship—like a trumpet blast, called forth an army for the speedy overthrow of this the last frontier. Already the railroads had pushed beyond the outposts of civilization; miles of track were laid upon the raw, unbroken prairie sod; tents and sod shacks began to mark the sites of future cities. Long lines of surveyors' stakes crossed and recrossed the new lands, in many places traversing homesteads upon which some fortunate settler would live for the minimum length of time to acquire title, which immediately would be transferred to railroad townsite companies—for a compensation.

But the rush of the multitude was for homes; free homes, the last distribution of the wealth of prodigal Uncle Samuel. Going, going, going—to the first comers. And what a mixed multitude these homeseekers were. Farmers and artisans, bankers and artists, newspapermen and schoolteachers, gamblers and preachers, reformers and land sharks, all were present. Lucky the one who had been in some degree familiar with the character of a particular section; he might exercise some intelli-

gence in his choice of a homestead. No time for the multitude to investigate. The poor fellow at the pool of Bethesda was no worse off than the one who hesitated at the land office. It was for him to make his choice quickly, and look at it afterward.

To be sure, there were land grabbers in those days, as there have always been—even in the days of Isaiah, when evil men joined field to field, inviting the curse of God. There were those who speedily became great landed proprietors. These had other men in their employ to search out the most valuable tracts, and especially those tracts where towns were to be located. Not infrequently through collusion with land office officials and railroad managers, these tracts were marked as already entered, to be turned over later, under the direction of the land shark.

The dispatch from Washington arrested and turned the current of two lives with which we have to do. In the beautiful little city of Madison, nestling among its lake-gemmed hills, young John Haywood, university instructor in economics, was overcome by what he explained to himself as a reversion to the animal instinct of material conquest. He had time, during the Thanksgiving vacation of his University, to see a bit of these new lands, select for himself a choice 160-acre tract, make some temporary improvements if necessary, and return to his school a member of the landed gentry. What could be more delightful than to spend his summer vacations upon a Dakota claim? He would go, he would see, and he would conquer a frontier even as his forefathers had done.

A little later, for the dispatch which reached Madison in the morning paper must needs travel over many miles behind the half-wild mustang team in Charlie Bailey's stage hack, Mrs. Osborne, wife of the government official

at Lone Tree Agency, called out, "Miss Betty, here's your news. The land on the other side is to be opened. Tom had warning last week to place his Indian guards to prevent the rush from crossing over into the Reservation, and it was intimated then that the Land Office would be open for business about the fifteenth. You had better get some things together in a hurry and go back with Charlie Bailey, if you want to file on Buffalo Springs."

And so it came to pass that when John Haywood looked up from a long, wondering gaze at his entry papers, which named a certain quarter section in a certain township and range as his own, unknown homestead, that he caught the victorious flash from the eyes of Elizabeth Harper, as she, too, looked up from her own papers.

"Why, John!"

"Why, Betty!"

"Of all persons! Don't tell me that you have so far forgotten yourself as to become a frontiersman."

John had the grace to blush hotly, for it had been the utterly incomprehensible determination of this same young woman to waste her fine talents, and throw away her life in teaching a horde of young savages at an Indian agency school, that had come between these two former classmates.

But Betty was gracious, and John was increasingly interested, as he listened to the wonder tales of the Great Sioux Reservation, and the young teacher's work among the new generation, which, thirty-five years later was to add luster to the name American on Flanders Field. "And, John, I am not afraid to tell you, though it is a secret, the quarter on which I have just filed lies at the intersection of two railroad surveys, and there is bound to come a town there. Besides, the only living, big spring in all that section, runs out of the bluff into the

Okobojo, which flows along the edge of MY HOMESTEAD. Tom Osborne, the Indian agent, you know, is a friend of the engineer who ran the lines of the railroad survey, and he took the numbers for me. It's only twenty miles from the Agency, and Little Coyote and I rode over this summer to spy out the land. It's a wonder of a place for a home. But just hear me rattle on about myself! I know you are dying to tell about your own homestead. Yet it's too funny to think of the starchy Prof. John Haywood wearing farm boots and overalls, and driving oxen. Which way is 'gee,' John? Is 'haw' right or left?"

John grinned sheepishly as he replied, "Now, Betty, I believe that even I could learn to do those things. But as to my homestead, I have no idea what it is like, nor where it is. All it means to me is this set of figures."

"Here, let me see your papers," and Betty reached out her hand. But if John's face had reddened under the girl's banter, it could not match the crimson which flooded her own fair face to the roots of her yellow hair, as she scanned the numbers of John's entry.

"Why, why, impossible! It can't be. But it is!" she gasped as she compared John's entry with her own, and then broke into peals of laughter. "I've a good mind not to let you have this paper back."

Quickly John snatched both papers from her hand, but still the figures had no meaning for him.

"Don't you see, stupid," Betty explained, "our claims lie side by side."

There are many yet living who will remember the "Palace Hotel," first pretentious structure of Aberdeen. Built solidly of prairie sod, it withstood for many years the wind, rain, and frost. It remained to witness to the hardihood of that race of pioneers, when towering granite and concrete crowded it on either side; when its smoky,

ill-smelling kerosene lamps were forgotten in the electric glare of a city; when the clang and roar of rapid transit made the days of creeping ox-carts a dream but dimly recalled. But the Palace Hotel of the frontier day was more than a passing convenience for food and rest—it was the city itself. Commerce and politics made headquarters there, and on a Sabbath day religion held sway. So closely packed during the great rush of homeseekers that a bed could be secured but for one six-hour shift in the twenty-four, and chairs in the office were all occupied during the night at a dollar each, yet when Sunday came, the big dining room became a chapel, as the circuit rider offered the gospel of the Nazarene as Cornerstone to these builders of a new state.

To John Haywood, that Sabbath was the longest day of his life. Before he had fully sensed the import of Betty's discovery, as to the propinquity of their homestead claims, the girl had slipped away to her own room. As he tossed upon the hard bed during the six hours of his occupancy, there came over him again, like the inrushing of a tide, his old desire of college days, to seize and to hold for his own this radiant, tantalizing, perverse yet adorable creature. Long ago John had surrendered to his teachers and his textbooks his childhood faith; if he believed at all in a God it was certainly no God of providence. Yet he found himself saying over and over again, "It's providential! It's providential! Her choice and mine—our homes side by side."

But Betty did not appear in the morning, and the young man lent but deaf ears to the earnest words of the preacher. He wanted Betty. He would show her how things were meant to be. She must see now that he had been right all along. She must go back with him to Madison as his wife, then, next summer, they would together spend their vacation at the Buffalo Springs,

roughing it. Time enough then to make definite plans for their future. The day was waning. John, standing in the doorway was in a moment caught up and lost in the glory of a landscape limned upon the pink and azure heavens by the sinking sun, when suddenly he was brought back to earth by a voice at the office desk inquiring when the stage for Lone Tree Agency would start the next morning. Instantly he wheeled about, stretching forth his hands. "But Betty, dear, you are not going back to the Agency. You are going home with me."

"Hush, John, you forget where we are," the girl replied with all the dignity of a queen.

"Forgive me. I've waited for you so long. Please come outside, and let me have a word with you." And Betty went with him into the cool beauty of the closing day.

"You can see how it is, Betty, surely. It is no mere chance that has drawn our homesteads together. It is our fate, girl. The parson is still here; marry me now, and we can go home together; then together we can come back for a while in the summer."

"And what about my school?" soberly asked Betty. "What about Little Coyote and the others?"

"What about those dirty little savages? Let them go. What are they to you? Betty, you have wasted enough of your life already—"

"No, John, no! It is no part of my plan to go back into the purposeless existence of the girls and women of the set which I left. I might as well ask you to leave your University work to teach 'dirty little savages' as you call them. I can hold my school and my claim both. And you—"

"Yes, what about me?" demanded the young man.

"Well, you can learn 'gee' and 'haw' this winter, and I'll give you a job of plowing on my claim, when you

bring out your oxen next summer. But seriously, John, I am already a part of this new world, this new life. You are not, and I suspect never can be."

Betty went back to Lone Tree Agency, and John was present at the opening again of his classes. But Charlie Bailey's hack continued carrying mail to the Agency, and an occasional letter, during the long winter, drifted out through the snow banks, even as far as to the beautiful little city of Madison, among the Wisconsin hills.

CHAPTER III

IN THE MORNING OF THE NEW DAY

The breaking of the spring upon the high prairies is like the breaking of the alabaster box of ointment. No, it is like stepping from a dungeon into the most beautiful halls of a palace. It is a draught of heady wine (now that, dear reader, is a simile understood in the days of the troglodyte). It is like the first kiss of sweethearts—thrilling every atom of being with the joy of existence. It is Creation's morn come again, clear, sweet, pulsing with life-forces.

"John, listen! Was ever anything so sweet? Hear that meadowlark calling?"

John Haywood, following along behind his straggling line of four oxen, paused, but not to listen. The rising sun, kissing the golden hair and radiant face of the girl, held him entranced. "I have never *seen* anything so sweet, Elizabeth mine," he replied.

"Silly! For being so prosy, I'll let you pick this basket full of chips, so that I can finish cooking your breakfast, We must save every drop of this precious oil."

"Chips! Whose woodpile have you discovered out here? Hadn't I better dig a basket of coal?" the man asked in gentle sarcasm.

"Oh, you *are* a tenderfoot. Pick me up some of those dry buffalo chips—and hurry! We must be on our way."

John was to learn that the sun-dried droppings of the vast herds of buffalo, which had but recently roamed these prairies, made a valuable substitute for light wood, and were to be gathered and hoarded as precious, when other forms of fuel were not to be had.

John Haywood, back in Madison, had placed his love for Elizabeth Harper in the scales over against ease, and position, and social standing, and the feeling of well-being in things accustomed, and the one was so great that it outweighed the many. He, too, would become a pioneer. He would cast his lot with those immortal heroes who had ever led the van of civilization; he would endure their privations and hardships, and, building for the generations to come, await the reward of the unknown faithful.

Betty was caught in the fervor of his sacrificial devotion. She, too, could yield something. And, after all, it does take a man to complete a home. So it was, that early May saw the yellow-haired schoolteacher bidding farewell to her Agency pupils, white and brown, and promising Little Coyote a visit in the time of ripe plums.

In the already stirring little city on the James River, but yesterday the homestead of a third schoolmate, there was another meeting of these two class-day friends; a meeting, and a union, which was to hold as long as life should last.

Together John and Betty went shopping. And such strange shopping it was! Fair reader—or stern—with what would you have headed that list, and what would the list have contained? What are the necessities for the beginning of a home upon the bare prairie—necessities possibly six months from replenishing, and all to be carried in one wagon?

Betty, already frontier-wise, must supervise the list. Two yokes of heavy, lumbering oxen, of course. They could gather their own living from the rich grasses everywhere abundant. A big wagon in which to haul all that the big team could draw. A canvas cover to serve as the tent house on the journey, and perhaps for weeks after the homesite should be reached. Two glazed window-

shades, and only enough lumber for the roof of a small house. The rest of the house Betty would explain later. Cured meat, flour, beans, molasses, dried fruit, salt, matches—a small oil stove with a few simple cooking vessels, and two five-gallon cans of precious fuel oil.

When all the stores were compactly loaded into the big wagon, with Betty's new mattress and wool blankets spread out under the canvas cover, the fourteen-inch breaking plow securely chained to the side of the wagon, the start was made.

It was an easy trail as far as the James River (profanely dubbed the Jim) just out of town, and John was secretly puffed up over his proficiency in ox-driving. To be sure, all that was necessary was for him to walk along by the side of his team, and occasionally brandish his goad—the oxen followed the deep ruts of other wagons gone on before. The descent into the shallow river was safely made to the accompaniment of sundry little squeals from Betty. The passage through the swirling, muddy water, though exciting, was soon over. Then came the steeper banks of the "Canaan" side of their Jordan, where, in the deep, moist soil, the wagon stuck at an angle which threatened to roll Betty backward into the flood. It may be that a more experienced teamster would have been able to pull up and out upon the firmer prairie sod, but try as he would, John was to find, after a half day's effort, a heavily loaded wagon settled into the mud up to the hubs, and a discouraged team of oxen unable to move the load a foot. To his proposal that he carry her back across the river to the hotel, and make a new start on the morrow, Betty refused.

"No, John," she declared, "you go and get the liveryman to come and help us out, but I'll stay here. This is but one experience, and we have several yet coming,

or I am mistaken. Life, you know, John, is made up of experiences."

John was ungracious enough to mutter something that did not seem to be altogether complimentary to some of the component parts of life, but he departed.

Delivered by the mules of the liveryman, again the white-topped wagon rolled on out toward the setting sun. The friendly stars came out, and drew near; the tired oxen were unhitched, and turned out to graze their fill; Betty's little oil stove soon sent forth an aroma surpassing that of Olympian ambrosia, to the newly made pioneer; then sleep—Adam and Eve alone in their universe; Creation theirs and the fullness thereof.

The first real day's journey toward the Promised Land! The pillar of cloud and fire might not be visible, but it was there, going on before. The exaltation of great adventure was upon them. The lumbering gait of their ungainly team transformed the canvas-covered wagon into a ship traversing a choppy sea. The loneliness of the vast prairie was the solitude of the limitless ocean. Columbus, Raleigh, Boone, Fremont, heroes of Kansas, Iowa, Minnesota—pathfinders all, and for them! Theirs to ride the crest of civilization, as it should engulf in oblivion this last frontier. Theirs the high enthusiasm of the Nineteenth Century Crusade—the adding of a new star to Old Glory, the making of a state wherein manhood should be the test and childhood the great concern of life.

John and Elizabeth Haywood walked out into the new day, out into the new West, side by side, hand in hand, unafraid—perhaps because unknowing. Comfort, Competence, Fortune, Fame, were friendly beckoning shadows just behind the horizon, but nearer, and with sterner visage, guarding the frontier, stalked Privation, Self-denial, and Hardship. John and Betty sang little

snatches of song, and laughed like the carefree children they were—facing the West.

"Whoa! Rest a bit, old fellows. Betty, come look at this stake in the mound of stones. I took a few lessons in Uncle Sam's system of township surveys last winter, but can you tell just where we are by these marks?"

"No, I know the meaning of the figures on the plat of my—our claims, of course, but not what all this says."

"See, this tells how many ranges of townships we are west of the principal meridian, and on this side how many townships north of the base line. Now here we are, at this township corner on this little map. You see, we have sixteen townships to go due west, then five townships due north, and from that point two miles farther west again. And that will bring us to Buffalo Springs."

"And home! O John!" exclaimed Betty.

"Ninety-six and thirty and two—a hundred and twenty-eight miles. Get up, old boys! We must make it in time to welcome our grandchildren to Thanksgiving," John exhorted the oxen.

Betty herself was doing some figuring. "How fast do we go? And how much time do we really have?" she asked.

"Two miles an hour, and twenty-one days," replied the driver. "Ample time with no bad luck."

"But—John, you know the townsite landsharks were fearfully mad when they found that we had filed on the Buffalo Springs claims. Tom Osborne, the Indian Agent, said they would have somebody there ready to jump the claim if we were not there on the hour."

And Betty was right. Claim jumping of desirable tracts was part of the business of the land shark. If one who had filed upon a claim did not appear and take possession within six months, or if at any time he was ab-

sent from his claim for that period, another party might enter upon the claim, make improvements, and contest the rights of the original claimant.

"Luck's with me, Betty, I've got you. We'll make it," cheerfully promised the man. "See that flock of ducks settling upon that little pond over that rise of ground? There's our dinner, girl." And soon the almost simultaneous crack of the two rifles proved John to be a good prophet in his latter statement.

The northward migrating hordes of ducks covered the pools left by departing snows in every depression of land. And both being accustomed to the handling of a gun, our young pioneers had no lack of fresh meat for their journey, though good sportsmen that they were, they never killed for the joy of wanton slaughter.

The land rolled away before them in long swells like a sea of vivid green, fixed in suspended motion after a great storm. The horizon seemed to loom high in the distance, on every side, giving one the effect of traversing the center of a gigantic saucer, the sides of which ever retreated.

"Ninety-six miles from where we began to count the township corners, Betty. Here we turn from the setting sun to follow the pole star," announced John on the morning of the tenth day. But neither star nor sun was necessary that they might find their way across this trackless land. Straight northward as true as the surveyor's instrument could point, stretched, in plain sight, quarter stakes, section posts, and township cairns, away into the distance. Gently the land lifted up before them. Shortly, like a low-lying cloud of blue in the northeast, a little range of hills appeared.

"Oh, the Bald Hills, John! The Bald Hills!" exclaimed Betty. "They say that old Sitting Bull used to go over there to make medicine against the whites."

"Well, we'll go over there some day and make medicine too, Betty. They are not so far away. And your old murderer of a redskin is safe enough now."

"Yes, he's safe enough I suppose," replied Betty slowly. "Though he did frighten me one time, when I went with Little Coyote's father, the Indian police, to the camp of the old medicine man. He usually pays no attention to the whites who come to his camp—just sits in a dignified silence with his eyes upon the ground. I do not know what caused him to look up when I stood before him, but suddenly he leaped to his feet, as old as he is, and taking hold of a braid of my hair gave it a little pull, with a hard cackling laugh. I noticed that the Indians looked frightened, and appeared anxious for me to leave. I tried to get Kicking Horse to tell me what the old man had said, but it was a long while before I could get him to talk. You know the story of Custer, of course, and the old medicine man's part in it. Well, this was what he said: "Yellow Hair [Custer] gave me one—two will make a rope for my girdle."

"The old villain," blazed John.

"Yes, I suppose he is," admitted the girl, but continued whimsically, "and yet, John, you must admit he has been a consistent advocate of 'America for Americans.' "

Even as at sea, where great deeps lift themselves in roaring heights to war with angry skies, so do storms reach majestic grandeur over the wide expanse of western plains. No barrier of mountain, no break of forest, no work of man is there to oppose or check the sweep of billowed cloud, the rush and boom of tempest, the falling seas deluging the land. In such a presence man withdraws into his primordial atom and resigns himself to nature—or, mounting up on exulting wings, revels in his kinship to nature's God.

Betty, during her stay at the Agency, had seen storms come up out of the northwest, storms to be met with courage, and indeed with a thrill of ecstasy, but also to be prepared for if safely met. The day of steady, though gradual climbing was drawing to a close. At last they had reached the top of the long incline, and looking over, they beheld a valley half a score miles wide, with the land rising more abruptly on the other side. "John, do you see that cloud looming up just north of the sun? That means you and I are going to stop right now and get ready for the big show."

The man was for making a possible two miles more of journey, but there was that in Betty's earnestness which induced him to heed her. At the young wife's direction the wagon was turned to face the southeast, the four wheels lowered slightly into the sod, the long picket ropes from the oxen gotten out to anchor the wagon to glacial boulders on either side, the canvas cover fastened as securely as possible, the weary cattle turned out to graze—and then they waited.

The brush and pen of men palsy at the word tempest. We speak the words *space* and *eternity*—and *God*, and are hushed. Suddenly the heavens were a mass of flame. The armies of earth brought forth their mightiest guns to rend the universe apart. The oceans of the skies burst their age-old barriers and fell roaring over them. Mercifully, the greatest force of the wind did not reach our travelers, and while the wagon bounded about as a thing in agony, its stay ropes held. Under damp covering, though unharmed, sleep at length came, and morning light.

Far down the valley to the south, glistening in the morning sun, a broad sheet of water lay. "Oh, isn't it beautiful, John! Or is it a mirage? I don't remember seeing it last night, though we must have passed near it."

John laughed. "Look at the sun, Betty."

"What's the matter with the sun? Why it's on the wrong side!"

"No, the sun's all right. You forget that we turned the wagon face-about when we stopped last night. The lake is no mirage, either, and it lies straight across our way. Dry out the things as much as you can, Betty, while I hunt up the oxen. That may take half a day, and we ought to get on the other side of that pond before sundown."

It was indeed well up into the day before the oxen were found, and the wagon, turned about, was on its way toward the north. "I must confess that I, too, have the feeling of going back over our own trail," said John as they descended the slope toward the valley. As they neared the broad sheet of water in the afternoon, the patches of "gumbo" alkali land became numerous, and more discouragingly sticky. At last, after pulling through a particularly difficult stretch, John halted the team.

"See here, girl, this looks to me like one of the 'experiences' you mentioned back on the James River. But here we have no mule team to help us out, and these oxen will never pull through that water and sticky mud. It's getting worse all the time."

"John, if you only dared leave the section line, we might go around the lake to the south. See, off there it looks like solid land." And off to the south toward solid land; off through gathering darkness around Stone Lake; crawling slowly up the north rim of the valley, groping for some stake or post or cairn to tell them where they were, coming back to a team exhausted and already lying down, John finally exclaimed, "Well, my dear, we are lost, and we might as well own up. Here we rest, and wait for another day."

CHAPTER IV

THE FIRST VISITOR

It was not the shining of the sun that awakened Elizabeth from her sound sleep the next morning, although the sun was riding high in the heavens; it was a hand, reaching in from outside the wagon cover, and laying hold of the shotgun which was slung in loops from the bows. Her startled exclamation brought forth a "Hush, dear! Don't make a noise," in the welcome voice of her husband. "We're right on the edge of a little bluff, and there are a dozen ducks in the pool at the foot." A moment later the crash of gunfire, and the victorious shout of the man, brought the tousled yellow head into the sunshine. For a moment the misty glory of the new day held the girl enthralled, then with a little gasp of startled incredulity, she reached back and fairly leaped into buckskin skirt and moccasins. Running to the edge of the bluff, she looked down upon the pool, and up and down the narrow valley, where lazily meandered a little stream. Then a shout of wonder and joy rang out, which brought the hunter running.

"O John! Can you guess where we are? And we stumbled upon it in the dark! It's the Okobojo and Buffalo Springs. It's home, John! It's home! We're here! We're here!"

Down went the ducks and gun, as the slowly-comprehending man raised his arms to receive the flash of gold and brown, flung into his bosom.

What is home? Easily spoken word, yet who may define it? It is said that a certain people have a word for house, but none for home—and that nation is de-

cadent. Home! palace? cottage? a place in which to eat and sleep? Ah, no, not that. Home! is it the mountainside? seaside? or plain? No, home owes its charms to no chosen spot. It is the castle whence courage fares forth to conquest. It is the safe haven toward which the eyes turn in the midst of tumult or strife. It is where the heart rests with love. It is where life begins, and life ends. Home—but one earth-word links with it in sweetest accord—Mother. But one word, and that not of earth, gives it perfect definition—Heaven.

Work was to be done, of course. A shelter of some sort for themselves, and another for their cattle later on. Acres of the tough prairie sod to be overturned for another year's crop—that, too, would come in time—but first, a few days' rest for the team and for themselves; discovery, inspection; the strange new delight of possession, and the planning and rearing in daydreams of all the structures which were, through the years, to become realities.

The cattle were picketed out upon the lush grass of the little valley, where each might slake his thirst at the near-by stream. Truly, the young people had reached the frontier. From the high point of their gently sloping claims they had a view of the valley twenty miles to the south; to the north the gigantic, wave-like swells of the great prairie rose to where the eye reached the horizon a dozen miles away; to the east the Bald Hills, hazy blue in the distance; to the west, where, Betty declared, one could almost make out the rise of ground which marked the banks of the big river eighteen miles off—and not a sign in all the landscape of the works of man.

As with arms about each other John and Betty gazed long at the prospect, they likened themselves to a new Columbus taking possession, through the right of discovery, of a new world. But with the passing of years,

and the acquiring of experience, they would look back upon themselves on that first day of their homesteading, as more like two land-lubbers setting forth upon an unchartered sea in a ship without sail or rudder.

"Where shall we build our house, Betty, on your claim or on mine?" at length queried John.

"On mine, of course, Mr. Professor," replied Betty mischievously. "A woman's kingdom is her home, you know." But even with these words she moved to the quarter section stake and cast a calculating glance to the east and then to the north. "The north and south line hits the edge of the bluff right here, John, and our house —*our* house, John, will be located *across the line,* on both sides. You had forgotten that one is obliged to eat and sleep upon his own homestead. In this case the law does not suppose that we are one—although I *am* the one, you know. Here will be the bed, there the table, and you will eat and sleep on your side upon your own claim, and I on my side upon mine."

"But, Betty, the bluff—"

"Will be cut down sufficiently to form the back and two sides of our one-room palace. The front we will build in with 'prairie bricks,' sod cut into strips the width of our wall."

A tape measure soon gave correct distances, and stakes at the edge of the little bluff marked the rear corners of the dugout to be. Man-like, John was at once seized with a passion for creating, and an hour's good, stiff work made a good beginning in the excavation. Then, the untried muscles demanded relief.

There seemed to be no need for hurry; the season was young; the cattle would profit by the rest of a few days; with their convenient wagon-camp the fashioning of the dugout home might await their odd hours and scraps of time.

So it was that these unsophisticated pioneers employed the remainder of their first day, and many of the days following, in becoming acquainted with their homesteads and the near-by surrounding country. However, there was a small bit of John's homestead, a corner beyond a hill where the Okobojo flowed through a narrow gap, which they did not take the trouble to investigate. Had they done so, the full meaning of the appearance of their first visitor, on the opening day of June, might have occurred to them.

With the mingled emotions of wonder and joy which stirred the heart of Robinson Crusoe, as he discovered the imprint of a human foot in the sand, John and Betty watched the approach of a strange equipage coming up the valley from the south. A span of blue-gray mustangs hitched to a vehicle of the class of half wagon, half buggy, called a "Democrat," driven by a man neither young nor old, dressed in over-emphasized Western style, stopped at the foot of the bluff.

Keen, small, close-set eyes, from under heavy black brows, quickly took in every detail of the wagon-camp and browsing cattle. Making no direct answer to the hospitable request of John to unhitch his team and join them at meal, the man, throwing a leg across the other knee, began a rapid fire of questions, not with apparent discourtesy, and in a voice rather pleasing in its tones.

"Passing through, are you? Hunting a claim?" he queried.

"No," responded John. "We're at home."

"Um," the stranger ejaculated, taking a plat book from his pocket. "Southwest quarter of seventeen. Filed on by Mike Lafferty, November 20."

"You're mistaken there," quickly broke in John. "It's the southwest quarter of seventeen, all right, but I filed on this claim myself on November 24."

"And your name?" asked the suave visitor.

"My name is John Haywood."

"And this young woman with you? I seem to have met her somewhere."

"Is my wife," responded John with growing heat.

"Let me look at your papers."

John started to hand them to the stranger, but with a quick movement Betty took her husband's arm, as though he had extended it to her, and herself taking the paper, opened it, but at arm's length from the man.

"It is all right and regular, as you see."

The stranger smiled slowly, with a half closing of the eyes. "Apparently," said he. "But a mistake *has* been made at the Land Office, and it is liable to cause you some trouble. You filed, you say, on the 24th—and have just gotten in, on the first of June. A little too late, wasn't it, if some other party had jumped your claim after your time was out?"

"No sir. We were not too late. We were here on time," responded John, now thoroughly aroused.

"Too bad I didn't come by a few days sooner, so that I could have been your witness to the fact—that is, of course, if you should happen to need a witness."

"And," continued John, "we are not at all concerned about claim jumpers. We were the first ones here, and there are no other marks but those we have made upon our homesteads."

"Are you sure? Well so long, neighbors. See you again. As the poet says, 'Where ignorance is bliss, 'twere folly to be wise.' You're fond of the poets, aren't you, Mrs.—ah—Haywood? Most teachers are." And the strange outfit bumped away across the prairie sod.

"The old snake," exclaimed Betty. "I wonder what he is up to this time."

"What! Do you know him?" demanded her husband.

"I saw him once or twice at the Agency. He calls himself Major Gilson. He came over there to endeavor to get Tom Osborne, the agent, to join him in a scheme to secure the Indians' coal lands on the Moreau River. I believe he is a bad man from the shock of white hair on the top of his head to the toe of his cowboy boots. Mrs. Osborne seems to like him, though, and Tom says that he has high up connections somewhere that give him some sort of power with the railroad folks and Land Office officials. But John, *do* you think there was a mistake at the Land Office, and we may lose the claim?"

"I don't know, of course, Betty, but I think it is just some scheme to scare us off. Anyhow, we are the only ones on the claim, and it is long past the 20th when he says the other man filed. We are going to protect and hold our home, my girl. Our ancestors defended theirs against Indians, and we may have to defend ours against land sharks."

But again, it was well for their peace of mind that John and Betty had not visited the hidden corner of their claim.

The immediate effect of the appearance of Major Gilson at Buffalo Springs was to fill our two pioneers with a fierce zeal for home building. In excavating for the dugout in the side of the hill, there was no substitute for the pick to loosen up the stiff clay, but after a few hours of back-wrenching, heartbreaking endeavor to cast, with a shovel, the loosened earth a sufficient distance away, John fashioned a rude but serviceable scraper from one of the house boards, to which he hitched a yoke of oxen. Betty drove, or rather led, the team while John held the scraper, and the work went forward.

By the end of the second week after their arrival the front and side walls, built of the tough prairie sod, were

up; the one door and two single-sash windows were in place; the well-braced, one-way sloping roof on, and the new home, secure from cold and heat and storm, was ready for its occupants.

Little Miss Bobhair Paintface, you turn up your nose at the thought of such a home—dirt walls, dirt floor, sod roof, save for the intervening single layer of pine boards. Of course you would. There were none of your kind in the place of the Lost Frontier. The women who walked shoulder to shoulder with their men, as they conquered the wilderness, and made the America of today, were real folks.

Betty lived to be the mistress of a beautiful home reared not far from the site of that hillside dugout, but the ecstatic thrill of possession was never quite so keen as that which she knew when she and John ate their first meal, and spread their first bed, in that rude sod house.

While Betty was one of those geniuses who can take two soap boxes and three yards of cloth and create a full set of furniture, and so was able to give the royal stamp of home to the place, she refused to always abide by the stuff, but fared forth with her man to watch the long roll of turning sod which, in another season, should reward them with a harvest—for John did learn "gee and haw."

How glorious were those days of June! What a constant wonder the early morning mirage. Off to the south, across the wide valley, there would often appear a tropical sea with its waves shimmering in the sunshine, dashing against palm-covered islands. Nearer by a sunflower stalk, growing in the dirt cast up from a badger's home, would stretch itself up into the sky like a giant sequoia. In later years, the little city of Appomattox, fifteen miles away, would, upon certain frosty mornings, take its place *above* the horizon with a band of sky

showing clear beneath—every street as distinct as were those of that other city coming down out of heaven, to the Seer of Patmos. And, in the fall of that same year, a morning delight of our pioneers was to see the small shack of some neighbor of two or three miles distance, stretch up to the height of a skyscraper, or reproduce itself upside down, roof to roof, above the real dwelling. Indeed, it was the mirage that introduced Betty to her first neighbors.

CHAPTER V

A BIBLE CHRISTIAN

There are three, or possibly four, estimates of Jesus of Nazareth, among the peoples and individuals whom we call civilized—classed in the general division named Christian. The first (and of those holding this estimate there are really but few) is an utter rejection, a refusal to consider the fact of Jesus either historically or spiritually. The second is that He was a great philosopher, living a life apart from and above ordinary humanity, exhibiting in His doctrine and existence a perfection foreshadowing the goal of humanity to be reached through the cycles of evolution—an ideal unsuitable to present conditions, and unattainable to the humanity of the present day. The third estimate of Jesus is that He was indeed a supernatural Being who came to save the souls of men from an eternity of woe, presenting God's demand upon humanity for holiness, but that the human nature of man negatives the possibility of obedience.

I have suggested the possibility of a fourth class—those who look upon Jesus as the Great God himself, wrapped up in human flesh, manifesting himself in relation to man's sin, coming to remove the consequences of the racial fall, showing infinite love and power to the individuals of that race in the forgiveness of sins and restoration of the nature to the moral likeness of God.

With great boldness, I would call this fourth class, this little flock, Bible Christians. To them the Scriptures are indeed and in truth the Word of God. Nor do they look upon this written word as an abstract philosophy to be understood, if known at all, by the learned few; to

them it is a letter penned by a Father to His little children in terms which they may understand, revealing both His love in their deliverance, and His plain directions for their daily guidance.

A Bible Christian—is such a life desirable? Is such a character possible? Does God make any such demand upon you and me? Does He expect that those who take upon themselves the name of Christ *shall follow Christ?*

What would be the attitude of one who should endeavor to literally follow the teachings of Jesus today? Does Jesus really expect such a following? The other day I was privileged to witness a pageant depicting the life of Jesus in which the words of the Book, the scenes of the Book, and the life and customs of the time, were accurately followed. That which forced itself strongly upon my attention in the attitude of the world of Christ's day toward Him and His doctrines, was not so much fierce antagonism—though that came later—as it was utter contempt. The prophecy of Isaiah was fulfilled, "There is no beauty that we should desire him; he is despised and rejected of men."

One will run farther from being laughed at than from a curse. Many a man will dare a blow who will slink away from a sneer.

I am conscious that in my endeavor to portray the character of Eugene Lorrimer as I knew him, there may creep in, even now, a hint of that contempt which is the heritage of one who is indeed like Jesus—that I may show him as a weakling, something less than a man, instead of the hero that he was, a man supernaturally strong. For alas, when I first knew him I knew not God, while he was a Bible Christian.

Eugene Lorrimer was born and received his education in a little town in western New York. Entering business life as a storekeeper, he, through good judgment,

close application, and known probity, had come to be recognized as one of the coming financial powers of his county. His father, between whom and the son existed an unusual bond of affection and fellowship, had, at the advice of his old friend, Horace Greeley, joined a colony in Colorado, hoping thereby to recover from the dread tuberculosis which had attacked him.

The letters of the father to the son, Eugene, were at first full of hope and cheer. Then there were long lapses when no word came through. Then reluctant admissions of tired days—days spent in bed. Finally, a message was received from a neighbor of the sick man, saying, "I am sorry to write you that your father seems to be failing. Whenever I go into his shack he can talk about nothing but his boy Eugene. He does not know that I am writing this to you, but if you love the old man as he seems to love you, I am sure that you will want to be at his side for the short time he may stay here."

There was no question in the mind of Eugene Lorrimer as to what he should do, nor as to what he would do. He, fortunately as he thought, was able to sell a half interest in his business to a former schoolmate, a man not a Christian, but who seemed to have good business qualifications. Thus, with the small cash payment he received from his new partner and with satisfactory arrangements for his little family, he sought his father's side.

How much does the generation which has all of life before it owe to the generation which is passing out? To what extent does duty to parent go? To whom am I to pay the debt for that which I have received? to my father, or to my son? China answers unhesitatingly, "To my father," and lives in the past. America answers as positively, "To the youth," and what shall we say certainly as to her future? God help us elders to so live that the natural emphasis may be not changed; that we shall

not too willingly become a burden to our sons, and rob our son's son.

It is not easy for one full of the powers of life and ability for their expression to withdraw from its participation. It was indeed a sacrifice for Eugene Lorrimer to remain at the side of his father, whose condition at times seemed to give promise of a measure of recovery. But his filial affection made his sacrifice a willing one. He had been brought up in a religious atmosphere, had been soundly converted as a young man, and was a member of the church. During his long hours of enforced inactivity he read much in his New Testament, and pondered deeply upon the life of Jesus, and the meaning which that life might hold for one who would be His follower. To what extent is a sacrificial life required of us? What is the hidden meaning of his words, "Take up your cross daily and follow me"? Eugene Lorrimer was to meet that great test, which in some form comes to the life of everyone who will "go all the way with Jesus." He was to learn that there was, for those who make Jesus their choice, a newness of life as distinct from the old life of the nominal church member, as was the resurrection life of Jesus different from his weary, circumscribed, despised life of Galilee and Judea. And this newness of life, which Eugene Lorrimer was to receive, was to come by the way of his own Gethsemane and Calvary.

As the condition of his father semed not to be changing greatly, he made arrangements for his wife and baby boy to come and occupy rooms near that of his father. It was the coming of his wife, and her expression of a distrust in Eugene's partner, which she could not bring herself to write, that brought the first cloud of the storm which was to break over Eugene. Strange, thought he, Effie should suggest that the boy whom the father had

named for his partner, Daniel Strong, might be given a different name.

Eugene wrote Strong, explaining his own inability to leave his sick father, and expressing full trust in his partner's honor and ability to serve them both.

Then came the great night of darkness, never to be forgotten, when like Abraham, he must needs throughout the long hours, beat back from his sacrifice the foul birds of doubt and despair. The day, in late August, had been a dreary one in that high altitude, and the old father had seemed to be laboring under great depression, but was now resting. Through the gloom a helper from the little railroad station made his way up to the cabins with a yellow envelope. The wife, Effie, meeting the messenger at the door, received the telegram, and handing it to her husband with a word of curiosity, passed out into the adjoining room where the old man was struggling in a paroxysm of coughing. Eugene tore open the envelope and read the message from the friend:

"Partner absconded. Business attached by sheriff. Complete smash. Come."

Even as he stood dazed by the disaster which had befallen him, he heard a bitter cry from his wife.

"Eugene! Eugene! Father's gone!"

The young man scarcely knew how he got through the following days of funeral and financial adjustments. He seemed to be walking in an impenetrable haze, detached from his own personality. Father gone, fortune gone, faith in his friend gone. Then upon a Sabbath day out into the solitude of a mountain fastness the Spirit led him to be alone with God.

Usually we are so filled with ourselves and our own petty lives that God has little opportunity to speak to us. In the even flow of His providences we walk on unheeding. It is the supernatural, or the strikingly unusual—

when a burning bush appears by the way to a Moses, or some sharp calamity falls across our pathway, that God demands our attention. Then, if we shall draw apart and give heed, God will speak to us.

It was upon that Horeb that Eugene Lorrimer finally surrendered his life utterly into the hands of Jesus, and became a Bible Christian. Realizing, as he had never done before, his own impotence, he turned to the One whose power is infinite. Conscious of his own shortsightedness, he surrendered to Him who knows all things. Frightened at the meaning of the bitter resentment that had welled up in his heart, he recognized his kinship with Cain the murderer, and he cried for cleansing of spirit to Him who could pray, "Father forgive."

He sought comfort in his hour of bitter sorrow, and found the promise, "I will not leave you comfortless," "He shall give you another Comforter." He knew not which way to turn in poverty and perplexity, but he read, "He will guide you into all truth." He opened his heart, and believing, received. In that hour the Bible became not a book for his library, but a personal revelation of the will and purpose of God for him, and he accepted its plain teaching as his rule of life.

It was at this time that the great influx of settlers was on into the newly opened Indian lands. There, he felt sure, amid new surroundings, and with new people, he could begin life over again—not making wealth and position his goal, but rather to live a life of Christlikeness in blessing. Converting into cash the little property left him by his father, he made his way to the new country, where he purchased a relinquishment of a claim at the edge of the great depression known as Stone Lake, from a man he met at the Land Office. Upon that quarter section of land, in the early spring, he installed his wife and boy in their new home.

I hear you ask, "What do you mean by a 'relinquishment'?" It was this: Many claims were filed upon by men at the Land Office who had no intention of making their home upon them. They expected rather to sell out their right to the filing to someone else who really desired to take possession. It was true that there were many false entries at the Land Office—some men filing upon many claims through fictitious names. Of course such men would of necessity be obliged to dispose of their illegally secured interest before the offense would come to the attention of the Government. A traffic in such claims enriched many men.

The tract to which the Lorrimers came lay close up to the sharp rise of land north of the Lake. The lower, eastern part, would provide an abundance of hay for stock, and in usual years, yield good crops of hardy flint corn. In the eyes of Lorrimer, the land made a good beginning for the rearing of fine stock. For the site of the house the wife chose a rather narrow coulee, on the west side of which a huge nest of black ants indicated a good supply of water flowing beneath—a fortune of itself in that country. True, the outlook would not be extensive, but neither was the home to be seen easily from any direction save that directly south. Effie Lorrimer had not forgotten the brother who had fallen with Custer under the hand of the same old Sitting Bull, who, with his yet untamed warriors, had his home a half-day's pony ride to the west. If there should come another outbreak—

The strange life of this Eugene Lorrimer, Bible Christian, may be said to have begun, in fact, at the Land Office, before he had reached the home he had chosen for his new beginning. Having secured his own entry, he was watching with sympathetic curiosity some of the other prospective settlers. One especially, the center of a

joking crowd, claimed his attention. The young fellow, apparently scarcely of legal age, was trying to argue with the same gentleman from whom Lorimer had purchased his relinquishment. The man was apparently very patient with the young Scandinavian, who was, in very broken English, objecting to a transaction just completed.

As Lorrimer came up, the man turned to him explaining, "The youngster evidently doesn't understand. He seems to think that the amount he should pay me for the relinquishment to the claim which I have sold him must be only the $16 the Government is to get, finally. In fact, this claim which he has just got is a very choice one, and the $500 he has paid me is a small part of its worth. Why, I'll sign a contract to give him a thousand the day he proves up upon it."

"I sign dees pappar; yes. He not tell me he tak all I got. He say I pay Onkel Sam saxteen dollar. Now he tak all I got. How I go to claim? How I hold heem?"

The utter wretchedness that spoke in the eyes of the boy, brought Lorrimer to his side, saying, "You come with me. Your claim is but ten miles from ours. We will see you through." Bread upon the waters, to be found again after many days.

CHAPTER VI

NEIGHBORS

Although the sod-walled home near the edge of Stone Lake was coulee-hidden from the distances about, it was the mirage of that wonderful Thanksgiving morning which introduced the Lorrimers to the Haywoods. Tingling with a clear crispness, the atmosphere of the early morning was so charged with ozone that it carried an appreciable odor—like a fresh-cut watermelon, John declared. Its effect upon Betty was exhilarating—intoxicating. She danced about her sedate husband, bantering him for a race over the hill. Holding hands, they ran like two children—the whole world a Garden of Eden, the whole Garden theirs, and they there alone.

Suddenly Betty stopped short. "John, John! Look there to the southeast."

"Yes. Stone Lake. Pretty."

"No, I see that. But the *house*. We've got neighbors!"

"Badger mound, probably. You know how the mirage makes a pine tree out of a sunflower stalk."

"It's *not* a badger mound, old silly. See that stovepipe in the roof, a mile high. And there's smoke coming out; somebody's there, John. It's Thanksgiving Day, and I'm so thankful."

It was a house; there were neighbors; and that Thanksgiving Day was the beginning of a life-long friendship between the two families.

It was inevitable that two men of such different religious convictions as the avowed infidel, John Haywood, and Eugene Lorrimer, the Bible Christian, should find

some sharp differences. Inevitable that the University teacher, in all the arrogance of cold scholarship, should have scant tolerance for the "fanaticism" of this quiet but unswerving man. And it is to the credit of the sterling good sense, reasonableness, and patient, persistent love of the Bible Christian that that friendship was kept and strengthened.

Then, too, the men found that they had a common meeting ground. Lorrimer had attended the Statehood meeting at Sioux Falls, and his vision for the new state harmonized with that of Haywood. While, as was to be expected, the thoughts and plans of the latter had run more upon economic and material lines, the interest of Lorrimer was absorbed in the moral and ethical aspects.

"To my mind," said he, "if the Territory shall be divided, and we be allowed to form our own constitution, it will be an opportunity, the first in the history of the nation, for a state to be born clean—free from the deadly incubus of the liquor traffic. I am greatly concerned over that matter. There would, of course, be a strong fight to keep prohibition out of the drafted instrument, but if we should fail there, a referendum vote might be provided for by the convention to be taken at the same time as the vote for the constitution. I believe that the voice of the men who came here to build homes through sacrifice and hardship, would bar forever the saloon from our new state."

"A big proposition, and of doubtful issue," thoughtfully replied John. "But here's my hand. I'm with you on it."

"Oh, if we women just had a chance to vote," broke in Betty.

Mrs. Lorrimer smiled. "Eugene has that, too, in his program for a little later. His idea of a government—of

a state—is something like a church, everybody brothers and sisters, and everybody good and helpful."

Lorrimer accepted the banter saying, " 'Neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.' But, Mrs. Haywood, we should expect you women to carry the day."

"How, pray tell me?"

"By voting the men."

And it came to pass that the women did free the new state from the saloon, and later it came to pass that suffrage was given to women.

While it is true that one sex is the complement of the other, neither developing normally and fully alone, yet each, man and woman, craves association with his own kind. If the nature of woman is more domestic, and man inclined to fare far forth, she is also fundamentally more gregarious than he. So, the fear always present in the heart of woman, of the time when her hour shall demand woman's sympathy and woman's care, was lifted from Betty by the near-by presence of Effie Lorrimer.

As they were trudging back through the dark toward Buffalo Springs and home, they were overtaken by the mail hack, Charlie Bailey driving his broncos like Jehu, as usual. "Well, infants," was his greeting, "still hunting that claim?"

"No, Mr. Bailey," was Betty's laughing reply, "we've found both of them."

"Great country, this," added Haywood. "Regular paradise."

"H-m, yas," admitted the hack driver. "Yas, it's paradise all right—for husky men critters and oxen—but it's hell for wimmen and hosses."

John cast a quick glance at the little woman by his side, but the answering look was from clear, untroubled eyes as Betty responded, "After all, I've a notion that it was Adam who made it paradise for Eve."

And the face of John, he being a mere man, showed agreement along with gratitude.

"Having any trouble with claim-jumpers?" asked Bailey as they reached their little home. "I heard, over at the Land Office, that Major Gilson had a man to file on this here quarter, for a townsite. Nobody building another claim shack on you, is there?"

"Why, no," was the surprised reply. "We've seen no one." But later in the night John and Betty both recalled the questions of their first visitor, and their thoughts were troubled. Was the railroad coming through soon; and would Betty's claim be selected for a townsite? Had the land sharks concocted some scheme to rob them of their home? Betty was to be the one to find a partial answer, but that was to come later. There had been rumors concerning the coming of the railroad, all through the summer, and Haywood had carefully replaced, in his sod-breaking during the summer, the stakes of the surveys where they crossed his and Betty's claims.

It was on the day of the first light flurry of snow that Major Gilson again called upon the homesteaders. This time there was no trace of enmity in his manner. Cordiality and friendliness seemed to ooze from him. The fact of the snow led up to the mention of winter fuel.

In the first days of the last American frontier, hay, and a little later straw, was the only thing available to burn. Twisted into short ropes and doubled over into a hank about a foot long, it served two purposes: gave one person a constant if not agreeable employment during the bitter winter days, and served to create an appreciable difference between the temperature within and that with-

out. People were able to exist by the use of twisted hay, but the invention (by some woman) of the hay burner, was almost like the discovery of fire itself by the early cave dwellers. The first hay burner was nothing more than an inverted wash boiler. This common domestic implement, tramped full and hard with hay or straw, was to be turned upside down over the front part of the cook stove, from which the two lids had been removed. The straw, lighted, fell down as it burned, and for the space of about an hour brought summer heat in the bitterest of weather. Burned out, the boiler was replenished from the near-by straw stack, while the cook stove and living room cooled off.

Then came the raising of flax, with its residue, after threshing, of tough, slow-burning woody fibre, and the lengthening to half again its height of the burner. There was one trouble, among others, in the use of this burner, and that was, gas frequently formed in the burner above the fuel as it sank down. When this ignited, there would be an explosion that would lift the back lids of the stove —and incidentally whatever might at the time be cooking thereon—to the ceiling with a bang, and cover everything in the cabin room with light ashes.

Our first American pioneers had an abundance of wood for their fireplaces—and hostile Indians. Our pioneers of the last frontier had grass and a strawstack, when the wind hadn't blown it away—and the inverted wash boiler. Looking back now, I wonder which might be called "the good old days."

"What about your fuel for the winter?" casually asked the Major during the conversation. "Going to keep the old man twisting grass, Mrs. Haywood? How would you like to get yourself a good stove, and burn coal?"

"Oh, that would be heavenly," exclaimed Betty, "but we have planned to go back East for the worst months of the winter."

"And I suppose heaven is about as near here as coal beds," added John.

"Maybe, maybe. Doubtless is to you," said the Major with a gallant bow toward Betty. "But one of my excuses for moseying down this way was to let some of our *friends* on to a good thing. We can supply you with coal, a plenty and cheap."

"Haul it from Pierre or Aberdeen, I suppose, a hundred miles or so."

"Oh, no. Indians. Lignite, you know. Rather soft, but burns well, and lasts longer than hay."

"But where do the Indians get it?"

"Never ask 'em. We swap 'em fire water for it down on the river bank. Sorry you are going away. Be sure to come back, and be mighty careful to be back on the dot. Lots of folks watching to jump good claims. Say, Haywood, no good in being stand-offish; come up and get acquainted with the boys. Something doing in politics by and by. You might fall for something good. So long. See you later." And the Major jogged off up the valley.

"John, I'm glad we're going away. We don't want any of his old coal. He is just trying to get us mixed up with his devilment."

"Oh, I don't know, Betty. Of course I don't take any stock in his business methods. He'd cheat the Indians out of their eye teeth if he could, no doubt. It looks as if the fellow is trying to be friendly with us. But is there really coal; and do the Indians get it?"

"Yes, there is coal, and it's just across the river. The Moreau has cut through and exposed a thirty-foot vein. It is no trouble for the Indians to pry loose great chunks

and raft it down to Wood's landing. Of course it is against Reservation regulations, but the poor Indians will take any risk for a bottle of whiskey. You can understand why these fellows have been trying hard to get rid of Tom Osborne and have an agent appointed more to their liking."

One of the inducements for the visits of Major Gilson in their vicinity was revealed in the discovery of their second neighbor. "Somebody's taken the claim up the creek, Betty," remarked John as he came home with a load of hay from the north meadow of their land, which lay along the Okobojo. "Better go up and get acquainted." And Betty did.

It is difficult to describe or even imagine a family of the antecedents of the Gordons in the condition in which she found them. True, the lure of owning a home, and finding a competency in broad acres in the West, coupled with a strong spirit of adventure, brought all classes together at the frontier, but in the main they were self-reliant, strong-willed, capable men, and their no less heroic wives. What Betty found concerning her new neighbors, appalled her. The house consisted of one long room unskillfully thrown together of sod, with the usual board-and-tarpaper roof. Openings there were for door and window, but a strip of tow-sacking closed each aperture. There was an attempt to divide the room into three small apartments, by the use of the same kind of material that did duty for window and door.

Yet, withal, the house did not have an air of untidiness. Rather, the extremity of poverty, save for a fine bookcase filled with what appeared to be well-used volumes, and two or three articles of splendid old furniture. As Betty came up, she was met at the "door" by Mrs. Gordon, with all the manner of the Grand Dame, her sharp face at once settling to its habitual frown, while her

tongue broke into a torrent of excuse and complaint. The man of the house, if one seemingly so utterly detached could be called *of* anything, was middle aged, of good features, with the student's stoop to the shoulders. In his recognition of the introduction to Mrs. Haywood his manner was courtly, but immediately he became immersed in his book. There were three cubs of boys and two girls, the elder apparently twenty years of age, the other a couple of years younger. The former, evidently from her lithe figure and quick movements, was a throwback to some remoter ancestor, she was so unlike the rest of the family. During the stay of their visitor she kept her face turned aside, so that in the dim light, Betty could not make out her features.

Telling them how glad she was to have such near neighbors, and noting that as they evidently had not had time, coming in so late, to prepare their home for the winter near at hand, Betty suggested that they make use of her little home during the absence of herself and husband.

There was really an air of condescension in Mrs. Gordon's reply. They did not look for any severe weather, and besides Major Gilson had assured them that he would see after them.

"Major Gilson!" exclaimed Betty before she thought. "Is he a relative?"

"Oh no. That is, not at present, but—" and the mother glanced slyly at the daughters. Betty noticed that the elder girl quietly slipped by them, out-of-doors.

CHAPTER VII

IN SORROW SHALL SHE BRING FORTH

Winter passed and spring came—that is, spring according to the almanac. The wind-swept prairies were frozen to the depth of four feet. Snow would lie packed hard in the narrow coulees for two months yet, but long before the snow disappeared the sod upturned during the summer would be in condition to receive the surface pulverizing by the wide-sweeping drags, and be seeded to flax. John Haywood had a hundred-acre field ready for that early seeding.

It would be sensible, as John suggested, for Betty to remain for the summer in Wisconsin, among friends. Friends and physician would be needed before harvest time. But Betty clung to her man. "Did the Pilgrim Mothers remain in the Old Country, or did they take their chances along with their menfolk? I couldn't stand it away from you all these months, and when I go down into the waters, I shall need your hand to help me back. Besides, you'd starve. You know you can't boil water without scorching it, John."

So Betty and John came back to the frontier together. They had expected to ride with Charlie Bailey from the railroad terminus, but a belated snowstorm had found them in a cut, in Wessington Hills, stalling their train, and holding it fast and nearly covered in drift, for quite a day, before the snowplows from Huron could dig them out. When they finally did get through, Bailey had gone.

During the day, however, as they were making inquiries for means of transportation to their home, a young man whose features seemed familiar to John, came into the hotel, and John accosted him.

"Yas, it been Ole Gunderson. Yas, I lif tan mile west from Mr. Lor'mer. Mr. Lor'mer ban one gude man. Yas, aye teamin' to Ap'mattox. Yas, aye go by Mr. Lor'mer. Mr. Lor'mer ban one gude man. Yas, aye took you 'long, too."

From Ole Gunderson they received the news of the winter, as they rode toward home—but particularly that "Mr. Lor'mer ban one gude man." For it was this particular Scandinavian to whom Eugene Lorrimer had been a "neighbor" at the Land Office the year before. Ole told them how that man had taken his own team and plowed for the boy the requisite number of acres to satisfy the homestead requirements; had helped him to fashion his small shack; had gotten work for him here and there, until now there was a substantial sum to his credit in the bank.

There was more talk of the railroad extension from the east, and also a north and south road. In fact, on his last trip he had carried over a big load of equipment for the surveyors, who were at Appomattox. "O, John," exclaimed Betty, "we're going to have a town at Buffalo Springs, and we'll be rich."

"No, aye tank she go furder west," replied Ole. "Look like both road she cross my lan'. Dat Measure Gilson he want my lan' but aye fool 'em. Most got enough in bank now to prove up."

The long trip over the rough country was exhausting to Betty, but the welcome they received from the Lorrimers was heartening. Nor would their hosts hear to John and Betty going on to their claims until the weather warmed up. "There was a stockman through here a while back looking up prospective purchasers for mules," remarked Lorrimer. "He takes cattle in part payment, and his terms are fair on the balance. Mules are about as hardy as oxen, and we can raise enough grain now for

their winter feed, so I'm inclined to trade with the stockman when he comes by."

So it was that before the Haywoods had gone on to Buffalo Springs, the mule herd had appeared, they had selected their team, swapped their oxen, and, as Betty put it, had put their feet on the second round of the ladder of civilization.

At the Springs they found the Gordon boys with a barrel upon a rude sled. No, they didn't all freeze to death during the winter—almost, though. Their shallow well had dried up and they had been hauling water from the spring. "Major Gilson said he reckoned you all had had enough of this country, and wouldn't be back anyhow. He said that Mike Lafferty had jumped this quarter."

John assured the boys that they were welcome to the water, but that if any Mike Lafferty had jumped their claims, he had another jump coming to him.

Summer comes suddenly to the high prairies of that latitude. One day a snow drift, and almost the next a bank of fragrant wild roses. One day the marrow-piercing wind from the north, the next, white, lazy clouds from the south, with plover piping in the springing grass, and ducks quacking in every snow-water pool. The hundred-acre field was harrowed and sown. The mules were steadily overturning a stretch of rich valley for sod corn. Buffalo Springs was at peace.

They had had a few casual visits from Major Gilson, always friendly. Usually there was some suggestion of political favor, or business connection, which might prove profitable to Haywood. "With the coming of statehood," said Gilson, "there will be at once a schoolhouse erected in every township of the county. The county will need a real school man to supervise the building—at a good salary, of course." Again, the Major brought a proposi-

tion for John to join a syndicate in securing from the government the sale or lease of the Moreau River country, in the Reservation—where the coal beds are. And, notwithstanding John's original distrust of Gilson, Betty felt that her husband's interest was aroused, for when their visitor had gone, John would vigorously oppose Betty's charge that, for some reason as yet covered up, an attempt was being made to bribe him. However, bribery is not always so crude an act as the passing of money; many times it bears the commercial aspect of an exchange of advantage for advantage.

"Schoolhouses in every township, indeed!" stormed the girl. "Where are the children—" and then she grew pink, and hid her face on John's shoulder.

"Anyway, that old villain can't get the Moreau coal land. Those hills are the Indian's best hunting grounds."

"It wouldn't be the first time the red man has had to give up," replied John. "Civilization is on the side of the higher race."

"You mean that when the red man has something that the white man wants, civilization gets it for him, I suppose."

"Well, yes. Something like that," John admitted with a grin.

One evening, about dusk, as Haywood was returning from the field, a woeful-looking wife met him at the spring. "I've found the claim jumper, John, the Mike Lafferty Gilson has kept mentioning. And oh, John, it's just fearful."

"What, Betty, has the rascal been here bothering you?"

"No, no. But I've been over to him. He's been here all the time; I mean on our land; on that corner we never looked at, beyond the hill." And Betty told her pitiful

story. Busy at her work, she had been startled at the appearance of one of the Gordon boys in the doorway, who, without preliminaries, said, "Jack says for you to come now; quick as you can get there."

"Jack who? Where?" demanded the astonished woman.

"Why, sister Jack—Jacqueline—over at the Lafferty's. Woman dyin'."

And it was to that little hut, hidden on the corner of her own claim, that the boy led her. A man on the floor in a drunken stupor; a young woman in the throes of childbirth; no help save the inexperience of the elder Gordon girl. "You looked kind," the latter said to Betty, "and I thought you—but I didn't know that you, too—. Oh, why must woman do all the suffering?"

But the same God who said, "In sorrow thou shalt bring forth," also gives courage and strength and protection to motherhood like nothing else in human experience. And God was there—with the new mother, with the one whose hour also was nearing, with the maiden who dared to be strong for others. And God, and they, saved the babe and the mother.

Late in the afternoon the man had awakened, though still fuddled with the drink, cursing Gilson. 'Twas the Major, he roared, who was the cause of all his troubles. The Major, who had brought them there with the promise to get the land for them, and then pay them a big price for it when the railroad came through. 'Twas the Major, black curses upon him, who had dropped them, and given them never a cent, when the railroad wasn't coming that way.

Betty could not stay—must not. But how could "Jack," either? She would; the young brother would be with her. She would induce Lafferty to go to Appomattox and send a doctor down—if one would come.

That was the story Betty brought home to John. A ghost laid—no more fear of a claim jumper. But a specter revived—Betty had seen her own footprints on the bank of dark waters.

Does lack of forestation deprive a country of sufficient rainfall? or does an insufficiency of rain prevent the growing of trees? What connection is there between the breaking of the soil and an increasing precipitation of moisture? Will trees grow on cultivated land heretofore treeless? Scientists tell us that the soil of the Dakotas—hundreds of feet deep—is formed from glacial deposits; that today the ancient moraines may be traced, and the outlines of the stranded and melting places of the great bergs may be seen on the higher points of the prairies. But who can explain the presence of cedar stumps and logs hundreds of feet below the surface? One thing is sure, they, at least, are safe from the prairie fires, which have been the one deadly enemy to the reforestation of the prairies.

Fire was also the one enemy most dreaded by the early settlers on the last frontier. They soon learned the necessity of fire-breaks—a strip of plowed land surrounding their stacks and buildings—but even these precautions were not always adequate against the storm of flame driven by high wind, especially when it carried those devil firebrands, the huge, rolling "tumbleweeds."

July of this year brought dry weather that made the swales of old, dead grass veritable tinder boxes. Before the coming of the whites it was only the lightning that started the fires, then usually soon quenched by the following rain. But the white man's pipe and careless campfire spread yearly and wide this menace to life and property. The morning came sultry, and before noon a gale from the west was picking up and driving small pebbles, like shot, into the face of Haywood. The mules were

stubbornly objecting to facing the pelting. There was a low-lying cloud approaching, which as it rose, took on a sinister glow. The prairie fire was coming, and the gale was blowing directly toward his home. Could he reach there before the flames? Would the fire-breaks hold them back? He recalled, as he raced through the surging dirt and cutting pebbles, the story of a neighbor, fifteen miles to the south, how his flock of two hundred sheep, on the close-cropped fold-lot, had all perished in a like gale of fire, and how the burning atmosphere, driven through the sod walls of a building, had consumed its contents. He came in sight of his place. The inferno was sweeping toward him with locomotive speed. Nothing could stop it. There was no hope—and then the wind veered. The front of the fire passed two miles to the south. They were saved.

That night John was awakened to make a furious ride to Stone Lake for Effie Lorrimer. But first he must go by the Gordons for a woman to stay with Betty until he could return. No, her daughter, whom Mrs. Haywood asked for, couldn't come, Mrs. Gordon declared. It was not seemly for a young girl to be present in such cases. The girl had already disgraced herself and her family by being at the Lafferty's—acting like a common nigger servant. But would she herself go and sit with his wife until his return? She supposed she could, but it was mighty strange that men never made arrangements for such a time.

Of course Mrs. Lorrimer would come at once. Too bad that Eugene was not there; he was "as good as any doctor," but he had been gone since noon over at the Lafferty's. Mike was seeing snakes and things.

The night passed, and the day was waning, before the cry, sweetest sound in the world, the wail of the newborn, announced to John Haywood the arrival of his son.

CHAPTER VIII

THE THREE PER CENT SHARKS

One of the most industrious, and who bade fair to become one of the most prosperous, of neighbors to John and Betty Haywood, was Joe Carscadden. Unmarried, the young man lived alone in his little claim shack two miles to the north of Buffalo Springs. Alone, but for the dreams of that future to be brought nearer by every hour of faithful toil, when the shack should give place to a home where the blue-eyed sweetheart, left back in Wisconsin, would come to be wife—and mother—and the mistress of the best farm in all this wonderful new land. Already the great day seemed to be in sight. A natural farmer—there are such, men who join untiring energy with a love of the soil—he had wrought so well that his oat crop of this year would easily yield a hundred bushels to the acre. A wonderful sight, that green field, as it grew to heading time.

Perhaps the great mistake Carscadden made was in trying to farm those first two years with horses rather than with oxen. Oxen could secure their own living from the short but nutritious bunch grass, making no demand upon the farmer for grain feed. Not so with horses; they must have their regular rations of oats or corn to be able to do their work—and horse feed, in those first two years, was sold, if not for its weight in gold, at least for a price which should have been prohibitive.

But back in Wisconsin, his matched Percheron grays held a place next to sweetheart Katie in Joe's heart. He could no more think of leaving them and taking a yoke of slow-plodding oxen out to that glorious new farm, which

was to be his and Katie's, than he could think of giving up Katie herself. So the grays and Joe came together in the immigrant car. Katie had loved them even as Joe, and in the loneliness of the great prairie they became a kind of link between him and the absent girl. Reticent, as was his nature in the presence of occasional visitors, Joe would talk to Dick and Barney out of the fullness of his heart, and many were the little shamefaced caresses they received, to be passed on through the spirit to the waiting one back East.

It was inevitable that Joe should run out of money before returns from the first crop came in, and what made matters more difficult, he had, in his intense passion to hasten the realization of his dream of a great farm of his very own, plowed for himself until the season was past when he might have been earning some money by plowing part time for other homesteaders who had no teams.

Joe himself might have kept soul and body together from the little garden, but Dick and Barney must not lose the gloss from their dappled, satiny coats—they must have real feed. And Joe made his second mistake—he sought the 3% loan sharks of Appomattox.

It is true, that the business of the world is carried on through credit and loans. True, that a borrower may reach prosperity through the payment of interest, when capital is wisely invested. True, also, that upon occasion, accident, catastrophe, unforeseen misfortune will demand a borrowing of money to avert an otherwise certain loss. But in the day of the Lost Frontier there was a tribe of business harpies to whom the title of Shylock would be a term of honor—man-eating sharks of the great prairies—robbers of the unwary and the unfortunate. These were the "3%" bankers.

The allowed rate of interest was 12% a year upon contract—and no farmer, however intelligent and indus-

trious, can afford to pay that rate as a business proposition. But even that high rate did not suffice these sharks. Take the typical case of Carscadden: He needed a little money, say fifty dollars, to buy a few bushels of feed for his horses. He would get some plowing to do somewhere and pay back the money in thirty days. The interest on the fifty dollars at 3% a month was added to the principal, and Joe signed a note for $51.50, giving a mortgage on his grays "just for form's sake." When the date of payment come Joe found that he had not half enough earned to meet the note, and the dry weather had put an end to plowing for a while. He called at the loan shark bank, and was greatly surprised at the cordiality he received. "All right, perfectly all right," he was assured. "We'll make you out a new note. Glad to accommodate you. Rains will set in before long, and there will be plenty of jobs for you. Don't worry, we'll take care of you."

So Joe signed another note with the 3% a month added to the principal. And again and again he signed new notes as the months came, each time compounding the interest at 3% a month. Then winter came with the necessity for more feed, and the two tons of coal which the bank urged him to buy, and which he dared not refuse, for they had ordered it at great expense to "protect their customers, and surely their customers would not leave them with the coal on their hands." These amounts swelled the growing principal. Then there was seed to buy in the spring—and the note increased, compounding itself regularly at 3% a month.

You say that Joe was a fool to be caught in such a trap. Maybe; but there were many Joes on the frontier —many fools with their fingers just about to touch the rainbow.

But now Joe saw the end of his long night of worry. The oats were heading—a hundred-acre sea of rolling

beauty. The harvest would bring him not only hundreds of dollars, but up to the thousands—and Katie.

And then the hail came.

One might well hesitate before attempting to describe in sober truth a storm of hail such as was not an uncommon occurrence on the high plateaus of the Dakotas. One likes to retain a reputation for veracity. Who could believe the story of great hunks of ice, many measuring four inches each in diameter, being picked up an hour after the storm? Who could credit the statement that iron castings of reapers were broken as though by sledge hammers, and stock killed as if by butcher? Nowhere are thunderstorms more terrifically grand, and nowhere more potential for destruction.

It was such a storm that suddenly swept down upon the Buffalo Springs valley. Sudden, short, but thoroughly effective in its work. In thirty minutes the coulees held drifts of ice to the depth of several feet. Out on the prairie the tough sod had all the appearance of having been cut deep by the hoofs of a mighty herd. On cultivated fields there was not a vestige of a living thing. Grain and plowed ground were beaten and mixed together as thoroughly as the ancient Egyptians made mortar for their bricks. The writer has seen what he here describes. Saw, as Carscadden saw, the oat field which an hour before had held his hopes of life.

There comes to humanity, in the hour of great calamity, a period when life seems to be thrown back upon the instincts. We continue to exist, and go about the habitual duties, but automatically. The conscious mind seems to step down from its throne for a time, and the subconscious mind takes control. It was in this dazed condition that Major Gilson, from the Appomattox bank, found Carscadden on the day following the storm. It did not take the financier through an extended survey of the

farm to make clear to him that the hour had struck to close up the bank's dealings with the young farmer.

"Tough luck, old man, but it's the bad and good together in life, you know. But of course you have hail insurance. No! Too bad, for I had started down here yesterday just before the storm to notify you that the Eastern party whose money we've been letting out, is calling in all his loans."

Joe looked up dully. "Must have a little more time now. Maybe get work on the railroad. Another year—"

"Oh, my dear man, no. Impossible to extend your note further. As it is, we can hardly come out even on the security—this is the team, isn't it?"

"You mean that you will take my horses; take Dick and Barney away from me?" Joe was wide awake now.

"Oh, of course, we had much rather have the money."

"But I can't. I can't—you see how things are."

"Well, the month is up next Wednesday, and if the money is not forthcoming we shall have to be satisfied with the team. So long; see you later."

Another night of brooding loneliness—and worse, for the young farmer. Who can gauge the battle fought in such a time? who can plumb the despair of a soul? But on the third day, passing neighbors saw Joe at work with team and scraper digging an excavation near the shack. "Fixing to build, Joe?" called one. "I like your grit, after losing your crop that way. Good luck to you." But the excavation was not for the new house.

It was Wednesday, the day upon which Major Gilson had promised to come after Joe's team, that Betty, white-faced, met John as he came home to dinner, exclaiming, "Isn't it awful! John. have you heard? The Gordon boys have just been over with the news. Joe Carscadden has killed his team and himself."

And it was true. The tortured, despairing man, facing the loss of all he had loved and lived for, had made the grays help dig their own grave, had led them into it, placed a rifle bullet in the brain of each, shoveled a light covering of earth over the bodies of his friends, and then, upon their grave had with his own hand fired the shot that ended his life.

The verdict of the coroner from Appomattox was not, "Came to his death at the hands of the 3% loan sharks," but it might well have been. "Betty," declared John Haywood, as he listened to the tale, "this is another count in my indictment against those rascals at the county seat; and another evil of which this fair land must rid itself, if the new state is to have the right kind of start."

"And the new state must have the right kind of a start, John," earnestly responded Betty. "Think how we honor the Pilgrim Fathers, and the founders of the early states, and how later their influence has pervaded the nation. Now in this latter day a new thing is coming to pass under the sun, and we pioneers of the last frontier, you and I, John, are given the privilege of laying the foundations of a commonwealth, a civilization which shall be free from many of the mistakes of our fathers, and safeguarded against the greed which would oppress the more humble toilers. Your long study of economics has fitted you for a great task here, and I see you filling a great place. You know back in the old states people are bound by tradition—family tradition, caste tradition —few of our people daring to act out their real selves. We need an American consciousness to prevail over class consciousness. Yes, I know what you say about there being no such thing as caste in America, but you'll find it, John, the caste of ruthless dollars. Here we have the opportunity of building a new state founded upon righteousness and good will, not upon customs and

notions, good, bad, and indifferent, which we have inherited from generations of ancestors. I believe God is giving us a chance to get rid of some age-old injustices and hoary evils."

"You talk like your friend Lorrimer, Betty, but I guess you are more than half right. Some day I'm going to take a whack at Bat Masterson's whiskey business, and put the fear of man, if not of your God, in that set of thieves at Appomattox."

CHAPTER IX

I WAS SICK AND YE VISITED ME

It was fortunate for John Haywood that the terrific hailstorm which so utterly ruined the hopes of his neighbor Carscadden and others was comparatively narrow in its extent. His own fair fields brought forth abundantly unto harvest. While the neighborliness of the frontier is proverbial, and "swapping work" was the order of the day, as in all new countries, and notwithstanding several farmers, whose crops the hail had harvested, found ready demand for their services, there was an almost tragic lack of harvesters—both of men and machines. Haywood's acreage warranted the purchase of a binder, but try as he would, no men could be found to assist him. The grain was ripening rapidly, and it began to look as if a considerable part of his year's work might go to waste through lack of ability to care for his harvest by himself.

Betty suggested that she drive the binder while John shocked up the wheat, or as much of it each day as he could. But that was not to be considered. Better the grain be neglected than Boy. Betty was thoughtful for a bit, then smiled. "John, do you know the Gordon boys?"

"No, and I don't want to. Shiftless lot."

"All but one, John. Let me try my persuasion."

Next morning while John and Betty were at early breakfast, a slender young man appeared at the door, saying, "I hear you want a hand to drive the binder."

"You're right, I do," heartily replied Haywood. "Have you ever run a harvester?"

"No, but I can drive a team, and I like machinery. I can learn it."

"Well, we'll try it out. You don't look heavy enough to do the shocking, or I'd let you tackle that. What's your name? Your face seems somewhat familiar. Are you one of the Gordon boys?"

"I'm one of the Gordons, and I believe I can do your work."

But not once during those harvest days did Haywood suspect that, through Betty's suggestion, "Jack" had become a boy in the sacrifice of her beautiful hair, and the donning of her father's old coveralls and an old straw hat.

The Pilgrim mothers were not afraid of the implements of the men—axe, rifle, and sickle—no less in the hearts of the women of the lost frontier there dwelt the same high courage.

That summer the route which the railroad would take when it came was definitely settled; not through Buffalo Springs but to the north. And not only did the road begin to build from the east, but a north and south line was located as well, the two crossing at the homestead of Ole Gunderson. Before their coming was made public Ole had "proved up," received his patent from the Government, and was owner of 160 acres of beautifully situated land on the Okobojo. The townsite company, represented by Major Gilson, made repeated attempts to get possession of this tract, but the Norsk boy stubbornly refused to deal with them. Finally the town, Okobojo, was located at the edge of Gunderson's land, to be extended over upon it when the young Norwegian should come to reason.

Haywood met Gunderson one day at the county seat, and Ole told him of his unwillingness to do any business with Major Gilson. "Have you any folks, any people in this country?" inquired John.

"No folk. Fadder, mudder, broder, sister—none. Mr. Lor'mer all folk I got. Lor'mer one gude man."

While they were talking they saw approaching the court house Lorrimer himself, accompanying the county sheriff. To a jesting remark of Haywood about Lorrimer being in company with the officer, the sheriff replied, gruffly, "He is under arrest." The words were like a clap of thunder from a clear sky.

"Why, why—what do you mean?"

"Practicing medicine without authority. Judge Burdick is going to try the case now."

It appeared that the complaining witness was none other than Doc Turley. This fellow Lorrimer was becoming notorious, the witness averred, in his part of the county, and not only was the regular practice of medicine interfered with by his quackery, but the lives of people put in jeopardy. The laws of the Territory were planned to protect folks from just such charlatans.

Witnesses were called to prove specific cases of violation of the law against prescribing or administering medicine without one being registered as a physician. Poor Mike Lafferty was made to acknowledge that Lorrimer had been at his house for two days when Mike had the horrors. Yes, he thought he had been given something to drink that seemed to make him easier, so that he went to sleep. Had Lorrimer presented a bill for his services? No, oh no. He was not that kind of a doctor. Had Lafferty made any sort of return for Lorrimer's service—anything that might be considered payment? No. Well yes, maybe. He had helped stack wheat one afternoon and wouldn't take a cent from Lorrimer for it.

If the prosecution had undertaken to prove that a man could actually be like his Master in neighborliness, and the relief of distress, it could not have taken a different course. True, some of the grateful ones had re-

sponded in kind, with tokens of appreciation, but for the most part it was the service of the Good Samaritan, that had been given without the possibility of material reward. From the scarcely restrained remarks of the packed-in audience, it appeared that things were not going any too well for the prosecution, when the last witness, a gaunt widow from over near Bald Hills, was called.

This was her story: She and her two boys were digging a well. Sandy was down in, using pick and shovel. George and she were drawing up the bucket. They noticed Sandy acting queer, and finally sinking to the floor of the well. The mother and the younger son were frightened, and she let down the younger boy to the other's relief. He reached the bottom, but immediately grabbed the rope and started to climb up, calling "Firedamp!" He, too, dropped to the bottom. The frantic mother was about to go down to her boys herself, when two neighbors came by on horseback. Neither would risk his life in going down the well, so she sent one after Doc Turley and the other for Eugene Lorrimer, who lived not so far away, and who, so she had heard, was as good as any doctor. Lorrimer was not long in coming. He brought a rope ladder, and by holding his breath and coming up a way frequently to catch a bit of air, finally got the boys drawn up. He himself was nigh dead with the gas, but he said, "We'll try to save the younger lad; he was the stronger of the two." He worked with that one for an hour steady, like the boy had been drowned, making him breathe. Seemed like he couldn't give him up. I could hear him once in a while asking Somebody to give him strength. But what could I do? Finally George did gasp by himself, and a little after could breathe regular. Sandy was gone, but she had one boy back. Then Doc Turley got there. Yes, Lorrimer had

given George a bit of stimulant, she didn't know what it was, but it kind of choked one in the nose.

The prosecution of Eugene Lorrimer had gone far enough—too far. It would prove a boomerang to react upon its instigators. The judge, himself bound up with the ring as he was, dared not follow the course laid down for him. He assessed a small fine for the technical violation of the law in the cases where "pay" had been received, and remitted the fine. Then, with a mild injunction to the prisoner to let the doctors do the doctoring hereafter, he dismissed the case.

Haywood warmly shook the hand of Lorrimer, saying, "Man, I'm proud to be counted your friend. I suspect, though, they were striking at me over your shoulder. And if so, I'll run across another chapter later."

When the days of ripe plums had come again, over on the Big Muddy, Betty remembered her promise, given now years ago, to Little Coyote. What a big boy he must be—almost a young man. Something akin to homesickness swept over her for the old life on the Reservation, among her loyal, brown-skin pupils. Her husband, coming in, broke her revery, but gave her a determination. "John, dear, let's take the team and go over to the Big River and visit a day with my old-time friends. Boy has never seen a tree, and we can gather a bushel of plums for marmalade." True, John had not much sympathy with the past of Betty's life which was devoted to teaching the little heathen Sioux, but he was not averse, just then, to a few days' vacation. As they began to descend the great trench which the river had worn, through the ages, some six hundred feet below the prairie, Betty was surprised and delighted to find that their road led alongside Medicine Rock. John's quick interest in that strange natural phenomenon fully satisfied his wife. All about the flat rock—a great slab of limestone, utterly

unlike any of the native rock thereabout—were trinkets, offerings of the Indians to the god of the footprints. Haywood took time to measure and sketch the footprints of the two human beings so plainly impressed in the rock, and heard from Betty the Legend of Medicine Rock. "See, John," she pointed out, "the human tracks *are* upon the bear tracks. It was so—the man and the girl were chasing the bear."

The giant cottonwoods, with their broad, chuckling leaves, were an almost frantic delight to prairie-born Boy. He was constantly reaching up his arms to them. Betty herself was near to tears. "I didn't know I was so hungry for trees. I could just get out and hug every one of them," she declared.

At the river they met another old-time friend, Charlie Bailey, who was in charge of the ferry. At the Agency John was made welcome by Tom Osborne and his wife, and Boy was properly appreciated. Of course, Betty's boy would be the most wonderful child ever born. John found in Tom Osborne something more than the usual political appointee, set over the wards of the nation. He was a man of intelligence, wide reading, and with a sympathetic interest toward his charges. Pointing to one aged Sioux, he asked of Haywood, "Take that old man out from his sordid surroundings, and of whom would he remind you?"

"Well, of a Roman senator, probably. But put a long beard on him, and with those eyes and that forehead and nose, he would be one of the old Hebrew prophets."

"That's it, exactly," responded Osborne. "There's a marked Hebraic, or at least a Semitic, cast to the countenances of the Sioux. Where did they come from? Their legends do not say, except that God—their Great Spirit—created them in the beginning, man and wife. Their story of the creation and of the flood is less farci-

cal, more majestic, than that of the Babylonian Hammurabi, or even that of the later Greeks. Where did they come from, and when? There is no evidence to connect the Sioux with the Moundbuilders, nor even with the cliff dwellers, nor the Toltecs nor Mayas. As to mental capacity they are no whit inferior to the white races with their long line of civilization behind them. In their thinking they are poetical in a high degree. Their language is filled with imagery. Their characteristics are bravery, self-control, faithfulness to tribe and family, and an implicit trust in their personal deity, whose protecting care is apt to foster in them an improvidence in material things. A good foundation there for real manhood."

Seldom are Indians demonstrative in expression of affection, yet the eyes of Little Coyote shone like stars as his beloved teacher, Yellow Hair, took both his hands in hers. "The youngsters miss you, Mrs. Haywood," the Agent remarked. "We have a good teacher now, but not one of the three we have tried since you were here has seemed to be able to enter into their lives, and win their confidence."

"Perhaps it has been because they have not opened the doors of their own lives," replied Betty. "Only those who are 'open hearted' should have much to do with children."

In the soft twilight of the closing day Little Coyote came up leading two ponies, and bantered Betty for a race. Both ponies were without saddles—to be ridden Indian fashion, bareback. The pinto, however, had on a white man's bridle, gloriously fashioned with bead work on hair. Betty looked up inquiringly at the Indian Agent. "It's all right," he smilingly assented, "if you don't go too far away. Just now," and lines of care appeared about his fine eyes, "there is an undertone of restlessness up on

Grand River, where the Old Man is, but it's all right here."

Like the two children they were, the woman and the boy sprang to the backs of the ponies, riding like Indians —no side-saddle affair—shouting and laughing at each other in a sure enough race.

John looked his astonishment, but refrained from expressing his real emotions even when his wife returned the victor. Well had the pinto been named Flying Whirlwind in the expressive Sioux tongue.

Betty started to turn the pony back to Little Coyote, but the lad shook his head. "No mine. You keep. You ride. You think of little Sioux."

And right there, but for placing everlasting disgrace upon the Indian lad, Betty would have thrown her arms about him and kissed him.

CHAPTER X

OLE GUNDERSON DISAPPEARS

Neither John nor Betty was especially pleased, as they returning home, sat down to a late dinner at the hotel in Appomattox, to find as their fellow guest, across the table, Major Gilson. "Too bad," he began, with a crooked smile, "that you didn't get the railroad at Buffalo Springs. Fine place for a town."

John replied that he was satisfied with the outcome, adding, "I hear there will be a junction on the Gunderson tract."

"Yes, I've had it platted, and have arranged to put up some good buildings there in the spring."

"But Ole told me that he wouldn't sell to the townsite company. Had made up his mind to deed the land to his friend Lorrimer, and let Lorrimer take care of the business for him."

"I suppose he did have some such crazy idea, but he had a letter from some of his folks back in Minnesota, and seemed to be anxious to get away, so he took up my really generous offer for the place."

"And you say that Gunderson has left the country?"

"Oh yes, he clipped out in a hurry the next week after I saw you and him together in Appomattox."

John remembered that day, the day of Lorrimer's trial. "But he told me then that he had no relatives in this country or anywhere else."

"Probably some girl case back there. You know how young fellows are," Gilson replied with an offensive smirk toward Betty. "Lots of things going on in the world that don't get into the papers. Trouble is, too many people

lose their heads and blab on themselves. One fellow I knew, a preacher, too, made the woman take an oath on the Bible with him that neither of them would ever tell a living soul. Then in a little while the man got to thinking that maybe the woman was telling on him, so he out and beat her to the confession.

"A cool head and a shut mouth will take a fellow through anywhere. There was a young fellow back east who married his young sister-in-law the next week after his wife died. The mother-in-law got out a warrant against him for perjury in swearing falsely to the young girl's age. When the officer came to serve the paper, the young fellow blurted out, 'I know what you want me for. It's not false swearing; it's for killing my wife—but I never did it.' He had not been suspicioned of killing the woman, but he gave himself away, and they did prove it on him, and he hung.

"Did you ever kill a man, Haywood? No, I suppose not. Your style would be to argue him to death. I was only a kid in the war, but—well, if a man has to, he has to, that's all there is to it. A man would be a fool to kill unless he was forced to, but what's the difference between a man and an ox, after all. I don't take any stock in this bloody-hand Macbeth business. Life is what a fellow gets. If he gets what he wants, spooks don't bother him any. There was a man back in Wisconsin who had trouble with his renters, a father and a son—something about taking down a fence. One day he saw the fence was down again, and the renters plowing corn in a field near by. He took his Winchester along for protection and went down to see about it. Hot words brought on others, and the old renter started toward him with a whiffletree in his hand. What was there for the man to do but stop the renter with a bullet? Then, when the son saw his father fall, he, too, made for the man, but he got

his dose. Of course nothing was done with the man who did the shooting; he was clearly within the law. Yet I heard him say, years after, that he never closed his eyes at night without seeing those two bloody corpses coming toward him.

"The law is mighty smart, of course, but a cool head and a held-in tongue can beat the law every time. Speaking about holding your tongue, those of your sex, Mrs. Haywood, are not always the babblers. Some women can hold their tongues. I warrant there is a thing or two you've never told even your husband. One other woman at least had sense that way. There was a man riding along a country lane with another fellow in the buggy from whom he was trying to buy the farm, which lay along side his own. They had been arguing pretty hot, when the one had got out to let down the bars, passed a bad name to the man in the buggy, as he drove through. There was an old rusty hatchet laying on the floor of the buggy, and in a second the man picked it up and threw it. It split the other fellow's skull. He was so close that some of the blood spattered on his clothes. Near by was the house of a neighbor he was acquainted with, and rather than go home to his wife the way he was, he went there and got the woman, who was alone, to wash his clothes, and lend him an old suit of her husband's. *She never told on him,* and the right man was never suspected, though another fellow came near to being hung for the killing.

"A cool head and a shut mouth, that's what it takes. There was a fellow came through our country, an agent of some kind, he said, and hired the best outfit in the livery stable, with a man to drive him across the country to a town some fifty miles away. That was the last seen of the driver, but a lonely shack by the side of the road they went over burned down that night, and some

boys, raking around in the ashes, found some bones and a belt-buckle, that was afterwards recognized as one worn by the driver. The buggy was located in another state, sold by a man answering the description of the agent fellow. That was the last of it; they never caught him. A cool head and a shut mouth, and come clear."

"But man, that's a horrible philosophy," exclaimed Haywood. "I am not a religious man, as you know, but if even murder is such a simple, safe procedure as you seem to think, and punishment so easily escaped, I would be driven to the belief in a hereafter and a judgment to catch the fellow who escapes here."

"Well nobody is foolish enough any more to believe in the old Hebrew superstition of God, and a judgment, and hell. Why not take what I want and need if I can get away with it. A cool head and a shut mouth turns the trick. The fool that is caught gets what is coming to him."

Betty arose from the table with a face as gray as ashes, saying under her breath, "God is not mocked; whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."

As Haywood followed his wife, Gilson called, "Well so long, folks. See you later; maybe at the judgment." That was the last time they were ever to hear him speak, and the next time they would see him would be at the judgment.

The Haywoods were shocked and disturbed by the strangeness of that chance meeting with Major Gilson; with the unexpected going away of the Norwegian boy, and the unaccountably gruesome subject of the man's conversation. The following day, after reaching home, they drove over to Stone Lake to inquire further about Gunderson. Evidently, the Lorrimers were puzzled at what John and Betty had to tell them. No, they had not known of Ole's going away. "In fact," Mr. Lorrimer

said, "I have been expecting the lad to come and see me ever since I received the letter from him, written at Appomattox the day I had my trial. Here it all is," he said, bringing out from a drawer a large envelope. "As I make out, he felt a distrust in himself to deal with these land people, and offered me a half interest in his place to do the business of platting and selling. He did not seem to think of any other plan than to deed me the whole tract, and trust to my honor for his share. I have not put the deed to record, as I was reluctant even to seem to have an advantage over the lad in such a deal. I was expecting him to come over, when we could go together to the county seat and make a more businesslike arrangement."

"But Gilson claims that Ole deeded the tract to him. If that deed is recorded it will take precedence over yours," said John.

"Of course, and I should not wish to hold Ole to anything against his desire, anyway. But it is difficult for me to believe that the boy has dealt with Gilson. He had an almost—well, crazy abhorrence of the man. The story don't ring true. You say that Gilson has the place already platted? What do you say to driving over and looking around?"

Haywood readily assented, and the two friends made their first visit to the new town of Okobojo. Not only was the grading for the railroads going on, but long lines of plowing indicated streets. Stakes, some bearing the legend, "Sold," showed the lot corners of what would be a typical boom town, when the iron rails were laid. Here and there a tent, or a roughly constructed shelter of boards, marked the beginnings of business operations.

Down close to the stream they found the board shack in which Gunderson had "batched," as he filled in his time on the claim. They found the rough door padlocked,

and the one window nailed up with heavy boards. "I don't know as to my legal connection in this matter, Lorrimer," declared Haywood, "though your deed gives you presumptive rights, but we are going to have a look inside."

As the window was uncovered, the light streaming in showed the interior apparently undisturbed—just as it might have been left any day when Gunderson went to work. Under the bunk was the old-fashioned carpet bag in which the lad had carried all his earthly possessions when he came into the country. The corduroy trousers, in which he "dressed up," were still hanging upon the wall. The room was insufferably close and evil-smelling. "Whew!" gasped Haywood, as he quickly came outside. "Ole must have been in too big a hurry to take care of his meat and vegetables before he went back East."

"Yes," soberly responded Lorrimer. "Everything shows too much of a hurry. I suppose I had better look up the record of Gilson's deed at the county seat, though I imagine everything will be found regular."

And so they found it, in the Book of Records: the deed of Ole Gunderson to Henry Gilson, properly signed and witnessed and acknowledged. Then, following was a second deed from Henry Gilson to the Northwestern Townsite company. Again and again the expression, "A cool head and a shut mouth," kept ringing through Haywood's mind. But where had he heard those words, "And after that the judgment"?

CHAPTER XI

LOST IN THE BLIZZARD

None of the settlers who passed through the great blizzard of 1888 will ever be able to forget the awful experiences of that storm. While its toll of death over the sparsely settled country was heavy, the examples of brave hardihood and heroic rescue, and the marvelous providences of preservation make a thrilling chapter of frontier life.

One settler, who had been to the railroad station for coal, was found, after the storm, standing with one hand resting upon his team—both man and oxen dead. Men were lost and died, not ten rods from their own door. In a score of instances imprisoned school children were kept alive only by the almost superhuman wisdom and exertion of the girl teachers. In other schools, where panic was allowed to enter, the entire school, teacher and little ones, perished in the storm. In one town a rope was stretched from block to block across the streets, and two men, strong and resolute, finally carried it to the schoolhouse. Along this rope, as a life line at sea, the pupils were guided, one by one, to safety. It is one of the incident of that never-to-be-forgotten Christmas time I would tell.

Effie Hayes would not be accounted a striking beauty in these days of movie screens, but were I to paint the picture of the universal mother I should wish the form and features to resemble my remembrance of her. Rather heavier than the average of women, well proportioned, an ivory-like skin, which lighted occasionally with a hint of red, a head regally crowned with a mass of coal-black

hair. To Eugene Lorrimer she came as God's greatest gift to his life—his wife.

True, others had wooed her; none more persistently than Daniel Strong, a man of strange attraction, although considerably her elder. Moved, as Effie was, by his attentions, yet the knowledge of his open scoffing at religion—and the opportune approach of Eugene Lorrimer —saved her from him.

He it was to whom the unsuspecting Lorrimer had turned in his hour of need, and with whom he trusted his business and the care of his family. The business relations gave Strong an excuse for visiting the Lorrimer home during Eugene's absence, and with the heart and wiles of Satan, he sought to establish himself in that paradise. The horror of the young wife, as she understood, closed the door of the home to him, but he could and did take revenge upon the husband's business.

Later, under another name, some said, he had drifted out to the frontier, and rumor had it, was becoming financially and politically important.

Light and shadow intermingle in the lives of all; and while sorrow followed their bright days, joy abode with Eugene and Effie Lorrimer even in their shadow. Of course privations were many in their new home, but these were bravely borne for the sake of the better days ahead for them and theirs. The busy years, lean and prosperous, had moved along, and the sturdy boy, the first-born, now four years of age, filled their hearts with pride and joy, and their daydreams with fond plans.

The day before Christmas dawned mild and pleasant. The soft Chinook wind was blowing through Moreau Gap from the northwest, and as Eugene made ready his team of mules for the trip to the little railroad station twenty miles to the northwest, the little boy, well wrapped in

woolen jacket, leggings, cap and mittens, was playing in the yard.

"Effie," said the father, "let little Daniel go with me. I can be back before dark, and the ride will do the lad no harm."

"But Gene," objected the mother, "I don't like him to go so far away without me."

Effie did not catch the answer of the father, as he bade her good-by, and left the house. A little later, when she looked over the yard, the boy was nowhere to be seen. She hastened down the hill to the barn, but he was not there, nor was there any boyish answer to her call.

"Well," thought the mother, "Eugene has taken him after all. But it is not like him to do that way."

The trip to the railroad was made in due time; the simple gifts and necessities purchased, and Lorrimer began his return. When about half way home his attention was arrested by a peculiar motion of the snow upon the ground. Without any apparent force of wind it appeared to be rising a few inches from the ground, in a dust-like wave, slowly moving off toward the southeast. Soon he became aware of a peculiar, sustained, singing sound—clear, high-pitched, metallic, as the particles of snow rose higher and higher from the ground, and their velocity steadily increased.

Eugene turned and looked back toward the northwest. There it was—the blizzard—as black as night beneath the swiftly approaching blue-gray roll that rode the crest of the storm. The snow dust was now high above the ground, swirling in eddies toward the coming cloud.

Suddenly the man and team were wrapped in a sea of an impenetrable, white, vapor-like, cloud. All the landscape was blotted out. The cold rapidly became intense. The wind surged about them in mighty billows. It was

as if one had been dropped into the very vortex of a tempest at sea. It was not a storm—it was a beating, crushing ocean of thick, white dust. Sight, motion, and breath itself, were to be struggled for, fought for, as one fights for life. Direction was gone; location gone; time itself seemed to have come to an end. No sense was left save that of the necessity of combat; struggle, struggle to keep going; to keep living.

More fortunate that day than some of his neighbors, Lorrimer's home lay in the general direction of the storm, and after what had seemed an endless eternity, the mules came to a stop at the door of their own embankment stable. As quickly as his frozen fingers would permit, Eugene unhitched and put away the team, and with his few purchases started for the house. Again and again ground by the fury of the gale. Finally, by crawling upon his hands and knees, he reached the door.

"Thank God! Thank God, Effie, I feared I never would see you again," exclaimed the husband as he staggered in.

"But the boy, Gene! The boy!" exclaimed Effie, her eyes growing wild. "Where's little Dannie?"

The father stood as one turned to stone. "Is he not here?"

"I thought he went with you."

"My God have mercy," groaned Lorrimer.

The mother sprang to the door and would have rushed all unprotected into the storm, but Eugene caught her. "It would be certain death for you, wife. For my sake, for his, you must stay. I'll go. The God who gave the lad to us has Dannie in His keeping. The Christ who stilled the tempest of Galilee for the poor fishermen, is also the Christ of the blizzard. We can go to Him."

The fruitless search; the long, bitter, sleepless night,

in which they imagined, again and again, they heard the call of the boy in the roar of the tempest; the breaking of Christmas day in unabated storm; were agony unbearable save for the real faith and trust in God that, in this time of their extremity, was the refuge of the stricken father and mother.

When Major Gilson alighted from the early morning train, the depot agent answered his inquiries in the negative. No, none of the Gordons from Buffalo Springs had come in.

"Curse their lazy hides," growled the passenger. "That whole nest of boys wouldn't make one good man."

The agent looked rather queerly at Gilson, for it was common rumor that the Major had allied himself more or less legally with the Gordon family. "Come in and sit by the fire, sir. You can wait here and be comfortable. Some of the boys will be along, if they were expecting you, though it is natural with them to be a trifle late," he finished with a smile.

"No, I'll not wait. I'll walk on by the Carscadden place—tell those infernal fools when they get here." And the Major pushed on south.

Really, walking was not unpleasant, though perhaps, as he soon thought, maybe it would have been best if he had left his heavy buffalo coat at the station. He easily followed the wagon trail across the prairie, but as he met a man with a team of mules he pulled his cap down over his face, and Eugene wondered at the surliness of the lone traveller, and speculated as to his destination. He reached the banks of the Okobojo as the first swirling snow of the storm began to obliterate the track. All at once he stopped. Was that a child's cry? It sounded down under the bank by the creek. No; there could be no child out there; it must have been some wild animal.

Again the cry came, and now he plainly heard the words, "Mamma, come get me."

In a moment the man was over the bank, and at the side of the child. As he gathered the little fellow beneath the great fur coat, in the shelter of the high, overhanging bank, the blizzard broke in all its fury. Soon the snow, drifting over the edge of the breaks above them, had the man and boy enclosed in a sort of cave, whose hard, white walls shut out the fierce wind and bitterest cold. The ground trembled as if beneath the rolling of a heavy freight train, and the man began to realize the awful force and fury of the storm. Surely, but for this shelter to which he had been led by the cry of the child, and for the warmth of the young body next his own, under the fur coat, he, as well as the child must have perished. The child had saved his life.

Once, as the night wore on, the boy stirring uneasily awoke. His dreams had been upon the promised Christmas, and looking up into the Major's face almost covered in the fur of coat collar and cap, he asked, "Are you Santa Claus? My papa says Santa Claus is Jesus."

"No, I'm not Santa Claus," replied the man with a catch in his voice; "and I'm sure I'm not much like the other One, either. But what is your name little man?"

The little fellow, slowly and proudly repeating the lesson he had been so well taught, replied, "My name is Daniel Strong Lorrimer."

"Effie Hayes' son! and they named him for me. Oh God," breathed the man in the first prayer that had passed his lips since childhood, "let me live through this to save the kid."

The night passed, and as Christmas Day came through the beating of the snow to the snow cave, so the Peace that was to be for all mankind came knocking, knocking at the heart of Daniel Strong—but found no entrance.

The child was often restless, and fretted over the long confinement, and the man's every muscle and bone was cramped and aching, but neither of the prisoners was freezing. After noon there was an appreciable lull in the blast, and Strong arousing the lad, asked, "Which way is home, son?"

"There, by the lake," replied the little fellow, pointing to the east. "Mamma's there, and papa—and the mules. I want to go home," and he began to sob.

"Well, Dannie, you hold close to me under the coat, and we'll try to find mamma—and papa."

He who sanctified the Christmas Day by becoming a little Child, cares very tenderly for His little ones. His angel surely attended the steps of the man carrying the child that day. Lorrimer was already preparing for another search through the storm, hopeless though he felt it to be, when there was a sound of something falling heavily against the door. Effie sprang to open it, and the apparently lifeless form of a man pitched inward upon the floor. Instantly the great coat was loosened, and at the voice of the living child, the cry of "Dannie!" and a second cry of "Daniel Strong" rang through the house, the shocked tones mingling with the voice of thanksgiving.

Tenderly Lorrimer and his wife ministered to the man who had once made himself their enemy, but who now had well nigh given his own life in saving their son. Tenderly through the night and the day following, as the storm still beat over the little home, they assured him of their forgiveness, and pleaded with him to seek the compassionate Saviour, whose mercy had surely protected him from the fury of the tempest. Again and again he seemed upon the point of yielding, but finally a hardening of the face showed the battle lost.

"I have known you were out here, and have been trying to keep out of your way, though I supposed I'd sometime run across you and have it out. I laid my course years ago, and I'll not take the back track. The road is too long and too crooked. I can't make it. I'm glad I found your boy; maybe it will be something to think about when things get black. I wronged you, Lorrimer, and would have wronged you worse. Such things men don't forgive."

"No, not unless they have found Jesus," replied Eugene. "Then one forgives as he is forgiven."

"Not for me. I'll go my own road. But," Strong finished with a wry smile, "try to remember if you should see me or speak of me that I am 'Major Gilson,' and not Daniel Strong, out here."

"Your past is safe with us," replied husband and wife, as they sadly bade him farewell.

CHAPTER XII

WHATSOEVER A MAN SOWETH

We are accustomed to think of the tornado (popularly miscalled cyclone) as a modern institution, but the oldest literature of the world gives a description of its work. The writer of Job thus chronicles:

> "Behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead."

No locality, nor any season, seems to be wholly exempt from these twisting demons of the air, although the "wilderness," the treeless, superheated areas of desert, plain and prairie, seem most subject to their visitation. If such areas are the home of the cyclone, it were well that they stay at home, for when they visit inhabited districts, even great cities, their force for destruction is second to no other power of nature, unless, perhaps, the earthquake.

Generally traveling from southwest to northeast they seem to have a partiality for water courses, as a river will frequently draw them aside from their way. Wonderful stories are told of the pranks played by these giant twisters, so heavily charged with electricity. One which came up in the night, took the house from over the bed of an old woman, lifted her with her featherbed and mattress under her, up carefully, and deposited her unharmed in a field half a mile away. Two farmers were riding home from work, when the twister struck them. The horses and men were killed, and the clothing stripped from the men, save a paper collar about the neck of one

man. At another time, a hen in the chicken yard was stripped of her feathers, but otherwise unhurt. In the city of St. Louis, many large buildings seemed to explode from a force within, the walls falling outward.

On the Pacific coast one may hear said of a still, sultry day, "This is good earthquake weather." So, on the uncultivated plains, the expression was coined, "This is good weather for a cyclone."

Such a day came to the Buffalo Springs country in the late spring following the winter of the great blizzard. About three o'clock in the afternoon, two separate storm clouds, which the Haywoods had noticed rising in the southwest, seemed to lean toward each other, and gradually unite in one black, swirling mass. The lower edge of the cloud was distinct, and below could be seen a strip of clear sky. Soon the cloud seemed to sag from its straight lower line, until it finally became funnel-shaped. From the lower end of this funnel came forth a solid-appearing, rope-like cloud, doubling and twisting, and reaching down. At once its inverted counterpart arose from the ground, united with it, and the cyclone was at work.

"John, it's in the direction to come near us, if not hit us. See, it seems to be standing still, but growing bigger," exclaimed Betty as they watched its formation. "What shall we do?"

"There is just one place of possible safety, if it should hit here," replied Haywood, "and that is the hole where we have been digging for the root-cellar. The side toward the storm would give a degree of shelter from its force. We may be drenched with water and plastered with mud, but there is no safety in the buildings."

So down to the shallow excavation they went, and stood by its side ready to jump in, should the twister hit their place. But while the wind was mighty, and the rain

fell in torrents, and after the rain the hail, the swirling destruction passed half a mile to the west, and they and their buildings were saved; though not their crops.

As they stood watching the snake-like cloud which was so easily observed because of the strip of clear sky behind it, it seemed at one time to stop and go back, as if to finish up some work before passing on. "That's in the direction of the Junction," remarked Haywood. "They're getting it bad over there."

In their immediate vicinity no one was killed, though many of the claim shacks were destroyed. A house a mile away was picked up bodily, carried a dozen rods, and set down without breaking a dish upon the table. Half an hour after the storm had passed, a panel of a door fluttered down from the sky, and fell at the feet of the Haywoods.

The day following the storm they were visited by Eugene Lorrimer, who came to be assured of their safety, he said, but the fact of their escape did not seem to remove the lines of anxiety from his face. Questioned, he admitted that he was bothered about a matter, and said that he had thought of driving over to Gunderson's place at the Junction, again. He pulled from his pocket an old-country "turnip" watch that Ole had carried. "When the lad first came out here, he was so utterly without friends, and had such difficulty in making himself understood, that I feared he might unwittingly get himself into trouble. So I put a slip of paper in the back of this old watch, saying that in case of trouble or accident I was to be notified.

"Two weeks ago I had a letter from a jeweler down in Blount, that he had purchased a watch from a man last fall, describing this piece. He said that a customer, a collector of some sort, had seen it in his show case, and wished to purchase it. He had opened the case to ex-

amine the works, and had found the slip of paper under the outside cover. He did not know that any present meaning would attach to it, but thought it best to notify me. I drove down to Blount, and secured Ole's watch."

"Was it Ole who had left it there?"

"No," replied Lorrimer.

"Did you ever get a description of the man who did leave it?" persisted Haywood.

"Yes, and I'm afraid that I know him," sadly replied his visitor. "Would you mind driving with me over to Gunderson's shack again?"

Haywood, himself anxious to find some further clue to the mystery of the disappearance of the Norwegian, assented. It was a scene of desolation that met their eyes when they reached the new town of Okobojo. Not a building had been left unharmed, and many were completely wrecked. Of the claim shack of Ole Gunderson, not a trace was to be found—roof, and sides, and floor—every board was gone. As the two men walked across the site of the little house, Haywood kicked with the toe of his boot at a muddy piece of heavy cloth sticking up from a slight depression in the ground, where the floor had been. The piece of cloth did not come loose—seemed to be part of some garment or blanket deeply imbedded in the ground. A pull by both men did not bring it out. "Strange," said John. "Wonder what Ole had buried under his floor."

"I'll borrow a shovel from those men working over there," replied Lorrimer. And there was that in the face of the one who had been a friend to Gunderson, that brought the men following him back to see what the shovel might reveal. A few shovelfuls of dirt brought forth a rusty hatchet. One of the men standing by exclaimed, "I know that hand axe. I've seen him driving stakes with it."

"Gunderson, you mean?" asked Haywood.

"No," was the reply. "Gilson."

A little further, and the mystery of the disappearance of Ole Gunderson was solved. Skull cleft with the hatchet, rolled up in the heavy carriage robe with which Major Gilson had wrapped himself on his long rides, the body had been hastily placed in a shallow grave beneath the floor of the shack, to await the judgment—but the cyclone had come first.

"It was Daniel Strong—I mean Major Gilson," stammered Lorrimer, "who was described as the man who sold Ole's watch in Blount. How could this have happened! Strong—Gilson, was not the man to commit murder in cold blood, though he would not hesitate to take advantage afterward. No, he would never plan a murder. There must have been trouble between them. Ole was very impatient with him. There must have been words, and probably blows."

John remembered his fellow guest at dinner in Appomattox.

There is no defense for a mob, though there may be explanation. There is no defense for an act which takes darkness for its shield, or hides behind a robe and mask. These are enemies of society, of the peace and safety of every man, even as is the crime which gives them their excuse. Major Gilson—Daniel Strong—was arrested, and taken to Blount for safe keeping, but that same day swift riders went north, and east and south, with a message. Before the coming of another day, fifty men, heavily armed, surrounded the jail in which the prisoner was kept. The outside door was battered down with railroad ties, and the jailer persuaded to give up his keys to the inner cage.

An unused telegraph pole lay by the side of the building. This was propped up against the jail; there, the ris-

ing sun found dangling from a rope-end, what had once been a man with "a cool head and a shut mouth," but whom Judgment had found.

On the cot in the cell from which the mob dragged the doomed man, the jailer next morning picked up an envelope inscribed, "Send this to Eugene Lorrimer, at Stone Lake, up in DeSoto county." Within were two scraps of paper, torn from a notebook. One contained the following scrawled words, evidently hurriedly written in pencil:

> "I can hear the mob outside, raging like a pack of wolves. They'll get me. The jailer is scared stiff. Whatever possessed me to take that Norwegian's watch, I don't know—no more than I know why I am spending my last 'precious moments' writing to you. The Gunderson deed was faked, of course. You win. I have $25,000 in the Leffleman bank at Appomattox. I have made a check for it on the other scrap of paper. The little Jew will give it to you—but you may have to make him. So long. See you later.
>
> I forgot. The little Gordon girl and the kid—"

There the writing ceased, as the leaf had been hastily torn from the notebook, and thrust into the envelope.

It was perhaps well for Haywood's peace of mind, that a few days after the storm, while he was lamenting the loss of his crops, he received a letter from his University. One of the faculty employed for the summer session, had, at the last moment, failed them. Could, and would he, their former teacher, so fully competent and highly respected, consent to help them out of their dilemma? Of course, the remuneration would be satisfactory.

"But I'd have to leave you and Boy here alone, Betty," objected Haywood, as his wife urged his acceptance.

"As if we weren't able to care for ourselves. We have the Laffertys, and the Gordons, and I might even visit the Lorrimers. You know I have Pinto, too, John. Besides, the salary would be an object."

Betty's show of bravery did not wholly deceive her husband. He knew that behind the high courage lay the shrinking dread of the weeks of loneliness, that even now was beginning to creep into his own heart.

"Remember, my husband, that our foremothers sent their men away to do battle for their homes. Are we not as truly doing battle for our frontier? I shall be lonely, yes, and so will you. But we will look to the future and be happy still."

The decision to go was quickly made, and at once put into effect. At the rise of the hill John turned and looked back toward his home, shadowed in the side of the bluff. The lamplight, streaming from the room, wove a crown of gold upon the head of the little woman, framed by the open doorway, smiling bravely, as she waved farewell.

CHAPTER XIII

THE LAST RIDE OF SITTING BULL

The two months at the University had passed all too slowly to John Haywood. True, the ever cheerful, always hopeful letters from Betty had, in a degree, held in check his uneasiness on her account, and mitigated his own loneliness, but now, as the slow-moving accommodation train, mixed freight and passenger, rolled into the terminus of his railroad journey, he chafed at the thought of the trackless miles which yet separated him from his wife and babe and little home. Home! home! home! Would he be fortunate enough to find someone traveling in that direction on the morrow? Dare he go to the expense of hiring someone to carry him on that day's journey to the north? Well, tomorrow he would see what might be the favor of the gods.

"Say, mister, you've got a claim east of the Agency, haven't you?" propounded the proprietor of the shack hotel as John was eating his supper.

"Yes. Why do you ask?"

"Well, there's some pretty skeery rumors comin' from up that way. Maybe no truth in 'em though. Folks is always gitten scared. But Bailey, from up yander was through here this evening on his way from Cheyenne Agency to Ft. Pierre, travelin' light, and he seemed to be in a mighty hurry. Maybe some truth after all, that old Sitting Bull is on another rampage."

"What!" exclaimed Haywood, starting up, his face growing ashen. "Old Sitting Bull? Why, my claim is less than twenty miles from his camp. And the Indians—"

"Yes, Tom Osborne, the agent, has been having trouble aplenty with 'em lately, and we hear they've the settlers in your county all up to Appomattox, and got 'em corralled there. That is, all that got away."

"My God! Betty alone with those red devils." And Haywood started toward the door.

"Say, mister, wait. You won't do no good by yourself, even if the rumors are true. Some of them rovin' bands will sure pick you up. There ain't an outfit in town just now to take you, anyway. Better wait here till we see how things is goin'."

But there was no rest for John; no waiting. Betty might even now be standing off the savages, expecting every moment his return. She would be one who would fight to the last. It might not be too late, even yet. At the urging of the hotel keeper, he armed himself with a good revolver, and then, in the dusk of the falling night, set out on his fearsome journey. Deflecting a little to the westward from his due north course, he sought the narrow valley of the Okobojo, that under the protection of its low bluffs, he might make his way to Buffalo Springs —and what?

Foolish to run; his lungs wouldn't stand that. How soft he was; how the summer at the University had robbed the hardiness from his limbs. Trot and walk; trot and walk—until strength is gone, then lie flat on back. Up again, trot and walk; trot and walk.

What was that cry ahead of him, yelling like a thousand devils? Only coyotes, of course. How calm the stars were overhead; how like glowing eyes, unheeding, unmoved, mocking in their remote security.

"O Betty! stand them off a few hours longer." Maybe the Indians had not come so far south as his home. But no, the Springs was the one place where the red men

were always sure of finding water. They would camp there for the sake of their ponies.

How like leaden bars his legs had become—feeling in them actually gone. He could keep them going now only by strong force of will. "Betty! Betty!" Oh, if he could make her hear and understand that he was coming.

No more running; not much more than crawling now. Had time stopped? Had he been traveling through an eternity? He had heard the church folks tell of an eternity of suffering; was this hell itself into which he had been thrust?

He stumbled over a low badger mound, and lay prone for an age. No! he *must not* rest. "Betty!" O God save my wife from the red fiends." What was that! *He had prayed to God!* Maybe there was a God. How helpless humanity is, after all, without a God. Somehow he felt strengthened, and he cried again, "O God, if there be a God, have pity on me and help me in my helplessness."

The east was growing gray. Venus hung like an arc light, harbinger of day. Familiar objects in the landscape began to attract his notice. That wide valley off to the right would be Stone Lake. Ahead, was the narrows between the bluffs, where he had dreamed of some day throwing across a dam, impounding storm water for an irrigation plant.

Every breath now a sob; every step an accomplishment of the impossible. Betty, Betty! Yellow-haired Betty. Yellow hair—what was that he was trying to remember? Yellow hair, that was Custer, of course. Sitting Bull had taken the scalp of that long, yellow hair. Then, like an arrow piercing his soul, he remembered Betty's tale of the old Medicine Man; his words, "Yellow Hair gave me one; two will make a rope for my girdle."

A shaft of red light from the rising sun fell upon the

house by the side of the Okobojo just as the man came in sight of it. Thank God, it was not a smoldering ruin. No smoke was rising from the stovepipe through the roof; there were no signs of life about the place. Staggering up he flung open the door with a cry more like that of a stricken animal than a man, "Betty! Betty!" There was no answer. No wife, no baby. Gone! Rushing toward the barn, in further hopeless quest, he caught sight of moccasin tracks in the dust by the path. "Indians! They have come!"

And the sun went out of the heavens for John Haywood, as he fell prone upon the earth.

It was in that condition that Eugene Lorrimer, riding over on Betty's "pinto" to see that the stock was cared for, and the home unmolested, found him a few minutes later.

And then, with the return to consciousness, and the assurance of safety of his wife and boy, the heart of the sorely tried man again broke forth in prayer, "Thank God! Thank God!"

Are there those who do not really believe in God? I suppose so. That small number who have so resisted His approach that their minds, as well as hearts, have become so darkened that they have been given over to believe a lie and be damned. But I am convinced that much of the infidelity of the day is insincere—is no more than a gesture of impatience at the conviction of their sins by the faithful Spirit of grace. I have, a few times, seen such avowed infidels suddenly brought face to face with death, and in each instance I have heard fervent cries break forth to the God whose very existence had just been denied.

It was true that old Sitting Bull, still smarting under the ignominious defeat at Wounded Knee, had again planned a foray upon the settlements to the east of the Mis-

souri River, but the elder warriors, those who had followed the great leader into Canada and back, were disheartened. The white man's medicine was too strong. A few of the young bucks rallied to him, but not many of them. The influence of the teaching in the Indian schools at the agencies was having its effect. Too many of the youth, like Little Coyote, had already turned their backs upon the Old Time, and were living in the New Day.

But the Reservation had seethed with hidden excitement as old Sitting Bull's efforts were being made. Finally it became known that the day for the outbreak was set—known to the authorities at the Agency as well, and effective precautions were taken. The heart of Little Coyote, however, was sorely troubled; should his people leave the Reservation upon their stroke of vengeance, their path would lie by Buffalo Springs, and his beloved Teacher, she of the Yellow Hair, would be of the first to feel the tomahawk and scalping knife. She must be warned. The twenty miles were not too long a run for an Indian lad. He could make his return more leisurely, and be back in camp before being missed.

So it came to pass that the moccasin tracks in the dust by the cabin of John and Betty Haywood were not those of a savage foe, but of a loyal, brown-skinned friend. Under the advice of Little Coyote, Betty had caught up the pinto, the Indian lad's gift to her, and had taken her boy over to the coulee-hidden home of her neighbors, the Lorrimers.

The patience of the Government had been exhausted by this last act of treachery of the old leader of the Sioux, and orders came to the Indian Agent to arrest him, and confine him behind bars at the Agency. A less wise administrator than Tom Osborne might have blundered into a tragic situation in the carrying out of the order of the Secretary. To have sent a detachment of white soldiers

to arrest the old Medicine Man, would, without doubt, have precipitated a bloody conflict. This was to be a job for the loyal, brown-skinned Indian police. And not for a large force of them either—one man should carry out the order, and that one would be Kicking Horse, son of Standing Elk and father of Little Coyote.

There was no welcome in the eyes of the older Indians, and in the faces of the younger bucks glared open hostility, as the blue-clad police entered the encampment at Grand River. To his demand that he be taken to the wigwam of Sitting Bull, no attention was at first paid. But with the patience and dignity of authority the messenger seated himself, and addressing the crowd about him, said, "See, I come unarmed, not as an enemy to foes, but in the light, unafraid, as a friend. I come not speaking the feeble words of Kicking Horse, that the breath of the prairie might brush away, but my voice is that of the Great Father, that thunders in the clouds. Tatanka Yotanka is not a papoose to put his fingers in his ears in fear of the words of friend or foe. He will hear. I have spoken."

The speech had its effect, and the messenger was led into the presence of the old warrior. For long moments there was silence—no recognition of the presence of the visitor by the old man. Finally, there came one word, "Speak."

Slowly, solemnly, impressively, Kicking Horse began his message: "Tatanka Yotanka, your medicine has failed. No longer will the warriors of the Great Sioux answer to your rallying cry. You have reached the end of the trail. The pale-faced moon rises in the east—the red-faced sun goes down in the west. At Spirit Lake, at Shetek, your hand was heavy upon the whites; but they pushed on around you across the Dakota, up to the Big Muddy. You ate the heart of Yellow Hair, and your

knife lifted the scalps of his brave men. You have answered treachery with treachery, broken word with broken word. You would rise yet and strike again? You rise, but you stand alone.

"The Little Father at the Agency has sent me to bring you to him. You go—today, tomorrow, later, but go you will. The free winds of the plains enter not the house of the iron bars; the shouts of the young men, the songs of the maidens, are not there. The eagle's wings are not fitted for a cage. The Happy Hunting Ground welcomes the unconquered. Tatanka Yotanka, you go—which way?"

Again long minutes passed, the old man staring off into space. Slowly, at length, he raised his lion-like head, and called sharply a command. Two young bucks who had been standing close to the entrance, entered the wigwam. "Prepare my pony with travois poles. I go to the Little Father with Kicking Horse. Let no hand be raised; no word be said." Turning to the Indian police he said, "Leave me. I prepare for the journey."

Ere the travois poles were fastened to the pony, a single shot was heard in the tent of the Medicine Man, and it was but the mortal shell of old Sitting Bull that accompanied Kicking Horse to the Agency.

Judged fairly by those standards with which patriots and military heroes are measured, Tatanka Yotanka, Sitting Bull, might be ranked among the great men of history. To be sure, he fought a losing fight—so did Lee. The march of civilization was against both. But I can imagine that the same purposes stirred the heart of that savage that ruled the actions of the Prince of Southern Gentlemen. Why did the young man of twenty-five rally his people at Lake Shetek? To drive back the invading aliens from their beloved Minnesota lakes and prairies. Why, defeated there with terrible reprisals, did

he descend upon the settlement at Spirit Lake and leave utter destruction? That he might check again the advancing tide oncoming through Iowa from the south. Why, driven across the Missouri, did he war against other tribes? Because they would make peace with the common foe. Why, harried and driven even across the line into Canada, did he rise again and again? Because he had the soul even of a Washington, and would not let his heart break. Treacherous? Yes, even as the old Hebrew warriors. Cruel? Even as the rules of warfare among his people. No pen will be taken to laud his deeds, no voice raised to sing his honor, but in another age and with clearer vision, he would be placed with the great of earth.

CHAPTER XIV

WE HAVE FOUND HIM OF WHOM MOSES AND THE PROPHETS SPAKE

The night of supreme physical and mental stress, as John Haywood returned to his home, was also one of spiritual self-revelation. In his distress he had called to One outside himself. Had he come to believe in a personal God? At least his unbelief was broken. It was to a mind and soul spiritually bruised and without a resting place, that Eugene Lorrimer, with love and tact and wisdom, ministered.

There is this about false doctrine, that it tends to incapacitate one for the acceptance of truth. I was talking with a graduate student of one of our state universities today, and was told of the attitude of one of their famous professors toward the supernatural contained in our Bible. As a man, he was pleasing in his personality, attractive and popular. As a scholar, he had attained distinction, but toward the knowledge which we, who have come into vital contact with Christ, possess, he manifested not merely the unbelief of the unconvinced, but the contempt of ultimate denial. Nothing short of the dynamite of the Holy Ghost can make an impression upon such an one. No argument can.

John Haywood had lived long in such a condition, but the dynamite which unhorsed Saul of Tarsus had likewise profoundly unsettled the man on the midnight Okobojo road. "I don't understand myself," he admitted to Lorrimer. "I had utterly rejected the supernatural in my thinking, and now I am forced to confess that in my terror and despair over my wife and babe I

prayed. Now I'm going to be honest all the way through —I did not call upon God of Law—a First Great Cause —Nature's God—my cry in that hour was a recognition of relationship I have refused to believe existed. Helpless need confessed itself, and in that act, it seems to me now, also confessed All-powerful Love."

"My brother," quietly spake Lorrimer, "you are close to the gates of the kingdom. You have discovered the very heart of Christianity. Helpless need, through Jesus Christ, comes into the very presence of All-powerful Love."

We are told by wise ones that our Christian religion —salvation—is not mathematically demonstrable; that faith is supposition. Be that as it may, it is logical without a flaw. Given the major premise of a God of love, and for a minor premise man with the power of moral choice, and Christianity is a necessary conclusion—miracles and all, from Virgin Birth to Resurrection, and the infilling of believers with Divine Personality at their Pentecost.

Not at once was Haywood able to lay hold on all these certainties. Like Nicodemus he said, "How can these things be?" but like the ruler of the Jews, his attitude toward spiritual things changed, and he became a "follower" even like Nicodemus, at first afar off. It was fortunate, or shall we say, in the providence of God, that his wife had already, through the ministry of Eugene Lorrimer and his wife Effie, come to know God through His revelation in Jesus Christ.

I was asked today how one might approach an intelligent, educated Hindu on the subject of Christianity; what system of philosophy would be best suited to carry the argument; what analogies might be traced between his religion and ours; what facts of our civilization might be urged to show the superiority of Christianity. My answer

was to quote Stanley Jones. "It is not so much that which passes as Christianity today, as it is the Person of Jesus Christ, that people need. It is only through Him that mankind can see God, and through Him they can know that God is unmeasured Love."

Christianity is successful in any age, among any people, when it is presented in terms of Jesus Christ. It is a farce, or a tragedy, where the name carries with it no spirit of self-sacrifice. There is no argument against Love. It was not only the teaching of the Lorrimers, it was that Love incarnated in their lives, that brought Betty into the wonderful knowledge that Jesus himself, in His atonement, had provided an experience for those who would be His disciples, in which the old self-demanding, self-glorifying life would die, to be replaced by a love so like His own that whosoever yielded himself to this transformation would be able to re-present Him in their daily lives. Not, to be sure, in the manifestations of His deity, but in the unselfishness of service—in Perfect Love.

Betty had neglected her Bible during her college and teaching years, but now it became to her a wonderful, a precious book. Especially, the unfolding, by the great apostle Paul, in his letters, of the possibilities of the Christ life—in the life of a Bible Christian—enchanted her. The new experience could not but manifest itself in the home. While John admitted to himself the subtle change in his wife, it filled him with a strange uneasiness. It seemed that Betty's very presence put him under a sort of condemnation, and his reaction to the vague accusation of his own heart was at times unkind. But after that night of great terror, the wife saw the time had come when she could take a definite step toward the home of righteousness she had determined upon. The next morning after their return home, the fear of the Indian up-

rising having passed, Betty came to her husband, holding out the Bible, saying, "John, you know that I have become a Christian. May we not have a Christian home in which to bring up Boy? Shall we not set up a family altar?"

Haywood took the Book in his hands, stammering, embarrassed. "But, Betty, I don't know how to be a Christian."

"You can read, John."

"Yes, I can read, but you pray, Betty."

The Holy Spirit directed the reading, and the Holy Spirit breathed through the wife the effectual fervent prayer. It was not many days before the shadows of infidelity and skepticism began to lift from the mind and heart of John Haywood, though even yet he felt that he had not reached the place of a "Bible Christian."

Improvement slowly began to show in and about the home of their neighbors up the Okobojo. While "Colonel" Gordon, as he was called, being a Virginian gentleman-born, was not to be diverted for any length of time from his beloved books, the boys had in a degree responded to the wise management of their eldest sister, and had, with her active participation, a goodly number of acres of their own under cultivation. To supplement the family income, the boys, and "Jack" herself, took jobs of plowing, or putting up hay, or harvesting—anything which youngsters with a team might do. The younger girl had, under the pressure of the mother, married Major Gilson. That is, a wedding ceremony was performed by a justice of the peace at Appomattox, but so far the Major had not found it convenient to start housekeeping at the county seat. Even after the arrival of the baby, the young wife remained with her mother. Gilson came and went as his pleasure or business demanded.

A warm friendship developed between Betty and Jacqueline, for it had come about through Betty that the younger woman found the support of the Inner Strength promised to those who put their trust in the Man of Nazareth.

The Haywood farm at Buffalo Springs grew apace. A comfortable house replaced the first home in the side of the hill, and the first real building, the one in which Boy had been born, was now fitted up for a granary. To John there was exhilaration in turning over the mile-long furrows of rich brown soil. He found that even in that northern climate cattle throve upon the nutritious bunch grass, and, given a place of shelter during the severest storms, would require little other feed throughout the year. He bought calves from his neighbors, and as the years came, acquired a respectable herd of cattle. One peculiar thing he did—that is, peculiar for one of his antecedents—he took time to "break in" steers. That is, to train young oxen to work. These, when broken to the plow and wagon, brought good prices.

His neighbor Lafferty he employed regularly upon the farm, and, except for rare periods of sprees, Mike proved a valuable workman. Boy, now two years old, was never satisfied away from his father. He literally "put his hand to everything." Whatever he saw his father do, that must he attempt. His favorite expression was, "I do, I do." To get his father's "vip," and with strings for lines, to drive mules, would yield amusement for hours. But sometimes it would be possible for John to take Boy with him upon seeder or riding plow, and then the lad was in the height of glory, with his hands *ahead of his father's* on the lines.

But it was neither his home nor his farm that absorbed the entire attention of John Haywood. Politics had always attracted him, and if his studies had made

him somewhat an idealist, the practical workings of government were not outside his understanding. It was evident that a combination of "practical" politicians was in control of affairs in the county—not always to the interest of others than themselves. If the new state-to-be should start with a foundation of better things, the predatory politics of the county politicians must be overthrown by the active interest of citizens who would have at heart the welfare of the whole.

The first opportunity of the citizenship of the last frontier to begin this building for righteousness would come in the convention to draft a Constitution for the State, and in the county convention to select delegates. Haywood determined to begin the program he had laid out for himself. To his amazement he found that in this gathering of the settlers at the county seat his own name was being used as a prospective member of the state convention. And his wonder grew as he was approached with the suggestion that the "boys," under certain conditions, would look with favor upon his election to that position. The "boys" had sent him to invite Haywood to a conference. Still wondering, John went. It appeared that the "boys," recognizing possibilities in Haywood's popularity, had determined to profit thereby, and make use of it, rather than precipitate a fight. Haywood could go to the Constitutional convention—and here would be the balance of the slate: Leffleman, the banker, would go to the State senate, Doc Turley to the Legislature—and so on down the line. The "boys" would elect Haywood to the great honor of helping to form the Constitution for the new State, and he in turn would work in harmony with the "boys."

It is no mean honor to participate in the forming of the fundamental law of one of our commonwealths, and the farmer from Buffalo Springs did not despise the op-

portunity. But to pledge himself to a coterie of politicians whose only interest in humanity was the dollars to be had in its exploiting was more than Haywood could undertake. Like a flash he remembered Carscadden and his vow. He would not go to the Constitutional convention, but he would go to the Legislature, and give the full strength of his manhood to the inauguration of such laws as would protect the honest, industrious homemaker against the oppression of the rapacious. He would refuse to come to any terms with the county seat schemers, but it was not yet time to lay open his own plans for the future.

"No, gentlemen," said Haywood with a smile, "I am not a candidate today, but if you want a really good man for the Constitutional convention, I'll nominate him—Eugene Lorrimer."

His proposal was greeted with a roar of laughter. "What! Sanky Lorrimer? Jesus Christ in politics. Why, he'd put the Ten Commandments and Sermon on the Mount in the Constitution."

"Probably make it a crime to cuss when we got mad, or smoke a pipe on Sunday," said another. "But seriously, Haywood, we have come to you in a friendly spirit. You'd better think over our proposition."

The fight was on. That county convention was the first skirmish of a long line of battle by the men of the last frontier for the establishing of a state safeguarded against ancient oppression. And Haywood won in that first test of strength; and Eugene Lorrimer as a member of the Constitutional convention helped to make possible the defeat of the saloon power. But from that day John Haywood was a marked man in the councils of the forces of evil.

At the Constitutional convention the friends of state prohibition selected twelve men from over the state to

draft a law to put into effect the prohibition proposition attached to the Constitution, should both carry in the election. As one of this committee John Haywood was named, and was notified that the session would be held in Huron late in the fall.

As relatives at Lake Shetek, in Minnesota, had urgently called for the Haywoods to spend the bitter months with them, John and Betty timed their departure so that they could attend the Huron meeting on their way. A generation later John was to look back upon this occasion as one of the important events of his life. There he was associated with those who became the outstanding men of the new state. The final draft of the law was to be made by Tom Sterling, who later was to represent the state for many years in the United States Senate. The decision of the committee was that the following program be recommended to the voters: Tom Sterling, the young attorney, to go to the State Senate and have charge of the bill there; while the young farmer, John Haywood, should go to the Legislature, to perform a like service.

In the course of time this program was carried out, but during the winter at Lake Shetek an incident occurred which nearly put an end to the career of the young farmer from Buffalo Springs.

CHAPTER XV

WINTER ON LAKE SHETEK

October brought a flurry of light snow which quickly disappeared under the soft-blowing Chinook wind from the northwest. A golden haze overhung the world—the smoke from the age-long burning of the lignite coal beds of the Bad Lands rising high to drift to the east. Those sections of the country whose seasons do not embrace an "Indian Summer" must forever be classed as robbed, unfinished, incomplete. The early frost has marked the limit of growing time, and leafy verdure gives way to the deeper, richer shades of maturity. It is the picture of age, ripe and full, but not old age in its wintry desolation. It is a season for sweet rest after labor. The skies draw close about, like a friendly tent, and the sun is mellowed to the red of a distant camp fire.

Although Betty's health would not permit her to engage in the promised strenuous sports upon the snow and ice, the invitation of Betty's relatives in Minnesota had been so kindly insistent that the Haywoods finally arranged to turn the farm over to the Laffertys for the winter. Until March there would be nothing to do about the place except care for the stock. The Warrens would meet them at Fulda, their railroad station, and drive them behind their fast bays the thirty miles to their home at the Lake.

The Land of the Dakotas, or Sioux, has been immortalized by Longfellow, in his story of Hiawatha, but how few know that it was of Minnesota (blue water, or sky-water) that he wrote. It was in this land, rich in folklore and legend, upon the borders of its seven thou-

sand lakes, that the Plains Indians, under the great federation of tribes called the Sioux, or Dakotas, had their original home. From Minnehaha to Wapeton, from the Lake of the Woods to Pipestone, the land was fashioned by the hand of Manitou, the Great Spirit, for his people. And indeed, for those who were to live by the chase, it was ideal. Wide forests and rocky hills lay to the north and east, where the Light of Day rose every morning from his bed in the Mighty Water. Through nearly the length of the state passed the Father of Waters, while the little lakes everywhere, from the rocky forests to wide-sweeping plains, offered fish and waterfowl in abundance. A well-watered land, as its names suggest: Minnesota (sky-water), Minnetonka (stormy water), Minnewaukon (devil water), Minnehaha (laughing water), and a score of other "Minnes." There the bison increased faster than the people of Manitou could slaughter for their use, great herds being crowded out to the west and south upon the scantier pastures and fewer watering places. There, from the earliest days, the Red Men waxed many and strong, until they must needs, as men have always done, prove their strength and prowess upon one another. Too easy to kill the bear, the elk, the buffalo—the man hunt gave more excitement and honor. War became the business of existence among them, as it is among civilized peoples, until Manitou began to fear that his children would exterminate themselves. So he came to their medicine men at night, and commanded that his people leave the rugged hills, leave the wide forests and the Great Sea where the Sun rises, leave the lakes and the grassy plains, and travel to the southwest to the land of Short Grass and Dry Water Courses. Many, many suns must they walk, they and their squaws and their papooses, but in that Land he would speak to them in words of wisdom.

The Very Wise Men of today, they who can take two pieces of bone—monkey, buffalo, or what not—and from

them construct the life history of the race of men, would give their own explanation of the hegira—flight of the bison before the horde of famished northern wolves, prolonged and unusual cold, or something else—but travel they did, and at the voice of their Great Spirit. They came to what is now the southwestern corner of Minnesota. There the medicine men bade them rest, for this was the spot in which Manitou had promised to meet them. Off to the Southwest a dark cloud appeared; zigzag lightning cut across its face in great gashes, while before it rolled a blue-gray billow, like the high storm wave on the Great Water. A giant Arm broke forth from the cloud, and reaching down, waved this way and that, threatening. But another great arm, black and hideous, sprang up from the earth and grappled with the cloud-springing Arm. Writhing and twisting, pulling and lifting, the Spirit of the Sky strove with the Spirit of the Earth. The red people covered their faces with their blankets and chanted the Song to Death. All Nature roared, and shook, and crashed, and broke. Then a silence fell upon them as the silence of the stars, and out of the silence a Voice spoke—a Voice born of the Great Silence:

"My children, gave I not to you the forest and the plain, the hills and the waters? Lacked you flesh for food or skins for raiment? My Spirit hovered over you in sunshine and gentle breeze. But behold! Your hearts grew black toward one another, even as the evil Earth-Spirit reaching up to me in combat. You poured upon the earth the blood of your brothers. But I saw. I caught it up. My anger breathed upon it, and turned it into stone. Behold!"

There before them, the tornado had swept clean from its light covering of soil, a wide ledge of beautiful rock, as red as blood.

"See, it is yet soft. Take it and carve from it your pipes, which henceforth shall be pipes of peace. Let brother smoke with brother, and friend with friend. If stranger shall smoke of this pipe he shall be no longer a stranger, but brother and friend. One year in seven there shall be no war throughout the land, and your tribes shall gather at this place, to remember my words of Wisdom."

The ledge of soft, blood-red stone is there today, and Pipestone it is called. The beautiful Lake Shetek, source of the Des Moines River, lies not far to the northeast. It was in this vicinity, made sacred to peace by their own traditions, that the Indians staged the great uprising of the early 60's, known to history as the New Ulm Massacre. From Massacre Point, a little tongue of land jutting out into Lake Shetek, to the small outpost village of New Ulm, to the east, the Red Men wrote, with fire and blood, their protest against eviction from their homeland, by the whites.

There is quite a little fall to the river, as it flows from the lake, and it was there that Betty's relatives, the Warrens, had built an old-fashioned waterwheel mill, in an earlier generation, and which was still in operation and in possession of the family. To their comfortable home the Haywoods received a genuine welcome. Although many miles from the railroad, it was a home of culture and refinement, and thorough enjoyment of life.

"But," I hear Miss Flapper say, "how could anyone live in an out-of-the-way place like that? I suppose they never went to the movies."

No, they didn't; nor did they have any phonograph to play their jazz—there was no such thing as either. They didn't have even a telephone or an automobile, and if anyone had suggested such a thing as a radio, I think he would have been in danger of the asylum. And yet, I repeat, the Warrens were intelligent, cultured people, who

thoroughly enjoyed life. Betty was able to accompany an occasional sleighing party wrapped up in heavy buffalo robes, and as an onlooker, delighted in the night frolics on the lake, where, in the light of huge bonfires, the game of "shinny" was played on skates with vigorous zest.

Haywood was glad to lend a hand at the mill to break the monotony of visiting, and an occasional trip, hauling loads of flour to customers at Fulda, or Slayton, or Walnut Grove, by sled and mule team, over the snow, was in the nature of a real outing, during the winter months. It was on one of these trips that the legislator-to-be came near to being a legislator-who-never-was.

In that part of the West the snow seldom disappears from the ground during the winter, but each successive fall is packed down upon that previously fallen, until the traveled roads become ridges of hard-pressed ice, sometimes three feet high. Woe to the teamster who allows his load to slip off either side.

Weather characteristics sometimes give evil names to localities. Who has not heard of the "Kansas" cyclone, and the "Minnesota blizzard? Yet the cyclone—or tornado—is no more peculiar to Kansas than the blizzard is confined to Minnesota. I have written of the blizzard of 1888 in the farther West, and it was typical of that kind of storm. But my present story is of a Minnesota snow storm—snow falling from the clouds, not rising from the ground.

Haywood had delivered his load of flour to the merchant at Fulda, and loaded up with coal for the furnaces at the mill and house. It had been his intention to remain in town overnight, and make the return trip on the morrow, but the roads had been in such a wonderfully fine condition, that he had made the trip in much shorter time than usual, and found a full half day at his disposal.

There was a slight thaw, so that the loaded sled required very little effort on the part of the team to pull. They could trot along for the most of the way. To be sure, it would be after midnight when he would reach the Lake, upon his return, but even so, that would be better than the indifferent accommodations of the Palace Hotel.

"Looks like snow," warned the landlord, as John expressed his purpose of starting out.

"Too warm to snow, and the roads couldn't be better," was John's reply.

"Yes, but it can get colder mighty sudden, and roads can get drifted."

Haywood suspected too much personal interest in the advice to remain, and pulled out. Ten miles, a third of the way, was made in good time. Another hour, and the half-way house would be passed. The wind from the east was a trifle colder, so that the sled runners creaked again on their frozen track. The sun, which had slowly been growing dimmer in the sky since noon, had disappeared. A dull gray seemed to cover the landscape. Not a very cheerful country, thought the traveler. Haywood noticed first on the sleeve of his heavy coat a few flakes of snow, and chirped to his team, which took up the easy trot again. He idly glanced at the soft flakes, resting so lightly upon the cloth, and remembered their entrancing beauty as seen under the microscope. No matter how many millions of them, there would be no two alike in their varied combinations of the three. Trinity shown so profusely in Nature; why not in Spirit?

More flakes were falling, falling as softly as down—a breath could turn them aside, a breath melt them. Yet by sheer force of numbers they could stop the mightiest locomotive, and cover its train. When the halfway house was reached, Haywood began to realize that the journey was going to be one of hardship if not of hazard. The icy

road, upon which the sled had slipped so easily, was now being covered with the fresh snow, making harder pulling, and the mules slowed down to a walk. The wind was rising, and drifts were occasionally forming across the track. Sky and earth merged into one indistinguishable bank of gray, against which he and his team were forcing their way with difficulty.

Haywood tied the lines to the seat, and clambered off to walk behind. The mules could find their own way better than he could guide them, and he would lighten their load that much. Now the team could scarcely be seen from the rear of the sled, and the drifting snow obliterated all evidence of track. The mules must feel the way with their feet. What if they should miss the track?

"Whoa!" That's exactly what they had done—and overturned the sled with its ton of coal. Nothing to do but get the mules and sled back up again on the solid road, and salvage what he could of the larger lumps of coal. And that took time, precious time in the darkness. At last, on the way again. He would do well, without more hindrance, to reach home by midnight. The wind was still rising, and growing colder, so that the snow seemed to cut his face. The drifts were getting higher, and again and again the team stalled in them, and more and more time was lost in slowly digging through. By now, the storm was beating square in their faces, and the mules would stop every few rods and endeavor to turn and go with the wind. John was forced to walk by their side, holding by the bridle. Was he himself on the road? He was not sure. Then he felt himself slipping off, down into the soft snow, and in his effort to save himself, he pulled the mule off the road with him. The other mule—and the load—followed.

Stunned, probably by the threshing about of the team, Haywood lost consciousness, while the storm silent-

ly, but swiftly, wrapped a winding sheet about him. He seemed to awake to music softly playing in the distance. Lights of many hues appeared and disappeared in kaleidoscopic forms. He was no longer cold—a sensation of well-being filled him. Then full consciousness flashed in a moment upon him. This was the door opening into Death. Painfully he struggled to his feet from under the coal. The storm still raged, but the team had gone. Shakily he stood, while the wind and snow beat upon him. What next; which way? Direction, distance—almost existence itself—were swallowed up in the thick, white smother. Was that a lamp twinkling off to the north? or were the lights and music coming back again? He stumbled forward. Oh, if he might sleep! Nothing in the universe was so desirable. Yes, Betty and Boy! Sleep was Death. The light was closer now; could he reach it? He stretched out a hand—and fell. Distant music; glowing and flashing lights again; and the snow drifting and drifting.

The old couple had retired early, to save the precious fuel, but had left a lamp burning in the window to hearten some poor traveler who might be out in the storm. Along in the night the house dog had become restless, pawing and scratching at the door to go out. Finally, the old lady, awakened, arose and opened the door. The wind tore it from her grasp, and before she succeeded in closing it, she saw that the dog was frantically digging at a mound of snow from which stretched forth a human arm.

Haywood would never forget that night—neither the kindness of the old people as, for hours, they worked over the man in whom they found but a small spark of life, or the agonies of returning consciousness. A million red hot needles seemed to pierce every part of his frozen body, as the blood began to circulate.

Morning came at last, calm, clear and cold. The deep snow, packed hard as a pavement, lay glistening in the

sunlight, in long billows like the vast swells of a sea after storm. Less than two miles away lay Shetek—so near, and so nearly lost forever in the night.

Aside from the soreness of frosted limbs, Haywood found himself little the worse from his terrible experience, and walked in over the snow, to find that the stable boy had discovered the mules at the door, ready for their breakfast, when he came out to do the morning chores. The Warrens and Betty, not having expected John's return at night, had been spared anxiety, as he arrived before the boy brought in word of the coming of the team without their driver.

The old couple did not lack for fuel, the remainder of the winter, and their Christmas goose was the biggest and fattest the Haywoods could find in market.

CHAPTER XVI

DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE

One of the most fantastic stories ever written is that by Robert Louis Stevenson, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,* in which the writer tells how, by the use of a potent drug, a generous, kindhearted gentleman was temporarily transformed into a veritable demon of wickedness. Other writers have dwelt upon the two natures inherent in humanity, the one in general accord with civilized standards, and the other, aroused under stress, showing traits of savagery of even the most abhorrent type. Evolutionists confidently point to these submerged passions and impulses as evidences of descent from ancestors among the beasts. Alienists allow the manifestations to be mental, and label them brain storms. Reputable physicians are found who will declare, when the explosion results in the death of another, that all the matter was, the exploder had a faulty skull and a cure may be found in surgical operation.

Granted that there is a vast difference in temperament to be found among people, the beast nature shown in eye and voice, the brain storm, the need for trepanned skulls, is a well-nigh universal malady, not manifested in everyday symptoms, but hidden, to break forth when occasion arises.

The Book of God places the seat of this disease, this insanity, not in the bodily makeup, nor in an afflicted mind, not in a pressed-in skull, but in a bent, twisted, polluted moral nature—in the soul. And it is the glory of the Christian religion that the Great Physician offers an adequate remedy, a perfect cure. Mr. Hydes have been

exorcised and forever laid to rest in Dr. Jekylls. Brain storms have given place to that peace which passeth understanding—no more to be broken. The Great Surgeon has operated upon many hearts, removing fragments of the "root of bitterness." Insanity—saneness. Moral unhealth—holiness.

One of the most complete transformations of character the writer ever knew was that of a young man somewhat over thirty years of age. His conversion was almost as radical as that of Saul of Tarsus. From a profane swearer, a man of unrestrained passions, living for self, his acceptance of Jesus as his personal Saviour turned him into a gentleman, whose life was a daily rebuke to sin and worldlikeness. No member of his church in the city was more relied upon by his pastor. And yet, this man, under sudden and great provocation, broke into a rage and cursed—like Peter, in that act, denying his Lord. But like Peter, quickly repented with tears and bitterness of spirit.

We say with trite expression, "Who can tell what a day may bring forth." Here is the opening of a new day to me. It is no different, appreciably, from a thousand other days. It will be filled with commonplace duties—commonplace events will march through the hours. But what a seemingly little thing may turn that commonplace day into the most momentous of one's life. My pupil had found a vacation job, and came to consult with his teacher over the future, and pray the blessings of God upon his decisions. The next morning was just a commonplace day, and he was engaged in homely duties; a truck track slipped a fraction of an inch; a sudden fall —the young man was in eternity. A little thing, the slight moving of a board but what a change it made in the day. My neighbor, a carpenter, was at work upon a low scaffold. A board was handed him to saw; the wind whipped

up an end, which struck him upon the side of the head. He fell but a few feet, but his neck was broken. Whose Hand guides the events of the day? Who dare say that any day is commonplace in its possibility?

One such day was to stand out forever in the life of John Haywood—the sting of an ox-fly to utterly transform the commonplace in its revelation of what lay hidden in the heart of a good man. For John Haywood would be accounted a good man anywhere. His purposes were right; he was on the whole a good citizen, a good husband, a good father. What I am about to relate will be thought by many readers to be incredible, but it is a true story. Reader, have you ever had an intimation of the meaning of that scripture: "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; who can know it?"

While not unmindful of the months of discomfort and long days of suffering and danger, John and Betty had opened wide their hearts to the coming of the second child. True, the roses had disappeared from the cheeks of the young mother; the exuberant gaiety replaced by a sober but no less real joy. Life was taking on meanings that had been but half understood by the girlish teacher at the Agency. If love for her husband had lost some of its romance, it had gained a quality of motherliness toward him—for was he not a big boy, often baby, after all? And Betty smiled to herself at the thought of three babies.

Stewart Edward White has given us a vivid description of fly-time on the African veldt, but had this writer the use of Mr. White's pen, the story of our far northern pests might equal that of the African author's. Haywood had put a yoke of young oxen to the hay wagon he himself doing the loading, up on the wagon, while Lafferty pitched the hay to him from the ground. The Irish-

man had advised the use of the mules because of the restiveness of the steers under the furious attacks of the big heel-flies, but John declared his purpose to train that team to be dependable under any circumstance. The load was half on when the steers made up their minds that they had had enough of haying for that day, and nearly upsetting the wagon in an abrupt turn, started on a gallop for the dark, cool, flyless cattle barn. In vain John called whoa. In vain he sought to turn them with thumps from the handle of the hayfork—with pricks from the tines. But one idea possessed the beasts, to get away from their tormentors, insects and man. Then Haywood's holdover from his ancestors appeared; a brain storm engulfed him; his hidden evil carnal nature possessed him. The hayfork sank deep, again and again, into the flanks of the cattle.

Betty, happily musing upon the future, came to the door to greet the passing haymakers, and this is what she saw: Over the long hill, coming down directly toward the house, a team of bloody oxen, foam flying from their mouths, bawling and running like mad; a wagon with a hayrack rapidly breaking up under the terrific bouncing; a man hardly the semblance of a man—yelling at the top of his voice as he thrust the cruel fork into the beasts. Straight down upon the house came the fearful thing—there was no escape. John would be killed. Then unconsciousness came to the wife, even as the wagon tore into the corner of the house.

There, in a heap upon the doorsill, the husband found her when he came to himself; found her apparently lifeless. "I didn't know it was in me! I didn't know it was in me! I didn't know that devil was in me," he moaned. "O God, help me!" Again that cry of helpless need to All-powerful Love, which was to be answered fully in

Wisdom's own time and way, for Jesus Christ was "manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil."

Betty's recovery was slow, so very, very slow, and during her convalescence her eyes would too often turn to rest upon the tiny mound on the hillside. While the self-reproach of the husband was abject, no word of blame came from the lips of the wife. Probably she felt no blame in her heart. To her it seemed that she had been an unfortunate spectator of an age-old tragedy—humanity powerless in the grip of a pitiless foe. A deep and tender sorrow filled her heart for her husband, and she prayed that as he had come to realize the existence of that hidden horror in his inmost nature, he might seek deliverance and cleansing from the One whom she herself had found as an uttermost Saviour.

The Lorrimers proved friends indeed during that summer. At first Haywood was all for putting aside his campaign for the Legislature, but Betty's refusal to hear of such a thing was earnestly seconded by the Lorrimers. Their house was cool, and Betty and Boy could have a room to themselves during Haywood's absence on his canvass, and the fresh milk and eggs, and garden vegetables, would bring roses back to pale cheeks. Above all, it was the need of spiritual companionship that decided Betty to accept their kindness.

It was late before John got into his campaign, and he found that the "boys" had not been idle in the meantime. Already the district had been thoroughly canvassed against him. He was a "highbrow, a puritan, impracticable, crazy, a religious zealot like Lorrimer. His election would mean the withdrawal of all money from the state for loans. The banks and best businessmen were all against him." Two circumstances gave him some hope: one, the county paper came out staunchly his friend; the

other, not so significant at first as later, the few Catholics he met appeared friendly.

The county convention of his party was held. The "boys" held the organization, two of his own chosen delegates turning against Haywood and voting with his opponents. Defeat seemed certain, when to his surprise he was recognized by one of the delegates who had been an upper classman in his own college days, and the delegation which his fellow alumnus headed swung to his aid. Haywood was nominated by a majority of two. Some of the opposition came up and congratulated him, saying, "You'll be all right when you learn the ropes." They would see to it that the man from Buffalo Springs was broken in or broken.

In the senatorial convention which followed, the little banker and three-per-cent-loan-shark, Leffleman, received an easy nomination for the State Senate. "So," thought Haywood, "the fight isn't over. Whatever I may be able to do in the House, if I should be elected, he will expect to undo in the Senate."

Then, before the election in November, another rock appeared in the course of Haywood's political ship, threatening certain wreckage. The farmers of the country, in their periodical struggle to come up out of financial submergence, had organized an Alliance for co-operative buying and selling. Haywood had been one of its foremost supporters, believing that much of wastage might be saved through the elimination of middlemen. In September the National President called a meeting of the State Alliance at Aberdeen. John attended, little dreaming of the purpose in the mind of the National leaders. Reports of the working of the Alliance in the Territory were gratifying; much had been saved in the purchase of coal, and seed, and machinery. The work of the grain buyers of the Alliance, though not so satisfactory, gave

hope for the future. The convention was feeling good; the farmers had proved their ability to manage their own affairs.

Then, the National President sprung the scheme he had thoroughly arranged—the organization of a new political party to be composed of farmers. He introduced a big, clumsy man whom every member of the Alliance was to be pledged to support for the United States Senate. This man's scheme was a railroad to be built from the wheat fields straight through to the Gulf. He would use state funds to build to the state line, and with himself in the Senate of the United States, he would pledge the national government to complete the line. Haywood sprang to his feet in vigorous protest. Pandemonium arose. But the chairman had his work cut out for him. He ordered the vote taken upon the question of the new political party, and as the lights suddenly went out in the hall, declared the proposition carried.

The farmers of the country have indeed suffered from an unfair placing of political and economic burdens, but it is a question whether they have been harmed more by those who have exploited them for gain, than by their own would-be saviors.

The whispered threat that Haywood heard in the darkness of the convention hall, was made good at election time; the National President of the Alliance himself came to Haywood's district to compass his defeat.

So John found himself, at the beginning of November, between two political fires, while a shadow, formless, but vaguely threatening, began to rise about his home.

The election returns gave John Haywood a narrow majority, which strangely coincided with the usual opposition vote of a Catholic precinct, this time cast solidly for Haywood. Years afterward it was explained that a

Catholic archbishop in an adjoining state, himself an ardent prohibitionist, had sent word down the line that the faithful were to vote for Haywood. Sometimes "Rome" goes into politics, and "politics makes strange bedfellows."

CHAPTER XVII

THE LOST GLOVE

The birth of the new state was marked with much pomp and circumstance. True, no vaulted dome lifted itself skyward over marble halls of the capitol, for the building hastily prepared for the meeting of the first Legislature was little more than a huge barn. But splendid-looking men were there, and beautiful women. Here and there one noted the face of a born leader, men of high aspirations and lofty purpose, whose clear thinking would be depended upon to set the barque of state upon the right course for its voyage.

The big, blond Hoosier, whom the people had chosen as their first leader, towered above the throng like the Viking his northman blood, through Norman-French ancestry, showed him to be. After the inauguration came the governor's reception, followed by the customary banquet and ball. It was a notable banquet in one respect, for it was the first time in history when, upon such an occasion, wine was not served. The new governor had been among the foremost of those whose labors had been crowned by an overwhelming vote to outlaw, in the new state, the iniquitous liquor traffic.

Haywood, the strangeness of his position as a legislator still upon him, and the loneliness of his absence from loved ones oppressing him, was an onlooker rather than a participant in the festivities. Sitting in the balcony, he watched the rhythmic movements of the dancers upon the floor below. Noting the number of army officers, from the fort across the river, and the splendor of their full dress uniforms, he turned to one at his side, whom

he saw also to be an army man, saying, "Quite a treat the army is having tonight."

Self-introductions followed. "Yes," replied the captain, "a function like this is a godsend to the boys. Life at an army post these days is monotonous enough."

"But you—"

"Getting too old to enjoy prancing about," the officer smilingly answered. "Besides, I have a little Sioux memento in my left knee that detracts somewhat from my gracefulness upon the floor."

"I beg your pardon, sir," responded John. "You have seen service, then, out this way, in the earlier days."

"Yes, I was with the command that brought old Sitting Bull to his last camp up on Grand River. It was about twenty miles to the east of Big Muddy that I got this touch from the Indians. Whether from supposed friendliness or some rascally trader, we never knew, but a band of young bucks got some arms and ammunition, and made a break to get away to the Bald Hills, to the east. I was given a squad to follow and bring them back. We came up with them near a big spring."

"Buffalo Springs," suggested Haywood.

The army officer looked strangely at John. "Yes, I believe that's what the Sioux did call it."

"That spring is on my place. And there was an Indian fight there?"

"Yes, a little higher up on the hill where there was a cairn of stones. Signal Point, the Reds call it."

"I wonder if you might be able to solve the mystery of this glove that I have carried about with me for these years," John eagerly inquired, taking from a breast pocket an old, long-wristed kid glove. "My wife stumbled upon it in the grass roots the first day we walked over our claim, and we have built up many a romance around

some fair captive of the Sioux. See, it has a bullet hole through the wrist."

A strange excitement seized the captain, and he trembled like a man with an ague as he took the glove and stared at it. "It's mine," he murmured. "And after all these years. May I have it?" he pleaded. "It means something to me even now."

"Why, surely sir, surely. But—but it appears to be a lady's glove."

"It was; a young lady's—a girl's. One of the sweetest, most wonderful—but there she is now, sir, and I haven't seen her for years."

Haywood, looking down upon the throng below, where the officer indicated, saw, her hand resting upon the arm of the big, fair-haired governor, a modestly though richly dressed woman, in the full bloom of resplendent womanhood.

"My mystery seems to have been deepened rather than solved," Haywood smilingly remarked.

"This bit of old leather may mean so much to me, that for its recovery I feel I owe you its story," the captain said after a pause. "It really begins back in Kentucky, when Margaret Gray was a schoolgirl of twelve, and Fred Horton and I were lads a few years older. Madcap Madge, with her dark beauty and superabundant vitality, was, even at that age, fairly worshiped by every boy and young man of the little town in which we lived. As her parents and mine lived in adjoining homes, I had rather the advantage of the other fellows in walking to and from school, and in twilight conferences in the shadows of the great oaks that graced the lawn which ran before both houses, unbroken by fence. I know that I was madly in love with the girl before she was in her teens, and she—well, she was an incorrigible tease, but

she would sometimes say that I might *think* of her as my sweetheart.

"Fred Horton was my chum, and while we never came to a break in our friendship, he made it mighty plain to me that he would do his best to win the girl for himself. I really think Madge slyly gave him encouragement. This was the state of things when I received my appointment to West Point. It was a great relief to me that the field would not be left to Fred alone, as he had already made arrangements for a course in the Medical College at Louisville. I don't know whether I got more joy or exasperation from Madge's occasional letters. From the home folks I learned of her beautiful devotion to the old father, and her wonderful home making qualities, but from Madge herself, it was an account of the perfectly glorious boating parties, of the exquisite young gentlemen visiting from the city, or fervid eulogy of the talents Fred was developing as a young physician.

"During my rare visits at home, her loveliness, as she developed into young womanhood, forged my chains ever more securely. At length, I received my commission, and was assigned to service in the West. Fred had arrived at home shortly before, and was beginning practice with good prospects of success. Even yet I can think of that month's leave at home with mighty little comfort. I believed that the glorious girl really cared for me, but when I would seek to monopolize her company, she would turn the tables, saying that all the girls were simply crazy over my uniform, and it would be an unpardonable sin for her to monopolize the hero of the day. Then she would proceed to fasten some other young lady upon me, while she would go off with Fred.

"I think I never came so near to hating a man as I did Fred, on that last night of my leave. Whether it was the spirit of perverse mischief, or the uncertainty of

her own heart, or a shrinking from final decision, I do not know. But while she granted my request to spend the evening with her, she had given the same favor to Fred. I was going away to the uncertainties of border life among the Sioux, and could not expect another leave of absence under a year. Even with the other man before me, I determined to know my fate. So I poured out my very heart before her in fervent protestation of my devotion, and demanded her decision. Fred, honorable man that he was, merely declared his own love, and as he was not going away, would not press her at that time.

"Madge had been nervously drawing her riding gloves through her hand, but for some time remained silent, while tears dimmed her brown eyes. Finally she spoke, smiling upon both of us, saying, 'Boys, I don't know. Really, I don't. I like you both. None of us knows what a year will bring forth, and I am only a girl of eighteen. Let's leave it on the lap of the gods for a twelve months. Here,' and mischief again twinkled in her eyes, 'I'm going to give each of you one of my gloves to wear over your heart. Bring them back to me a year from now, and maybe the gloves will tell me which heart is truest.'

"That was like Madge, and like her, too, as she stood up, kissed us both as a sister might, and bade us good night. It may have been a fancy, but, do you know, sir, my heart was kept alive for a year by a tender light I saw in the brown eyes, as they turned away from me.

"As you know, the troops out this way saw plenty of active service in those days, and the opportunity for correspondence was limited. Seldom, during that year, did I hear from her, and as the twelve months drew to a close we were rounding up old Sitting Bull's braves for the last time. I had been promised a two months' leave when we should finally reach camp on Grand River, and was all impatience to be off and away, as you may imagine. I

told you about the breaking out of the band of young bucks, and my assignment for the pursuit. We struck the trail of the runaways close to the river, crossed over, and picked it up again where they evidently had paused to 'make medicine' at the Rock. It was our plan to pass around and intercept them, and if possible, urge their return without combat. With that intent we made a hard ride to pitch camp at the Springs.

"Reaching there, our scout declared that the band had outridden us, and had, in fact, been at the watering place not long before. 'See,' he said, 'pony tracks still wet.' The men unsaddled for a rest and a bit to eat, but I took my night glasses, and accompanied by a sergeant, stole out into the dusk for a reconnaissance over the hill into the valley of the lake. As it turned out, the Sioux also had out a reconnaissance—and they saw us first. Their first shot hit the sergeant, and I sprang to my feet. Then, in the next flash, what seemed like a double blow from a hard fist struck me in the leg and breast. That was the last I knew for a while.

"Of course, the shots drew the troops at once, and when the melee was over, all of the fugitives were accounted for. Strange to say, the wound in the knee, said the surgeon when we got back to the command, was the more serious of the two. The bullet which hit in the breast had glanced from a rib over the heart, without entering. The blow, however, was hard enough to produce unconsciousness, and plenty of blood, for a little while. The men, in rendering first aid, cut away the clothing from over the wound, and Madge's glove, which I carried there, was lost in the darkness."

"But you went back," exclaimed Haywood.

"No, it was several weeks before my leg was at all serviceable, and in the army leaves of absence, especially

on the Sioux frontier, were not everyday affairs. The powers that be would hardly consider the request of a young lieutenant for permission to go half across the continent that he might explain to his sweetheart the loss of her glove."

"But she would learn of your wound through the newspapers."

The officer smiled. "Hardly. You will remember that we were something like two hundred miles from the outposts of civilization, and newspaper reporters were unknown among us. Besides, such skirmishes were all in the day's work. No, I could not write, and Madge did not hear. I did not bring back her glove, nor explain the reason why. Her father had died, and the girl was left without relatives. Fred was there, an honorable man, with a growing practice as a physician. I was, well, anywhere or nowhere. If Madge hesitated it was not for long. My people afterward sent me the printed account of her marriage."

"And you have not seen her since?"

"No, not until tonight. I have been busy on the frontier, and have not been back home. I'm afraid I sneaked away up here tonight until I could bear again the old hurt."

"You say she is here—and her husband?"

"No, poor Fred! She has been a widow for years. But now, if you will excuse me—" and his eyes were fastened upon the old glove with the bullet hole in the wrist where it had lain over his heart.

"My dear fellow, yes," exclaimed Haywood, as he wrung the officer's hand. "And all the good fortune in the world go with you."

Later in the evening, as he leaned forward, watching the gay throng below, he caught sight again of his army

friend of the evening. His hand was waving in John's direction, and at the movement his eyes caught a flash of light from the twinkling brown eyes of the woman at the officer's side. She was waving to the stranger in the balcony an old riding glove that had a bullet hole in the wrist.

CHAPTER XVIII

PRACTICAL POLITICS

I would not give the impression that there are no honest men in our various legislative bodies, state and national. It is my purpose to sketch in broad outline some of the things which will confront the man of high ideals, whose participation in politics is with a purpose of service, and not of self-aggrandizement. Is it possible for a man to ascend to the top of a high mountain, there to be shown the kingdoms of the earth, and still be able to say, "Get thee behind me"? Yes, if such a one carries the Spirit of Him who was thus tempted, and yet chose the crown of thorns.

There is a smug saying about the office seeking the man, but that does not occur in practical politics. Today I read the announcement of retirement to private practice, of a district judge whose conduct of his office has been an honor to the Bench. He gave as his reason for this decision his unwillingness to participate in an unseemly strife to attain or hold a position in which he might serve his fellow men. God's Word seems to bar the followers of Jesus from modern political life with these words: "In honor preferring one another."

It was the privilege of the writer to read the private letters of young Robert LaFollett, then a student in the University, in which he forecast the course of his life, and which course he followed to the end. While he knew nothing of the higher life of the spirit, and not all of his policies may be commended, yet his was the outstanding life of political independence of his generation. He was never swerved from what he thought to be right by

political bosses, or by what effect his course might have upon his own political fortunes. But here is the significant thing about the career of LaFollett, he wrote platforms for his party, but they were laughed to death. He introduced bills in the Senate, but they got no farther than the pigeonholes in the committee desks. As far as constructive legislation is concerned his life was a failure.

It was well for Haywood that the most of his associates were, like himself, inexperienced in legislative matters. Usually, the new member is shown small consideration. He is to be seen and not heard. True, he may rise at his seat and move adjournment at the fixed time, but that is about as far as he is suffered to go. In the case of Haywood, some unseen hand was evidently pulling the strings in his favor. He was placed upon the best committees of the House, and was asked to name some friend of his for one of the important clerkships—someone who would help to make him solid in his district. These favors he could accept with gratitude. Then came an offer with a background of shadow—hiding, who could tell what? John had taken a room at one of the unpretentious hotels, where the expense would fit the salary he would receive. Early in the session he was approached by a member of the "Third House," that body of shrewd, often unscrupulous men, agents of individuals and corporations who would have interest in forthcoming legislation.

"See here, Haywood, what are you hanging out at this dump for? Don't you know that the men who are anybody have rooms at the Park Hotel? There's where the laws of this session are going to be made, not up on the hill. Why hide your light under a bushel down here?"

"But this is a pleasant, respectable place, and—"

"Respectable," broke in the man, "oh yes. Fatally so."

"And my expenses must be measured by my income," concluded Haywood.

"Oh, if it's merely a matter of money, that's easily fixed. I thought it was your modesty overpowering you." He drew a pocketbook from his coat and produced a bill for room and board for the entire session, receipted in full by the hotel management. Filling in the name of John Haywood, he presented it to the legislator. "Come up and pick your room. All settled for, you see. Oh, there's no strings to it. Just help yourself. Get up there and get in the swim."

To say that this was not a temptation to Haywood, would not be true. He knew that legislation would be shaped in the private rooms of the big hotel, and knew that he had been considered of enough importance to be bidden to join the company of the leaders. The money saving would be no little thing just now. It might mean better medical aid for Betty. "No strings to it!" Who or what was the donor? No strings—but maybe chains down yonder. How much was his manhood worth in dollars and cents?

He had been looking at the strip of paper, and turning it over in his hands for some moments, he at length realized. He handed it back, saying, "Thank my friend or friends, and tell them that I prefer to remain here."

A queer look passed over the face of the lobbyist. "Oh well, suit yourself. Going to support the Alliance candidate for the Senate, I suppose."

"No," replied Haywood.

"Well, you've got sense, if not dollars. Come up and see us. Don't be offish. Nothing to be gained in politics by flocking to yourself."

As the head of the Committee on Enrolled and Engrossed Bills, Haywood found in his hands the original

of the Bill which was to be enacted into the Law carrying into effect the provision of the Constitution for the prohibition of the liquor traffic. This, as with all bills, was to be copied again and again in longhand, each copy to be most carefully scrutinized in comparing it with the original. A faithless or careless clerk, by the change or omission of one letter, might nullify the law. It has occurred that the change of a comma, in a tariff law of Congress, caused the government to lose thousands of dollars before the error could be corrected. There must be no such changing, accidental or otherwise, in the work of his clerks—least of all in this prohibition law. Literally day and night Haywood watched the Bill, and it was with great relief as well as rejoicing that he finally saw it receive the signature of the Speaker of the House, and at length that of the Governor, and become the law of the state.

Through the favor from the unknown source, Haywood found himself on a committee, every other man of which was a lawyer, charged with the task of adapting the laws of the Territory to the conditions of the new state. The bills he introduced in the interest of the farmers, and so-called humbler classes, received favorable consideration in committees. Again and again, upon important occasions, he was called to the Chair by the Speaker, to preside over the body.

One day one of the newly elected United States senators, Judge Norton, called John to his room. After thanking him warmly for his support, the Judge asked, "Are you being looked after all right, Haywood? You know we fellows in politics are dependent upon each other. Any man with brains can make his way, of course, but a little boost up the ladder occasionally does help a fellow to rise."

Haywood was not slow in expressing his appreciation of the "boosts" that had come to him, though the Senator disclaimed any connection with such favors.

In the act of Congress by which the new state was to become a part of the Union, two square miles of land in every township were to be reserved for educational purposes. It was decided to locate a university, and two, at least, state schools for teachers. As these school lands could not be sold for less than $10.00 an acre, purchasers would have to be found for a sufficient number of sections to build and equip the institutions. It was upon this question that Haywood was approached by Lefflеman, the state senator from his district. After a good deal of circumlocution, the little banker came to the point. A syndicate of bankers was forming to bid the $10.00 an acre, for not only enough to finance the proposed colleges, but even perhaps take over all the school land of the state. Ten dollars was a big price, declared the Senator. It would be many years, if ever, before the market value would be that high. Money in the bank could be used over and over again in helping build up the country. No use to let the land lie idle and unproductive. "And see here, Haywood," the banker continued, "we know you are an honest man, and wouldn't do a thing out of the way, but you can help your district and yourself at the same time. If this sale goes through, we are promised a normal college for our county, and that will put us solid with the folks at home."

Haywood's reply to this proposition that he join in robbing future generations of their heritage in the land given for their education, was so scathing that the scheme was not again mentioned in his presence.

While the agitation which afterward brought forth the Granger Laws, and finally the establishing of the Interstate Railroad Commission, had already begun, and the

railroads, in the minds of the public were held to be as much common enemies as common carriers, the country was too new, and the demand for railroad construction too pressing, for the railroad corporations to fear much in the way of adverse legislation at the hand of the first legislature. Every member had a pocket full of passes for himself. His wife—and upon occasion, his cousins and his aunts—might be granted a trip pass to New York, or elsewhere, if the legislator was of sufficient importance. The railroads were liberal, and feared not.

The express companies also thought to have part in this new era of good feeling, but having less favors to grant would be given more justice if less consideration. The bill to tax the gross receipts of these corporations was strenuously fought in the House, but passed with a safe majority. After it had been engrossed in Haywood's committee, it was turned over to the corresponding committee of the Senate, of which Leffleman was the chairman. As the session moved rapidly to a close, the friends of the bill made vigorous inquiries as to the lack of action upon it in the Senate. Leffleman declared that it had not been received from the House committee. Haywood produced Senator Leffleman's receipt for it. The latter promised to look into the matter. More delay. Time was growing short for its passage, when Haywood took with him Senator Tom Sterling and promised the little banker personal action against himself if the bill were not forthcoming. The bill was found, passed the Senate, and became a law.

When Luther was creating his disturbance among the ecclesiastics, it was proposed that he be silenced with money. To this was replied, "The fool don't love gold." And so other means were brought to bear upon the recalcitrant German priest. So with Haywood. "The fool

couldn't be beaten down with gifts," and he must be discredited before his word would come to the people.

As the session drew to a close the work became exceedingly heavy upon those who had come there with a mind to work, and Haywood was spending many nights until late in the committee room. Taking advantage of this fact, those who plotted the downfall of the man arranged his pit. A woman lobbyist, whose arguments and wiles had failed to move John, was easily induced to lend articles of feminine apparel. John seldom took the precaution of locking the door to his rooms, so they readily found entrance. Across an easy chair near the bedroom door was carelessly flung an opera coat, from beneath the folds of which peeped the toes of dainty slippers. On his study table rested a richly plumed hat. The lamp was turned low, and the outer door left ajar, so that chance passers would dimly see these evidences of a woman's occupancy. And they were thus seen by more than one friend of Haywood—friends whose mouths would be shut for his defense by what they saw.

Later in the night the conspirators made themselves busy with the story that a woman had been visiting Haywood in his room. Some declared that they had seen a woman go in there earlier in the night. As was intended, the reports came to the ears of others, John's friends, who were not slack in defending his honor. Some of them made an excuse to call upon Haywood as he went back to his hotel. John met them at the door, opened but a handbreadth, and greeted them cordially, but excused himself from inviting them in, as he had important matters to attend to which would not wait. They excused him, but shook their heads as they slowly walked away.

CHAPTER XIX

LOVEST THOU ME MORE THAN THESE

The prohibition of the liquor traffic by either state or national enactment does not at once put an end to depraved appetite, nor change the hearts of those who would traffic in the damnation of their fellows. Mike Lafferty was a faithful servant on the farm of John Haywood. Sober, industrious, he would in time become prosperous. The temptation of strong drink taken away from before him, his manhood finally became established. Alas for those who would destroy a soul for the gain of a few dimes! Such a one came across Mike during a visit to Appomattox that winter, and the Irishman, after the first drop of enticement, threw the bars down and turned himself loose. In a drunken brawl he struck a blow that left a man apparently lifeless upon the floor of the old saloon.

He heard about him the cry, "Catch him! Lynch the Mick!" and his brain partly cleared. The mob would get him as it had Major Gilson. Springing through a rear door, he escaped in the darkness. For days he skulked in the timber along the big river almost without purpose except to escape the mob. Finally he remembered that Haywood was at the Capital down the river. John would save him from the mob. He would find John. It took some time of careful questioning before Mike located the hotel where his friend had rooms, but he did not find that friend at home. He would go in and wait for him. Worn with privation and wandering he fell asleep, and yet he sensed the steps of men at the door. They had stopped; someone was turning the doorknob—they were

coming in. The mob was after him again. He sprang to the inner room to shut himself in, but the door stuck, leaving a crack open. Peeping, as his panic began to subside, he saw the visitors arranging the cloak and hat upon chair and table, and surmised that a prank was being played upon his friend Haywood. The visitors had left the outer door open; he must close that. But other steps kept sounding in the corridor. At last there was quiet, and Mike stepped forth, as Haywood himself came in.

Mike was incoherent in his pleading to be saved from the mob, and only John's strong assurance of protection calmed the Irishman so that he was able to explain the meaning of the feminine apparel in the room. Then came the knock of Haywood's friends upon the door, and Mike's recurring terror of the mob, and John's excusing himself from his friends for Mike's sake—and the case was made complete against the honor of the legislator who could not be bribed.

We sometimes hear the foolish declaration, "I don't care what people think about me as long as I know I'm all right." An honest man should and does care what other honest men think of him. True, one's character is what one is, and that will endure. But reputation, too, is a precious thing. Character affects our standing with God; reputation has to do with our relations with our fellows. There is no earthly possession so precious as a good reputation. It is a bankable asset when even possession of property would not avail.

Of course no open charges were made against Haywood—these might be met and refuted. But what defense can be made against the averted face, the brief nod, the broad, meaning smile, the inuendo? John wondered how far the rumors would travel. Would they reach Betty, and would she think evil of him? No, Betty

would have faith in his manhood. That his enemies would make open charges against him in a future campaign, would be certain. It was a matter of relief to him that with the big men of his associates there was no hint of change in attitude toward him. Either they had not heard, did not believe, or did not care. Haywood's suspicion that the last was the true reason, may have been correct.

Two more surprises came to him in the closing days of the session. An old soldier, a capable and worthy man, was one of the applicants for a position in the United States Land Office. He appeared in John's committee room one day, seeking Haywood's endorsement, saying Senator Norton had written him that he would back him with the President if he got Haywood's O. K. John was glad to lend his endorsement, and the old soldier was afterward appointed. The second surprise was a letter from Washington to John himself.

"Friend Haywood," it began. "Glad to see that you have made good in your first experience in law-making. How high is your ladder? There will be a few Federal plums ripening during the year, and I take pleasure in putting into your hands the pole that will bring them down. In plain American, as the President depends upon me to decide to whom shall be given the Federal jobs in my half of the State, I shall depend upon your endorsement of applicants in your section. And by 'your section' I do not mean merely your legislative district. Of course, you will recommend only good party men, but I need not remind you that a good politician will strengthen his fences wherever he can. I hear that your present state senator will not be renominated. How about that place for the next round in your ladder?"

The first session of the Legislature of the new state came to an end. A good beginning in constructive legisla-

tion was enacted, and some laws passed which would tend to curb the rapacity of those who would fatten upon the weakness or misfortune of their fellows. Even the Farmers Alliance, which, under the personal direction of its National President, had sought Haywood's defeat, at its annual session passed resolutions commending his work in behalf of the farmers.

Nothing succeeds like success. When the time came for re-election John found himself practically without opposition. Mike Lafferty, freed from danger of punishment by either mob or the law for his affair at Appomattox, was able to pull the teeth from the slanderous rumors against John, which had begun to be spread, and the reation was in Haywood's favor.

When the Master, at the shore of Galilee, put the question straight to Peter, "Lovest thou me more than these?" it called for a fundamental decision—one which must be made as Peter made it if Eternal Life was to be attained. Peter, a fisherman, had made the greatest catch of his life. It was the peak of success in his occupation. At that moment came the demand of Jesus that he strike a balance between success and fellowship with Christ.

A crisis not unlike this came to the life of John Haywood. His feet were upon the ladder, and that ladder reached high; he was becoming known as a successful politician, and other politicians courted his friendship. He had but to follow the suggestions of party leaders to continue to rise. "Lovest thou me more than these?" He could not escape the insistence of the demand. He must answer, and answer honestly. What was wrapped up in supreme love to Christ? Did it not mean Christ-likeness—the putting aside of selfish ambition for the service of others?

He was driven to his final decision to become a real follower of Jesus—a Bible Christian—by an interview

with Senator Norton. The Senator had written Haywood to meet him at Huron, and there in his room at the hotel, together they went over the general outline of the work to be done in the forthcoming session of the Legislature. Certain measures were to be passed. Certain others, well enough in themselves, were to be opposed, as being of advantage to the opposite party. Still others were to be advocated in much speechmaking, for the edification of the "folks back home," and then were to be allowed to quietly die in committee.

To John's objection to the ethics of this procedure, the Senator replied, "The only ethics politics knows is success."

"But, Senator, right is right, and wrong is wrong," persisted Haywood.

"Bosh!" exploded the elder man. "There is no such thing as right and wrong in the abstract. Anything that is good for me is right; it is man's highest duty to help himself."

Like an echo John seemed to hear the words of another man: "We live but once. Why not take what I want if I can get away with it?" And then more clearly came "And after death the judgment."

"Senator," quietly responded Haywood, "I believe that all history, from Adam and Eve in the garden, down to this day emphasizes the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the certainty of its punishment. Wrong is wrong, and in the very nature of things cannot make for ultimate success. It was death to Adam; it will be death to any son of Adam."

"But do you mean to tell me that you really accept literally the Genesis story of creation?" demanded the Senator.

"Yes," responded Haywood, smiling. "Since I found God—came to know Him—it is easier for me to accept the

facts I have come to know, than to hold to the guesses of science. The implications of evolution do away with the sinfulness of sin, as your argument would suggest, do away with the need of a Saviour, destroy the hope for individual redemption apart from racial uplift. Evolution offered me no hope one day when I needed help. Senator, I was in horror at what I found hidden in my own heart. This Book told me the story of myself. It beckoned me. It urged me to a trial. It promised me, not an ultimate perfection through rolling cycles, but an instantaneous deliverance from my evil self. I found this promise first offered, dimly it is true, in this same Genesis, coming out into the fulness of light on the banks of Jordan in the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

"You well know, Senator, how radical a change has been wrought in me by my acceptance of the salvation offered by Jesus Christ. The story of Genesis is a rational and necessary part of the genius of this Book. To discard that would be for me to stultify my own consciousness of the fact of my regenerated life."

Something had gripped the Senator as he listened. "Well, I don't know," he mused. "It may be so, of course."

"May be so—is so," urged John. "Senator Norton, if this Book is true, and Jesus Christ is the manifestation of the Almighty God in human flesh, what weight should His life have with you and me? What wisdom could be higher than to put the reins of our guidance in His hands? If He has linked you and me up with eternity, is it not the part of folly for us to horizon ourselves with the natural things of three score years and ten?"

There was a strange look on the face of Hiram Norton as he grasped John's hand in a mighty grip. "Do you know, you are the first human being who has ever

brought this subject to me as a personal matter. Let me have your Book, and I'll go into it tonight."

With a prayer in his heart that the same Spirit of Promise who had led his own groping soul into the light of liberty, might guide his friend, John excused himself, promising to meet the Senator in the morning.

At breakfast, a messenger handed Haywood a note which read as follows:

> "Dear Haywood: I find that matters demand my immediate return to Washington, and I am leaving on the 6:10. Hope to see you later. You are right. You have chosen the better part. I have been eating Dead Sea apples since midnight, but I must go on my way. I cannot pay the price. If I dared to pray, I would say, God bless you. We need not mention this matter again.—H. N."

"Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble," sighed Haywood with a sad heart. "But what a Christian that man would have made! 'As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord'."

CHAPTER XX

AND THIS IS LIFE ETERNAL

We read that the Captain of our salvation was made perfect through suffering. We read again that we are to fill up the measure of His suffering. And again, if we suffer with Him we shall also reign with Him. It is in the providence of God that we shall be made white—and tried. Suffering has its place in the perfecting of those who would be heirs to eternal life. The point of my trial will be at the place of my strongest prop. Suffering will come in connection with one's deepest love. It is God's way. Divine Love will prove its fulness to those who love Him. He is not ruthless to break hearts, but at any cost He must teach us to come to Him for rest.

The bloom did not come back to Betty's cheek. She made no complaint of suffering, but more and more she found need for resting. Always cheerful, her bright spirit seemed to rebuke the shadow of the darkness that was drawing ever closer about the home. It was upon a glorious day in the late fall, after John's successful re-election, that she claimed a whole day with her husband. "Just to visit," as she said. To be sure, she had not been neglected during his many absences. Mrs. Lafferty had kept things in the home orderly, Effie Lorrimer had been over frequently, and she had had the precious daily companionship of sweet, womanly "Jack" Gordon. "But, John," she said, "today I am hungry for my husband alone."

They talked of the hardships and victories of the early years; of their finding the Lorrimers and the Gordons, and the friendships formed. "Did you hear what Mr.

Lorrimer has done about the little Gordon girl, or Mrs. Strong, as he calls her, and the boy? He has taken the money that Major Gilson left him a check for, and invested it in her name so that it gives a good income to the girl and her child."

"That would be like Lorrimer," said Haywood.

"Yes, and like his Master. I have been thinking much about life, as I have been lying here."

"About life," exclaimed the husband.

"Yes. The meaning of it, and its relation to the One we call Jesus. You know that He proclaimed of himself, 'I am the Life,' and it has come to me that only the things which are like Him have any real value to life.

"And another thought has taken possession of me, John, and that is the unbroken oneness of this life with the next. I am sure that I am to go on living, and living richly."

"O, Betty, you must. You must!"

"Perhaps not as you are thinking, John," replied Betty, with shining eyes, as she patted his hand. "Jesus said that those who believe on Him should not see death. I believe on Him, dear, and believe Him. For His own good reason He has dropped a veil over the future, but I believe if we could know the truth as we one day shall, our fears would vanish. I have come to have such rest in the declaration that God is love. Jesus showed that to be true in every act of His life here, and I know that as we seek and find His will we shall find it to be full of blessing. Can't you believe that, John?"

"Yes, with my mind. But, oh, Betty!"

"I know, my dear. I, too, have missed you when you have been away, but I have been sure of your love. These earth-days are so short, and at best much sorrow is mixed with them. The place that Jesus is preparing for us has

neither sorrow nor ending. Can't you believe that, John?"

"Yes, but now, Betty, now!"

"I know, dear. Those whom the Master loved came to the same question. Would you read a little in the Book where I have marked?" And John read that passage beginning: "I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever. . . . . I will not leave you comfortless," and ending, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

"The Master is speaking to you, John. I am tired now, my beloved. Pick me up in your arms, and let me lie upon your heart. I can rest there."

And so, cuddled down in the strong arms, Betty went to sleep.

When consciousness returned to John Haywood he heard a voice, scarcely to be recognized as his own, calling from a vast distance, "Betty, Betty!" But Betty had crossed over even as his own feet had followed her to the brink of the dark waters. Tenderly laying the beloved form back upon the bed, he staggered to his feet. At once he was conscious of a Presence at his side as sensibly as though seen, and felt himself held in the Everlasting Arms. Then out from the silence came these words to him: "Beauty for ashes, and the oil of joy for mourning."

In those days, and especially upon the frontier, the offices for the dead were performed at the home, and kind hearts and tender hands were there to minister. But it was no longer Betty that lay so still and cold in the room below all the long night through. Betty could always ease whatever the ache of his heart, but would his heart ever again cease to ache? It may have been the groan of the father that aroused Boy, but he awoke calling, "Papa, I want my mother. Take me to Mother

now." How helpless and hopeless the man as he strove to silence and comfort the child. Then he heard an outside door open. The voices of the watchers below were hushed. There came a tap at the door of his room, and a soft voice called, "Mr. Haywood, will you let me take Boy? I have often gotten him to sleep."

Again there was a sound in the room below, but it was the gentle crooning of a lullaby hushing to quietness the sobs of a frightened child. And the presence and Christlike sympathy of Jacqueline Gordon brought another comfort to the heart of the man, though in that hour he was far from knowing its meaning.

The passing of golden haired Betty into Life Eternal was not the end of life for John Haywood. In after years he could count it rather the beginning of life. He found the meaning of surrender; he found the Comforter; his vision as to values was made clear, so that he could put first things first. And in God's own good time the promise was verified:

"Beauty for ashes, and the oil of joy for mourning."