

PINE CREEK RANCH

HAROLD BINDLOSS

CHAPTER XXV The Strike-Breaker

Although some time had gone since the evening meal was served, Mrs. Ogilvie was engaged at the kitchen stove. The steak and potatoes must not burn and the Scandinavian hired girl was frankly mutinous, for after an angry dispute with Ogilvie her lover was going. Mrs. Ogilvie left the girl alone. At harvest one needed help and on the plains to get useful was hard. Moreover, her part was as far as possible to soften her husband's autocratic rule.

Ogilvie thought his word went, but he did not know his wife's light touch sometimes banished fierce rebellion. Although Mrs. Ogilvie often got tired, she saw there was no use in grumbling. Somebody must absorb the jars and be a sort of buffer against the shocks, Margaret would not; the girl had inherited her father's imperious temperament.

Ogilvie had not stated whom he expected, but when Mrs. Ogilvie went back to the room they used he came from the porch and she imagined he had been looking out. The evening was calm and a tranquil smoky sunset glimmered behind the bluffs on the edge of the plain. As a rule, after supper one heard the hired men laugh and joke, but all was quiet.

Margaret, sitting by the window, felt the calm was ominous. Ogilvie picked up a newspaper, but she thought he listened. Although his look was imperturbable, he had perhaps some grounds to be disturbed, and when at length they heard wheels he got up and pulled out his watch.

When the trail forked a wagon took the homestead track, and Margaret saw with some surprise five or six men on board. The team stopped behind the barn and the men vanished, but after a few minutes they advanced to the house. Ogilvie's men had joined the others, for the group was larger, and the strangers' faces were now covered by white masks, rudely cut from cotton flour bags. Ogilvie put up his newspaper and went to the window.

"The gang are not going to make much trouble, but to handle them is a man's business and I won't stand for my womenfolk meddling," he remarked, and gave Margaret a steady glance.

Margaret said nothing. One did not dispute with Ogilvie, and although she rather sympathized with his dissatisfied men, she approved his scornful courage. Moreover, she imagined he had reckoned on the masked strangers' interference and had, no doubt, used some precautions. His noting the time was significant.

"You mustn't be anxious, mother," she said in a low voice. "The boys' visit is not altogether the surprise party they think. He expected them."

"Why, yes; I know your father, and he hates to be bluffed," Mrs. Ogilvie agreed. "All the same, now our lot have joined them they are a nasty bunch and he's alone."

They waited. Ogilvie had gone to the wide porch, and faced the party at the bottom of the steps. Although the light was going, his tall figure was distinct and his pose was somehow commanding. His men were in front; the others had pulled the flour bags over their heads and necks. In the dusk they were fantastic and rather ominous, but Ogilvie laughed.

"Well, boys, are you playing Bushwhackers? Jesse James is a long while dead, and anyhow his hunting ground was not in Canada."

His contemptuous voice carried, and Margaret smiled. She

was not much daunted and she approved her father's line; he implied that the American outlaw's methods were exotic and out of date. The men began to push about the bottom of the steps and he waved them back.

"Stop right there! I don't want you on my porch. Now what's the trouble?"

"We're quitting. Our boxes are on board," one of his replied.

"Then, you brought the Bushwhacker gang to help you load up your clothes? Well, I'm not trying to stop you. Why don't you go?"

"They mean to help us collect our pay."

"Ah," said Ogilvie, "that's another thing! Looks as if your theatrical friends had come along about six weeks too soon. My engagement stands. You'll get your pay all right when the pay is due."

"You can't put that across on us; two or three of the others tried," a masked stranger rejoined meaningly. "We know you got some gall, but we're here to see you hand out the wad."

"If you are a plainsman, you know the rule: when the crop is off the ground the farmer reckons up. An easy boss will give you something to go on with, and my lot have drawn about half their roll. Now they want to quit. Very well, I certainly won't stop them. I have no use for trash."

Margaret, by the window, turned her head, for she would sooner Mrs. Ogilvie did not know she blushed. After all, her father was not justified to refuse the wages his men had already earned. She had imagined all he had wanted was to force them to carry out their engagement; but it looked as if he were willing to keep money that was not his. His unscrupulous greediness had jarred before, but rebellion had not helped much. Her protests had moved Ogilvie to ironical humor, and so long as she was at the homestead she supposed she must acknowledge his authority. All the same, she pictured Lawrence's generous fairness and the contrast hurt.

"If I'd known your father was set on holding up their pay, I'd have fixed it with the boys and said nothing," Mrs. Ogilvie observed.

"Then you have fixed things like that for him at other times?"

Mrs. Ogilvie smiled. "Oh, well, my dear, he's obstinate. One must, of course, be boss, but trouble's expensive, and so long as your father thought he won I was happy."

"I wonder," said Margaret thoughtfully. "Were you not sometimes humiliated? And did you not get tired? I'm afraid I have not your patience. You are a noble champion—"

She jumped up, for it looked as if the men got angry.

"The rule the old man talks about is a blamed bad rule and it's not going to stand much longer," one remarked, and addressed Ogilvie. "Anyhow, I've fought my boss for my wages, and I'm willing to fight for my pals'. Say, mister, are you going to hand out? Or do you want us to break your safe?"

Ogilvie leaned against the rails and laughed.

"You haven't the grit. If you force my house, by morning you'll be on your way to jail."

It looked as if he purposely annoyed the angry group, and his rashness puzzled Margaret. Then, for a window at the back was open, she thought, she heard horses' feet. She imagined Ogilvie had calculated on getting help, but the horsemen were not yet at the homestead and the others were on the veranda steps.

"Quit talking and get busy!" one shouted. "We'll take our money."

"A mental disorder," he said, "is still held by the laity to be a 'blot' on the scutcheon, and a hospital for the insane is considered as a place to be avoided as a country graveyard at midnight."

Dr. Hershfield believes these notions are the one great factor "that militates against the proper care of the mentally sick at home."

"It is one great reason," he continued, "for the lack of proper co-operation to keep the mentally recovered in continued mental health."

The alienist said he would substitute in the place of these "absurdi-

Ogilvie said nothing. He faced the group scornfully, and the fantastic white hooded figures began to climb the steps. Margaret ran across the floor and jumped from the window. She had not long since blushed for her father, but now the others threatened him her blood was fired. When she stopped at the top of the steps she balanced a small bore repeating rifle with which she sometimes hunted sandhill cranes.

"We don't want you on the porch, boys. I think you had better keep the grass," she said.

The group hesitated. Margaret's pose was firm and her hands were steady. Moreover, Ogilvie's men knew she could hit a crane at 100 yards. They pushed the others back; and then in the sudden quiet one heard the rapid beat of horses' feet.

A few moments afterward, a mounted policeman pulled up his horse behind the group and Margaret quietly put her rifle against a post. Another constable, who had gone down at the back, came from the house. A big pistol was strapped on his hip, but he negligently swung a riding quirt.

"Hello, boys! Looks as if you were not keen for folks to know you," he said in a bantering voice. "Well, I like your modesty, but if somebody has got a gun I want to see his license."

All were quiet. In Canada the firearms law is strictly carried out. The young trooper beat some dust from his uniform and resumed:

"You and Mr. Ogilvie were disputing. What's the trouble?"

They told him frankly. In practice, the Royal Northwest constables' powers are judicial as well as executive, and the settlers trust the police. The young fellow nodded and addressed Ogilvie.

"You don't allow their claim?"

"They have no claim. All they have to do is to stand by their engagement, and I'll stand by mine."

"We sure earned the money and we want it," one of the gang rejoined.

The trooper leaned against the rails, studying the angry group.

"I'm sorry, but to fix the thing is not my job and you want to state your case at a civil court. Anyhow, you can't seize another man's money and the law won't stand for your beating up your boss—" He stopped for a moment and his voice was sterner when he went on: "Your plan's to see a lawyer, and you better get going."

The men grumbled, but they went and when the wagon rolled away Ogilvie turned to the young fellow.

"They can't force their claim, but if you had come along a few minutes later, they might have broke my safe."

"We started when we got your message. I suppose somebody put you wise?"

Ogilvie nodded. "I take no chances. The boys don't yet know whom they're up against. But you have ridden some distance. Come on and have supper."

"No, thanks," said the constable with dry politeness. "We did not mean to stop. If you complain that the gang threatened you, I'll report to the superintendent, but they were not violent when we were about. Good night, Mr. Ogilvie."

He went down the steps and Margaret's face got hot. The young fellow had carried out his duty and had used some tact, but she thought his sympathy was for the men and he would not eat in the house. Margaret was forced to admit his fastidiousness was not unreasonable. She rejoined her mother and in a few minutes Ogilvie returned to the room.

"The bunch is gone," he said. "When you handle trash like that you have got to be firm."

"But you need men for the harvest," Mrs. Ogilvie remarked.

"In the morning I expect to hire a wagon load," said Ogilvie, with a short laugh. "The railroad is running harvesters'

ties" the "true facts of mental hygiene," and an avoidance of insanity as one would pneumonia, tuberculosis or other physical ills, but not as "work of the devil."

Many Girl Mothers Are Discovered in Australia

Sydney. (UP)—A mother aged 12 years, six aged 13 years, 34 aged 14 years and 132 aged 15 years were listed by an official bulletin, recently issued by the Australian federal statisticians office.

Of the brides listed 660 were under

excursions, and I guess all the stiffs and deadbeats from Toronto, Port Arthur, and Winnipeg are on the cars. The strike's clean broke, ma'am."

Margaret colored and her eyes sparkled. When her father was threatened she had gone to his support, but now the strain was over his shabbiness and hardness jarred. Moreover, the young trooper's polite contempt had stung.

"You planned the excursions?"

"I am not a railroad boss. All I did was to put it up to the office."

"But the men who quit were farmers," said Mrs. Ogilvie. "The fresh lot from the cities will not earn their pay."

"They'll earn mine," Ogilvie rejoined. "When you are forced to fight, something must be risked, but I allow it may be awkward. If my neighbors had had the gall to back me, I might have kept the bunch I had."

"I wonder—" said Margaret. "Spiers and the Elliots have kept their men, but they were just. After all, they had not much grounds to indulge you. I suppose you think they let you down?"

Ogilvie gave her a queer smile. "Larry argues like a crank and George carries no weight. I am up against Mrs. Spiers. She rules her fool husband and he is Larry's pal. But for her, I'd have got the Elliot farm and Geoff's."

"Lawrence is a first class farmer and Pine Creek was mortgaged to Hart."

"That's so," Ogilvie agreed, dryly. "Lawrence paid the mortgage and I guess it cost him most all he had. If Geoff had been left alone, he'd have gone broke and pulled down his partner, but Mrs. Spiers saw he didn't loaf. She means him to make good, and so long as Geoff pulls his weight Larry will keep his feet. Well, the Fairholm lot were first to meet the boys' new wages bill and their easiness made trouble for me. The raw English kid at Pine Creek is some antagonist!"

He resumed his newspaper and Margaret got up. There was no use in contending and she was humiliated. By contrast with her father's stern parsimony, Lawrence's justice and Spiers' joyous carelessness were strangely attractive.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

First Lady of State



MRS. C. C. YOUNG

Sacramento, Cal. (AP)—Home cares and the mothering of two growing daughters occupy the time of Mrs. C. C. Young, wife of California's governor who was married while still a student at Stanford.

Throughout the early years of married life she placed housekeeping ahead of club work. Later, however, when the children no longer demanded so much of her time, Mrs. Young became an active member of the Town and Gown club, a literary organization at Berkeley, which included many of the wives of University of California professors.

When her husband became governor, Mrs. Young again retired from active social and public life. Governor Young's long hours at his desk preclude their participating in many social functions.

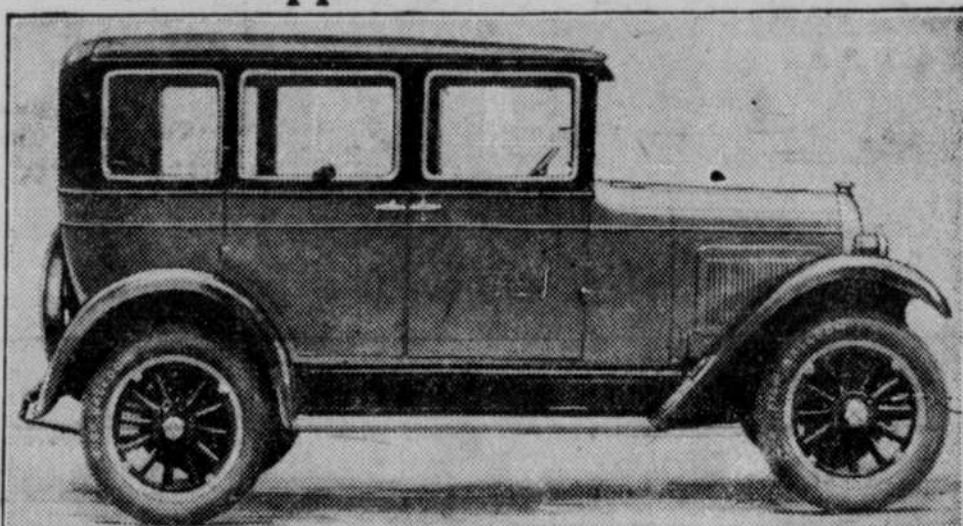
RACE DECEMBER 10

New Orleans, La. (UP)—The Southern A. A. U. cross country championship run will take place in Baton Rouge December 10, Secretary Benedetto has announced. Entry blanks have been mailed to every club, school and college in Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas. The course will be five and one-half miles.

17 years of age, the youngest being 12. At the other extreme, there were 93 brides aged 65 and over, including one aged 81. The oldest bridegroom was 87.

The birthrate of 22.02 per 1,000 persons was low, but it was accompanied by the very low death rate of 9.42 per 100, the two combined giving a rate of natural increase equalled by few countries in the world. The death rate of children under 1 year of age—54 out of every 1,000 born—was the lowest in the world, except New Zealand's 40 per 1,000.

New Whippet Car a Motor Marvel



One of the sensations in the automobile world is the perfected "Whippet" produced by the Willys-Overland, Inc., and it is direct evidence that John N. Willys, president of the corporation, proposes to make good on his declaration that "there can be no monopoly in the light car field." The perfected car, and the price at which it is offered, placing it directly in competition with the lowest priced cars, has centered the eyes of the automobile industry and the motor car world in general on the enterprising Toledo manufacturer. It makes him the first manufacturer of automobiles to enter the price field heretofore exclusive to but one light car manufacturer.

The "Whippet," which has been in production for more than 18 months, holds the national fuel economy record of 43.28 miles to the gallon in a test between Los Angeles and New York City, covering a distance of 3,550 miles, under official observation of the A. A. A. In a speed test on Rocking-

ham Speedway, Salem, N. H., a "Whippet" recently attained a speed of 71.6 miles an hour over a 50-mile route. This was officially timed.

The same engine that has accomplished these records is the power plant employed in the perfected "Whippet," now offered at the lowest price in the history of Willys-Overland.

The "Whippet" was the first light car to be equipped with four wheel brakes, setting a new trend in the light car field. The braking area of the "Whippet's" brakes is greater than any other light car.

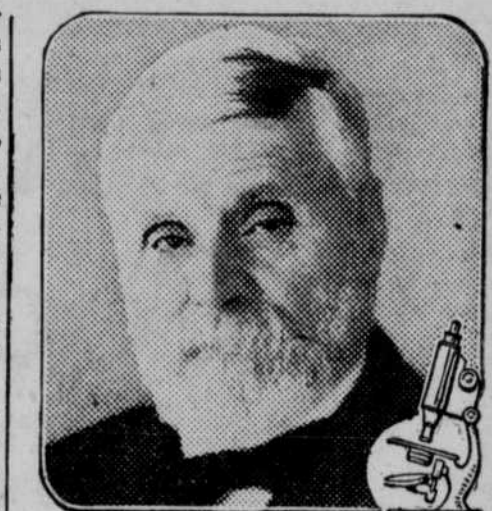
Details of the perfected "Whippet" disclose a wider range of colors, employment of full crown fenders, a new cadet sun visor that imparts a smart military effect, and the addition of automatic windshield cleaner, rear view mirror, and a combination rear driving light and stop light. These additions make the "Whippet" the most fully equipped light car built in the four cylinder field.

Millions of Families Depend on Dr. Caldwell's Prescription

When Dr. Caldwell started to practice medicine, back in 1875, the needs for a laxative were not as great as they are today. People lived normal, quiet lives, ate plain, wholesome food, and got plenty of fresh air and sunshine. But even that early there were drastic physics and purges for the relief of constipation which Dr. Caldwell did not believe were good for human beings to put into their system. So he wrote a prescription for a laxative to be used by his patients.

The prescription for constipation that he used early in his practice, and which he put in drug stores in 1892 under the name of Dr. Caldwell's Syrup Pepsin, is a liquid vegetable remedy, intended for women, children and elderly people, and they need just such a mild, safe, gentle bowel stimulant as Syrup Pepsin.

Under successful management this prescription has proven its worth and is now the largest selling liquid laxative in the world. The fact that millions of bottles are used a year proves that it has won the confidence of people who needed it to get relief from headaches, biliousness, flatulence, indigestion, loss of appetite and sleep, bad breath, dyspepsia, colds and fevers. Millions of families are now never without Dr. Caldwell's Syrup Pepsin, and if you will once start using it you



J. B. Caldwell M.D.
AT AGE 83

will also always have a bottle handy for emergencies.

It is particularly pleasing to know that the most of it is bought by mothers for themselves and the children, though Syrup Pepsin is just as valuable for elderly people. All drug stores have the generous bottles.

We would be glad to have you prove at our expense how much Dr. Caldwell's Syrup Pepsin can mean to you and yours. Just write "Syrup Pepsin," Monticello, Illinois, and we will send you prepaid a FREE SAMPLE BOTTLE.

To Beat the Game

"At cards I win one day and lose the next." "Well, why don't you play every other day?"

Pray for your enemies, if you cannot love them.

Russian Sham Marriages

As the only accepted pretext for transfer of a student from provincial educational institutions to Moscow, Soviet students have taken to contracting sham marriages with Moscow inhabitants.



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Cuticura Shaving Stick 25c.

ASKS SANER VIEW OF PERSONS WHO SUFFER INSANITY

Chicago.—A "saner view of the insane" is asked by Dr. Alex. S. Hershfield, state alienist, in a plea to dispel the "mass of information regarding the subject of insanity."

"Mystery, horror and repugnance occasioned by mental diseases in the minds of the misinformed," said Dr. Hershfield, "is a relic of the old notion that an insane person was possessed of the devil."