



# The COW PUNCHER

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*Kitchener, and other poems*  
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## CHAPTER VII.—Continued.

"Real estate is the only subject I would trust him on," she continued. "I must say, Dave, that for a shrewd business man you are awfully dense about Concord."

He remained silent for a few moments. He decided not to follow her lead. He knew that if she had anything explicit to say about Concord she would say it when she felt the time to be opportune, and not until then.

"How much did you invest?"

"Not much. Just what I had."

"You mean all your savings?"

"Why not? It's all right, isn't it?"

He had risen and was standing by the window.

"It's all right, isn't it?" she repeated.

"I'm afraid it isn't!" he said, at length, in a restrained voice. "I'm afraid it isn't."

"What do you mean?" she demanded.

"Bert," he continued, "did it ever occur to you that this thing must have an end—that we can't go on forever lifting ourselves by our own bootstraps? We have built a city here, a great and beautiful city, almost as a wizard might build it by magic overnight. There was room for it here; there was occasion; there was justification. But there was neither occasion nor justification for turning miles and miles of prairie land into city lots—lots which in the nature of things cannot possibly, in your time or mine, be required for city purposes. These lots should be producing; wheat, oats, potatoes, cows, butter—that is what we must build our city on. We have been considering the effect rather than the cause. The cause is the country, the neglected country, and until it overtakes the city we must stand still, if we do not go back. Our prosperity has been built on borrowed money, and we have forgotten that borrowed money must some time be repaid."

"You mean that the boom is about to burst?" she said.

"Not exactly burst. It will not be so sudden as that. It will just ooze away like a toy balloon pricked with a pin."

There was silence for some minutes. When she spoke at length it was with a tinge of bitterness. "So you are unloading?"

"The firm is, I beg you, Bert, to believe that if I had known your intention I would have tried to dissuade you."

"Why me particularly? I am only one of the great public. Why don't you give your conclusions to the world? Now that you see the reaction setting in doesn't honesty suggest what your course should be?"

There was reproach in her voice, Dave thought, rather than bitterness.

He spread out his hands. "What's the use? The harm is done. To predict a collapse would be to precipitate a panic. It is as though we were passengers on a boat at sea. You and I know the boat is sinking, but the other passengers don't. They are making merry with champagne and motorcars—if you can accept that figure—and revelry and easy money. Why spoil their remaining few hours by telling them they are headed for the bottom?"

After a moment she placed her fingers on his arm. "Forgive me, Dave," she said. "I didn't mean to whine."

"You didn't whine," he returned, almost fiercely. "It's not you. You are too good a sport. But there will be lots of whining in the coming months." Manlike, it did not occur to Dave that in that moment the girl had bidden goodby to her savings of a dozen years and had merely looked up and said, "Forgive me, Dave, I didn't mean to whine."

He glanced at his watch. "It's late for a theater," he said, "but we can ride. Which do you say—auto or horseback?"

"I can't go horseback in these clothes and I don't want to change."

Dave pressed a button and the omnipresent Chinese "boy" stood before him. "My car," he said. "The two-passenger car. I shall not want a driver." Then, continuing to Miss Morrison: "You will need something more than that coat. Let me see, my smoking jacket should fit."

In a few minutes they were threading their way through the street traffic in Dave's machine. Presently the traffic thinned, and the car hummed through long residential avenues of comfortable homes. On and on they sped, until the city streets and the city lights fell behind and the car was swinging along a fine country road through a land marked with streams and bridges and blocked out with fragrant bluffs of young poplars.

At last, after an hour's steady driving in a delight of motion too keen for conversation, they pulled up on the brow of a hill. Dave switched off his lights, the better to appreciate the majesty of the night, and in the silence came the low murmur of water. There were no words. They sat and breathed it.

Suddenly, from a sharp bend behind in the road, flashed the lights of an approaching car. Dave was able to

switch his own lights on again only in time to avoid a collision. The oncoming car lurched and passed by furiously, but not before Dave had recognized Concord as the driver. Back on its trail of dust floated the ribald notes of half-intoxicated women.

"Close enough," said Dave when the dust had settled. "Well, let us jog back home."

They took the return trip leisurely, drinking in the glories of the night and allowing time for the play of conversation. Bert Morrison was a good conversationalist. Her points of interest were almost infinite. And they were back among the street lights before they knew.

"Oh, I almost forgot," Bert said, as they parted, as though she really had forgotten. "I was at a reception today when a beautiful woman asked for you—asked me if I had ever heard of Mr. David Elden."

"What, Dave Elden, the millionaire?" I said. "Everybody knows him. He's the beau of the town, or could be if he wanted to." Oh, I gave you a good name, Dave."

"Thanks, Bert. That was decent. Who was she?"

"She said her name was Irene Hardy."

## CHAPTER VIII.

Upon the return of Irene Hardy to the East it had slowly become apparent to her mother that things were not as they once had been. It seemed as though she had left part of her nature behind—had outgrown it, perhaps—and had created about herself an atmosphere of reserve foreign to her earlier life. It seemed as though the loneliness of the great plains had settled upon her.

"Whatever has come over Irene?" said Mrs. Hardy to the doctor one evening. "She hasn't been the same since she came home. I should not have let her go west alone."

The doctor looked up mildly from his paper. It was the custom of the doctor to look up mildly when Mrs. Hardy made a statement demanding some form of recognition. From the wide initiation into domestic affairs which his profession had given him Doctor Hardy had long since entirely ceased to look for the absolute in woman. He had never looked for it in man. He realized that in Mrs. Hardy he did not possess a perfect mate, but he was equally convinced that in no other woman would he have found a perfect mate, and he accepted his lot with the philosophy of his sixty years. So instead of reminding his wife that Irene had not been alone when she went west he remarked very mildly that the girl was growing older.

Mrs. Hardy found in his remark occasion to lay down the book she had been holding and to sit upright in a rigidity of intense disapproval. Doctor Hardy was aware that this was entirely a theatrical attitude, assumed for the purpose of imposing upon him a proper humility. He had experienced it many times.

"Doctor Hardy," said his wife after the lapse of an appropriate period, "do you consider that an intelligent remark?"

"It has the advantage of truthfulness," returned the doctor complacently. "It is susceptible of demonstration."

"I should think this is a matter of sufficient interest to the family to be discussed seriously," retorted Mrs. Hardy, who had an unfortunate habit of becoming exasperated by her husband's good humor. "Irene is our only child, and before your very eyes you see her—you see her—Do you know, I begin—I really begin to suspect that she's in love."

It was Doctor Hardy's turn to sit upright. "Nonsense!" he said. "Why should she be in love?" It is the unfortunate limitation of the philosopher that he so often leaves irrational behavior out of the reckoning. "She is only a child."

"She will be eighteen presently. And why shouldn't she be in love? And the question is—who? That is for you to answer. Who did she meet?"

"She met no one with me. My accident left me to enjoy my holiday as best I could at a ranch deep in the foothills, and Reenie stayed with me there. There was no one else."

"No one? No ranchmen, cowboys—cow punchers—I think I have heard"—with nice disdain.

"No. Only young Elden—"

"Only? Who is this young Elden?"

"But he is just a boy. Just the son of the old rancher of whom I have told you."

"Exactly. And Irene is just a girl. Doctor Hardy, you are all very well with your fivers and your chills, but you can't diagnose a love case worth a cent. What about this young Elden? Did Irene see much of him?"

The doctor spread his hands. "Do you realize that there were four of us at that ranch—four only, and no one else for miles? How could she help seeing him?"

"And you permitted it?"

"I was on my back with a broken leg. We were guests at their home. They were good Samaritans to us. I

## Variations of the Straight Line Suit



With the beginning of the season suits and dresses were presented in a variety of silhouettes, and now that the midseason is here, the public has declared its preference. Wide-hip, crinoline and peg-top outlines captured and held their devotees, but a high percentage of well-dressed people planned their faith to lines almost unbroken in suits, in dresses, and more particularly in evening gowns. No new aspirant has disturbed the stability of the straight-line suit, and now that manufacturers have tested out the public, that is the one thing they are entirely sure of. Therefore such new suits as they are turning out for present sale are variations of the straight-line models.

"Straight line" is not to be taken too literally. It means a silhouette having little definition at the waistline. Such as there is results from belts and girdles and not from fitting. The two suits shown in the picture illustrate this point very clearly, and also bring out the introduction of new features that vary the style and make



**Christmas Decorations.**

Everywhere women and children are more or less engrossed with preparations for Christmas day, the most joyous of the year for them. No one can do too much toward celebrating the greatest of festivals in the right spirit, for it should be a day of rejoicing. The interchanging of gifts is all to this end, but this phase of Christmas celebrating seems overdone, and to occupy too much time and costs too much money in late years; it crowds out other and equally important things. Everyone should share in the good cheer at Christmas time and extensive giving of high-priced gifts would much better be curtailed than the Christmas dinner with the reunion of members of families and their friends, the remembrance of the unfortunate or poor, and contributions to institutions that need them.

Some things cannot be omitted at Christmas time, if it is to retain its significance. The Christmas greens that decorate our homes and churches, Christmas candles and goodies and, of all the things the Christmas tree, must be provided for. The high cost of living has not made these impossible in any community, and in many places where evergreen trees are plentiful, it is time and effort, more than money, that is needed. The youngsters will do a lot toward furnishing Christmas greens, wreaths, branches and little trees that make a background for all the day's festivities and set off the bright red or holly or candle-berries, bitter-sweet and poinsettia.

Nearly all the poinsettia used at Christmas time is artificial. It is made by houses that manufacture decorative plants and flowers, of bright red velvet, and lasts for years, that is, as long as it is put away carefully from Christmas to Christmas. By far greater amounts of poinsettia are made of

# Colds Break

Get instant relief with "Pape's Cold Compound"

Don't stay stuffed-up! Quit blowing and snuffling! A dose of "Pape's Cold Compound" taken every two hours until three doses are taken usually breaks up a cold and ends all grippe misery.

The very first dose opens your clogged-up nostrils and the air passages of your head; stops nose running; relieves the headache, dullness, feverishness, sneezing, soreness, stiffness. "Pape's Cold Compound" is the quickest, surest relief known and costs only a few cents at drug stores. It acts without assistance. Tastes nice. Contains no quinine. Insist on Pape's!—Adv.

Johnson Knew Human Nature.

Johnson wrote to Boswell on September 22, 1777: "When a man is invited to dinner he is disappointed if he does not get something good . . . everybody loves to have things which please 'their palate put in their way, without trouble or preparation!"

Three Sects.

Teacher—How many sects are there?

Little Boy—Three.

Teacher—What are they?

Little Boy—The male sex, the female sex and the insects.—London Ideas.

Nothing will take the conceit out of a bachelor like marrying a widow.

Many an uncivil young man manages to pass a civil service examination.

# WOMAN WORKS 15 HOURS A DAY

Marvelous Story of Woman's Change from Weakness to Strength by Taking Druggist's Advice

Peru, Ind.—"I suffered from a displacement with backache and dragging down pains so badly that at times I could not be on my feet and it did not seem as though I could stand it. I tried different medicines without any benefit and several doctors told me nothing but an operation would do me any good. My druggist told me of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. I took it with the result that I am now well and strong. I get up in the morning at four o'clock, do my housework, then go to a factory and work all day, come home and get supper and feel good. I don't know how many of my friends I have told what Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound has done for me."

—Mrs. ANNA METERIANO  
36 West 10th St., Peru, Ind.

Women who suffer from any such ailments should not fail to try this famous root and herb remedy, Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

A Young Girl well groomed is an attractive sight.

# Red Cross Ball Blue

if used in the laundry will give that clean, dainty appearance that everyone admires. All good grocers sell it; 5 cents a package.

# Kill Dandruff With Cuticura

All druggists: Soap 25c, Ointment 25c, and 50c. Talcum 25c. Sample each free of Cuticura, Dept. 2, Boston.

# Old Folks' Coughs

will be relieved promptly by PISO'S. Stops throat tickle; relieves irritation. The remedy tested by more than fifty years of use is

# PISO'S