

TWO-BITS AND A NICKEL.

By H. WALTER BURR.

"Oh, this is grand!" exclaimed George Casey, as he paused for a few moments to enjoy the embracing air and scenery. All about him the mountains lay in tangled heaps, farther away the foothills sloped gracefully downward, and still farther down in the valley and out over the mining camp he could see the old trail that stretched away to the westward. He was new to these scenes, having recently come to Wyoming from his home in Boston, and he was drinking in the atmosphere of the new life to the fullest.

"Y-a-s," drawled the girl as she overtook her companion; "but I'm a thinkin' as how we better start for home. It's a-gettin' purty late, an' we're some twelve miles from town. We can't much more than get here by day."

"Two-bits," said George, tauntingly, "I believe you're a coward. Here you were born and raised in this country, and you're scared about being out in the hills after dark. Now, I'm a tenderfoot, and yet I wouldn't be afraid to wander all over these hills from now until morning."

George Casey was indeed a "tenderfoot," at this was not the worst of his failings. Raised in a wealthy family, he had been given everything he wished, and had ruled his father's house to suit himself. That he was the most important portion of the family he did not know, and he was not content with his position, but he desired that others should share that opinion with regard to him. When he found that he was to spend his summer in Wyoming, looking after some mining interests, he determined that all other things he would show the people here that there was one tenderfoot that was not so tender after all. The few friends whom he had made on first arriving at Cold Springs, had soon tired of his lordly ways and the only one who cared to accompany him on his various journeys over the hills was Two-bits, who followed him around like a faithful dog. Nobody could tell where Two-bits got her name. She was a rough, uncouth girl of fourteen years, born in the wilds and true to her birthplace. The high cheek bones and swarthy features that of an Indian blood—a fact of which she was proud.

No two characters could possibly have been more opposite than those of George Casey and Two-bits. She had always been accustomed to associating with dandy, well-dressed, brown-faceted, bow-legged cowboys, who treated her like one of their own kind, and sometimes enjoyed teasing her or the amusement of the gang. An admirer had been making a tenderfoot of her, but she had never seen one before, and since no one else in that immediate vicinity seemed to share the feeling, he had only allowed her the monopoly of it.

"Well, what will I do?" he asked, "I can't stay here all night."

"Mebbe yer could jump across. I did— but I'm only a coward." She was becoming sarcastic, but not without purpose. The child was beginning to see that the young man would need every incentive she could offer to get him to put forth his best efforts. She had no doubt of her own ability to clear all the chasms, but she was quite sure that her companion was not accustomed to such tricks. Now, he stood like a scared child on the opposite side of the ditch. If the situation had not been so serious, it would have been comical.

"Well, yer comin'?" she asked, impatiently.

He stepped back for a run, but when he came to the edge again he stopped short and looked ruefully at the red glow beneath him. He held out his hand and drew it back suddenly, as he felt the intense heat. Then what little courage he possessed forsook him, and he began to whimper.

"I just can't make it, Two-bits. Whatever shall I do?"

"W-a-l-l," drawled the matter-of-fact girl, "I s'pose I could go ahead an' git some of the fellers from town ter come out an' help yer across. They'll make no end of fun of yer, though."

"Blast the fun!" he cried. "Hurry up and get me out of this most any way."

"All right. Stay where you are, and I'll be back after a while," and she bounded away like a deer, leaving George Casey sitting there in the night alone.

Minutes dragged like hours, and the darkness seemed to grow thicker every moment, except when it was penetrated by that uncanny glow from down below. Then, as he

Then he remembered that she had not been in the best humor, he decided that he would probably enjoy the sport as much as any of the others.

"Hello!" called a voice, "Where are yer, Mr. Casey?" It was the voice of Two-bits, and it was sweet music in his ear.

"Right this way, Two-bits," he answered. "Have you brought help?"

She came to the other side of the gulf, and holding a stout plank out toward him she drawled:

"Y-a-s. That's er help. Did yer think I was a-goin' ter give yer away ter the gang? Yer would never a-heard the last of it, I guess. We has music in his ear, with this here." Then, making sure the plank was resting securely on either side, she ordered, "Now, git s'pry, and don't waste no time. Hop across, I tell yer!"

As they came to the last crevice where the board was necessary, George paused.

"W-a-l-l," drawled Two-bits, as she waited, with arms akimbo, "this is the last one. Yer got to give up now? If yer do, I'll leave yer for good, deary."

"Two-bits," said George, and there was considerable pathos in his voice; "Two-bits," he repeated, "will you forgive me for calling you a coward? You are the bravest girl I ever knew, and you've been real kind to me to-night. Will you forgive me?"

"Aw, come along with yer," said the girl, greatly embarrassed. "It's my 'pinion yer fellers in the east jist talk ter hear yer heads roar half the time, and don't mean what yer say."

They neared the town, walking side by side. The board had been thrown away, and from that appearance no one would have known that anything out of the ordinary had occurred. As he left her at her own door he pressed her hand tightly, and said:

"You are a brave girl—a regular little heroine."

Next day she found a pony tied to the post in front of her mother's house, and on the beautiful saddle which it bore, was pinned a note which read:

"This is Nickel, a present to Two-bits, the brave little girl who was good to a coward."

TO ENTERTAIN LONGWORTHS.

Ambassador Reid and Wife Will Present Young Couple to England's Court.

The Longworths will be guests, while in London, of the American ambassador and his charming wife.

Refreshed by her long vacation, Mrs. Reid has returned to the Court of St. James with her hands full of preparations for King Edward's first drawing



MRS. WHITLAW REID.

room of the season, to be held May 25, at which she will present many American women, some of whom will be her guests.

Naturally, the presentation most important to the American colony in London this season will be that of Mrs. Nicholas Longworth, President Roosevelt's daughter. During their stay in London, Mr. and Mrs. Longworth will be the guests of the Reids at Dorchester House, where the suite occupied by the ambassador and his wife will be at the disposal of the Longworths. To add to the attractiveness of these rooms, some choice boudoir furniture has recently arrived from France to lend a fresher bridal beauty to them.

Exiled Queen Ranavaloa.

Among the members of the ruling families of the world, most of whom have known many sorrows, there are few figures so pathetic as that of Ranavaloa, the ex-Queen of Madagascar, who is now on a visit to Paris, and who since 1897 has been a queen without a throne, living in Algiers on the charity somewhat grudgingly vouchsafed her by the French Government.

Ranavaloa is now forty-four, and, although her complexion inclines to a dusky shade, she is by no means unattractive. She possesses a distinctly good figure, dresses with much taste, and wears her clothes with distinction. She ruled over Madagascar for fourteen years, and, like the two queens who preceded her, became the wife of the Prime Minister. When she began her reign the country was at war with France.

Chinchillas Becoming Scarce.

The chinchilla, the little rat-like animal which produces the popular fur, is in danger of extinction.

The chinchillas were formerly found in great numbers in the high ranges of the Andes, in Bolivia and Chili, but owing to the demand for their skins they have been ruthlessly hunted, in season and out of season, and the Chilean Government finds it almost impossible to enforce a law which has been passed for their protection.

The exports from Coquimbo, the principal port for this trade, amounted last year to twelve thousand dozen skins, and the prices paid were almost double those of the previous year.

Joke on Time.

A Pennsylvanian named Weeks, with a chronic habit of purloining watches, has been given the Time of his life by the judge, who sent him up for ten years.—New York Evening Mail. What is the difference? He is no friend of Hours.—Washington Post. Wait a Minute. We Second the motion.—Chicago Tribune.

Year! Year! What's all this about anyway?—Wichita Eagle.

This squib has been going the rounds so long, that it appears to us a little Decade.

Most Blessed of Emotions.

Oh, toiling hands of mortals! Soon, soon it seems to you, you must come forth on some conspicuous hilltop, and but a little way further, against the setting sun, descry the spires of El Dorado. Little do you know your own blessedness, for to travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive, and the true success is to labor.—Robert Louis Stevenson.

The Newest Wearing Apparel.

The Princess gown occupies the centre of fashion's stage for spring and summer, and will doubtless "go to mill and to meeting" during the coming months. It appears in all sorts of gowns from the exquisite creations for evening to the walking skirt and its accompanying bolero, but there are those who cannot and will not wear this style of garment, and for these there are very pretty skirts, cut circular, and flaring widely about the lower edge. These skirts are constructed from all sorts of materials, even to the thinnest of summer fabrics, and if properly made they will not necessarily give much trouble by sagging. However, for the skirt of washing stuff, the gored models are much more satisfactory and patterns for these can be obtained with the modish flare about the bottom.

The vogue of the circular skirt has led to the fashion for flat skirt trimmings. These sometimes take the form of stitched bands of the material or silk, while braids of one or several kinds are often interlaced in design about the bottom. Another mode of skirt trimming much used is consecutive rows of shaped flounces, one over-lapping the other and extending at each side of the front panel. One might almost say that the front panel in unbroken length from waistband to hem prevails in the majority of gowns.

When bands of the same fabric as the skirt are put on as trimming they are usually piped with a contrasting color; the tunic and flounce being often suggested by the manner in which these are applied.

As for coats, the bolero is in high feather this year, and figures in all varieties of wear from the ornamental to the useful. As an ornament it appears in the negligee of the morning as well as upon the evening toilette. The little lace and embroidered boleros are to be much worn with soft silk and summer gowns and will prove very fetching adjuncts to the toilette.

Every woman and girl will do well to provide herself with several lingerie waists for nice wear. These little blouses are very important in the wardrobe, no matter how meagre or sumptuous it be. They can be had in a great variety of styles and in all of the sheer summer fabrics. Those embroidered, or inset with lace, are very dainty and considered quite suitable for any occasion where one needs to look well. On cool days they can be worn over a slip of pink, blue or lavender and be very pretty and becoming. Many of these waists are made with elbow sleeves but they can be had with the long sleeve—and some of the newest imported blouses are made with sleeves which end in a long point over the hand.

In materials, no one will go astray in purchasing voile and linen for her spring and summer gowns. There are linens of all kinds from the sheer handkerchief qualities to the fine unbleached linens. Then there are soft cashmeres, raw silks, mohairs and eolennes as well as the immortal serge. White is promised much vogue for summer, and mixed with black it is very smart for the new suits. These suitings are mostly in small checks, or stripes.

Was a "Anonymous" Letter.

A certain Congressman from Virginia has long retained in his employ a colored man by the name of Ezekiel. One morning the master started for the Capitol, leaving behind him a letter he had forgotten. Sometime in the afternoon he remembered the communication, and, as it was of some importance, he hastened back home only to find that the letter was nowhere to be seen in his library. He had a distinct recollection that it had been left on the table. He summoned Ezekiel and asked if he had seen it.

"Yassah, yo' lef' it on yo' table."

"Then where is it now?"

"I mailed it, sah."

"You mailed it! Why, Zeke, I had not put the name and address on the envelope!"

"Jes' so, sah! I thought it was one of dem nymous communicashuns."

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SHE CAME TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE GULF.

doggedly as before, and followed him back toward the camp.

The sun had gone down, and soon the long twilight was drawing to a close. Now and then the howl of a coyote was heard far out over the hills, and in another direction the answering note of its mate. The echo made the whole region take up the sound, until it seemed that the two lone travelers must be in the midst of an entire pack of the creatures.

"Yer may as well let me take the lead," said Two-bits, and not waiting for his consent, she pushed her way ahead of him. He had called her a coward, and she would show him that she was not one.

He willingly took his place behind the guide, for he felt safer when he knew that she was taking the responsibility of leading. He secretly wished that he had taken her advice and started home sooner, but he would not admit it to her.

"Yer'll hef ter hustle faster'n us," she remarked, "er I'll be all up with us when



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