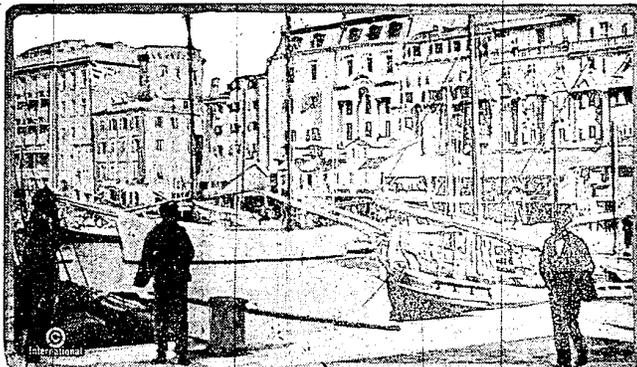


WHERE D'ANNUNZIO MIGHT CLASH WITH AMERICANS



View of the harbor of Spalato, Dalmatia, where D'Annunzio may run counter to American forces if he pursues his plan to "annex" the whole of the Dalmatian coast.

The Cow Puncher

By Robert J. C. Stead Author of "Kitchener and Other Poems" Illustrations by IRWIN MYERS

"MY NAME IS CONWARD."

Synopsis—David Eldon, son of a drunken, shiftless ranchman, almost a maverick of the foothills, is breaking bottles with his pistol from his running cayuse when the first automobile he has ever seen arrives and tips over, breaking the leg of Doctor Hardy. It is not until his beautiful daughter, Irene, is rescued by the injured man and brings a doctor from 40 miles away, Irene takes charge of the housekeeping. Dave and Irene take many rides together and Dave's father's enforced stay at the house is so long that they become well acquainted. They part with a kiss and an implied promise.

CHAPTER III.

Dave's opportunity came sooner than he had expected. After the departure of the Hardys things at the old ranch were, as both father and son had predicted, very different. They found themselves on a sort of good behavior—a behavior which, unhappily, excited in each other grave suspicions as to purpose. The tension steadily increased, and both looked forward to the moment when something would give way.

For several weeks the old man remained entirely sober, but the call of the appetite in him grew more and more insistent as the days went by and at last came the morning when Dave awoke to find him gone. He needed no second guess; the craving had become irresistible and his father had ridden to town for the means to satisfy it. The passing days did not bring his return, but this occasioned no anxiety to Dave. In the course of a carouse his father frequently remained away for weeks at a stretch.

He moped around the ranch buildings, set moodily by the little stream, casting pebbles in the water, or rode over the old trails on which he had so often been his companion. Then the old man's horse came home. Dave saw it coming up the trail, not running wildly but with nervous gallop and many sidelong wrappings of the head. As the boy watched he found a strange emptiness possess him; his body seemed a phantom on which his head hung over heavily. He spoke to the horse, which pulled up, snorting, before him; noted the wet neck and flanks, and at last the broken stirrup. Then, slowly and methodically, and still with that strange sensation of emptiness, he saddled his own horse and set out on the search.

After the last rites had been paid to the old rancher, Dave set about at once to wind up his affairs, and it was not until then that he discovered how deeply his father had been involved. The selling of the cattle and the various effects realized only enough to discharge the liabilities, and when this had been done Dave found himself with a considerable area of unmarketable land, a considerable bundle of paid bills and his horse, saddle and revolver. He rode his horse to town, carrying a few articles of wear with him. It was only after a stiff fight that he could bring himself to part with his one companion. The last miles into town were ridden very slowly, with the boy frequently leaning forward, strolling the horse's neck and ears.

He sold horse and saddle for sixty dollars and took a room at a cheap hotel until he should find work and still cheaper lodgings.

In the evening he walked through the streets of the little coast town. He snubbed him with its indifference. He became aware that he was very lonely. He realized that he had but one friend in the world; but one, and of her he knew not so much as her address. He began to wonder whether he really had a friend at all, whether the girl would not discard him when he was of no further use just as he had discarded his faithful old horse. Tears of loneliness and remorse gathered in his eyes, and a mist of the twilight blurred the street lamps now glimmering from the poles. He felt that he had treated the horse very shabbily indeed. He wanted old Slop-eye back again. He suddenly wanted him with a terrible longing; wanted him more than anything else in the world. For the moment he forgot the girl and all the girl's sighs centered about the beast which had been so long his companion and servant and friend.

"I'll buy him back in the morning; I will, sure as I—!" he said, in a sudden gust of emotion. "We got to stick together. I didn't play fair with him, but I'll buy him back. Perhaps I can get a job for him, too, pull in a light wagon or something."

The resolution to "play fair" with Slop-eye gradually rested; for his cheerfulness and he walked at play back to the hotel.

The men's sitting room now presented a much more animated picture than when he had registered, for it was the evening. It was filled with ranch cowboys and cattlemen of all degrees—breeders, buyers, traders, owners and wage earners, with a sprinkling of townspeople and others not directly engaged in some phase of the

cattle business. Soon he was in a group watching a gaudily dressed individual doing a sort of sleight of hand trick with three cards on a table.

"Smooth guy, that," said someone at his side. The remark was evidently intended for Dave, and he turned toward the dealer. He was a man somewhat smaller than Dave, two or three years older, well dressed in town clothes, with a rather puffy face and a gold-filled tooth from which a corner had been broken as though to accommodate the cigarette which hung there.

"Yes," said Dave. Then, as it was apparent the stranger was inclined to be friendly, he continued, "What's the idea?"

The stranger nudged him gently. "Come out of the bunch," he said in a little voice. When they had moved a little apart he went on, in a confidential tone: "He has a little trick with three cards that brings him in the easy coin. He's smooth as grease, but the thing's simple. Oh, it's awful simple! Now you watch him for a minute, and they watched through the opening in the crowd about the table. The player laid three cards—two red ones and a black. He passed them about rapidly over the table, occasionally turning his hand sideways so the onlookers could see the position of the cards. Then he suddenly threw them face down on the table, each card by itself.

"The trick is to locate the black card," Dave's companion explained. "It's easy enough if you keep your eye on the card, but the trouble with these rubees is they name the card and then start to get out their money, and while they're fumbling for it he makes a change so quick they never see it. There's just one way to beat him. Get up close, but don't say you're getting interested. Then when you're dead sure of a card crack your fist down on it. Give yourself right to it and get out your money with the other hand. When he sees you do that he'll try to bluff you, say you ain't in on it; but you just tell him that don't go, this is an open game, and he's got to come through and the crowd'll back you up. I stuck him once—a whole hundred first crack—and then he barred up. Watch him."

Dave watched. Saw the black card go down at one corner of the board; saw a bystander fumbling for a five-dollar bill; saw the bill laid on the card; saw it turned up—and it was red.

"That is smooth," he said. "I'd a'worn that was the black card."

"So it was—when you saw it," his companion explained. "But you were just like the sucker that played him."



"You Ain't Playin'!" Said the Dealer. "You Ain't in on This."

You couldn't help glancing at the jar getting out his money, and it was in that instant the trick was done. He's too quick for the eye, but that's how he does it."

Dave became interested. He saw two or three others lose lives and tens. It was plain his companion's tip was straight. There was just one way to beat this game, but it was simply enough when you know how. He sidled close to the table, mixing great pretense of indifference, but watching the cards closely with his keen black eyes. The dealer showed his hand, made a few quick passes, and the black card flew out to the right. This was Dave's chance. He pounced on it with his left hand, while his other plunged into his pocket.

"Sixty dollars on this one," he cried, and there was the triumphant note in his voice of the man who knows he has beaten the other at his own game.

"You ain't playin'," said the dealer. "You ain't in on this."

"That don't go," said Dave very quietly. "You're playin' a public game here, an' I chose to play with you this once. Sixty dollars on this card." He was fumbling his money on the table.

"You ain't playin'," repeated the dealer. "You're a put-in. You ain't in this game at all."

"Sure he's in," said the crowd. "That ain't right," whined the dealer, "but you got it on me. Turn 'er up."

The card was red. Dave looked at it stupidly. It was

a moment or two before he realized that his money was gone. Then, regardless of those about him, rushed through the crowd, flinging bystanders right and left, and plunged into the night.

He walked down a street until it lost itself on the prairie; then he followed a private trail far into the country. The air was cold and a few drops of rain were falling in it, but he was unconscious of the weather. He was in a rage through and through. Slop-eye was now a dream, a memory, a mere-gone. Everything was gone; only his revolver and a few cents remained. He gripped the revolver again. With that he was supreme. No man in all that town of men schooled in the ways of the West was more than his equal while his grip was in his palm. At the point of that muzzle he could demand his money back—and get it.

Then he laughed. Hollow and empty it sounded in the night air, but it was a laugh, and it saved his spirit. "Why, you fool," he chuckled, "you came to town for to learn somethin', didn't you? Well, you're learnin'. Sixty dollars a throw. Education comes high, don't it? But you shouldn't kick. He didn't coax you in, an' gave you every chance to back away. You batted in and got stung. Perhaps you've learned somethin' worth sixty dollars."

In his innocence of the ways of the game it never occurred to him that the friendly stranger who had showed him how to play it was a friend of the sharper, and probably at this moment they were dividing his sixty dollars at the price of old Slop-eye—between them.

Early next morning he was awake and astir. The recollection of his loss sent a sudden pang through his aching joints, but he tried to close his mind to it.

"No use worryin' over that," he said, juggling the few coins that now represented his wealth. "That's over and done. I traded sixty dollars for my first lesson. Maybe it was a bad trade, but anyway I ain't goin' to squeal." He whistled as he finished dressing, ate his breakfast cheerfully, and set out in search of employment.

Almost the first person he met was the stranger who had schooled him in the gambling game the night before. There was something attractive about his personality; something which invited friendship and even confidence, and get beneath these emotions Dave felt a sense of distrust, as though part of his nature rebelled against the acquaintance.

"That was the rottenest luck you had last night," the stranger was saying. "I never saw the beat of it. I was hopin' you'd stay and raise him next time; you might have got your money back that way."

"Oh, I don't mind the money!" said Dave cheerfully. "I don't want it back. In fact, I figure it was pretty well spent."

"Lots more where it came from, eh?" laughed the other. "You're from the ranches, I see, and I suppose the price of a steer or two doesn't worry you a hair's worth."

"From is right," Dave replied. "I'm from them, an' I ain't goin' back. As for money—well, I spent my last nickel for breakfast, so I've got to line up a job before noon."

The stranger extended his hand. "Shake," he said. "I like you. You're no squealer, anyway. My name is Conward. Yours?"

Dave told his name and shook hands. Conward offered his cigarette box, and the two smoked for a few moments in silence.

"What kind of a job do you want?" Conward asked at length.

"Any kind that pays a wage," said Dave.

"I know the fellow that runs an employment agency down here," Conward answered. "Let's go down. Perhaps I can put you in right."

Conward spoke to the manager of the employment agency and introduced Dave.

"Nothing very choice on tap today," said the employment man. "You can handle horses, I suppose."

"I guess I can," said Dave, "some." "I can place you delivering coal. Thirty dollars a month, and you board with the boss."

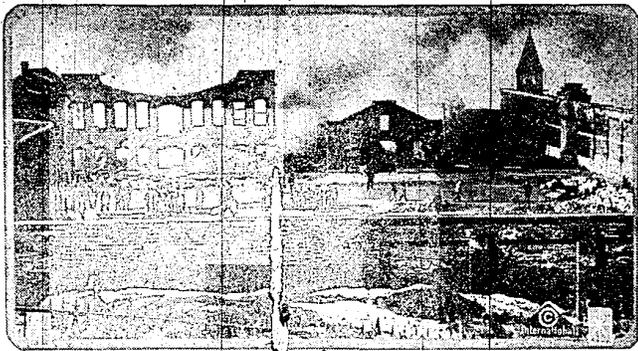
"I'll take it," said Dave.

The boss proved to be one Thomas Metford. He owned half a dozen teams and was engaged in the cartage business, specializing on coal. He was a man of big frame, big head, and vocabulary appropriate to the purposes to which he applied it. Among his other possessions were a wife, numerous children and a house and barn in which he boarded his beasts of burden, including in the latter his horse, his men and his wife, in the order of their valuation. The children were by-product, valueless until such time as they also would be able to work.

Dave learns lesson No. 2 from Conward.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

DISASTROUS FIRE IN SING SING PRISON



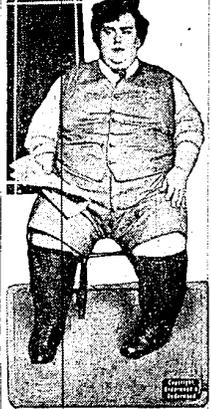
Scene in Sing Sing prison, New York, during the recent fire which destroyed a number of buildings. The loss was heavy. The fire was said to have been started by a lunatic.

SERVICES FOR MURDERED BELGIANS



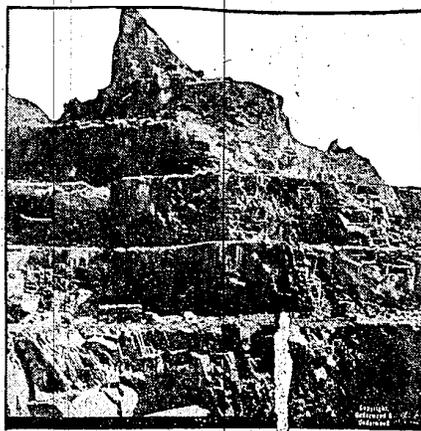
Traunee, Belgium, a manufacturing city on the Scheldt, where on August 22, 1914, 383 unarmed citizens were ruthlessly shot down by the Germans. Recently held memorial services for those murdered men in front of an altar erected at the scene of the crime.

FATTEST BOY IN THE WORLD



This is Leeny Mason of Leicester, England, a boy of sixteen who weighs 420 pounds, making him the world's fattest boy. Some of Leeny's other dimensions are as follows: Arm circumference, 23 inches; chest, 64 1/2 inches; thigh, 23 inches, and calf, 24 inches.

BLASTING AWAY A MOUNTAIN OF SLATE



Glidermaw mountain, near Snowden, Wales, is gradually disappearing as huge quantities of its slate are being blasted away daily. This slate is replacing tar, etc., for road covering.

Old Tree Made Prolific

An old back-yard apple tree in an Ohio city is yielding, in rotation, crops of apples of the extra-early, early, medium-early, fall and winter varieties, besides seven kinds of pears—a total of 36 varieties of fruit. The tree, more than 75 years old, was thought to be dead and in an advanced stage of decay, when the horticulturist responsible for its metamorphosis began his experiments. Skillful and studied grafting, of course, accomplished the seeming miracle. The renewed tree is now vigorous enough to produce some 40 to 50 bushels of fruit every year, all of the choicest kind. Its owner declares that yielding several varieties of fruit at different seasons makes a healthier type than the usual production of a heavy crop all in one season.—Popular Mechanics Magazine.

Simple Stunt to Cure Hiccoughs

This is the method of treating obstinate hiccough that Dr. D. Francisco Vanegas employs. He describes it in the Revista de Medicina y Cirurgia Practicas (Madrid). The patient lies down and draws up his knees until his thighs are pressed tightly to his abdomen, the lower part of the legs being pressed against the thighs by bending the knees. The position is held for several minutes. The effect of this is to press the abdominal organs up against the diaphragm and to sustain the pressure until the diaphragm ceases its spasmodic contractions.