

claim on the AX ranch and the three of us will work them both until we get our patent."

"Don't you have to clear away a lot of bush and grow things?" he asked.

"That is how one makes a living but it is not optional in acquiring a deed at the end of three years. It is only necessary that one live on the ranch all the time for the three years to earn a free ranch."

"By Jove, it's interesting. I believe I shall try it. Are they plentiful—the ranches, I mean?"

"There is only one available here. It has a small shack on it. If you decide to take it up, Dick (that's my brother) will plow up a couple of acres for a house garden and you could stump a large area and get it ready for feed. You'll want some stock and hens to start with, you know."

"Of course. It could be managed. I've a lot of bally trinkets in my trunks that would bring in a little sum. It's deuced new to me and I expect I shall be soft and all that sort of thing. Oh, I say—that must be your place yonder. You've several cattle and some horses."

"Oh, yes. We've made a fair start. We sold our house down east and brought a carload of stock out with us. That's the way most folks do in this country. Most of the land in the west is settled by down-easters who hanker for a change or see better opportunities. We've laid out a fair sum of money and if we can't make it go we're a poor combination. You will have worse odds to fight against but it's worth the try—and you can count on us to lend a hand."

"You've kept up your strength remarkably well because you've lost an awful lot of blood and it's still running. We'll have to let a doctor fix it up properly and trust him to keep his counsel. I'll drive you in this afternoon when you can make all arrangements about the ranch at the same time."

"You've been deuced kind. I'll probably fail to do as well as you expect, but I'm glad you took me in hand," he thanked her.

Dick was several years older than Dorna and naturally assumed a permissible proprietorship. He heard her story about the proposed neighbor and what he was expected to do for him with unaffected displeasure.

"If you know how to work, young man, you'll make it go, but if you don't, you'll go up in the air quicker than blue blazes," he informed the sickly stranger when he had a moment alone with him.

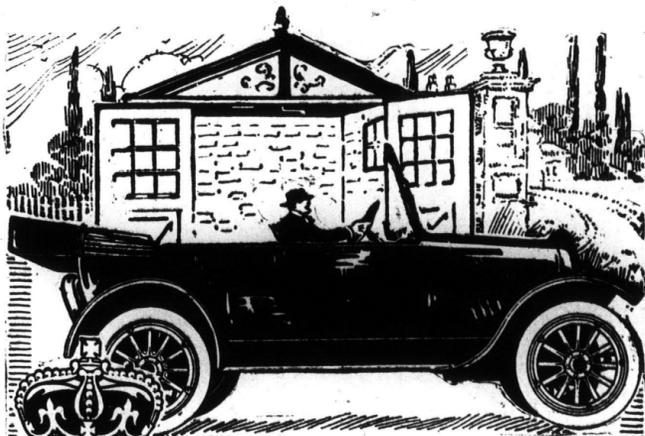
He seemed quite cheerful, therefore, when Dorna drove out next morning alone and showed him a note that Furlow had left for her.

"I'd never make it go on the ranch. Your inspiration would be a great aid but I am not physically able. I thought I was, but the doctor thinks otherwise and recommends rest. I want to thank you for the help you gave me. I hope that I may yet be a credit to the principles you avow even though I never see you again. I am going east on the night train."

"Just hold 'Ginger' while I go and eat a bun. I'm going into town."

"What's the hurry?" asked Dorna.

"I'm going to enter for that other



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After a hard day's work in the orchard gathering fruit, these girls are getting a well-earned rest asleep on beds of straw in a barn. They are British women who have taken the places left vacant by men going to war and are doing their bit to help increase Great Britain's food supply. Though they work from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., they are a merry party Britain's food supply. Though they work from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., they are a merry party of girls. The scene of their labors is a farm near Hounslow, and they are paid eight cents an hour.

They had been travelling through well-wooded undulating forest. Now they arrived at a flat, woodless plateau, the highest of several which stretched away in stopes, stair-like for several hundred yards. The flat lands below were sparsely wooded and here and there in the distance the river loomed in view, while away beyond were vast curtains of bluish-grey mist rising into sky-piercing summits of white—the arctic paradise of Alpine cloud dwellers.

"We have a beautiful site," the girl acknowledged with an air of prideful discovery. "Our ranch goes down in flat lots right to the river's edge. Across the river there are more ranches, away back beyond the top of that awful hill."

In that direction the bank of the river shot up three hundred feet and rounded off into a respectably sized mountain on which a road wound and disappeared around a gigantic curve.

Dick Waters received the derelict with a bad grace. He had seen the type before and knew their maladroitness. He made no comment upon the man's wound merely taking Dorna's explanation, "struck on the head on the road from town and knocked out," as sufficiently plausible, and acting as sullenly as his morose nature allowed. He unhitched the horse while Dorna started preparations for breakfast and bathed the head of the visitor.

"You've lots of sand," she said to him.

ranch in Bertha's name before any other bloke gets a chance to come dyin' around this diggings."

Dorna laughed merrily. Bertha was the senior member and general home manager of the only remaining Waters' family and it looked as if things might hum on the triangle ranch.

Dick hired a few men to get the other log shanty ready and it was occupied in three days.

A barnyard was fenced off in course of time; a good stable erected and a boundary fence made around the three ranches—now one.

The land with the fewest stumps was put under cultivation and yielded sufficient hay, alfalfa and oats for feed.

It was a wise selection having the ranch buildings on the lowest slope close to the river. That was the secret of the failure of those who went before—they found it so difficult to get at the water.

Dick and Bertha were growing content with their slow but profitable progress while Dorna wished ranch life had more excitement and some refinements.

The regular milking of several cows, feeding pigs and hens, making huge quantities of butter and the seemingly useless romping over the lands gathering in small crops here and there and rounding up recalcitrant cattle, bored her immeasurably. Her nature demanded a change.

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