

most frequently to be found. This evening she was at the sewing machine busy with Hughie's Sunday clothes, with the baby asleep in the cradle beside her in spite of the din of the flying wheels and little Robbie helping to pull through the long seam. Hughie shrank from the warm, bright atmosphere that seemed to fill the room, hating to go in, but in a moment he realized that he must "make believe" with his mother, and the pain of it and the shame of it startled and amazed him. He was glad that his mother did not notice him enter, and by the time he had put away his books he had braced himself to meet her bright smile and her welcome kiss.

The mother did not apparently notice his hesitation.

"Well, my boy, home again?" she cried, holding out her hand to him with the air of good comradeship she always wore with him. "Are you very hungry?"

"You bet!" said Hughie, kissing her, and glad of the chance to get away.

"Well, you will find something pretty nice in the pantry we saved for you. Guess what."

"Don't know."

"I know," shouted Robbie. "It's muzzie's pie. Muzzie tept it for 'oo."

"Now Robbie you were not to tell," said his mother, shaking her finger at him.

"O-o-o I fordot," said Robbie, horrified at his failure to keep his promise.

"Never mind. That's a lesson you'll have to learn many times, how to keep those little lips shut. And the pie will be just as good."

"Thank you, mother," said Hughie. "But I don't want your pie."

"My pie!" said the mother. "Pie isn't good for old women."

"Old women!" said Hughie, indignantly. "You're the youngest and prettiest woman in the congregation," he cried, and forgetting for the moment his sense of meanness, he threw his arms round his mother.

"Oh, Hughie, shame on you! What a dreadful flatterer you are!" said his mother. "Now run away to your pie, and then to your evening work, my boy, and we will have a good lesson together after supper."

Hughie ran away, glad to get out of her presence, and seizing the pie, carried it out to the barn and hurried it far into the snow. He felt sure that a single bite of it would choke him.

If he could only have seen Foxy any time for the next hour, how gladly would he have given him back his pistol, but by the time he had fed his cow and the horses, split the wood and carried it in, and prepared kindling for the morning's fires, he had become accustomed to his new self, and had learned his first lesson in keeping his emotions out of his face. But from that night, and through all the long weeks of the breaking winter, when games in the woods were impossible by reason of the snow and water, and when the roads were deep with mud, Hughie carried his burden with him, till life was one long weariness and dread.

And through these days he was Foxy's slave. A pistol without ammunition was quite useless. Foxy's stock was near at hand. It was easy to write a voucher for a penny's worth of powder or caps, and consequently the pile in Foxy's pencil box steadily mounted till Hughie was afraid to look at it. His chance of being free from his own conscience was still remote enough.

During these days, too, Foxy reveled in his power over his rival, and ground his slave in bitter bondage, subjecting him to such humiliation as made the school wonder and Hughie writhe; and if ever Hughie showed any sign of resentment or rebellion, Foxy could tame him to groveling submission by a single word. "Well, I guess I'll go down to-night and see your mother," was all he needed to say to Hughie to make Hughie grovel again. For with Hughie it was not the fear of his father's wrath and heavy punishment, though that was terrible enough, but the dread that his mother should know, that made him grovel before his tyrant, and wake at night in a cold sweat. His mother's tender anxiety for his pale face and gloomy looks only added to the misery of his heart.

He had no one in whom he could confide. He could not tell any of the boys, for he was unwilling to lose their esteem, besides, it was none of their business; he was terrified of his father's

wrath, and from his mother, his usual and unfailing resort in every trouble of his whole life, he was now separated by his terrible secret.

Then Foxy began to insist upon payment of his debts. Spring was at hand, the store would soon be closed up, for business was slack in the summer, and besides, Foxy had other use for his money.

"Haven't you got any money at all in your house?" Foxy sneered one day, when Hughie was declaring his inability to meet his debts.

"Of course we have," cried Hughie, indignantly.

"Don't believe it," said Foxy, contemptuously.

"Father's drawer is sometimes full of dimes and half-dimes. At least, there's an awful lot on Mondays, from the collections, you know," said Hughie.

"Well, then, you had better get some for me, somehow," said Foxy. "You might borrow some from the drawer for a little while."

"That would be stealing," said Hughie.

"You wouldn't mean to keep it," said Foxy. "You would only take it for a while. It would be just borrowing."

"It wouldn't," said Hughie, firmly. "It's taking out of his drawer. It's stealing, and I won't steal."

"Huh! you're mighty good all at once. What about that half-dollar?"

"You said yourself that wasn't stealing," said Hughie, passionately.

"Well, what's the difference? You said it was your mother's and this is your father's. It's all the same, except that you're afraid to take your father's."

"I'm not afraid. At least it isn't that. But it's different to take money out of a drawer, that isn't your own."

"Huh! Mighty lot of difference! Money's money, wherever it is. Besides, if you borrowed this from your father, you could pay back your mother and me. You would pay the whole thing right off."

(To be continued)

WESTERN STOCK MEN MEET.

The Western Stock Growers convened in Calgary on Jan. 24, for the discussion of several questions which have arisen owing to the separation of the two provinces. The question of brand recording occupied nearly the whole of one forenoon, and it was finally decided to have separate brand recorders for each province. Some favored the establishment of a neutral zone between the two provinces in which brands would be recorded in either; this idea was finally dropped. More stringent hide inspection and the necessity for greater safeguards to protect stockmen from the reckless killing of animals by railways was discussed. Deputations waited on the new Minister of Agriculture urging larger grants to the agricultural shows and it is thought that something definite will be done in this connection when the house meets. The Mounted Police come in for their share of praise. Evidently the men of the cattle country would sooner see the services of the old guard of the prairies retained, for letters to this effect were sent to Sir Wilfred Laurier and the Hon. Frank Oliver.

A BIG FORESTRY SCHEME.

It is announced in the press that Canada's big Trans-continental road the C. P. R. is to plant trees along its road with a view to furnish ties, fenceposts, etc. The efforts at tree and shrub-growing by the Company in their gardens along the main line have shown what constant attention will do. When this big corporation gets busy with its tree planting the appearance of the landscape will be changed materially.

NEW CATALOGUE

We have received the spring catalogue of the Buchanan Nursery Co. of St. Charles, Man., containing a list of apples, crabs, plums, small fruits, ornamental trees and shrubs and plants suitable for out-door cultivation in Manitoba and our other prairie districts. Only the hardiest plants and trees have been listed in this catalogue, which have been found by many years of practical experience to be suitable to our climate. The catalogue will be sent free to any one who will write for it.



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