

mare there myself," he added fiercely to the newcomer.

Into the saddle clambered the Dean; eagerly he galloped for Cargelly; at his side loped the messenger. From time to time he consulted his watch; would he be in time to stop it? For, as they sped, the man explained, idiotically enough, that the son was riding Gray Bird in the race, and that he was to have ridden Whirlwind himself.

With easy swing the thoroughbred mare loped over the smooth prairie trail. If it had not been for the cayuse galloping laboriously beside her she would have gone faster.

"There's plenty of time, Guv'nor," cried his companion; "don't knock the mare about." He had an idea that, perhaps, he would yet outwit the Dean and secure Whirlwind for the race. He even thought of throwing his lariat over the churchman and pulling him out of the saddle. But he gave up this idea; many things might happen: the mare might get away; even the Dean might break his neck.

Four miles off, the square, unadorned houses of Cargelly rose on the level prairie like huge packing-boxes. A motley multitude of twisting figures could be seen to the right; that was the race-course—even the Dean surmised that.

Would he be in time? His watch told him it was twenty minutes to four.

As they drew nearer the brown mare pricked her ears wistfully; the scent of a speed battle came to her nostrils, and she rattled the snaffle-bit restlessly against her white teeth. Straight for the race mob galloped the Dean; close at his heels loped the cayuse. Swifter glided the prairie under the two horsemen, for Whirlwind was warming to the race taint that was in the air.

"What time—is it—Guv'nor?" panted the man at Dean Ruthven's elbow.

"Two—minutes—to four," he gasped in answer.

"They're at—the—post," pumped the other as the wind drove into his set teeth. He could see a dozen horsemen grouped near a man with a red flag, straight in front of them.

Now it happened that the starting-post for this race, which was one and a quarter miles, was at the point where their trail cut through the course.

Young Ruthven was one of the horsemen. He was in a rage. What had become of Whirlwind? He had sent his man, Ned Haslam, a good rider, too, out for her—Ned was to have ridden Whirlwind; next to the Padre himself, she would gallop better for Haslam than any one else.

As Gray Bird swerved away from the starter's flag, and swung around on his hind feet, young Ruthven caught sight of the two horsemen.

"Hold off for a minute," he cried eagerly to the starter; "here comes Whirlwind at last; I think Ned is on her back, too. She'll be under

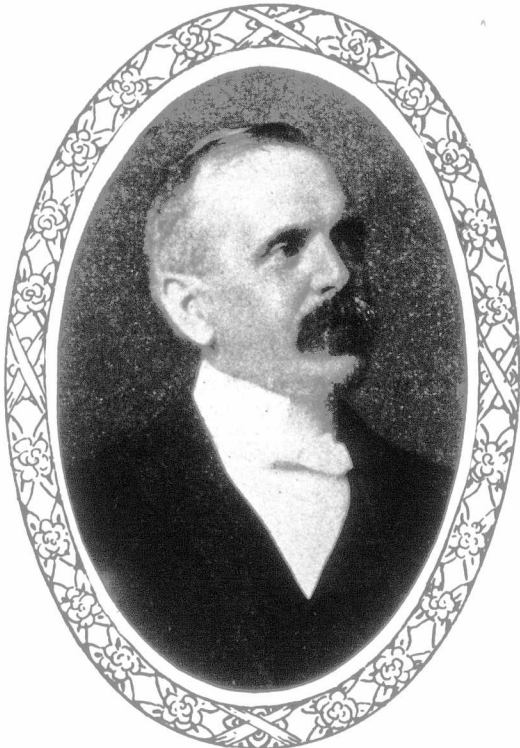
your orders in another minute and can start."

One of the Winnipeg riders uttered an objection.

"She'll have all the worse of it," retorted the Padre, "for her idiotic rider has got tangled up in some delay, and has had to gallop the mare."

"I'll wait," said the starter; "line up and get ready."

There could be no technical objection.



A. W. PRITCHARD.

Secretary Manitoba Agricultural College Commission.

The Padre beckoned with his whip for Whirlwind's rider to come to the post; the Dean answered with a shout when he recognized his son.

"Back there—line up!" called the starter. "Whirlwind must start as soon as she gets in the bunch—I can't wait."

Nobody recognized the Dean in his tight-buttoned corduroy coat—not even his son; for they were busy trying for the best of the start.

"Hold on!" called the Dean, as he swung on to the course from the trail.

Even if the starter had wished to delay matters the Dean would not have been of the party, for Whirlwind, trained to the quick start, keen for the strife that had been of all her life, rushed through the eager straining horses, carrying them with her.

"Go!" yelled the starter, dropping his flag as they flashed by him all in a bunch.

Down went the second flag! It was a start—a beautiful start.

As the Dean flashed by his son the Padre recognized him. Great Caesar! Had the Guv'nor gone mad! It was like a nightmare; he rode as one in a dream. But in front of him was the terrible tangibility of his clerical father riding in a wicked horse-race. Of course the Guv'nor was crazy, but—and he took a pull at Gray Bird's head—he couldn't afford to throw away the race on that account.

At his flank raced the mare from Edmonton; behind, half a length, thundered the two from Winnipeg. Past the crude grand-stand on the first round, they swung in this order. Whirlwind had the lead and she meant to keep it; that had always been her idea of a race. Speed she had in plenty; but when horses were in front they threw fierce-cutting sand in her face, and the snapping of the rider's shirts in the wind, and the crackling of their whips, bothered her.

How she liked the jockey on her back! His strong pull on the bit steadied her around the curves; firm-braced in the saddle he sat quiet—just as a jockey should, she reasoned.

In the Dean's face was the horror of a lifetime compressed into a tiny tablet. With set teeth and braced knees he pulled strong at the mad brute's head. "She's running away with me," he muttered; "I shall be disgraced for life!"

Hard on the right rein he tugged as Whirlwind hugged the circling rail on the left. If he could only pull her off the course!

"That's right," whispered the mare; "steady me a bit wide." Out of her large, wise eye she watched the horses behind. Ha, ha! such sport! They would never catch her.

"Good old girl!" muttered the Padre as the strong, brown quarters in front of him gathered and straightened with the easy motion of a steam piston. Now the broad hoofs scattered the gravel back in their faces; truly she was a picture.

He eased Gray Bird back after they passed the stand on the first round. The Regina horse slipped into his place at the mare's heels. On his right pounded a big bay from Winnipeg; half a length back was the gray mare from Edmonton running under a strong whip.

Madly the grand-stand cheered as Whirlwind, still in the lead, swung into the straight. "Who is the jockey?" someone asked. "Thought Ned Haslam was to ride for the Padre—that's not Ned."

"He's a mighty good jockey, though—whoever he is," another answered.

A quarter of a mile from the finish the Winnipeg horse, Cyclone, far-reaching in his big stride, was lapped on Whirlwind's quarter. The Padre saw this; that was what he was lying back for



AN ALBERTA, N.-W. T., RANCH CORRAL.