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THE WESTERN HOME MONTHLY

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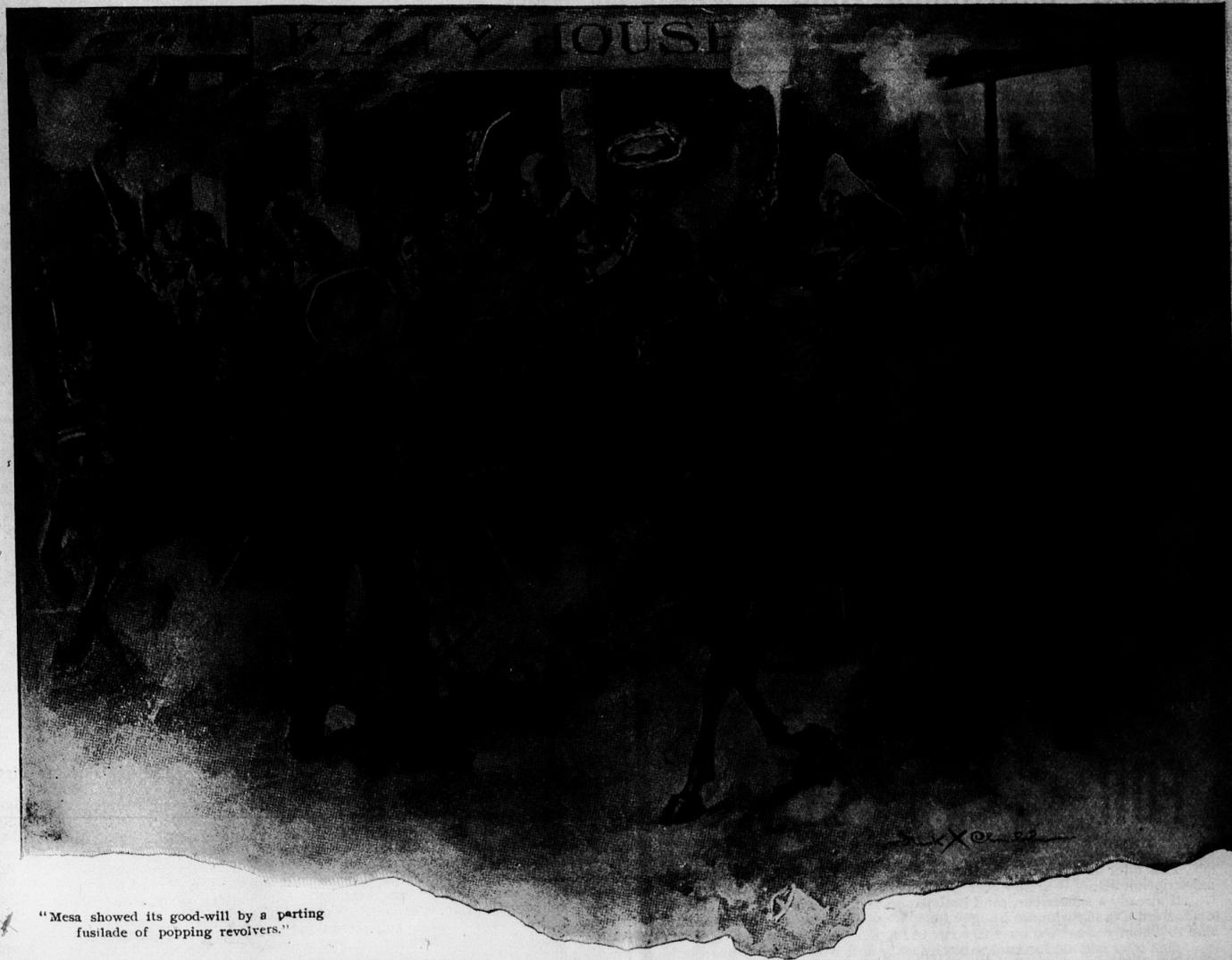
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Pete Sanderson Intervenes.

By William MacLeod Raine.

How the Alberta Cowpuncher Spoiled a Settlement of the Servant-Girl Problem.



"Mesa showed its good-will by a parting fusillade of popping revolvers."



WHEN the stage rolled past in a cloud of white Alberta dust, Mrs. McCoy was at her kitchen window, and not by chance. She was something over two hundred pounds in weight and something under five feet in height, but surprisingly little happened in Mesa that her beady black eyes did not fasten on. Just now they gimleted the occupants of the back seat of the stage.

"Mrs. Kelly and her new hired girl

have come," she announced to her daughter in the sitting-room. "Yu don't say," responded a less robust replica of the mother, with a rush to the nearest window. Mrs. Kelly, a thin, wiry, capable woman, sat a picture of triumph enthroned. Not for nothing had she gone all the way to Winnipeg to secure a cook that would disdain the lures of Hymen. For beside her was a pale, washed-out little woman with a child on her knees, clearly the captive of her bow and spear. The new cook was a plain, drab little body who looked the worse for the wear of an unsympathetic world. But Mrs. Kelly flaunted her

in the face of unwed Mesa as proudly as if her find were a beauty. Her aggressive defiance the young men understood perfectly. Three cooks had come to the Kelly House within six months and three of them had gone to make glad the homes of lonesome cowmen. Before these, other girls had come and gone, a steady stream of them. Wherefore hilarity in Cattleland. Charivaris had been frequent, to the delight of everybody but Mrs. Kelly, who had at last announced definitely that she was not conducting a matrimonial agency in her kitchen. Hence her trip to Winnipeg and the advent of the insignificant little woman finished in drab.

It was not till afternoon that Mrs. McCoy could take time to waddle over to the hotel. She found Mrs. Kelly on the shaded east porch, evidences of spring sewing scattered about her. The tiniest manikin in the world played in the sand at her feet. "Well, I see yu got back all right, Sarah." "Set yourself by that water olla. You'll find it real cool there. Yes, I got back more dead'n alive, I guess." "What seems the matter with yu?" asked Mrs. McCoy, sympathetically, as she took out her sewing. "Want o' sleep. I don't know as I got twenty winks last night. Set