

Through State of Nebraska on Horseback



IF I HAD any enemies to punish I would recommend that they take a horseback ride," said J. B. Parker of Lincoln, who, with Mrs. Parker, had just returned from a 600-mile trip in the saddle, as he straightened out the pillow on his chair at his place of business, 234 North Tenth street. Becoming comfortable, he remarked with the next breath: "We intend to go clear into Yellowstone park next fall and I have already figured how we are to make the trip."

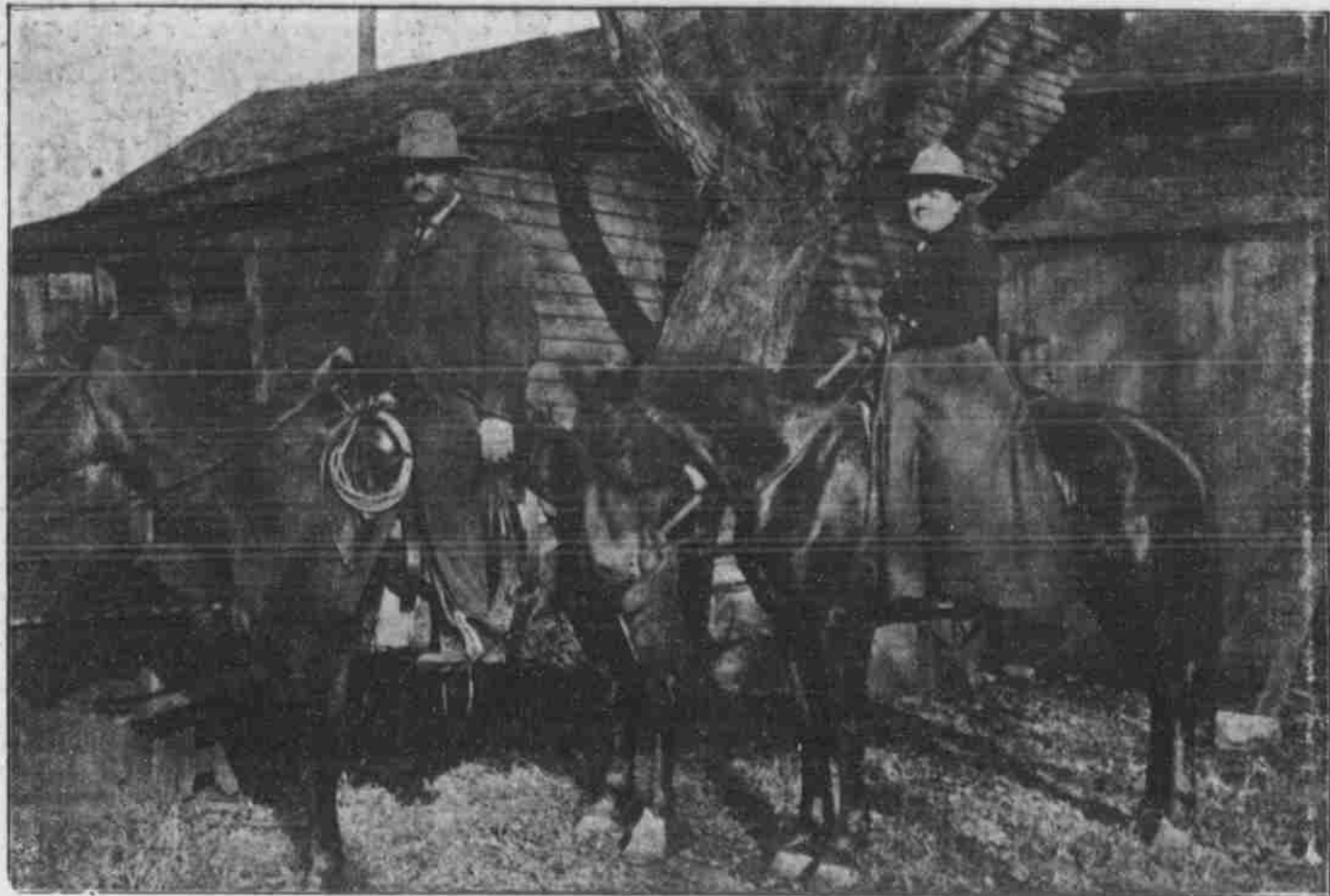
Mr. Parker weighs 283 pounds, which is seven pounds less than when he started on the ride, and he had not ridden to amount to anything for twenty years. He rode a regular western horse, bought in South Omaha just before the start, and Mrs. Parker rode a thoroughbred Kentucky animal.

Mr. and Mrs. Parker made the trip from Lincoln to their ranch near Dunning, a distance of 262 miles, on horseback in seven days, remained at the ranch eight days and made the return trip in six days. Both were feeling stronger and better at the end of the return trip than upon their arrival at the ranch, and though they made an average of forty-three miles a day, the horses came back in good shape. They left Lincoln four weeks ago and the first night they rounded up at Seward, thirty-four miles. They spent the second night at Bradshaw, the third at Grand Island, the fourth at Ravenna, having passed the famous Taylor ranch during the day, ate dinner at Cairo that day and on to Mason that night; then Broken Bow the sixth night. They arrived there at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, but owing to a heavy sand storm, remained over until the next morning. The seventh day they rounded up at Dunning, from which place it was only seven miles to their ranch. The return trip was made over the same route in six days.

Mrs. Parker's riding outfit consisted of divided skirts, sweater, cowboy hat, riding shoes and a regulation cowboy saddle weighing forty-five pounds. Mr. Parker rode the regulation cowboy saddle and ordinary business suit, with the cowboy hat. Three weeks or more before the start was made Mrs. Parker rode every day an average of ten or fifteen miles and it was the great improvement this produced in her health that suggested the long overland trip.

Before starting the route was mapped out carefully. It was planned that there be no camping out and no stopping at the roadside for meals. Every night the two remained at a hotel in some town along the route and every meal was eaten in a hotel. They took their time and got their direction from one town to the other and incidentally found out some things. "One of which," said Mr. Parker, "was that mere guesses are made by different people as to the distances between places. Many a time we would be riding along and ask someone how far it was to the next town. Probably the answer would be five miles. After going two or three miles we would meet another person and asking him the same question, the answer would be nine times out of ten six miles, and sometimes seven and eight."

This mode of spending a vacation was adopted in the hope that the health of Mrs. Parker would be improved, she having been a sufferer for some months with a bad cough, the result of an attack of pneu-



MR. AND MRS. CLARK OF LINCOLN AS THEY APPEARED ON THEIR LONG RIDE.

monia, and that the weight of Mr. Parker might be reduced to the extent of 75 or 100 pounds. In the first instance the trip was an entire success, the cough of Mrs. Parker having been left in the sandhills. In the latter, however, there was no such good luck. "I only lost seven pounds," said Mr. Parker, "but I am thankful that I didn't take on seven."

"Twenty years ago," said Mr. Parker, "when I used to ride the ranges, I thought nothing of a hundred-mile trip a day, but right here I want to rise to remark, and just at this time it is easier to talk standing, that 100 miles a day on horseback is quite a jaunt. However, I enjoyed this trip. The first two days out it nearly did me up, and I had made up my mind when we reached the ranch we would start back in a buckboard. When I would get off that horse at night my clothes would stick closer to me than a brother. But after the first two days I was all right. The first part of the trip did not bother Mrs. Parker at all, but after about half of the distance had been covered she began to show the effects of it. She stood the trip well, however, and after an eight days' rest at the ranch we never thought any more of the buckboard, but were ready for the return and we both felt tip top when we got back."

"The times when I got tired were when night was coming on and we would meet some man on the road and he would say it was three or four miles to the town. We would jog along, come in sight of the town and then find it was six or seven miles away. Those times when the train would pass us I had visions of home and of the greatness of the iron horse. Just to give

an example of the slowness with which a man on horse gets along: At Grand Island I met an engineer I knew. The next day I met him on the street at Ravenna. He had gone into Lincoln and back again and we had merely got to one little town.

"We had fine weather nearly all the way. At Broken Bow we struck a sand storm that was the regular thing. The sand cut our faces and was so fierce that when we landed in the town we stayed all night because it was impossible to make any headway against it. One night we rounded into Lincoln at 6:30 o'clock and found nothing there but a section house. Not even a place for our horses. We were tired out then, but there was nothing left but to push on to the next town. We were right in the sand hills then and from then until the stars came up I believe it was the darkest night I ever saw. We had merely a little trail to follow in the sand and we ran into a sand blow. This is where the wind scoops out the sand and wipes out the trail. In this instance for over a block. We hunted around and found a patch and followed it for over a half mile and it took us to a water tank. Then we had to retrace our route and get back to the blow-out for a fresh start. We made it all right and found the trail that brought us into town about 9:30 that night."

"The first day upon our return trip we made sixty-four miles and were not the least bit tired when we went to bed that night. That was the biggest day's riding we did. We got along a great deal better on the return trip than we did going out. Neither of us noticed it and never felt tired out at night like we did when we went out.

The last day we made forty-five miles.

"Before I made the trip I could not walk any great distance without feeling tired and puffing and blowing, but just to see how I was getting along we walked across the bridge over the Loup, which is said to be a mile wide, and I didn't puff a bit and was not the least tired. The trip did us both a world of good and we had any number of experiences that made it enjoyable. I believe that it has entirely cured the cough of Mrs. Parker, which had troubled her for months, and I never felt better in my life. Of course, I found on the start that I couldn't stand the racket like I used to in the old days, but I enjoyed it so much and it did us so much good that next year we shall ride into Yellowstone park from here. But we are going to arrange it a little different next year.

We are going to get two good horses to ride and a team and buckboard. In the buckboard, which I shall hire a boy to drive, I intend to put a tent, with the bottom sewed on to keep out the snakes and bugs, the cooking utensils and such things needed around a camp. Then when we want to stop, we can stop and make a camp. If we tire of riding horseback then we can get into the buckboard. In that way it will be more enjoyable and not the least bit tiresome. I firmly believe that an outing like that is the greatest thing on earth for a person to take and I believe it is becoming more recognized as such every year. I certainly recommend it for anyone who wants to improve his health, though just for a three days' jaunt it is killing if one is not used to it."

Martyrdom of the Housewife



THE DIFFICULTY of securing domestic help is not new, and it is not peculiar to New York, relates the New York Evening Post. A century ago, an English writer, William Fordyce Mavor, in his "Survey of Berkshire," remarked pathetically: "It is greatly to be lamented that good servants every year become more scarce and difficult to command." Such also was the complaint of our own grandmothers and mothers; such is the complaint of our wives today. It is true, however, that servants are harder to find than for some years past. Housekeepers from one end of Manhattan to the other unite in a chorus of grief, which is echoed from Brooklyn, Staten Island and the Bronx, from Westchester county and Rockland, and from the whole state of New Jersey. The trouble may be more acute here because population is more congested, but if the newspapers of Philadelphia and Chicago are not deceived, the situation in those cities, and indeed in the whole country, is unusually distressing.

Some of the reasons for the present plight are obvious. There have been and must continue to be certain inherent difficulties in the problem. These have often been pointed out: Long and irregular hours, confined and often lonely routine, varying quantities of work, vagaries and caprices of mistresses and the so-called "social stigma." All these combine to draw women into factory employment, with its fixed hours, opportunities to be on the street in going and coming, congenial companionship while busy, definite tasks, formal rules for conduct, consistent supervision and general independence outside of hours

of labor. For the many women to whom the kitchen and its duties are not positively attractive, the factory will always be a strong magnet; and the growth of manufacturing must make even deeper inroads upon domestic service. Various suggestions have been offered for improving conditions, but few or none of the remedies are practicable for people of moderate means, who must continue to meet these inherent difficulties as best they can.

There are, however, some new factors in the reckoning. The demand for the work of women is keener than ever before. With the last decade a number of occupations have opened to them for the first time. Women are, for example, acceptably filling positions as factory inspectors and sanitary officers. Most of these new occupations are above the skill and intelligence of the housemaid, but the women who are drafted into the higher service leave room in other callings for the better class of maids to enter, and thus drain off the household service from the top.

The greatest demand for female labor is due to the era of prosperity. Our manufacturing has expanded enormously. With all our factories running full time and paying high wages, the housekeeper is facing a sharp competition at a desperate disadvantage. To add to her troubles she must compete, also with her own class. A few days ago the New York State Department of Labor, in its quarterly bulletin, declares: "Prosperity is so widely diffused that the servant-keeping class is larger than ever before, and has thus created a demand that exceeds the supply." With families that kept no servant now employing at least one, and wealthier families adding an

extra nurse, waitress, or laundress, the unfortunate housewife is ground between the upper millstone of the factory and the lower millstone of her own companions in adversity.

Not only is the demand greater than before, but the supply is smaller. The very prosperity that has enlarged the servant-keeping class has enabled poorer people either to maintain their daughters at home or send them to school; and many girls who in 1903 would have been seeking places are now living in ease on the abundant earnings of their fathers and brothers. Statistics on this point are not available, but the facts are patent. It is plain, also, that employment at good wages has allowed many young mechanics to marry, and has thus transformed possible housemaids into actual wives. The "steady company" has been much in evidence, and his attentions have still further disturbed our domestic economy.

Some people ask why the enormous immigration of the last few years has not filled up our depleted stock; for generally in times of heavy immigration household servants are comparatively abundant. An examination of the government returns shows that in the twelve months ending June, 1902, the number of female immigrants was 182,374, and in the next year it was 243,906. With an increase of over 65,000 there ought to be some balm in Gilead for our housekeepers. But unhappily the character of the immigration has not been such as to furnish domestic servants. Of the total number of women for 1903, 9,877 came from Asia and other lands outside of Europe. Moreover, of the 234,023 Europeans a large number are from nations where modes

of life and social conditions unfit women for domestic service in America, without a training that would uproot most of their personal habits. In 1902, some 44,853 came from Austria-Hungary, and in 1903 the flood had risen to 58,027. The figures for Italy are respectively 32,643 and 43,056; and the totals for Portugal, Roumania, Russia, Servia, Spain and Turkey are 41,429 and 51,118. Making these deductions, we have left from the immigration of 1903 only 81,222 women from the countries that usually send household servants. Of these, 15,225 came from Germany, 8,212 from Norway, 32,600 from the United Kingdom and 16,220 from Sweden. Many of them, of course, started directly west to settle on the prosperous farms there.

The other day a gushing student of the question suggested that "love is the only hope." Without disparaging the Christian virtues, we may be sure that love will not melt the stony heart of factory wages or immigration statistics. With demand strengthening and supply diminishing, the outlook is not cheerful. The only relief now in sight is from a check upon our prosperity. The fall in prices and curtailment of manufactures that are expected in the near future will inevitably lessen the demand for female labor both in the factory and in the home, and will as inevitably increase the supply. Meantime the martyrdom of the housekeeper must go on. If it be true, as ancient writers allege, that one of the enjoyments of the righteous in heaven is to see the torments of the damned, then the families which have drawn from the greatest American lottery one or two competent and contented servants should be in seventh heaven of ecstasy.