

here you!" But as Pinto afterward explained, Hog Eye had doggone skun away off'n the party, right before the refreshments was served. "Why, bless my Mary Ann—ain't he jes a humpin' hisself!" So replacing the corn cob stopper, Pinto clapped heels to his mare, and put after the swaying wagon.

"Now look at here, Hog Eye," he remarked aggrievedly; "ain't you done forgot suthin'—the bottle—or good-bye—or the change, mebbe." He kept pace beside the buckboard, and gazed upon its driver in mild reproof. "Oh, git away an' lemme go, Mr. Pinto!" implored Hog Eye; "can't ye see they're arter me? Old Billy Thunder Bull—oh, Mr. Pinto; the crazy old medicine buck drunk an' half killed his squaw, an' fired the wickyup, an' they've traced the lick to me. Oh, what shall I do, Mr. Pinto—they're arter me hard, an' I'm hittin' the trail—Oh, for God's sakes, Mr. Pinto."

Pinto grinned. "Don't seem's if I'm oltin' to yer any," he remarked, and then reining up his mare, let Hog Eye go on.

Three days later, the mules and other effects of Hog Eye were found strewn about the railroad some miles westward along the line; and for a while there was hopeful belief that Hog Eye himself had been strewn some, too. But as a search of the neighboring country failed to discover his remains, it was generally understood that the man had jumped a freight at the water-tank and gone on to pastures new. A spring later this was confirmed. One of the Lazy N BAR H outfit, visiting the country below the Park, was leaning against the bar of the Square Goods House, when he heard a familiar voice singsonging complaint accompanied by the swish of a sweeping broom.

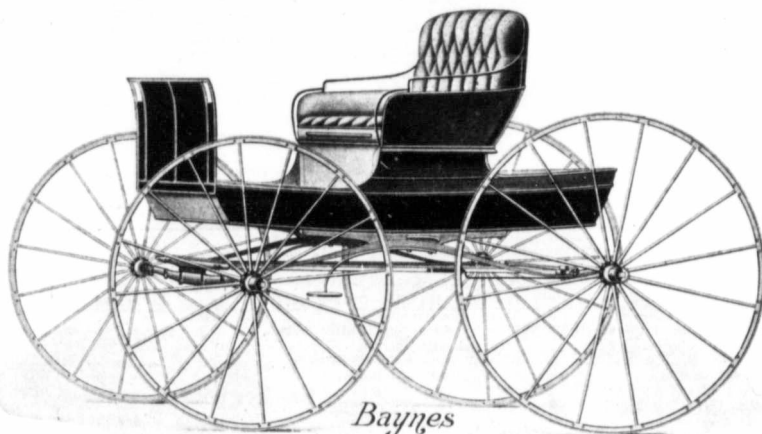
"Oh, no," whimpered the voice, "a feller don't get no sort of a chancet, nohows. Jes' let a feller git his head up onct, an' they all tries to beat him down. Why, I was jes' a doin' fine, an'—"

"Why, Hog Eye," said the cowpuncher, politely; "if it ain't Hog Eye, you ole, sad mem-ry! Come here an' weep on this buzzum!"

But Hog Eye, who would have been glad at any welcome in times gone by, expressed his feelings otherwise. He stood there, red and pale by turns, clasping the broom to his breast, and turning his eyes wildly as if hunting a chance to flee. "My name ain't Hog Eye," he said; "an' I don't know ye, annyhow. Whatcher want?"

But it was the old Hog Eye just the same, only more dirty, unkempt and shiftless.

That summer had dwindled down to the first coming of frost, when the town marshal concluded, in the interests of society, to ask Mr. Forbush to move on. "You see, frien'," he said, kindly enough, "it might not be healthy for you to hang aroun' longer. Some o' them women folks over van has been missin' chicken



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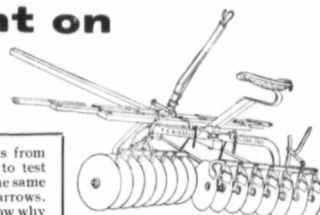
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stock lately, an' they see you roun', too. So's they put two an' two together—sure—that's all right; it may be damned bad arithmetic but it sums up strong. I guess you'd had oughter mosey along, frien', an' they won't be trouble comin'. Now, you git a good start, won't ye?"

Hog Eye shuffled away in dejection. That was the way of it. They wouldn't give him no chance. He was drooling along to himself in this mood, when a voice hailed him, and, looking up, he found himself fronting the emporium of Capt. Jack Spendy, the town's eminent merchant, and there was the gentleman himself standing on the porch.

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