



THE LAND OF NEVER WAS.

Ho, the Land of Never Was! How beautiful it seems, Lying, as we know it does, So near the Port of Dreams. Knees flash beside the ways, Luring us afar, Laughing sunshine fills the days, Night shows every star.

GAMBLING WITH FATE

By WILLIAM WALLACE COOK

CHAPTER X. DARREL AGAIN AT THE HALF WAY HOUSE.

Darrel tarried for breakfast at the Half Way house. Here he had the first opportunity of testing the effectiveness of his disguise.

The shrinking personality of the man in corduroys was well assumed. In dismounting at the stable, Jimmie, the hostler, wished him a brusque "howdy," then averted his face, winked at a friend standing near by and thrust his tongue in his cheek.

"The sheriff went up War Eagle way last night," said the proprietor, resuming his conversation with the young man. "With the intention of investigating the explosion?" "I reckon that's it. He wants to make out whether the Sandy Bar chaps told the facts or jest rung in a version of the Arabian Nights onto him."

"And if the wagon was sporged out so effectually why not Darrel?" "It was the same argument used by Cliff and it was unanswerable."

"Breakfast' jedgey," he announced, and began hammering out the alarm in front of the door.

When Darrel sat down at the table the proprietor posted himself at the dining-room entrance and watched him ominously. The fugitive's identity was not suspected, but the proprietor had heard of the extra plate-cleaning the day before and wanted to see if the insult would be repeated.

The food was brought on, Darrel began to eat and the proprietor went away with a grim smile. Breakfast over, Darrel asked for a sheet of paper and an envelope.

In a few moments he had written the following: "For the Sheriff: If you will call at the old cabin in the coulee to the left of the War Eagle trail, not far from the mine, you will find something that will interest you."

He did not sign the communication, but put it into the envelope, sealed it and addressed it to "The Sheriff, on his way back to Anaconda," and left it with the proprietor for delivery.

When he rode away from the tavern Darrel was reassured. His new personality had withstood the test and he knew that he could trust it until such time as it ceased to be serviceable.

But one thing made him uneasy. That was the doubt, now twice expressed, that giant powder could be so comprehensive in its destructive powers.

To settle his question what could be better than to have the sheriff visit the hut in the coulee? The body of a smooth-faced man would be found, but evidences would be at hand to show that a beard had been removed.

Everything would point to a sudden act of self-destruction. It would be supposed that Nate Darrel, overcome with the hopelessness of his case, had done away with himself.

The fact that the fugitive had escaped the explosion in some remarkable way would silence the doubters. Shortly before noon Darrel rode into Anaconda, turning aside and making for the livery barn nearest the Black-foot trail.

vats and other things usually found in a gentleman's wardrobe. Darrel closed the trunk disappointedly and carried his search through the closet and dresser drawers.

Nothing there, all McCloud's belongings, apart from what he had taken with him in the traveling-bag, having been put away in the trunk.

The eastener had told the clerk he intended to return on the morrow, but it was perfectly evident that he had imagined he might be detained much longer. Had he left Anaconda with the deliberate intention of destroying himself?

When he went down stairs to dinner Darrel was revolving this question in his mind. In the afternoon he read an account of his death in a daily paper and gave diligent attention to the gruesome details.

It was a long article and began with an account of the murder of Sturgis, the arrest of Darrel and his night escape from the Sandy Bar jail.

Nothing new was brought forward but the author of the account was not a doubter for he dwelt exhaustively on the vicarious methods of justice and pointed the whole affair with a moral.

Next morning another paper had more to say on the subject. Sheriff Scatterly had returned from the hills after a personal investigation and gave it as his opinion that the escaped murderer had been hurled into eternity in substantially the manner described by the men from Sandy Bar.

Abner Gryce's bronchos had run away; the wagon had collided with a boulder beside the trail, the horses had broken loose and the shock of the collision had set off the crystallized giant powder.

The report went on to state that Scatterly, in returning from the War Eagle mine, had had a communication handed to him at the Half Way house. Usually he took no notice of anonymous letters, but in this particular case he had made an exception.

The communication had requested him to call at Kansas Joe's old cabin in Lost Horse coulee. He had gone there but, aside from evidences that the hut had been recently used, he had found nothing and no one.

Darrel threw aside the paper, lighted a cigar and leaned back in his chair. A throbbing fear was leaping along his nerves.

The cabin empty! Had Scatterly made a mistake and gone to the wrong place? While possible this was hardly probable. Yet, if the sheriff had made no mistake in the cabin, what had become of McCloud?

Darrel got up and walked out of the hotel into the cooler air. His situation had become greatly complicated and the issue confronting him was very trying even to his iron nerves.

Should he retreat? he asked himself. It would be easy to close his account at the hotel and proceed to some other part of the country.

They resumed their seats and Darrel drew a chair near and excused himself while he read the communication from Ormsby. The envelope was sealed, which Darrel accounted strange if it contained simply a letter of introduction.

As he read, the eyes of the two ladies stole furtively to his face. They were not prepared for the sudden whiteness they saw there, the sharp, almost imperceptible compression of Darrel's thin lips, the convulsive movement of the slim, white fingers that held the sheet from which he was reading.

Puzzled and interrogative glances passed between the elderly lady and her niece. Darrel seemed abstracted. He held the letter long enough to have read it; half a dozen times. The writing ran as follows:

Dear Junius: This will be handed you by Mrs. Gorton and Miss Avery. There is something about the man whom they are seeking which they do not know and which I do not care to have them know—yet awhile. In your own time and when you think best you may give them the information. Through private sources I have learned that the man has taken another name, and when these tactics are resorted to it is clear that something is wrong.

Miss Avery has experienced much sorrow and I would not care to add one straw to her burden, if it could be helped. You understand, do you not? You will help them, I know, and please be a little tactful in what you do. The name now used by the one they desire to find is Sturgis, Jack Sturgis. He was last heard of at Sandy Bar, near Anaconda.

"Is there any bad news from Mr. Ormsby, Mr. McCloud?" asked Mrs. Gorton, in an agitated tone. "We must not anticipate, Mrs. Gorton," answered Darrel, with an encouraging smile, as he put the letter away. "If you will tell me in what way I can serve you, I shall be most happy to do all I can."

"Thank you," came from Miss Avery, in a low voice. Then she looked toward her aunt as though desiring that she should make the necessary explanations. "We have come here to find Elise's father," said Mrs. Gorton. "He has been absent from home for five years and during the last year no word whatever has been received from him. Naturally we can draw but one inference—she cast a hasty glance in her companion's direction—yet, in the absence of any positive knowledge, we cannot but have some hope."

[To Be Continued.]

AN APPEAL TO HONOR.

Bandit Chief Received and Entertained as a Gentleman Takes His Departure as One.

Treat a man as if he were a gentleman and he will rarely disappoint you. In illustration of this truth Mr. Crosse, author of "Round About the Carpathians," tells a good story of a robber chief in Hungary. A few years ago the Carpathian mountains were infested with organized bands of robbers, and neither life nor property was safe.

At this time a lady of great wealth, the Countess Z., who lived not far from the main highway between Budapest and Vienna, received a polite note one morning, informing her that 12 gentlemen would dine with her at midnight. She understood what it meant.

It was impossible to summon help, and well she knew that every approach to the castle would be guarded, to prevent communication. In this dilemma she made ready for her uninvited guests.

At midnight up rode an armed band, 12 men in all. Immediately the gate of the outer court and the entrance door were thrown wide, as if for the most honored and welcome guests. The countess stood at the entrance to receive them, richly dressed. She bade the chief and his men a gracious welcome, gave orders that their horses be cared for, and then, taking the arm of her guest, led the way to the dining hall. Here a goodly feast was spread and all the gold and silver plate of the castle was lavishly displayed.

The leader of the robber band started back in surprise; but recovering his self-possession, he seated himself beside his charming hostess, who engaged him in merry talk of the gay world at Vienna, with which they were both familiar. At length, when the feast was nearly ended, the chief took out his watch and said:

"Countess, the happiest moments of my life have always been the shortest. I have another engagement this night. Bad as I am, none ever appealed to my honor in vain. You have received me as a gentleman, and I shall take my departure as one. As for you, my men," he said, looking sternly round with hand on his pistol, "I charge you to take nothing from this house. He who disobeys me dies that instant."

The chief then asked for pen and paper and wrote some words upon a sheet, which he handed to his hostess. "This, madam, will serve to protect you in future. You have but to show it and it will save you from any molestation or loss."

THE COST OF LIVING.

HIGHER NOW THAN IT HAS BEEN SINCE THE WAR.

Increase of Expense on Some Necessaries of Life Ranges from 33 to 100 Per Cent.—All Commodities Higher.

Washington (D. C.) Special. Carroll D. Wright, commissioner of the bureau of labor of the department of commerce and labor, who is one of the recognized statisticians of the world, has undertaken in a bulletin, which has just been issued, to throw light on the question of the increased cost of living in 1903 over the preceding 13 years.

Wright has made his comparisons with wholesale figures since they are regarded as the more substantial basis and his report includes 260 series of quotations, covering farm products, food and clothing, fuel and lighting, metals, implements, lumber and building materials, drugs and chemicals, house furnishings and miscellaneous goods.

In making his report the statistician adopted the method pursued by all leading authorities of the world, and in comparing prices for 1903 with former years he reduces the price of the preceding 13 years to the average price for that period. He places this average price always at 100. The difference between 100 shows the decrease or increase in cost for 1903.

The first table shows the average relative prices of all commodities higher in 1903 than at any time since and including 1890. Farm products reached the lowest average in 1896 and the highest in 1902. Cloths and clothing were the lowest in 1897 and the highest in 1890. Fuel and lighting were the lowest in 1894 and the highest in 1903. Metals and implements were the lowest in 1898 and the highest in 1900. Lumber and building materials were the lowest in 1897 and the highest in 1893.

Statistics show a decrease in the price of beef from 1902, but the relative price



CARROLL D. WRIGHT. (He Proves in Figures That Cost of Living is Higher Than Ever.)

compared to the period since 1890 shows an increase in cattle of 4.7 per cent.

Under the head of farm products 16 articles show increases as follows:

Table with 2 columns: Commodity and Percentage Increase. Includes Wheat (5.1%), Hides (24.8%), Steers (6.9%), Oats (31.7%), Timothy hay (19.2%), Hogs (37.0%), Corn (21.1%), Cotton (44.7%), Barley (21.2%), New York hogs (36.9%).

There was a decrease of 1.3 per cent. in sheep, 2.5 per cent. in rye, 5.9 per cent. in flaxseed.

Fifty-three articles of food are given, and on 35 there is an increase over the average for the preceding 13 year ranging from five per cent. on bread in the Washington market to 72 per cent. on pepper from Singapore. The following increases in percentage are shown:

Table with 2 columns: Commodity and Percentage Increase. Includes Dried codfish (5%), Eggs (23.2%), Potatoes (5%), New York cheese (23.3%), Butter (6%), Mackerel (23.6%), Canned salmon (19%), Cornmeal (22.2%), Molasses (12.5%), Smoked hams (34%), Cra'ks, B'stn X 12.6%, Lard (35%), Milk (12.9%), Beans (33%), Mess beef (13%), Bacon and salt (34%), Western ham (17%), Pork (42.1%), Tallow (17.2%), Herring (51%).

Decreases are shown as follows: Sugar (1.2 to 5%), Vinegar (12%), Soda crackers (9.5%), Evapo'd fruits (28%), Flour (6.4%), Coffee (57.4%).

Of 70 articles of clothing, the prices of 56 for 1903 are higher than the average price for the preceding period since 1890. Increases ranged from three per cent. for gingham to 20.8 per cent. for sheetings. Women's dress goods were 14.3 per cent. higher; overcoatings, 17.3 per cent. higher; and blankets, 17.9 per cent. higher.

The table on fuel and lighting shows an astonishing increase in cost to the consumer during 1903 over the average price the preceding ten years. The result follows:

Table with 2 columns: Commodity and Percentage Increase. Includes Petroleum, ref'd (53.1%), Anthracite stove (27%), Petroleum for ex- (33.1%), Anthracite chest-nut (27.2%), Anthracite coal (26.2%), Anthracite egg (34.3%).

LARGE MEETING

Proceedings of the Thirty-first General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Los Angeles, May 18.—Action on two important matters was taken by the general conference of the Methodist church at Tuesday's session. The report of the committee on episcopacy, recommending that the conference elect eight bishops, was adopted. At the close of a heated debate between Dr. James M. Buckley and Dr. Thomas B. Neely, the two foremost parliamentarians of the Methodist church, the conference adopted the report of the special committee, which finds that the conference has no authority to district the episcopacy.

Los Angeles, Cal., May 19.—The crowd that besieged Hazard's Pavilion yesterday seeking admittance to the Methodist conference in order to observe the balloting for bishops, which had been fixed as the special order of the day, was unusually large. Upon reassembling after recess Bishop Hamilton, who presided, asked the delegates to devote ten minutes to prayer, seeking divine guidance in the important duties before them. Tellers were then appointed and the first ballot for bishops was cast.

On the first ballot for bishops only one was elected, J. F. Berry, who received 531 votes out of 730 cast. One hundred and twenty other men were voted for. Los Angeles, May 20.—Three additional bishops were elected Thursday at the Methodist general conference. Dr. W. F. McDowell and Dr. Henry Spellmeyer on the second ballot, which was announced at the morning session, and Dr. J. W. Bashford, chosen on the fourth ballot in the afternoon. The third ballot resulted in no election.

Four of the eight bishops to be elected have thus far been chosen, as follows: Dr. J. F. Berry, Chicago; Dr. Henry Spellmeyer, Newark, N. J.; Dr. William F. McDowell, New York; Dr. James W. Bashford, Delaware, O.

The fourth ballot, which resulted in the election of Dr. Bashford, presented Dr. William Burt and Dr. T. B. Neely at the head of the list in the order named, with 460 and 440 votes respectively.

The fifth ballot was taken just before adjournment and as a result of it, it is reasonably certain that Dr. William Burt is elected as the fifth bishop, and perhaps Dr. T. B. Neely a sixth.

The report of the committee on international and industrial peace, which was read at the morning session, will doubtless provoke an animated debate when it comes up for consideration next Tuesday as the special order of the day.

The report recommends three agencies as the means to accomplish universal arbitration and the settlement of industrial disputes, namely, The Hague peace court, a United States permanent national industrial peace court, and a permanent periodic international peace congress.

Los Angeles, Cal., May 21.—When the Methodist general conference adjourned last night seven of the eight bishops to be elected had been chosen, and the ballot taken just before adjournment probably had elected the eighth, although its result has not yet been announced. The three bishops chosen Friday were: William Burt, of Rome, Italy; Luther B. Wilson, of Baltimore, and Thomas B. Neely, of Philadelphia.

WILL SUE FOR DAMAGES.

Grain Shippers Intend to Make Trouble for the Lake Carriers' Association.

Milwaukee, Wis., May 21.—The Journal says: An entirely new feature has been added to the trouble between the Lake Carriers' association and the Masters and Pilots' association. The Lake Carriers' association (the vessel owners) had relied on what is called the "strike clause" in the bills of lading. This clause provides that, in case of a strike, the vessel owners shall not be liable for damages during the strike. Relying on this clause, the vessel owners have felt confident in their position, believing no damage suits could be brought.

F. R. Morris & Co., who now have a boat load at the dock at Milwaukee waiting for a settlement of the trouble, have notified the owners of the vessel that the owners will be held liable for all delay and damages that may result from the non-delivery of the grain at its destination. Morris & Co. assume that this trouble is not a strike, but that it is a condition brought about by the vessel owners themselves and partakes more of the nature of a lockout.

The action of the F. R. Morris Co. will be followed by similar action on the part of grain shippers throughout the country and may bring about a settlement of the trouble.

Expelled From the Exchange.

New York, May 20.—Andreas S. Floyd and Frank B. Crawford, comprising the brokerage firm of Floyd, Crawford & Co., whose suspension was recently announced, were yesterday expelled from the Consolidated stock exchange and Petroleum exchange. This action was taken by the governors after repeated efforts had been made to bring Messrs. Floyd and Crawford before them.

A Battle in Santo Domingo.

Cape Haytien, Hayti, May 20.—Dominican government troops, commanded by Gen. Cabrera, and Dominican revolutionary troops, led by Gen. La Sala and other generals, met recently at Guayacanes, Santo Domingo. In the fighting which followed the government force had 30 men killed or wounded and the revolutionists lost heavily. Five revolutionary generals sought refuge in the French and Venezuelan consulates here and later embarked on the French steamer Olinde Rodriguez, bound for Porto Rico.



IN THE AFTERNOON HE READ AN ACCOUNT OF HIS DEATH IN A DAILY PAPER.

He passed the "Colonel's Own," silent and almost deserted, at that hour, and was soon at the hotel where he had put up during his brief stay in town a short time before.

"How do you do, Mr. McCloud," said the clerk, affably. "You're a little ahead of schedule, aren't you?" "A little."

"I understood you to say you wouldn't be back until to-morrow. Two ladies called to see you, this morning, and left a card."

CHAPTER XI. DARREL FACES THE ISSUE.

There was a sole-leather trunk in McCloud's room. It was locked but a small key ring in a pocket of the corduroys held a key that gave access to it.

No papers were found. There were two suits of clothes—both of the best quality—a supply of clean linen, cravats