

Continued from 1st page.

was Jack Delaney's liking for the girl. Unfortunately, on the plains, as well as in other primitive and sparsely settled communities, actions and words frequently cause more weight than they would do in large social circles. Therefore Calvin Larned was not alone in surmising that Jack Delaney intended, ultimately, to make Metta his wife. All "the boys" looked upon such a climax as a foregone conclusion, and even Spencer Knight shared in the general opinion. Indeed, the belief alone prevented Knight himself from entering the race for Met Larned; for the foreman, who had never exchanged more than 20 sentences with Metta, loved the girl with an affection which never passed to make psychological estimate or social comparisons—a love that was only surpassed by his deep and undying loyalty to Delaney, for whose sake he kept his secret so well that not a living soul ever once dreamed of it.

Cal Larned's derogatory remarks at the "round up" meant Jack Delaney were not nearly so severe as his mental comments upon the same living subject. In his own mind he thought that the Englishman had been "foolish around" Metta quite long enough.

One Sabbath when Spencer Knight and most of "the boys" had gone to Cheyenne with 200 young steers to ship by the railroad to Chicago, Delaney, as was his custom on Sunday mornings in summer, brought his hammock outside the long low shanty, swung it on the shady side of the building, lit his pipe, and stretched himself out to enjoy the three-week-old Illustrated London News.

"Mornin' Jack!" exclaimed a voice—the only voice whose accents usually disgusted Delaney. "Good morning," replied Jack, lazily looking up. He has noticed that the visitor was stout, and added: "You didn't walk over, Larned?"

"Not much, I didn't, I seen your barn door open as I come up, an' found empty stall, so I hitched my pony an' got him a feed o' your oats—'spose that's all right?"

"Oh, certainly; you are very welcome," said Jack, as vexed as a man could be with Larned's take it for granted style, but willing to tolerate the fellow for his daughter's sake.

"Party day an' duty, Jack. Can't you pass the bottle, me son? A smell o' rye or Bourbon, or even a couple o' fingers o' gin, wouldn't it be bad?"

"I do not like my men to use liquor, so do not use it myself, and have none on the place. You will find good spring water at the well, yonder, and plenty of milk in the cellar. That's the best I can do for you Larned. Help yourself."

But neither milk nor water possessed any charms for Cal Larned. He threw himself full length upon the rough bench which ran along the shanty, and filled his mouth with fine cut tobacco, which he chewed very carefully for the space of five minutes. He then succeeded in drowning a grasshopper some 10 feet away from him by a dexterous discharge of black juice, and proceeded directly to the matter which just then accounted for his presence at the Delaney ranch.

is that which I dislike even more—Mr. Larned, and you will never find me guilty of any dishonorable conduct—Yes, I will ride over this afternoon."

Cal Larned had acted his part well, and knew it. He was fully aware that his point was practically carried, for having succeeded in influencing a man like Jack Delaney, he knew it would be an easy matter to mold Metta to his will. All "the boys" looked upon such a climax as a foregone conclusion, and even Spencer Knight shared in the general opinion.

"Next Monday," said Jack, after a pause, "I shall start for home to make the folks over there a visit before settling down for life. You will stay and take care of things for me while I am gone, won't you, Spencer? I shall not be away more than a couple of months, and during that time I should like to have the carpenters over from Cheyenne and run up a comfortable cottage over yonder by the poplars. Consult Metta as much as possible."

Delaney spoke so mechanically that Knight knew, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that something was wrong. But he made no inquiries.

"All right, Delaney; and when you return I shall ask for leave of absence for a similar purpose. Like yourself, I am an Englishman. There was a little unpleasantness in our family, which induced me to locate in the West some 12 years ago. The other day I saw an old friend of mine, who was passing through Cheyenne. We talked matters over, and I think past differences can now be adjusted. However, I will not pester you with my affairs to-night."

Somehow or other Jack Delaney was absent from his ranch eight months instead of two, so that the following summer had commenced by the time he returned to his Western quarters.

"We will leave business until tomorrow, Spence," said Jack, as he and his first lieutenant sauntered toward the creek. "Let us talk of other matters to-night."

As a matter of fact, they said nothing at all for almost half an hour. Then Delaney spoke: "How is Metta? I have heard nothing from her for two months. I told her not to write, as I was so uncertain about starting. How is she?"

"Metta is well, very well." Silence again, this time broken by Knight: "Delaney?" Both men paused in their walk, and Jack puffed violently at his pipe. "You picked me up a stranger and treated me like the white man that you are. You had faith in my manhood and you have trusted me implicitly. Have I justified your confidence?"

"You have, Spence—a thousand times over. You have my hand on it." Thanks, Delaney. Now trust me a little more, and believe me that I would not pry into your private affairs for the mere sake of being meddling or to wound you. May I go ahead?"

confessed to me that he had tormented Met and played a bluff game with you. You are not very angry, are you Delaney?"

Jack certainly did not look very angry, and he grasped his friend's hand and shook it with remarkable vigor.

The Hon. Spencer Knight is still known as Spencer Knight on the Delaney ranch, of which he is sole proprietor; but Jack Delaney, of Wyoming, is no more, his friends having rechristened that gentleman with his old name when he settled down to the pleasant life of an English country squire.—Chambers Journal.

Rev. Thomas Dixon, of New York, doesn't agree with many of his clerical brethren in his opinion of the Sunday newspapers. Rev. Mr. Dixon thinks the mightiest educational influence in the country to-day is the press, and that the Sunday press is three times as good and three times as strong as the week-day press. He thinks, moreover, that the press of to-day exercises a wonderful power for good, and he quotes Carlyle as having said that the clergy of England is not found in the pulpit to-day, but in the newspaper office.

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