

# THE GIRL AT THE HALFWAY HOUSE

A STORY OF THE PLAINS  
BY E. HOUGH, AUTHOR OF THE STORY OF THE COWBOY  
Copyrighted, 1905, by D. Appleton & Company, New York

## CHAPTER XXII.—Continued.

At this place they saw a few men sitting outside the door, calmly smoking—among these Sam, the liverman, a merchant by name of Chapman, and a homesteader, who was known as One-eyed Pennyman. Inside the house, playing cards with Curly, were four other men. Franklin noticed that they all were armed. They all appeared from their story, to have just dropped in to pass a little time with Curly. From time to time others dropped in, most of them remaining outside in the moonlight, sitting on their heels along the porch, talking but little, and then mentioning anything but the one subject which was uppermost in every one's mind. Yet though nothing was said, it might well be seen that this little body of men were of those who had taken the stand for law and order, and who were resolved upon a new day in the history of the town.

It was a battle of the two hotels and what they represented. Over at the great barroom of the Cottage there was at the same time assembled a much larger gathering, composed chiefly of those transient elements which at that time really made up the place—wide-hatted men, with narrow boots and broad belts at which swung heavy, blued revolvers with broad wooden butts—a wild-looking, wild-living body of men, savage in some ways, gentle in others, but for the most part just according to their creed. All drank whisky, and drank it regularly. Up to ten o'clock the whisky had produced no effect.

At ten o'clock a big Texan raised his glass high above his head and smashed it upon the bar.

"Law an' order be damned!" said he. "What kind o' law an' order is it to let a murderin' Greaser like that

and in front of the door there swept a dark and silent cordon. The leader of the invaders paused, but went straight forward.

"We want that man!" he said.  
"You know very well you can't have him."  
"We don't know nothin' o' the sort. We want him, an' we're goin' to have him. Git out of the road!"

A second figure stood by the side of Franklin, and this man was recognized by the leader.

"Aw, now, Curly, what d—d foolishness is this here? Bring him out."  
"You know I won't Jim," said Curly, simply. "We're tryin' him on the square. You ain't the Co'te. I koin't give him to no one but the Co'te."

Silence fell for an instant, then from the rear of the party there came pushing and crowding and cries of "Burn the house—drive him out!" There was a rush, but it was met by a silent thickening of the line at the point assailed. Men scuffled with men, swearing and grunting, panting hard. Here and there weapons flashed dully, though as yet no shot was fired.

The rushers toward the house grew closer, so that assailants and besieged were now mingled in a fighting, swearing mass.

"You're no cowman, Curly," cried one voice, bitterly.  
"You're a d—d liar!" cried Curly in reply, "whoever says that to me! I'm only a-keepin' of my word. You koin't clean us out. I'll shoot the livin' soul out o' any man that touches that door! This here is the jail, an' I'm the deppity, and, by—! you'll not have my prisoner!"

"Quite right, me man," said a cool voice at Curly's side, and a hand fell on his shoulder as a tall form loomed sprang toward the building. The cries became savage, beastlike. It was no longer human beings who contended

two prone figures. Others caught at the rope, groveling, snarling. They were saved the last stage of their disgrace. Into the crowd there pressed the figure of a newcomer, a hatless man, whose face was pale, whose feet were unshod, and who bore one arm helpless in a dirty sling which hung about his neck. Haggard and unkempt, barefooted, half-clad as he had stumbled out of bed at his ranch six miles away, Bill Watson, the sheriff appeared a figure heroic enough. With his broken arm hanging useless and jostled by the crowd, he raised his right hand above his head and called out in a voice weak and halting, but determined:  
"Men, go—go home! I command you—in the name—of the law!"

## BOOK IV

### The Day of the Plow

#### CHAPTER XXIII.

##### The End of the Trail.

The Cottage Hotel of Ellenville was, singularly enough, in its palmy days conducted by a woman, and a very good woman she was. It was perhaps an error in judgment which led the husband of this woman to undertake the establishment of a hotel at such a place and such a time, but he hastened to repair his fault by amiably dying. The widow, a large woman, of great kindness of heart and a certain skill in the care of gunshot wounds, fell heirless to the business, carried it on and made a success of it. All these wild range men who came roistering up the Trail loved this large and kind old lady, and she called them all her "boys," watching over her chickens. She fed them and comforted them, nursed them and buried them, always new ones coming to take the places of those who were gone. Chief mourner at over three score funerals, nevertheless was Mother Daly's voice always for peace and decorum; and what good she did may one day be discovered when the spurred and booted dead shall rise.

There was yet no key to the Cottage bar when there came the unbelievable word that there was no longer a buffalo to be found anywhere on the range, and that the Indians were gone, beaten, herded up forever. Far to the north, it was declared, there were men coming in on the cow range who had silver-mounted guns, who wore gold and jewels and who brought with them saddles without horns! It was said, however, that these new men wanted to buy cows, so cows were taken to them.

Mother Daly looked upon this, and it was well. She understood her old boys and loved them. She was glad the world was full of them. She looked out over the wide, wind-swept plains, along the big chutes full of bellowing beaves, at the wide corral with its scores of saddled Nemeses, and she was calm and happy. It was a goodly world.

It was upon one day that Mother Daly looked out upon her world; upon the next day she looked again, and all the world was changed. Far as the eye could reach, the long and dusty roadway of the cows lay silent, with its dust unstirred. Far, very far off, there was approaching a little band of strange, small, bleating, woolly creatures, to whose driver Mother Daly refused bed and board. The cattle chutes were silent, the corral was empty. At the Cottage bar the keeper had at last found a key to the door. Up and down the Trail, east and west of the Trail, all was quiet, bare and desolate. At some signal—some signal written on the sky—all the old life of Ellenville had taken up its journey into a farther land, into another day. The cowman, the railroad man and the gambling man had gone, leaving behind them the wide and well-perforated Cottage, the graveyard with its double street, the cattle chutes with well-worn hairy walls.

(To be continued.)

#### Senator Hoar's Advice Ill-Received.

A young man from Florida came to Washington to represent a newspaper in his state, says a correspondent of a New York paper. A few days after he arrived Senator Hoar introduced a bill referring to a lottery in Florida. The young reporter hastened to see the senator, with visions of a column interview with him concerning the bill and its effect and all that. The servant said the senator would see him.

"What is it?" asked Mr. Hoar, when the young man had been shown in.  
"I want to ask you about the bill you introduced to-day?"  
"What do you want to ask me about it?"  
"Why, I am from Florida and represent a Florida paper, and I thought you might give me an explanation."  
"Have you read the bill?"  
"Yes, sir."  
"Do you understand it?"  
"I think I do, sir."  
"Well, if you do not, no explanation I could make would help you to. Good evening."

#### Beecher and the Medium.

While in England Henry Ward Beecher was entertained by a gentleman who believed in spiritualism and was himself a medium, says the Argonaut. One day he asked if Beecher would like to talk with the spirit of his father, Dr. Lyman Beecher. Mr. Beecher replied that it would please him immensely. After the seance was over he was asked how it had impressed him, at which, with the twinkle in his eye, Beecher responded: "All I have to say is that if I deteriorate as fast for the first ten years after I am dead as my father has, I shall be a stark naked fool."

## HARBOR BLOCKED

STEAMERS SUNK ACROSS THE CHANNEL BY RUSSIANS.  
THIS KEEPS THE JAPANESE OUT

All Vessels on the Outside Keep Up Steam for Emergency—Believed that Vice Admiral Makaroff Will Adopt the Offensive.

LONDON—A correspondent of the Daily Mail at New Chwang says that after the removal of the battleship Retvizan four Russian steamers, the Harbin, the Hallar, the Niguta and the Sungari, were anchored at the mouth of the entrance to Port Arthur in proper position and sunk, leaving only a small channel available. Vice Admiral Makaroff having previously ordered the whole fleet to remain outside with steam up, economy of coal being unnecessary.

This dispatch, which is prominently displayed by the Daily Mail, and which the correspondent says is "on Russian information," is, if true, news of the first importance, confirming the idea that Vice Admiral Makaroff will adopt the offensive and make a desperate attempt to bring together Russia's scattered naval forces and endeavor to inflict damage upon the Japanese navy.

## RATING OF PENSIONS.

Order Regarding Payment Under the 1890 Act.  
WASHINGTON—Commissioner of Pensions Ware, with the approval of Secretary Hitchcock, has issued an order making the following change in pension rating:

In the adjudication of pension claims under the act of June 27, 1890, as amended, it shall be taken and considered as an evidential fact, if the contrary does not appear, and if all other legal requirements are properly met—that when a claimant has passed the age of 62 years he is disabled one-half in ability to perform manual labor and is entitled to be rated at \$6 per month; after 65 years at \$8 per month, after 68 years at \$10 per month, and after 70 years at \$12 per month. Allowance at higher rate, not exceeding \$12 per month, will continue to be made as heretofore, where disabilities other than age show a condition of inability to perform manual labor.

This order shall take effect April 13, 1904, and shall not be deemed retroactive.

The former rules of the office fixing the maximum and minimum years at 75 years, respectively, are hereby modified as above.

#### Committee Sees Private Report.

The special committee of the house on the postoffice report has, it is said,

## POULTRY

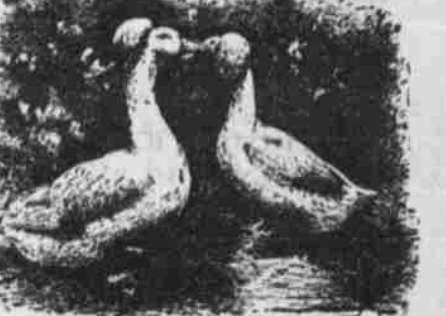


### Raising Pheasants.

For pheasants take a medium sized hen, after she has been sitting two or three days, gently lift her off of the nest and place not over 15 to 18 pheasant eggs in the nest, gently replace her on the nest; if she flies off when replaced, let her go, she will most likely go back of her own will. If possible, select the tamest hens for hatching quail and pheasant eggs. Food and water should be placed so that the hen can subsist during incubation. This is especially essential if the hen is shut up in some out-building, otherwise the food part is not so essential, as she will soon find food if allowed to roam over the yard, etc. If the hen is quite tame, examine the eggs frequently to see that none is broken or whether she has fouled her nest; if any of the eggs have been broken, remove the broken eggs and clean all the others that have become dirty from the broken eggs; do this with a damp cloth dipped in warm water. Never put the eggs in water. A foul nest is quite certain to kill the young birds. It takes 22 to 24 days for the eggs to hatch. After the eggs have been under the hen 20 days sprinkle the eggs with luke-warm water. I find that this greatly assists the young in leaving the shell. The hen should always be set in a box whose sides are at least six inches higher than the nest; if not the young will leave their foster mother as soon as they are out of the shell. Don't remove the hen until the young are at least 24 hours old, as by that time they will have learned a part of their foster mother's call or talk. When you desire to remove the hen and her brood to a coop, first get four boards, say 12 to 14 inches wide, edge them up, making a square enclosure; nail the ends together and then throw dirt around the bottom edges of the boards, so that it is not possible for a bird to get out; better, perhaps, to put dirt on both sides of the boards, as it often happens that other chickens may scratch the dirt away from the outside, thus giving the young a chance to get out. When you are quite certain that you have your enclosure such that the young cannot escape, then take any old box that you may have, remove one end and one side, place the box in the center of enclosure with open side down, nail slats over the front to keep the hen in the box. When this is all done, take the hen and her brood and place them in the box, and the first thing to do after this has been done is to give the hen all the corn she will eat.—F. J. Wilson.

### Crested White Ducks.

Crested white ducks are valuable chiefly as ornaments, as they possess no qualities that are not found in



more commonly grown breeds. The standard weight of the mature drake is 7 pounds and of the duck 6 pounds.

### Scaly Legs.

"Scaly legs" is caused by a parasite and hence can be quite easily eradicated from a flock. The trouble does not spread rapidly and this again indicates that it is quite easy to control. It is seldom met with in young fowls and less in the light Mediterranean breeds than in the heavy breeds. Old birds of the heavier types are most likely to have it. Fortunately for the raisers of water fowls, ducks and geese are not subject to it. As parasites of all kinds can be killed by the use of grease and oil, these may be disposed of the same way. Probably the oil and lard themselves would do the work, but to make the remedy the more efficacious, kerosene is added. It is also sometimes well to make an emulsion of kerosene and water and dip the legs of the fowls into this. Pure lard is good and if the legs of the fowls are greased with this (fill the spaces between the scales are filled the recovery should be complete. This is a matter that should be attended to, as the birds doubtless suffer greatly from the incessant itching. This is shown by the persistency with which fowls affected with this disease peck at their legs, often making them bleed.

### Every Farmer can improve his flock of fowls by constant and careful selection, always weeding out the poorest.

### A Change of Corsets.

A valuable discovery has been made that half of woman's ills come from wearing the same pair of corsets every day, says Philadelphia Press. There is some truth in this statement for the reason that pressure is always exerted upon the same place and one gets tired in spots.

A change of corsets would naturally mean a change in pressure. The same holds good in shoes and hats.

If people would only consider these small things, much discomfort and annoyance could be avoided. The poor liver gets credit for all our ills.



"I command you—in the name of—the law!"

come clear? Which of us'll be the next he'd kill?"  
"Well," said a conservative, soothingly, "let's wait till to-morrow. Let's let the Co'te set another day, anyhow."

"Yes, I reckon that's right; yes, that's so," said others; "we'd better wait till to-morrow."  
A brief silence fell upon the gathering, a silence broken only by tinklings or shufflings along the bar. Then, far off, over the prairie, there came a little flat, recurrent sound, or series of sounds, as of one patting his fingers softly together. It fell and rose and grew, coming rapidly nearer, until at length there could be distinguished the cracking and popping of the hoofs of running horses.

"It's the Bar O outfit, from the Brazos, coming in," said some one. The crowd pressed out into the air. It opened and melted slightly. The crowd at Curly's shanty increased slightly, silently. Inside, Curly and his friend still played cards. The giant prisoner lay asleep upon the floor.

The rattle of many hoofs swept up to the door of the Cottage, where the restive, nervous horses were left standing while the men went in their leader, a stocky, red-mustached man, bearing with him the rope which he had loosened from his saddle. Having drunk, the leader smote upon the bar with a heavy hand.

"Come along, men," he called out. "The quicker we hang that d—d Greaser the better it will be."

He moved toward the door, followed by many silently, by others with steps that lagged. "Well, you see—" began one man.

"To h—l with all that!" said the newcomer, turning upon him fiercely. "We don't need no cowards!"  
"No, that ain't it," resumed the first man, "but we got to respect the Co'te—just Co'te ever did set here, you see. The fellers, some of 'em, thinks—some o' the jury thinks—that the feller's too crazy fer to hang."

"Crazy be d—d! We're goin' to hang him, an' that settles it. Law an' order kin take care of it afterward."  
All the time they were shifting toward the door. As though by concert they swung into saddle and swept off up the street in a body, above the noise of their riding now breaking a careless laugh, now a shrill yell of sheer joyous excitement. More than a hundred men drew up in front of the frail shelter over which was spread the doubtful aegis of the law.

Fifty men met them. The lights went out in the house in an instant,