

ON THE PRAIRIE

By HONORE WILLIAMS

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As far as the eye could see the prairie stretched as smooth as a floor. Rhoda and little Dinny strolled on and on till the lone paddock was only a dot against the blue sky line. Little Dinny darted from one butterfly patch to another, with wild shrieks of delight in their yellow glory. He pulled up great handfuls of them, rolled over and over in their beds of gold and covered his mother with showers of their petals.

Rhoda pulled little Dinny's hand. The blue delight of the June skies might as well have been November gloaming for all the pleasure reflected in her brown eyes. The ranch walls seemed to stifle her lately. She had planned all night to take the boy and spend the lonely waking hours in the open. But now, with all the wide spaces of sky and prairie about her, her sense of desolation and disappointment seemed accentuated instead of lessened. She was tired of thinking, utterly weary of trying to straighten her endless tangle of questionings. She wanted to get away, to find comfort and rest.

She wondered, in spite of the soft hand of Dinny in hers, if things might not have been vastly better had she never come west to the ranch with Donald. Somehow marriage was so different from her girlish dreams. And now at twenty-three, after five years, she was wondering if it really paid. Not but that Donald was kind, not but that he gave her all that he could of himself he could spare from the ranch. It was the hopeless stupidity of it that was wearing on her. Her life was made up of failures.

After the advent of Dinny and the continual surprise that he really was theirs, that he did smile, that it was a tooth that he had taken a step nothing had occurred to disturb the cloying evenness of her existence. And Donald, all the old ecstasy of the first marriage days gone, how unessential

There was a mad roar, a wild swirl of wind. Rhoda and little Dinny started down it. The blue delight of the June skies might as well have been November gloaming for all the pleasure reflected in her brown eyes. The ranch walls seemed to stifle her lately. She had planned all night to take the boy and spend the lonely waking hours in the open. But now, with all the wide spaces of sky and prairie about her, her sense of desolation and disappointment seemed accentuated instead of lessened. She was tired of thinking, utterly weary of trying to straighten her endless tangle of questionings. She wanted to get away, to find comfort and rest.

There were a mad roar, a sudden half darkness and a wild swirl of wind, then gradual quiet and freshening cold with great deluges of wet rain. When the first roar had died away in the distance Rhoda sat up. The tor-

nado had passed between her and the ranch house. She pulled off her skirt and wrapped it about the child, who was limp and speechless with terror. She herself was strangely calm.

As the darkness lifted a little she tried to look off through the driving rain to the herding line, but she could see nothing. She lifted the child and with him in her arms struggled in the direction of the ranch house. Slipping, falling, wind whipped and half drowned, shivering with the cold, she struggled on and on.

Through the swirl of the storm she heard hoarse shouts, then Donald's wild shout: "Rhoda! Rhoda! Rhoda!" And her husband threw himself from his horse and clasped them both in his arms.

"Are you hurt? Oh, you poor, poor girl!"

"Oh, Donald, Donald," she gasped. "No, no, I'm not hurt. Neither is Dinny."

"Dinny—oh, yes, Dinny, too, of course." And he took the little fellow from her and led her toward the house. "I went home for lunch," he panted. "To surprise you. They said you were out here. Then the tornado came, and—and I went mad, I guess."

"Donald," said Rhoda, raising her voice above the howl of the storm, "did you really care so much as that? Why, you even thought of me before you did Dinny. Did you really care so much, Donald?"

Donald looked down into her upturned face in dazed astonishment. "Care Rhoda?" he asked. "Care? Why, what else do I live for?" And he put her on the horse with a touch that thrilled her as of old. She looked down at the child as Donald laid him in her lap, and the thoughts of the morning, of the past years, came back to her.

"How could I have misunderstood so?" she asked herself. "What a fool a woman can be!"

Donald, leading the horse, could not hear, but she smiled happily at his back through the blinding rain and hugged the child to her with the old joy of living.

The Indian of Today.

Something more than four centuries have gone by since Columbus dawned on the view of the American red man. The red man's horizon has broadened in that time. A young man who describes his adventures among the Sioux for the Booklovers Magazine found the warriors of the plains unimpressed by the noble paleface.

"Why do they call the Fourth of July 'Independence day?'" an old warrior asked as they sat by the campfire.

The explanation was somewhat incoherent, but included mention of a war with Great Britain.

"Oh, yes, I have been there," remarked the Indian reminiscently. "London is a fine city."

Then up spoke another brave from where he squatted, with dripping rain streaking his war paint. "I like Paris better."

The white man gasped.

"Archibald was born in Berlin," said the female sphinx at the red palls, turning to indicate the child who grinned toothlessly in the background.

"Which do you prefer?" they asked.

"It has stopped raining," said the white man, "and I must be going."

Later he transpired that one was a Carlisle graduate, and all had been abroad with Buffalo Bill.

The Mirror Superstitions.

The mistrust of the ghostly mirror is so old and so far spread that we meet with it in the folklore of every land. An old tradition warns us that the new time when we look at it in the calm evening sky, carries a message of evil to those who see it first reflected in a looking glass. For such unlovely mortals it is said that the lunar virus distills slow poison and corroding care.

The Deputy Game Warden

By CLARA TAYLOR

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Harry Taylor, Yale graduate and all round good fellow and a general favorite, although it was known that he had no fortune, had gone into the Maine woods with a party of campers who, like himself, could not well afford the season at Newport. As it was the close season for all kinds of big game they made little pretense of hunting. They had been in the woods for a week or ten days when Nick Barton, the game warden for that district, happened that way and was put up for the night. Before leaving in the morning he said to young Taylor:

"Look here, now, I've got to go out of the woods for a week, but it won't do to let this district without a warden. There are plenty of campers coming in, and some of them will run any risk to secure the antlers of a moose. I've got to leave a deputy to be in charge of the woods, and watch, and I'm wondering why you wouldn't fill the bill."

"I have never acted as a policeman yet," replied Harry, with a smile.

"But this is a far different thing. I shall give notice to all the campers I come across that a deputy has been left in the woods and that any interference with the game laws will be daily and rigorously punished."

"But suppose I find the law being violated and make an arrest?"

"All you have to do is to take your prisoner before the nearest justice of the peace and state your case. It isn't twenty-five miles to the nearest magistrate. It will be best fishing and dawdling around all hollow."

Further objections were made and combated, and the upshot of the matter was that Harry Taylor was duly and legally appointed deputy game warden in and for a certain district.

"If you are to be in the woods for the month, and if I stay here as well, and if I visit your camp every day to see that the law is not being violated, and if you find I am not altogether—altogether indifferent, why—why?"

"A month later as they were getting ready to go out of the woods Miss Bessie said:

"What do you think became of the boy that mooned? Father and Fred went for the horns next day, but the boy had mysteriously disappeared."

"I think the boy walked off on his own legs before we got through talking about the situation," said Harry.

His eyes flashed for a moment, and then she blushed and smiled and said: "I didn't think there was such a mean man in all this world."

A Sheridan Retort.

Richard Sheridan maintained that the Duke of Wellington would succeed in England, while his great rival, General Tarleton, had the opinion that he would fail. The matter was one of constant dispute between the two.

Tarleton, who had been wrong, grew obstinate. Consequently, when the news of the retreat of the French at Talavera was received in England, Sheridan, by way of a taunt, said:

"Well, Tarleton, are you on your high horse still?"

"Oh, higher than ever," was the reply. "If I was on a horse before, I am on an elephant now."

"No, no, my dear fellow," said the wit, "you were on an ass before, and you are on a turtle now."

PELICAN ISLAND.

Home of All the Pelicans of the East Coast of Florida.

In that long, narrow lagoon on the east coast of Florida, in the Indian river there is a muddy sludge or four acres in extent. Originally it doubtless did not differ from hundreds of similar neighboring islets, but, for some reason past finding out, this islet, and this alone, forms the nesting resort, the home, of all the pelicans of the Indian river if not, indeed, of the east coast of Florida. The brown pelican, unlike its white cousin, nests normally in low trees and bushes, and there is evidence that when the original pelican colonists landed on the islet which now bears their name it was well grown with black and red mangroves, in which the birds placed their scaffolding of sticks. Exceptionally low temperature and high water—perhaps also excessive use by the birds, which sometimes build as many as seven nests in a single mangrove—have killed tree after tree, until at present only three serviceable trees remain. Still the birds come back, the compelling motive which prompts them to return to this particular spot being evidently stronger than that which induced them to nest in trees.—Frank M. Chapman in Century.

STOCKHOLM.

The City of a Thousand Islands and Rocky Reefs.

From Sweden's capital an enthusiastic visitor writes: "The sky has an almost Italian radiance as the sun shines clear and bright on the glittering levels of the lagoon that divide the rocky towers from the old. Across the water, on which a fleet of white ferries ply, rises the broad front of the palace, the stem outline of which is relieved by the russet glow which time has lent to the brickwork. In front of the palace runs a broad quay crowded with shipping, behind which one may catch peeps of narrow, winding streets, with sloping roofs and painted houses bent with age. The square front of the palace rises above the red and gray roofs, seeming to command the old city. On my right the waters narrow to a swift rushing stream, over which a stately bridge has been thrown, uniting the palace with the picture pile of the opera house, or, rather, with the broad square in which it stands. Behind the opera house lie broad streets of modern houses, in which there are unexpected glimpses of waterways crowded with shipping."

"Stockholm is built on a series of islands formed by Lake Malaren. It is, indeed, the city of a thousand islands and rocky reefs, which are sown broadcast many miles beyond the mainland, where the lake and river join the sea. The steamers which ply up and down the lake afford endless excursions. Seaward you may sail a day among the islands until you reach the long, low reefs on which the Baltic beats. In spite of their cold climate the Swedes delight in the open air. After the indoor life of English or American cities it is a great pleasure to take one's meals out of doors, although it has sometimes been necessary to dine wrapped in an overcoat. We have seen people dining in the Tirol gardens beneath awnings and umbrellas in the rain. This habit may explain the health and vigor of the Swedes."

VARIETY IN CHEWING.

Gum and Tobacco Are Not the Only Materials Utilized.

Gum chicle, which forms the basis of most American chewing gums, is by no means the only chewing material, though chewing gum has spread over a large portion of the world.

Among the old fashioned gum of the spruce tree is still in greater favor, and it is used in the great spruce belts driven a thriving trade in the brown tannin.

Although the chicle comes from the tropics, it is seldom used as a chewing gum there, unadorned rubber being the fashion. In Peru "coca" or cocoa leaves, from the staple chewing material, are sometimes used, since from its leaves cocaine is extracted. In the east the betel nut is chewed in preference, the nut being prepared with lime. To it might be accorded the place of first prominence, since because of the congestion of population practically one-tenth of the human race give it the preference.

One of the oldest chews is the lenden bullet which the English soldier used to chew before the introduction of the jacketed bullets now in use. They declared that it lessened their thirst and to some extent lessened their hunger on long marches.

And then there is tobacco.

ODD THINGS ABOUT WORDS.

When the Word "Lunch" Was First Used It Meant a "Lump."

"Lunch," etymologically, is just a lump of the sixteenth century. "Lunch of bacon" meant merely a slice or lump of it. So Burns speaks of bread and cheese "dealt about in lumps," and Scott records that "little Benjie was ramming a huge luncheon of pie crust into his mouth." While in modern times "lunch" is an abbreviation from "luncheon," the latter was originally an abbreviation of "luncheon." A philologist shows how the old "noon steak," noon drink, came to mean noon eating, and to appear as "luncheon," and the development thereafter of "luncheon" from "lunch" was very natural.

Curious changes of words sometimes take place between two languages. This English has borrowed the French "posuer" and has given to France "snob" in trade. Frenchmen have a way of taking a polysyllabic word and using half of it. Thus of "steeples" they have appropriated the main part of "mounting a steeple" when he means to ride a race over the customary obstacles. A smoking jacket is with him a "smoking" and a sleeping car is a "sleeping."

Very Different Trials.

Tess—And you going to get your rehearsal tonight? Jess—No, Tess—You'd better. We're going to give that new hymn a trial. Jess—Can't. I am going to give a new him a trial my self.

Harrab, or huzzab, is the oldest and most common exclamation in all languages.

A Conqueror Attraction.

A recent visitor to the Westchester churchyard asked a middle aged native of the village to be directed to the graves of Burke and Waller. The man said he had no recollection of any such persons having been buried there.

"But," he added, "you see that little chemist's shop over there? That's the shop where they brew the trunk murder man, used to be an apprentice?"

Not There.

"Judge," said Mrs. Starvorn to the magistrate, who had recently come to board with her, "I'm particularly anxious to have you try this chicken soup. I have tried it," replied the magistrate, "and my decision is that the chicken has proved an alibi."—Exchange.

The Gallant Hero.

The famous Calabar bean is said to be worse than strychnine. The natives use it for an ordeal. If a person is accused of a crime he is made to eat one, being adjudged to be guilty in case of death, which is almost inevitable. Another seed employed for a like purpose is that of the ordeal tree of Madagascar, said to be the most deadly of vegetable products. One of these seeds called the seed of an almond will kill twenty men.

THE TOY INVENTOR.

His Hardest Task Is to Catch the Fancy of the Public.

The small inventor is an important factor in the mechanical toy business, and he earns all of the living he gets in thinking up devices. He is most concerned with the small mechanical toys, and, in addition to the prime requisite of putting forth something novel, he must get something which costs as little as possible and which catches the fancy of the multitude. This last point is one which is most difficult to cover. No student of the subject has ever yet been able to discover or deduce the type in which the public taste moves, and it is a hard hit or miss as to whether a figure which walks on its hands, an airplane with wings on an aerobicycle, or a toy which will be the best sold. Then, when the invention has been achieved, the inventor has still the problem of finding the maker who will buy it and pay a fair price. The inventor and maker are in much the same position as the writer and publisher, both go through the same mental turmoil as to the timeliness of the output and both take the same risks.

The inventor who has been in the business long learns at last the best places at which to offer his wares and his name or less of an idea of what they ought to bring him, and once he has acquired this knowledge his entire energy is devoted to keeping up with the demand for newness. Something absolutely different from anything else previously offered is in general better than an improvement of an old idea, and that is why in mechanical toys the same device is sold some two seasons in succession. Philadelphia Record.

CHOCOLATE.

A Luxury in This Country in the Eighteenth Century.

The first newspaper notice that announced the sale of cocoa and chocolate in America read:

"Amos Trask, at his house a little below the Bell tavern in Danvers, makes and sells chocolate which he will warrant to be good and takes cocoa to grind. Those who may please to favor him with their custom may depend upon being well served, and at a very cheap price."

This notice appeared in the Essex Gazette of Massachusetts on the 18th of June, 1771, five years before the signing of the declaration of Independence. Despite Mr. Trask's assurance that his rate was cheap, chocolate was very expensive and beyond the purse of any but the wealthy folk. Wouldn't they be surprised to see how generally chocolate is sold these days in packages as cheap as a penny?

When the Spanish soldier Cortes conquered Mexico in 1519 he found the people very fond of a drink called "chocolate." This was served to the ruler Montezuma in a cup of solid gold. When the Spaniards went home they introduced this drink into their country, but it remained very expensive. The secret of its preparation was never allowed to get out of Spain. Now it is the cheapest article of food and drink we have.

A Story of Edwin Forrest.

Edwin Forrest, the great actor, was at Columbus, O., on one of his tours. It was in the railroad station at midnight. It was cold, bleak, biting weather, and the old fellow hobbled up and down the platform, but there was majestic even in his very hobble. An undertaker's wagon pulled up at the station and a corpse was removed from it. The baggage man carelessly hustled the body into his dray and wheeled it down the platform. As he halted, old Forrest broke out into the most horrible cursing and with his tongue lashed the baggage man for his careless handling of the human clay. Then he turned, approached the corpse and broke into the oration of Mark Antony over the body of Caesar. No one was there but the frightened baggage man and a handful of actors. The great actor's voice rose and fell and the subtle tears and resolute thunder of the oration awoke the echoes of the station as a great organ in a majestic cathedral and in an aside speech as a climax: "There, I'll be dead myself inside a year," said he.

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DARING OF LIONS.

Incidents to Prove That the Brutes Are Not Cowards.

It has been said many times that lions are cowardly brutes, but of the many lions with which I have had personal dealings, expected and unexpected, the epithet cowardly is the last I should consider appropriate in describing them. I have been charged by a lion, and he certainly did not look cowardly. I have come face to face, at a distance of some twenty feet, with a family party of half a dozen fortunately full fed. They stood, we, quiet dignity, looking at us, and then slowly moved away, stopping every few yards to stare and look again. There was neither fear nor meanness in their appearance or behavior.

I have seen lions stalking game, and I have myself been stalked by them. If I could have encouraged myself with the conviction of their cowardliness when I was the quarry and they the hunters, it would have put a different aspect on the situation. We were at this time living in a station over seventy miles from the nearest connecting link with the outside world, and when man-eating lions took possession of the country which led to this link things became serious.

A large troop was reported, and the natives maintained that this troop ran along in the grass parallel with the caravan road for a path some ten inches wide, and having selected the most subtle member of the caravan, jumped upon him like a flash, and, seizing him, disappeared as quickly as they came.

Our mail runners, attached to whom were a couple of native police armed with rifles, were several times attacked. Finally, as the wall party was camping one night, fortunately jumped upon him like a flash, and, seizing him, disappeared as quickly as they came.

ASPARAGUS.

Its Relation to the Famous Asphodel of the Early Ages.

As a tickler of the palate asparagus has come down the ages with all the weight of Greek and Roman approval. First mentioned by the poet, and Aristophanes, the humorist, regarded it as a great aid in digesting the crank philosophies of the day.

It is an old fact that this culinary plant is closely related to the famous asphodel, which was supposed by the ancients to be the leading flower in the garden of Eden, and the Greek philosopher, the humorist, regarded it as a great aid in digesting the crank philosophies of the day.

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POINTED PARAGRAPHS.

How soon we learn that the average man's bark is about all there is to him. When people say anything good about you, ever notice what a few are present?

We all of us claim to be natural, but we all of us know that the only time when we are not putting on is when we are asleep.

Somehow the hundred dollars some other man has always looks larger and as if it should go further than the hundred dollars you have.

There are not many sights more depressing than to meet a farmer's wagon on a country road going out from town with a coffin in it.

When a man says he got up nine times with the baby six nights in succession it means that one night he woke up and heard his wife snore up—Atchison Globe.

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