

The Montana Raised Boy

Not long ago I happened to meet the head of a big law firm in an eastern city, and, learning that he was a Montana product, I asked him his story, and this is substantially what he said:

"My father was never very strong, and 20 years ago he sold all of his property, went west and settled on a ranch 40 miles from Fort Benton. He invested everything in cattle. The business prospered and his health improved, until the fateful winter of '86-7 killed almost every head on the range. It was worry over the loss and the hardships he endured that winter that caused his death. For soon after the spring round-up, when they could not find enough cattle to pay the round-up expenses, he grew rapidly worse, and that winter died. I had a younger brother of 10, and I was about 15. A cattle ranch without cattle is as useless as a clock without a mainspring, and my mother was immediately confronted with the problem of caring for herself and her boys.

"We had practically nothing left. We had no relatives that were so well off that she felt that she could appeal to them for help. So when the spring came, she arranged to go to her sister's home with my brother, and live with her on a small farm in one of the middle states. I decided to go to Fort Benton and look for work. I had a \$5 bill, a buckskin pony worth \$30—if a man needed a pony real bad—and a stock saddle worth \$40. I was very homesick, I can tell you, when I saw the stage drive off with my mother and brother, and I knew that there was scarcely enough money for them to reach their destination.

"I wanted work. So the first thing I did after I reached Fort Benton and put my horse up in the livery barn that we patronized on our few visits to town from our ranch, was to go from store to store to find it. Before night I had canvassed the town without success. Then I determined to take ranch work or go up into the mountains and work on a farm, as I felt sure that farmers would certainly need some one at that time of the year. I went to the proprietor of a cheap hotel and told him frankly of my prospects and the extent of my property. He said that he would allow me to stay at his hotel until I found work, if that were in a reasonable time, and promised that at the end of the month he would give me a job as dishwasher at six dollars a week, if I found nothing better. The liveryman kindly permitted me to sleep in the office of the barn or in the hay loft free of charge. I chose the office, using my saddle blanket for a covering and a carriage robe for a mattress. The night man had a cot in there, and it was not so lonesome as the loft.

The third day when I came in to dinner the proprietor of the hotel informed me that a German farmer from the highlands was in town looking for a man and told me to wait for him. When he came in and looked me over—I weighed about 115 pounds and was 5 feet and 10 inches tall—it was plain that he was not satisfied with my appearance. I felt that the crisis of my life had come. If he does not take me, I thought, who on earth will? 'I want a man,' he said; 'my work is not light. What can you do?' I make irrigating ditches, I milk 30 cows, I plant 100 acres of oats. I need a man who is big and strong.' I told him I was strong, which was untrue, but I knew that God has forgiven me the lie. I was suffering at the time from a bad abdominal rupture. But in the determination to work at any thing I felt that I was a powerful man. 'Try me one month,' I said. He was not a prepossessing looking fellow himself but when he told me to get my horse and be ready to start at 2 o'clock, I was as pleased as I ever expect to be. On the way to his home I sat in the big wagon with him and tied my horse to one of the team. The wagon was loaded heavily with barbed wire and it was late in the evening when we drove up to the barn after 20 miles of rough roads. On the way he had told me what he expected me to do. I could take 15 cows to milk at the start. Yes, 20 if I liked. I was good with horses? Yes. Then he would give the black stallion and the little bay gelding. He worked the stallion because he got mean if he stood idle. I must use care with him and see that the jockey stick running from his ugly bit was firmly buckled in the gelding's hame collar, otherwise he would kill the gelding. The alarm clock in the little attic was always set for 4 o'clock rising, and I would build the kitchen fire for his wife the first thing. Then care for my team and when through milking come to breakfast. The orders for the day's work he would give later.

"To make up for lack of strength I set the clock for 3:30 o'clock the next morning. After milking the 15 cows that were allotted to me, and doing the team chores, such as feeding, watering, harnessing, etc., I was ready for breakfast with perhaps 10 minutes to spare. Spare minutes were always spent cutting wood. I was as tired as if I had done a day's work. After breakfast I was sent to harrow a field and when the time came to quit that evening at 6 o'clock it seemed hardly possible that I would be able to do my chores. My rupture, too, hurt me frightfully. I was more nearly discouraged that night than I have ever been since, but new strength came with refreshing sleep. The next day was harder on account of aching muscles, but strange as it seemed to me, I was not as tired when night came as I had been the night before.

"As the week wore on the hard old German, and his harder wife, whom I took pains to please, told me that my work was all right, and that they would pay me \$20 a month and board and washing, and keep my horse in their pasture. Besides this the 'gros mudder' darned and patched my clothes and made coarse shirts for me. I felt that I was earning twice that, for farm and ranch hands in that vicinity were then and are now getting \$35 and \$40 a month. I determined, however, to stick it out, and I stayed at that place two years. In the winter I went into the woods at daylight and took my lunch, which was frozen solid when it came time to eat it. In the spring I broke some horses for him to ride, and went on a near-by round-up for two weeks to gather some of his cattle which had drifted down. Haying, plowing, threshing and ditch digging occupied my time, most of the year averaging 15 hours a week.

"One thing that made me contented was that the young man who taught the district school, for eight months, boarded there, and I studied and read with him on Sundays and in the winter evenings. Besides, all the money I made was clear. My clothing, which was of blue denim and cheap underwear, cost me less than \$20 a year, and all the rest of the money I saved. Several times I had chances to work for neighbors, and the second year my employer raised my wages \$10 a month, not, he said, because I earned it, but the old woman liked to have me around her boy as I did not swear.

"At the end of the second year I had \$500 in money, my horse and saddle, which were worth considerable less than when I left home. While the hard work made me some stronger, and entirely cured my rupture, I felt that I was not able physically to compete with the big, husky fellows that could do with ease what cost me pain and grief. Besides, I was fond of books, and desired to prosecute my studies.

"At any rate, I bade good-bye to my German friends and went to town, determined to try for a teacher's certificate, which I succeeded in getting in the second grade. Almost immediately I secured a school. The district was out on the prairie 15 miles from town, and the salary was \$60 a month for six months. The place was indeed desolate and lonely. The nearest house was a mile and a half. At the rear of the building was a lean-to shed for wood and lumber. The trustees permitted me to fit it up as a dwelling room and stable.

"I was invited out to meals so often, and the patrons sent so many pies and cakes and loaves of bread and rolls of butter, that there was little for me to buy except books, and I borrowed them when possible. The time passed quickly, but it was more lonesome than I can tell you, especially when the winter set in and the storms kept the children from school. At the end of the term however, I was a few hundred dollars better off. But meanwhile I had made some pleasant acquaintances in town, and the banker where I had my deposit invited me often to his beautiful home. My church membership also brought me in contact with a great many refined people. And I think I can truthfully say that the church was always my greatest satisfaction and help. I went to the Episcopal church, a body which is wrongly supposed by many to have little in common with the working people. I found by experience that the church can and does fill in the lives of the poor, who desire it, a lack that nothing else seems able to supply.

"The rest of the winter after school closed I did the janitor work for a law firm, and, after a little practice, did almost all their copying on the typewriter, tended to the horse of one of the proprietors, and,

for my services, lived as one of the family in the senior partner's home, and received \$25 a month besides my living. My clothes cost more, however, in town, and I could not save more than \$15 or \$18 a month. The next fall I burned my bridges behind me, took my money, about \$1,900, and left for a small college, having arranged to pay my board at the dormitory by acting as janitor of one of the buildings. The rest is an old story, one that thousands of young men are doing today. I worked my way through the law school and college, saving as much from my little hoard as I could, for the day when, after having hung out my shingle, I should wait in vain for a client. Each summer I worked as a laborer at anything that I could get to do. I think that that is a much better way than selling books or anything of that sort. The money is sure, and the work puts one in condition for the year's study. After I graduated I came here and opened up my office.

"Yes, I have a good practice, but I do not feel as you suggest, that I have succeeded so far by exceptional ability in any way. It seems to me that I have pulled through by what my mother used to call stubbornness. When I think of it now I wonder how a physician would account for the fact that I was able to ride those vicious horses and do that hard straining work in my physical condition. If my advice were worth anything to a boy, I would say don't let any obstacle prevent you from doing the work that you have to do in the very best and most painstaking way."

—H. E. Robbins, in Anaconda Standard.

Railroad Goose Law.

Nashville & Knoxville Railroad company vs. Thomas F. Davis—Putnam law. Justice Wilkes said:

"This is an action in damages against the railroad for running over and killing three geese of the value of \$1.50. The owner of the geese lived about a mile from the railroad but permitted them to run at large, and they went upon the railroad track near a public road crossing. The engineer blew the whistle and rang the bell for the crossing, but there is no proof that he rang the bell or sounded the alarm for the geese. Whether the geese knew of

this failure to whistle to them does not appear.

"We think there is no evidence of recklessness or common law negligence shown in this case, and the only question is whether a goose is an animal or obstruction in the sense of the statute, section 1574, subsection 4, Shannon's compilation, which requires the alarm whistle to be sounded and the brakes put down and every possible means employed to stop the train and prevent an accident when an animal or obstruction appears on the track. It is evident this provision is designed not only to protect animals on the track, but also the passengers and employees upon the train from accidents and injury. It would not seem that a goose was such an obstruction as would cause the derailment of a train if run over.

"It is true a goose has animal life and in the broadest sense is an animal, but we think that the statute does not require the stopping of trains to prevent running over birds such as geese, chickens, ducks, pigeons, canaries, and other birds that may be kept for pleasure or profit. Birds have wings to move them quickly from places of danger, and it is presumed they will use them; a violent presumption, perhaps, in case of a goose—an animal which appears to be loath to stoop from his dignity to escape a passing train.

"But the line must be drawn somewhere and we are of the opinion that the goose is the proper bird to draw it at.

"We do not mean to say that in case of recklessness and common law negligence there might not be a recovery in killing geese, or chickens, or ducks, or other fowls, but that case is not presented. Snakes and frogs and fishing worms are, to some extent, obstructions when upon the railroad tracks, but it cannot be held that for such obstruction as these, as well as fowls, the train should be stopped, and mails and passengers delayed. We are of the opinion that there is an error in the judgment of the court below, and it is reversed, and the case having been heard without a jury, it is dismissed at plaintiff's cost." — Nashville (Tenn.) Banner.

Ready to Change.

Little Tommie had been put to bed alone. It was upstairs, and the

thunder rolled and lightning flashed unmercifully. He lay quietly until he could no longer stand it and then his little nightgowned figure appeared at the head of the stairs.

"Ma!" he cried.

"Yes, my son," came the calm rejoinder.

"I'm afraid, ma. It thunders so and I'm all alone."

"Go back to bed, Tommie," came his mother's voice. "Don't you know nothing can hurt you?"

Tommie went back to bed, but not to stay.

"Ma!" he cried again, and this time the little figure was half way downstairs.

"Tommie," called his mother, "don't you know I have told you nothing can hurt you, God is always with you?"

"Then, ma," and this time there came an audible sniff from the weeping Tommie, "you come up and sleep with God and let me sleep with pa."

—Lippincott's.

Crumbling Chimneys.

While making a number of alterations in his block at the corner of King street and Third avenue Wm. Germer made a discovery that may account for a number of impending fires that have occurred during the past two winters. In his building Mr. Germer has a brick chimney and while that portion beneath the roof was found to be in fair condition

that which extended above and was consequently exposed to the elements was so completely disintegrated, though its condition could not have been told by merely looking at it, that one's finger could have been poked through a brick at any place, they crumbling into dust at the slightest pressure. Whether it was the fault of the material from which the brick was made or the action of the heat inside and intense cold outside is not known, but Mr. Germer for one will cut out brick chimneys hereafter and use the galvanized iron safeties instead.

Crown Grant Desired.

Colin Alexander Chisholm has given notice of his intention of applying within 60 days from date for a crown grant to the "Diamond" quartz mineral claim located on the right limit of the Klondike river near the Ogilvie bridge. An action protesting against the issuance of such grant must be commenced prior to the issuing of the certificate of improvements.

Trial Begins

Special to the Daily Nugget. Cape Town, April 28.—The trial of Princess Radzwill for forgery in connection with a note purporting to have been endorsed by the late Cecil Rhodes, but repudiated by him, began today.

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