

MOUNTAIN HOSPITALITY.

BY HARRIET C. LE ROY.

"Now you be sure an' come just as you say you will. Get started early, for my woman wants a long visit with you. She'll be a-lookin' for you. Giddap, go 'long there!" And he left us in a cloud of dust. I looked at Isabel and smiled. This was something new in our experience. This man from the mountains—almost a stranger to us, for we had met him only once or twice at our boarding place—had dropped in with a neighborly gift of fresh, sweet buttermilk for Isabel, and incidentally to invite us to spend the day at his home, "way off up the canyon, seven miles from nowhere," as he described it.

Isabel was delicate. At home her appetite had been capricious, her liver very much out of order, her digestion poor, so I had brought her to this mountain village, 4,000 feet above the sea level. A week had brought some improvement, and I felt that we had found the place which was to give us back our old hearty, healthy Isabel.

Our landlady—a delightful little French woman—looked at us smilingly, and said:

"You will go, yes? Meesis Smeeth, she ver' good lady, but—what you say—'queer'?" She make ver' strange dress—you know! But she ver' good lady—Meesis Smeeth."

On Tuesday morning we walked over to the livery stable and climbed into the top buggy, while the aged hostler led forth and harnessed our faithful steed.

Isabel and I had learned to love that horse, for he was safe. Oh, yes, he was safe. He had been safe for lo! these many years. Indeed, it required quite a stretch of the imagination to believe that even in his friskiest colthood days he was ever otherwise.

And he was slow. Perhaps that was the reason we got him cheap. At any rate that was the reason we arose early and hid us to the livery stable at 7:30 o'clock in the morning. Our hostler kept up his usual running talk about horses, and this horse in particular. Isabel and I felt sure that they had been colts together—that old man and that old horse.

At last we were off in the cool freshness of the early day. Out and across the sun-baked plains, where not a vestige of green could be seen, through a barnyard or two our road led us, and we wondered if this were not designed for the pleasure of the isolated ranch women who came to the kitchen door to see us pass. So little of variety came into their monotonous lives—an occasional ride to the little town to make their small purchases—nothing else. Perhaps it was a slight pleasure to them to respond to our "good-morning" as we jogged slowly along. Isabel, who is of a philanthropic turn of mind, fondly believed so.

Did you ever travel a mountain road punctuated at short intervals with great, heavy gates that must be tugged at and swung back out of the way? Isabel, being a semi-invalid, was privileged to hold the reins over Old Trusty's back, while I, who was considered by the family "tough as a pine knot," had to get down and out and open and close those gates!

There were only seven of them that morning, and when the last one had swung to behind us we found ourselves at our journey's end. For there stood the little ranch house perched on the hillside. The front yard sloped abruptly down the road, and down the slope to meet us came speedily our hostess.

Her hearty greeting made us feel welcome, and she at once unharnessed the horse and led him to the barn. Then she returned and wheeled and turned and backed that buggy in regular man-fashion, until she had it neatly stored close beside the barn.

Isabel is a fastidious soul, and she looked with fascinated eyes at our hostess and her unconventional garb. The words of our little French landlady came back to us, and we decided that "Meesis Smith" was indeed "ver' queer."

Tall and robust in figure—a perfect amazon, masculine in her motions, with the scantiest of cal-

ico gowns, which revealed her bare ankles and her husband's slippers, into which she had thrust her feet at our approach. I, who hate stocking darning, envied her. To thus simplify the multitudinous cares of life—to do away with the darned basket—what joy!

Isabel and I sat down on the little porch and breathed in great lungfuls of the delicious mountain air. It was such a green little canyon away up here in the mountains! A delightful brook ran down from the crest above us, and innumerable ducks and geese swam and paddled in a pond beside the house. On the green hillside a flock of snow-white Angora goats browsed and played and slept. They made a pretty picture, and Isabel, who is a camera fiend, regretted that she had not brought her kodak.

Our hostess presently went to a coop in the yard, seized two imprisoned fowls, and promptly wrung their necks. Then she came back to us with the two chicken heads in her hand, and placidly resumed the thread of her discourse, while not far away the decapitated fowls flopped and fluttered on the grass.

I looked anxiously at Isabel. She was very white about the mouth, and I saw she was faint. Poor Isabel, who had never in her life seen a tragedy like this before.

I ran to the bubbling spring close by and brought her a cup of water, which revived her somewhat. By this time our hostess had gathered the material for our intended dinner up in her apron and gone inside.

Isabel looked at me piteously: "Oh," she said, "wasn't it dreadful! Oh, I'll never touch a bit of chicken again while I live! Oh, how could she do it!"

I laughed heartlessly. "My poor dear," I said, "do you think a ranch woman can always have a man at hand to do these things? If she depended upon a man for such services I fear her chicken dinners would be few and far between. As for me, I'm delighted at the prospect, for this 5,000-foot-high air has given me an appetite like a Canadian lumberman's!"

Isabel changed the subject. I knew she firmly believed she could not eat a morsel of dinner. Of course this was silly in Isabel, but please remember that she was delicate, poor girl!

So I talked briskly about the poetic charm of the snow-white Angoras, the snow-white ducks and geese, the green hillsides, the lonely, towering pines and the blue, blue California sky.

An hour passed, and various odors came to us through the screen door. Every moment I grew hungrier. Isabel too, I noticed, looked often toward the door and sniffed the air appreciatively.

Our hostess, still in her "ver' strange dress," divided herself about equally between her dinner and her guests. And Isabel and I were delighted and surprised with her talk. Away up here at the very edge of everything, that lonely woman had read and studied and thought upon the questions of the day until she had become a fluent and brilliant talker. And Isabel and I listened with interest, albeit I was secretly afraid that something would burn, and kept on the alert for the disheartening odor of scorched potatoes or burned biscuits.

On one of her trips to the kitchen Isabel whispered to me: "Why doesn't she hurry up! I'm simply starving to death!" She looked at her watch. "Half-past twelve! O, dear me, do you suppose it will be much longer?"

I laughed at her but, wisely forebore to remind her of her previous remarks: "You, my dear," I said, "are such a good listener that our hostess wants to prolong the pleasure. Think what it means for her to have a real woman—two real women—to talk to! She says she often goes three weeks without seeing anyone but her husband and the hired man!"

Isabel looked thoughtful. "Well, if you put it that way," she said, "I'll try to stand it awhile longer—but, O, dear me!" and she placed both hands pathetically over her belt buckle, "there's such an emptiness here!"

It was one o'clock when the man of the house and his hired hand came up the step front yard. Our host greeted us warmly and

went around to the side of the house where presently arose a great splashing.

Isabel's spirits revived. "I believe I could eat those chickens—raw!" she whispered, meekly.

Our hostess came just then with the welcome call for dinner, and we went into the neat, rag-carpeted dining-room. That dinner! Our seven o'clock breakfast had long become only a dim memory, and we looked with delight, poorly concealed, I fear, upon that hospitable board.

Her best tablecloth and napkins, the whitest of stone china and even a little bunch of flowers were tastefully arranged, and she sat down, flushed and perspiring, but full of hearty hospitality. Our host filled a plate to overflowing and passed it to Isabel. I looked at her in wonder as she began upon it. Isabel—the "dyspeptic-tablet fiend" our unsympathetic brother had called her—Isabel, who had been eating by the half-ounce, as ordered by the doctor! Well, I decided to say nothing but let the poor girl enjoy this one good meal, whatever happened!

Did you ever eat a regular down south chicken dinner with fried chicken, crisp and brown and tender, and thick cream gravy, and creamy mashed potatoes and baked sweet potatoes of golden yellow, and puffy biscuits baked to a delicious brown, and coffee for the gods—and all the rest?

Such a dinner, served to mountain-whetted appetites! Well, strange to say, that good woman's good dinner worked a complete cure with Isabel. From that day to this not a dyspepsia tablet has she taken! Everything agrees with her and she is plump and rosy.

Late in the afternoon when our hostess had led forth Old Trusty and deftly harnessed him she staid by the buggy for a final chat. "Girls," she said, "you don't know what a treat this has been to me! I think you're so good to come 'way up here to visit me a whole day!"

Isabel reached out of the buggy and caught her hand. "Good!" she said. "Why, Mrs. Smith, it's you who are good! We've had a perfectly lovely time and we thank you ever so much. And I'll send that book I promised just as soon as we get home."

We got Old Trusty in motion and jogged slowly down the rocky road. Isabel looked back and waved her hand. The lonely figure still stood in the road watching us. She waved an answering salute and we made a turn which hid her from view.

We have never seen her since, but Isabel, perhaps remembering that dinner, does not forget her. A new book, a fresh magazine, often finds its way to the little mountain home where a lonely woman keeps in touch with the outside world.—N. O. Times-Democrat.

POINTS FOR "VET" SMOKER

Three Cigars a Day Is Quite Enough for Any Man, Declares an Authority.

Very few persons, says Medical Brief, are aware of how much harm is done to young men by the almost universal habit of cigarette smoking. The man who smokes cigarettes has one always in his mouth, and is continually inhaling nicotine, until his system is saturated with the poison. The result of this practice is a catarrhal condition of the nose, throat and bronchi, a disordered and very irritable state of the nerves, a weak and rapid action of the heart, and indigestion.

Thin, anemic, weak and clammy hands stained with nicotine poison, unstrung nerves and degenerated muscles, the youth of the land go on ignorantly suffering the consequences of a pernicious habit until attacks of heart trouble, nervous prostration, melancholia, etc., bring their condition to the attention of the physician.

If a man must smoke—and we admit the charm of the habit to those who have become accustomed to its soothing influences—let him choose a mild cigar, and have certain times set for indulging. If he puts a certain restraint upon himself from the start in the matter of smoking he will not overdo it, and there are few men who can smoke more than three cigars a day without injury.

ROPING BIG BEAR NOT EASY

Bruin Chases Ranch Owner and Lately Narrowly Escapes with His Life.

"In the winter of 1893," said Tim Kinney, a ranchman of Rock Springs, Wyo., to a Washington Post reporter, "the bears in Bitter creek were surely a nuisance to the stockmen. I lost so many calves that I got fighting mad, and declared war on the four-footed despoilers.

"One day my foreman and I were out rounding up a herd of beeves when in a low, marshy spot we came across one of the biggest bears I ever saw. Unluckily, we didn't have either rifle or revolver, but as I looked at the beast and thought of my dead calves my dander got up, and it occurred to me that we might throw our lariats over him and hold him until some way of executing the death penalty could be found.

"We thought it was a picnic, as far as throwing a rope over Mr. Bear was concerned. My man got his rope over the enemy's neck and I got him around one leg. It looked as though we had him. Dismounting, I made the end of my lariat fast to the stump of a tree, but the foreman stayed on his pony. Grabbing a huge rock, I got quite close to the brute and dealt him a terrible blow on the forehead. With a howl of rage he gave a mighty lunge that broke the rope from the tree and started after me.

"But for the tremendous efforts of my companion, who still maintained his hold, I would have been caught and killed before I could have been able to reach my pony. As it was the shave was extremely close, and the bear was right at my heels as I got in the saddle. All this time the foreman was tugging and hauling manfully, and if he hadn't been strong and skillful I'd have never lived to tell this yarn. In a few minutes I managed to get another piece of rope, and this time old Silver Tip was unable to break his fastening. Both of us then assaulted him with stones and beat him into insensibility before administering the coup de grace with a hunting knife."

SAILOR'S MARRIAGE YARN.

Tells Party in Ice Cream Parlor of Customs Which Are Peculiar to Andaman Islands.

The day was warm for March. The sailor sat in the ice cream saloon eating ice cream and lady cake.

"The queerest marriage I ever seen, miss," he said, "was in the Andaman Islands. But maybe you ain't interested in marriage?"

He laughed as men always laugh over this joke, and the pretty waitress permitted herself to smile.

"The islanders in them islands," he said, "is dwarfs. Four feet, on the average. Very fierce and ugly.

"If a young islander wants a girl for his wife he asks her parents for her. They never refuse. They take the girl and hide her in the forest. There the lad must find her before morning. If he finds her she's his. If he don't she ain't.

"Of course I don't need to tell you that if the girl wants the young feller she sees to it that he finds her first.

"And vice versa.

"Here is how the marriage ceremony is performed. The lad climbs up a slim young tree and the girl climbs up another close to him. Her clothes don't bother her in climbin'—clothes never bother an Andaman islander. Well, up they go, and as they near the top their weight bends the slim trees over toward each other prettily. The trees bow and bend and courtesy, and finally the lad's head touches the girl's and from below a shout goes up, for the head touching has done the business. The ceremony is finished. The young folks' troubles have begun."

Egg-Swallowing Record.

A singular story of egg-swallowing comes from Maritzburg, the capital of Natal. A well-known citizen made a bet with a local auctioneer that he would swallow 42 raw eggs in ten minutes. He performed the task in eight minutes, and then offered to swallow 60 raw eggs in 15 minutes.

HUMBOLDT

Hart Clark proprietor of the Nims City hotel was a business visitor here Saturday.

John Jacobs of Pawnee City was here the latter part of last week.

There was considerable excitement caused by two horse races on the Humboldt track last Saturday. It is reported that considerable money changed hands on the event.

Gib Early of Lincoln was visiting his family over Sunday.

Walter Green a former resident of Humboldt but lately of Elkhart is moving his effects back to his property on Long Branch street.

August Meyers of South Auburn, a former business man of this city spent Saturday shaking hands with old friends on our street.

Billy Kinsey and Lou Kaserman of DuBois spent Saturday here.

Nannie Chaffin returned Saturday from a visit with friends in Falls City.

Otis Hunter and wife were visiting at the home of the latter's parents, Mont Williamson and family the past week.

Lizzie Brackett of Pawnee City spent several days the last of the week with her friend Nora Stadler.

Clemantine Rouske spent several days with friends in Lincoln the past week.

Mark Williamson is able to be about again after quite a severe illness.

Mrs. Joseph Graves is numbered among the sick.

The seniors of the Pawnee high school spent Friday the guests of the Humboldt seniors.

Nannie Chaffin has been employed in the general merchandise store of Ben Stramer this week.

Claud Lian was transacting business in Lincoln this week.

Mrs. Tina Crawford returned last Thursday from a weeks visit with her daughter, Mrs. Gus Wheeler in Lincoln.

Chas. Woods of Pawnee City was in this city Saturday.

Eva Cooper spent several days the last of the week with Lincoln friends.

Fred Linn of Grandin, Mo., visited with relatives in this city the past week.

Dick Turner spent Sunday with friends in Pawnee City.

Lenan Woodsey of Tecumseh was a guest of her sister, Mrs. H. P. Marble Sunday.

Alma Howell was absent from her school duties the first of the week on account of sickness.

E. K. Kentner of Falls City was in town the first of the week.

Guy Sneathen of Dawson spent Sunday with friends in this city.

Mrs. Geo. Batterfield was a Pawnee visitor Tuesday.

Ione Norton has been employed in the central office in this city the past week.

O. T. Little and wife spent Friday with Pawnee City friends.

About 3 p. m. Monday morning, the fire department was called out to extinguish a blaze in the house occupied by the section foreman. How the fire originated is not known but it is supposed to have been caused by mice and matches. The room in which it started contained some loaded shells, the fire caused these to explode and the report awakened the family who gave the alarm. Prompt arrival of the fire department saved the building from much damage.

Bohumil and Frank Hnizda are making preparations to move to their new home near Blue Rapids, Kansas.

Ione Bist entertained a number of her young friends in a most pleasant manner Saturday afternoon at her home south of this city.

The Ladies Kensington of the Presbyterian church spent a most enjoyable afternoon at the home of Mrs. L. S. Hackett on last Thursday.

Mrs. Sarah Marburger attended the district meeting of the Rebeccas at Pawnee Tuesday.

The chrysanthemum show given by the ladies of the Christian church on Friday afternoon and evening was a decided success in both a financial and social way.

SALEM

Mrs. Everett Scott of Falls City came up Monday to visit her parents, Joe Kanger and wife.

C. B. Emmert spent Tuesday with Fred Wittwer's west of town.

Mrs. W. H. Jones and little daughter arrived from St. Joe the latter part of last week.

W. D. Easley came up from Kansas City Tuesday on business.

Prof. Feuerstien, Misses French and Tilden attended the teachers' association at Falls City Friday.

Ira McCool, Chas. McIntyre and Clarence Miller were in Falls City.

A. Graham, wife and daughter, Hazel of Dawson spent Sunday with relatives here.

Mary Wertz of Falls City visited friends Monday and Tuesday.

Mrs. C. G. McCool and Zola went to Hawthorn Saturday and spent several days, guests of Mrs. J. H. Timmerman.

Mrs. Waggoner visited at Mrs. Dawson several days this week.

Mrs. Hannah Moon of Table Rock came down Saturday and will spend some time with her sister, Mrs. H. M. Bates.

Ada and Verda Allen drove to Falls City Saturday.

W. B. Boyd was on the sick list several days last week.

Mrs. Susan Wertz of Falls City is visiting Mrs. J. H. Timmerman.

Mesdames J. L. Slovic and Harry Jenne of Falls City spent Sunday in Salem.

Joe Windle and wife visited James Metz and family at Falls City Sunday. J. H. Timmerman and R. E. Griestead were in the county seat Tuesday.

Geo. Slocum and wife of Stella spent Sunday with the latter's parents, O. A. Jennings.

Benson Jones came down from Lincoln last week.

Howard Greenlee came down from Table Rock Friday morning.

Mrs. Mamie Manley of Arkansas arrived the latter part of last week to visit her father and sisters.

W. H. Jones of St. Joe has purchased the barber business of Chas. Cooper. He will move the shop to the Odd Fellows building. Mrs. Cooper talks of running a lunch counter.

The first attraction of the Salem Entertainment course was given Wednesday evening by the Jubilee singers.

Mrs. G. H. Russell returned home Monday after a few weeks stay at Kansas City and Plattsmouth, Mo.

Mrs. B. L. Hassenpflug of Bern, Kas., is visiting at the home of Ben Wickham since Friday.

Last Thursday evening Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Kelly entertained a crowd of young people at their home west of Salem in honor of their son Hallie's birthday. The evening was spent in jolly games and pleasant conversation. Several musical selections were also rendered. The guests were served to an oyster supper. At a late hour they departed to their homes, thanking their host and hostess for the pleasant evening spent and wishing Hallie many returns of the day.

OHIO

Elias Meyers who lives in Falls City was out to Eph Pecks Sunday.

J. W. Maust and wife of Strausville were pleasant visitors at Rev. Stouder's Sunday.

Ethel and Elma Cook entertained their friend, Lydia Warner, Sunday.

W. F. Reischick and family were the guests of Mrs. Hofer at Falls City Sunday.

Mrs. Joan Wilts of Falls City visited her aunt Mrs. S. H. Knisely on Saturday.

Herman Wolfe and family of Jefferson precinct were guests of Mrs. Wolfe's parents Sunday.

Neille Knisely was a guest of Sadie Peck Tuesday.

A series of meetings was started in Barada Sunday evening. Rev. Brewer of Maple Grove will conduct the meetings.

August Zorn and wife visited with relatives Sunday.

Jas. Gilmore and wife spent Sunday at the latter's parents' Mr. and Mrs. Yoder.

Willis Yoder and wife of Falls City Saturday and Sunday with his parents.

Perry Shaffer who has been building an addition to his house has it completed and which improves the looks very much.

Mrs. Fred Harkness is very low at this writing.

Mrs. Omara was shopping in Falls City Thursday.

Mrs. Adolph Brackman entertained her parents Sunday.

Ellis Hout and wife of Verona are shucking corn for the farmers' market.

N. Peck and wife spent Sunday afternoon with Olyve Prichard and wife.

Mrs. Eph Peck was in Falls City Saturday the guest of her daughter, Mrs. W. K. Kaigher.

Gay and Albert Burk were guests of John and Wm. Hutchison Sunday.

Geo. W. Peck and wife drove down to Kansas Saturday to visit their son, Lloyd Peck and wife.

Mrs. Carl Batman was called here a few days ago from Kansas City on account of the illness of her sister, Mrs. Chas. Harkness.

Allan Gilmore is spending a few days with his grandparents, D. Yoder and wife.

The little son of F. S. Lichty and wife is very sick.

The telephone men put in phones on Noah and Clay Peck Monday.

Prof. Watson returned to Verona last Saturday afternoon after a brief visit in our city.

George Powell of Omaha, an old time resident of Falls City called at this office Saturday.