

WINGHESTER DAVE'S IRREGULARITY

Nobody had ever accused Winchester Dave of crankiness. He could shoot as straight and quick, drink as much "valley tan," and sit at "Deacon" Rafter's poker table with as commendable nerve as any man in the Lake Valley region of New Mexico.

Hard by the village of Haldale, in old Missouri, was a tiny cemetery, on a great bluff overlooking the murky river that cut the State in half. There slept the gray-haired mother, who had given to the West one of its bold, bad men. And the West—the real, sturdy, manly, quick-on-the-trigger West—would have honored her for the excellence of her offspring had it known where to lay the offering.

After this week of fasting and due humiliation of the fish, Winchester Dave, loaded with a boxful of pink and white verbenas, pear cactus, royal in gold and blue, and mesal plucked from the mountain top, would come over to Missouri, and deck that grave with such elaborate attention to detail that it would make all the other mounds in the little city of the dead look quite somber and neglected.

The pilgrim from bad-man's land had observed that on the adjoining lot there was always a fresh bunch of violets—a small and insignificant tribute when viewed across the riot of floral decorations erected by the citizen of Lake Valley. He pitted the one driven to such a frugal display of grief, and sometimes took the liberty of evening up matters with the dead by besieging the violets with plants of more vehement coloring from his superabundant store.

Some years before he became of age Edwin was managing the plantation with all the skill of a veteran agriculturist. Aside from the negroes, it was Tom Barnes, a sort of assistant overseer. Tom blew in one winter along with the worst blizzard that had ever visited the country. The Ashtons fed and clothed him, and offered him steady work. He was of a taciturn disposition, and did not seem overly pleased with his position. One evening he left without taking the trouble to say good-bye, and that night the "second edition" of the blizzard came with a fierce determination to rout that cheerful liar known as "the oldest inhabitant."

"Mother!" A queer word from an outcast like Barnes, but it went deep down into the motherly heart of Mrs. Ashton, and she bent over, and pressed her lips to his brow. There was no change in Barnes' demeanor when he recovered. Most of his converse was with the horses, and he preferred sleeping in the barn loft to the comfortable room the Ashtons offered him. He was a tireless and efficient worker, and appeared to be content.

Like a loyal mother of the South, Mrs. Ashton was too proud of her son to attempt to dissuade him from enlisting. When the tocsin resounded across the State, that he should be among the first to grasp the sword was a matter of course. Both looked at it that way. Bitter?—Ah, yes. Yet she thanked the good God that she had a son to offer—this brave mother of a lost cause.

Edwin's company went south, and joined General Price. Barnes remained upon the plantation for a year, doing well the part entrusted to him by his young employer. Then a recruiting officer came up the river, and asked him if he was a "rebel." Tom said, "No." If they had put the other proposition the answer would have been the same, as the overseer didn't worry his head about politics or wars. But the mission of this recruiting officer was to make men worry over such things, and he took Tom along, gave him a musket, and taught him how to drill and shoot. Tom took his new situation as he did all other affairs of life, and went along doing as he was told, without discussion.

"If yer want ter give it away, grandma," responded Dave, in a tone meant to be gentle, "all well an' good, but yer don't need to rake over an ole sore jes' ter satisfy my our reasonable curiosity."

She looked dreamily across the river to the oceanlike stretch of bottom-land—so fertile and inviting to the agriculturist—under the invigoration of a summer sun, a sinister aspect, however, which has often resulted in the ruin of growing crops and the subsequent beggary of the toiler; for the Missouri River is tigerish when the northern snows ask passage to the gulf.

"I was thinking," said the woman, slowly, as if feeling her way over uneven ground, "that it might really be a relief to tell it. It's not so telling of it that's wrong. It's the not telling at the right time which has nearly driven me crazy with remorse, and siften kept me on my knees, praying to Him till it commences to get light in the east."

She bent her head to her hands, and her small frame quivered as if at the mercy of some relentless, physical ailment. Winchester Dave decided that he had made an awful mess of it, and resolved on a serious, self-condemnatory lecture as soon as he was "alone with himself." He laid a big paw on her shoulder in what was, in all honesty, intended for a sort of soothing caress, and stammered out an apology for his stupidity in introducing the subject of her grief.

"Never mind, my friend," she said, as she raised her head, and dried her eyes with a handkerchief. "It's not your fault, I'm going to tell you, and I want you to tell me just how mean I've been to—Tom there."

The narrative, as given by the woman with honest attention to detail, consumed about an hour. Stripped of its non-essentials, it appears in the following paragraphs. In the early days of the Civil War, a company of Confederate volunteers was raised in the village of Haldale. Edwin Ashton, a tall lad from up the river a ways, was chosen first lieutenant. When he was very young, his father died, and as he was the only child, the widow's heartstrings were twined around him doubly close.

She watched the boy's development with eager solicitude, realizing the twofold responsibility an All-wise Providence had seen fit to place upon her. The boy chose to accept a large share of this responsibility himself, and not even by so much as a suggestion did he ever give his mother any real ground for apprehension, in regard to his conduct. The two lived for each other and the good they could do. At church, at social meetings, wherever people assembled, they were inseparable. It is the boy's pride, and the woman's joy—a partnership indissoluble.

Some years before he became of age Edwin was managing the plantation with all the skill of a veteran agriculturist. Aside from the negroes, it was Tom Barnes, a sort of assistant overseer. Tom blew in one winter along with the worst blizzard that had ever visited the country. The Ashtons fed and clothed him, and offered him steady work. He was of a taciturn disposition, and did not seem overly pleased with his position.

On the tenth day of his illness, the patient raised his head on his arm, looked at Mrs. Ashton, and murmured: "Mother!" A queer word from an outcast like Barnes, but it went deep down into the motherly heart of Mrs. Ashton, and she bent over, and pressed her lips to his brow.

There was no change in Barnes' demeanor when he recovered. Most of his converse was with the horses, and he preferred sleeping in the barn loft to the comfortable room the Ashtons offered him. He was a tireless and efficient worker, and appeared to be content. Like a loyal mother of the South, Mrs. Ashton was too proud of her son to attempt to dissuade him from enlisting.

and the bushwhackers stole nearly everything on the place that they could run off or carry with them. Mrs. Ashton was driven to the necessity of seeking refuge with a relative in town.

In the spring of 1863, Haldale was garrisoned by a formidable force of Federals, and it was reported that the Confederates were massing for attack. Couriers asking assistance were sent to all the headquarters by the Union commander, and various preparations made for standing a siege. Entrenchments were hastily thrown up, and cannons mounted. Vigilant picket service was established all around the beleaguered army.

The Confederates advanced slowly, and then camped within sight of their enemy. Their point was to discover the weak place in the armor before trying their steel upon it. Passage to and from the town was strictly controlled. Every stranger was regarded as a spy, and held under strict surveillance.

On the night of May 14, Tom Barnes was sentry on the south road. A man slipped out of the bush, and approached him with both arms raised. The sentry pointed his gun at the other's breast. The man placed his finger on his lips, and whispered one word. The sentry grounded his gun, wrote a line on a slip of paper, and passed it to the man who had sprung from the shadows.

"Relieving squad comes on at midnight," said Barnes. "Be back before they do." Five minutes later, Edwin Ashton, the Confederate soldier disguised as a citizen, was in his mother's arms. He was also in the enemy's files at a time when his course would be determined by a swift and fatal penalty. He knew that, and so did the sentry on the south side. Mother and son crowded the experiences and hopes of two years in two short hours.

While they whispered in a darkened room, the men who guarded the sleeping army paced to and fro along the outer lines. A spring moon bathed the green world in glowing benediction, and the turgid river sparkled through the trees. Far down-stream there blended with the cries of the night birds on the river bottoms, the wheezy exhaust of an old ferry-boat, bearing dispatches for the garrison.

"Twelve o'clock and all's well along the front!" The moonbeams flashed back from the bayonets of the relieving squad, and by their brilliancy seemed to sanction the proclamation of the sentries. In their dazzling rays no foe could lurk unseen, no secret enemy menace the sleeping legions.

In the afternoon of the next day a soldier wearing a captain's straus called at the house where Mrs. Ashton resided. He handed her a sheet torn from a small notebook. On it, this was written: "dere muthr god bles yu good bi tom."

"Where has he gone?" she asked. "I'm afraid not to heaven," replied the soldier. "He let a spy in last night. If you want his body, I'll have the boys dig a hole for it."

"Now, my friend," said Mrs. Ashton, "here is where the hurt comes. I ought to have told them so they would have known it was not a spy. Of course, I couldn't have saved Tom's life, because I didn't know what they were going to do till they did it, but it would have saved his good name. The reason I didn't tell it was because I was afraid if they knew I had a son in the Southern army, they's watch my house closer, and that some time Edwin might come back, and they's catch him. And so it went on and on, and I became more and more cowardly about it until I was so ashamed I couldn't look an honest person in the face. Now do you suppose Tom knows, and despises me for it?"

THE EXPORT APPLE TRADE

In shipping Canadian apples to Great Britain, the following directions should be followed:

PACKING APPLES.

- 1. Cool all fruit thoroughly before packing.
2. Handle as little as possible.
3. Grade fruit according to "Fruit Marks Act."
4. Pack fruit tightly in package.
5. Pack no inferior fruit for export.
6. Pack a limited quantity of fancy apples of the best varieties in boxes holding not less than one bushel or forty pounds net of fruit, a suitable size being the Canadian standard (10 x 11 x 20 inches, inside measurements). Little or no packing material should be used, but a sheet of cardboard at top and bottom of case will reduce the amount of injury from bruises. Only very fancy fruit for dessert use, such as "Fameuse," "King," "Wealthy," or other highly colored varieties, should be wrapped in paper.
7. The barrel is the most suitable package for the bulk of the apple trade with Great Britain. It is popular with the wholesale trade, and the retailers like it as the net weight of fruit holds out, which is an object where fruit is sold by the pound; the demand for apples in boxes will increase when the trade find they get a good article combined with 10 lbs. net weight of fruit.
8. Barrels should be well made, strongly nailed and should have eight hoops, two each at top and bottom, with four quarter hoops. Place at each end of barrel a circle of heavy cardboard, in order to prevent the fruit being bruised and becoming unsightly when exposed for sale. These cardboard circles should have semi-circular holes at each side to allow of their being easily removed.
9. Brand packages for export according to "Fruit Marks Act," Section 4.
10. For making barrels or boxes use a wood that will not taint the fruit.

SHIPPING APPLES.

- 1. Ship only very choice fruit of early varieties, as early apples have to compete with home grown fruit on the British markets.
2. Table varieties of choice quality, packed in crates, should be shipped in cold storage at a temperature ranging from 35 to 40 degrees. A lower temperature is not required. A great sudden change of temperature always causes damage to perishable food products, causing apples to become "slack," "wet" and "wasty."
3. Ship only very choice fruit of early varieties, as early apples have to compete with home grown fruit on the British markets.
4. Table varieties of choice quality, packed in crates, should be shipped in cold storage at a temperature ranging from 35 to 40 degrees. A lower temperature is not required. A great sudden change of temperature always causes damage to perishable food products, causing apples to become "slack," "wet" and "wasty."

MARKETING APPLES.

The leading fruit markets in Great Britain are London, Liverpool, Glasgow, Bristol, Manchester, Cardiff and Hull. These ports are the distributing bases for the bulk of the fruit shipments as well as other food products sent to Great Britain from Canada. Individual Canadian shippers may make good business connections with firms at inland British towns, and realize very satisfactory returns for their goods, but as a general rule it is not advisable to exploit new markets unless prepared to meet losses which are liable to be made in establishing new trade connections.

As the bulk of Canadian apples shipped to Great Britain are sold at public auction it may be of interest to Canadians to know how these sales are conducted at Liverpool and Manchester. Liverpool and Manchester have each a large sales-room where an Association of fruit brokers conducts public sales on fixed market days with occasional special sales.

Regular sales days in Liverpool are Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Regular sales days in Manchester are Tuesdays and Thursdays. Printed catalogues are furnished to buyers which give a description of

upon valleys so beautiful and green that they seem a gateway into paradise, and stately craft that, with swelling sails, ride the waters of earth. While transporting supplies to the fort, Winchester Dave had no doubt seen this mirage of the desert, and doubtless had confused it with the home of the soldier dead.

The eyes of the woman glistened. The tears arose, and she placed her hand in his arm. Slowly they walked from the cemetery down the valley to her cottage. He helped her over the stile, and stood with her at the door. "My friend," she said, as she looked with serene eyes up into his, "you've brought peace to my old heart to-day, and there's just one thing, if you don't mind, I thought I'd rather ask you first"—her eyes were wistful now—"you've been good to me; you wouldn't mind, would you, if I prayed for you?" Winchester Dave began fooling with his belt. He loosened it, and with its two wicked-looking revolvers, passed it over the woman.

Table for the month of April 1905, showing days of the week, feasts, and religious observances. Includes entries for 'Of the Feria', 'Fourth Sunday of Lent', 'Passion Sunday', 'Easter Sunday', and 'Low Sunday'.

PRACTICAL ELECTRICITY BY MAIL. A thorough course by mail in this subject. Every man dealing with electrical machinery should master this subject. Our course is cheap, easily learned and of excellent value. Canadian Correspondence College, Limited TORONTO, CAN.

TOOLS. We are showing complete sets of tools in prices from \$3.00 to \$20.00 a set. SCROLL SAWS and LATHES. Rice Lewis & Son LIMITED. Cor. KING & VICTORIA ST., TORONTO. Conditions of sale and terms of payment are detailed.

Give Thou Thy Hand. Give thou thy hand to him who toils. And build with him the home deep-yearned. Far nobler wilt thou find his strength Than that of wealth in garb unearned. Who toils is pure; his love will stand; Give thou thy hand. Thou, too, art builder of the world. O Woman-soul! then build with him Co-partner in its roof, O sweet! Your cottage in the twilight dim Here, Toil and Love, ye shall command. A home not builded on the sand Give thou thy hand. Out of its portals there shall walk The generations bearing Morn— The light of Faith, the flame of Hope, And deathless Purpose, struggling-born. If thou wouldst shape for futures grand Fear not beside Toil's strength to stand— Give thou thy hand. —Charles J. O'Malley, in the New World.

