THE LONE STAR RANGER

A Thrilling Texas Border Story

By ZANE GREY

SYNOPSIS.

—10—

The time of the story, about 1875. The place, the Texas cow country. The chief character, Buckley Duane, a young man who has inherited a lust to kill, which he suppresses. In self-defense he shoots dead a drunken bully and is forced to flee to the wild country where he joins Blandy's outlaw band. Euchre, an amiable rascal, tells him about Jennie, a young girl who had been abducted and sold to Bland for a bad fate. They determine to rescue the girl and restore her to civilization. Euchre has just reconnoitered, and is reporting the outlook to Buck. Euchre is killed. Buck kills Bland and is dangerously wounded by Mrs. Bland, but escapes with Jennie. Jennie is delirious. Buck never sees her again, but kills her abductor. Duane barely escapes death at the hands of lynchers for a crime he never committed. He goes to see Captain MacNelly of the Rangers, who hands him a pardon on condition that he join the Rangers and assist in breaking up the outlaws. Duane accepts and goes to the outlaw headquarters on a secret mission. He meets Colonel Longstreth, mayor of Fairdale, and Miss Ray Longstreth and her cousin, Ruth. There is something suspicious about Longstreth.

CHAPTER XVII—Continued.

Miss Longstreth rose white as her dress. The young women present stared in astonishment, if they were not equally perturbed. There were cowboys present who suddenly grew intend still. By these things Duane gathered that his appearance must be disconcerting. He was panting. He wore no hat or coat. His big gunsheath showed plainly at his hip.

Sight of Miss Longstreth had an unaccountable effect upon Duane. He was plunged into confusion. For the moment he saw no one but her.

"Miss Longstreth — I came — to search—your house," panted Duane.

"Search my house!" exclaimed Miss Longstreth; and red succeeded the white in her cheeks. She appeared astonished and angry. "What for? Why, how dare you! This is unwarrantable!"

"A man—Bo Snecker—assaulted and robbed Jim Laramie," replied Duane, hurriedly. "I chased Snecker here—saw him run into this house."

"Here? Oh, sir, you must be mistaken. We have seen no one. In the absence of my father I'm mistress here. I'll not permit you to search."

Lawson appeared to come out of his astonishment. He stepped forward.

"Ray, don't be bothered now," he said, to his cousin. "This fellow's making a bluff. I'll settle him. See here, mister, you clear out!"

"I want Snecker. He's here, and I'm going to get him," replied Duane, quietly.

"Bah! That's all a bluff," sneered Lawson. "I'm on to your game. You just wanted an excuse to break in here—to see my cousin again. When you saw the company you invented that excuse. Now, be off, or it 'll be the worse for you."

Duane felt his face burn with a tide of hot blood. Almost he felt that he was guilty of such motive. Had he not been unable to put this Ray Longstreth out of his mind? There seemed to be scorn in her eyes now. And somehow that checked his embarrassment.

"Miss Longstreth, will you let me search the house?" he asked.

"No."

"Then—I regret to say—I'll do so, without your permission."

"You'll not dare!" she flashed. She stood erect, her bosom swelling.

"Pardon me—yes, I will."

"Who are you?" she demanded, suddenly.

"I'm a Texas Ranger," replied Duane.

"A Texas Ranger!" she echoed.

Floyd Lawson's dark face turned pale.

"Miss Longstreth, I don't need warrants to search houses," said Duane. "I'm sorry to annoy you. I'd prefer to have your permission. A ruffian has taken refuge here—in your father's house. He's hidden somewhere. May I look for him?"

"If you are indeed a ranger."

Duane produced his papers. Miss Longstreth haughtily refused to look at them.

"Miss Longstreth, I've come to make Fairdale a safer, cleaner, better place for women and children. I don't wonder at your resentment. But to doubt me—insult me. Some day you may be sorry."

Floyd Lawson made a violent motion with his hands.

"All bluff! Cousin, go on with your party. I'll take a couple of cowboys and go with this—this Texas Ranger."

"Thanks," said Duane coolly, to the eyed Lawson. "Perhaps you'll be able to find Snecker quicker than I could."

"What do you mean?" demanded Lawson, and now he grew livid. Evidently he was a man of quick passions.

"Don't quarrel," said Miss Longstreth. "Floyd you go with him. Please hurry. I'll be nervous till—the man's found or you're sure there's not one."

They started with several cowboys to search the house. It struck Duane more than forcibly that Lawson tried to keep in the lead. It was Duane who peered into a dark corner and who, with a gun leveled, said "Come out!"

He came forth into the flare—a tall, slim, dark-faced youth, wearing sombrero, blouse and trousers. Duane collared him before any of the others could move and held the gun close enough to make him shrink. He peered into Duane's face, then into that of the cowboy next to him, then into Lawson's and if ever in Duane's life he beheld relief it was then. That was all Duane needed to know, but he meant to find out more if he could.

"Who 're you?" asked Duane, quietly.

"Bo Snecker," he said.

"Ranger, what 'll you do with him?" Lawson queried, as if uncertain, now the capture was made.

"I'll see to that," replied Duane, and he pushed Snecker in front of him out into the court.

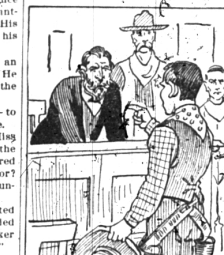
Duane had suddenly conceived the idea of taking Snecker before Mayor Longstreth as the court.

When Duane arrived at the hall where court was held there were other men there, a dozen or more, and all seemed excited; evidently, news of Duane had preceded him. Longstreth sat at a table on a platform. Near him sat a thick-set grizzled man, with deep eyes, and this was Hanford Owens, county judge. To the right stood a tall, angular, yellow-faced fellow with a drooping sandy mustache. Conspicuous on his vest was a huge silver shield. This was Gorsech, one of Longstreth's sheriffs. There were four other men whom Duane knew by sight, several faces were familiar, and half a dozen strangers, all dusty horsemen.

Longstreth pounded hard on the table to be heard. Mayor or not, he was unable at once to quell the excitement. Gradually, however, it subsided, and from the last few utterances before quiet was restored Duane gathered that he had intruded upon some kind of a meeting in the hall.

"What 'd you break in here for," demanded Longstreth.

"Isn't this the court? Aren't you the mayor of Fairdale?" interrogated Duane. His voice was clear and loud, almost piercing.



"That's a Lie, Longstreth."

"Yes," replied Longstreth. Like flint he seemed, yet Duane felt his intense interest.

"I've arrested a criminal," said Duane.

"Arrested a criminal!" ejaculated Longstreth. "You! Who are you?"

"I'm a ranger," replied Duane.

A significant silence ensued.

"I charge Snecker with assault on Laramie and attempted robbery—if not murder. He's had a shady past here, as this court will know if it keeps a record."

"What's this I hear about you, Bo? Get up and speak for yourself," said Longstreth, gruffly.

Snecker got up, not without a furtive glance at Duane, and he had shuffled forward a few steps toward the mayor. He had an evil front, but not the boldness even of a rustler.

"It ain't so, Longstreth," he began, loudly. "I went in Laramie's place fer grub. Some fellers I never seen before come in from the hall an' hit Laramie an' wrastled him on the floor. I went out. Then this big ranger chased me an' fetched me here. I didn't do nothin'. This ranger's hankerin' to arrest somebody. That's my hunch, Longstreth."

Longstreth said something in an undertone to Judge Owens, and that worthy nodded his great bushy head.

"Bo, you're discharged," said Longstreth, bluntly. "Now the rest of you clear out of here."

He absolutely ignored the ranger. That was his rebuff to Duane—his slap in the face to an interfering ranger service. If Longstreth was crooked he certainly had magnificent nerve. Duane almost decided he was above suspicion. But his nonchalance, his air of finality, his authoritative assurance—these to Duane's keen and practised eyes were in significant contrast to a certain tenseness of line about the mouth and a slow paling of his olive skin.

Then the prisoner, Snecker, with a cough that broke the spell of silence, shuffled a couple of steps toward the door.

"Hold on!" called Duane. The call halted Snecker, as if it had been a bullet.

"Longstreth, I saw Snecker attack Laramie," said Duane, his voice still ringing. "What has the court to say to that?"

"The court has this to say. West of the Pecos we'll not aid any ranger service. We don't want you out here, Fairdale doesn't need you."

"That's a lie, Longstreth," retorted Duane. "I've letters from Fairdale citizens all begging for ranger service."

Longstreth turned white. The veins corded at his temples. He appeared about to burst into rage. He was at a loss for quick reply.

Floyd Lawson rushed in and up to the table. The blood showed black and thick in his face; his utterance was incoherent, his uncontrollable outbreak of temper seemed out of all proportion to any cause he should reasonably have had for anger. Longstreth showed him back with a curse and a warning glare.

"Where's your warrant to arrest Snecker?" shouted Longstreth.

"I don't need warrants to make arrests. Longstreth, you're ignorant of the power of Texas Rangers."

"You'll come none of your damned ranger stunts out here. I'll block you."

That passionate reply of Longstreth's was the signal Duane had been waiting for. He had helped on the crisis. He wanted to force Longstreth's hand and show the town his stand.

Duane backed clear of everybody.

"Men! I call on you all!" cried Duane piercingly. "I call on you to witness the arrest of a criminal prevented by Longstreth, mayor of Fairdale. It will be recorded in the report to the Adjutant-General at Austin. Longstreth, you'll never prevent another arrest."

Longstreth sat white with working jaw.

"Longstreth," said Duane, in a voice that carried far and held those who heard. "Any honest citizen of Fairdale can now see what's plain. In the last few years you've been mayor you've never arrested one rustler. Strange, when Fairdale's a nest for rustlers! You've never sent a prisoner to Del Rio, let alone to Austin. You have no jail. There have been nine murders during your office—innumerable street fights and hold-ups. Not one arrest. There have been lawsuits in your court—suits over water-rights, cattle deals, property lines. Strange how in these lawsuits you or Lawson or other men close to you were always involved! Strange how it seems the law was stretched to favor your interest!"

Duane paused in his cold, ringing speech. In the silence, both outside and inside the hall, could be heard the deep breathing of agitated men. Longstreth was indeed a study. Yet did he betray anything but rage at this interloper.

"Longstreth, here's plain talk for you and Fairdale," went on Duane. "I don't advise you and your court of dishonesty. I say plainly: Law here has been a farce. The motive behind all this laxity isn't plain to me—yet. But I call your hand!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

Duane left the hall, elbowed his way through the crowd, and went down the street. He was certain that on the faces of some men he had seen ill-concealed wonder and satisfaction. He had struck some kind of a hot trail, and he meant to see where it led. He was by no means unlike to that Cheseldine might be at the other end. Duane controlled a mounting eagerness. But ever and anon it was shot through with a remembrance of Ray Longstreth. He suspected her father of being not what he pretended. He was troubled.

Upon returning to the inn he found Laramie there, apparently none the worse for his injury.

"How are you, Laramie?" he asked. "That was a good crack Snecker gave you."

"I ain't accusin' Bo," remonstrated Laramie, with eyes that made Duane thoughtful.

"I don't accuse him. I caught him—took him to Longstreth's court. But they let him go."

Laramie appeared to be agitated by this intimation of friendship.

"See here, Laramie," went on Duane, "in some parts of Texas it's policy to be close-mouthed. Policy and health-preserving! Between ourselves, I want you to know I lean on your side of the fence."

Laramie gave a quick start. Presently Duane turned and frankly met his gaze. He had startled Laramie out of his habitual sly taciturnity; but even as he looked the light that might have been amaze and joy faded out of his face, leaving it the same old mask. Still Duane had seen enough. Like a bloodhound he had a scent.

"Talking about work, Laramie, who'd you say Snecker worked for?"

"When he works at all, which sure ain't often, he rides for Longstreth."

"Humph! Seems to me that Longstreth's the whole circus round Fairdale. I was surprised to hear some one say Longstreth owned the Hope So joint."

"He owns considerable property hereabouts," replied Laramie, constrainedly.

"Humph again! Laramie, like every other fellow I met in this town, you're afraid to open your trap about Longstreth. Get me straight, Laramie. For cause I'd throw a gun on him just as quick as on any rustler in Pecos."

"Talk's cheap," replied Laramie, gaining light of his bluster, but the red was deeper in his face.

"Sure. I know that," Duane said. "And usually I don't talk. Then it's not well known that Longstreth owns the Hope So?"

"Reckon it's known in Pecos, all right. But Longstreth's name isn't connected with the Hope So. Blandy runs the place."

"That Blandy. His faro game's crooked, or I'm a locoed bronch. That Hope So place ought to be run by a good fellow like you, Laramie."

"Thanks," replied he; and Duane imagined his voice a little husky. "Didn't you hear I used to—run it? I built the place, owned it—for eleven years."

"Well, I'll be doggoned." It was indeed Duane's turn to be surprised, and with the surprise came a glimmering. "I'm sorry you're not there now. Did you sell out?"

"No. Just lost the place."

Laramie was bursting for relief now—to talk, to tell. Sympathy had made him soft. "It was two years ago—two years last March," he went on. "I was in a big cattle deal with Longstreth. We got the stock—as my share, eighteen hundred head, was rustled off. I owed Longstreth. He pressed me. It came to a lawsuit—an' I—was ruined."

It hurt Duane to look at Laramie. His was white, and tears rolled down his cheeks. Duane saw the bitterness, the defeat, the agony of the man. But the reason he did not openly accuse Longstreth, the secret of his reticence and fear—these Duane thought best to try to learn at some later time.

"Hard luck! It certainly was tough," Duane said. "But you're a good loser. And the wheel turns! Now, Laramie, here's what. I need your advice. I've got a little money. But before I lose it I want to invest some. Buy some stock, or buy an interest in some rancher's herd. Sure you must know a couple of men above suspicion."

"Thank God I do," he replied, feelingly. "Frank Morton an' Si Zimmer, my friends an' neighbors all my prosperous days, an' friends still. You can gamble on Frank an' Si. But if you want advice from me—don't invest money in stock now."

"Why?"

"Because any new feller buyin' stock these days will be rustled quicker 'n he can say Jack Robinson. The old ranchers are wise an' sore. They'd fight 'if they—"

"What?" Duane put in as he pulsed. "What 'd make them fight?"

"A leader!"

"Howdy thar, Jim" boomed a big voice.

A man of great bulk, with a ruddy, merry face, entered the room.

"Hello, Morton," replied Laramie.

"I'd introduce you to my guest here, but I don't know his name."

"Haw! Haw! That's all right. Few men out yar go by their right names."

"Say, Morton," put in Duane, "Laramie gave me a hunch you'd be a good man to tie to. Now, I've a little money and before I lose it I'd like to invest it in stock."

Morton smiled broadly.

"I'm not the sequence," Duane said, bluntly, "if you fellows never size up your neighbors any better than you have sized me—well, you won't get any richer."

It was enjoyment for Duane to make his remarks to these men pregnant with meaning. Morton showed his pleasure, his interest, but not faith held aloof.

"Wal, stranger, to come out flat-footed, you'd be foolish to buy cattle now. Better go back across the Pecos where the rustlers ain't so strong."

"All I hear is rustlers, Morton," replied Duane, with impatience. "You see, I haven't ever lived long in a rustler-run country. Who heads the gang, anyway?"

Morton looked at Duane with a curiously amused smile, then snapped his big jaw as if to shut in impulsive words.

"Look here, Morton. It stands to reason, no matter how strong these rustlers are, how hidden their work, however involved with supposedly honest men—they can't last. There are a lot of men around Fairdale who are afraid of their shadows—afraid to be out after dark—afraid to open their mouths. But you're not one. What you need out here is some new blood. Savvy what I mean?"

"Wal, I reckon I do," he replied, looking as if a storm had blown over him. "Stranger, I'll look you up the next time I come to town."

Then he went out.

Laramie had eyes like flint striking fire. He breathed a deep breath and looked around the room before his gaze fixed again on Duane.

"Wal," he replied, speaking low. "You've picked the right men. Now, who in the hell are you?"

Reaching into the inside pocket of his buckskin vest, Duane turned the lining out. A star-shaped bright silver object flashed as he shoved it, pocket and all, under Jim's hard eyes.

"Ranger!" he whispered, cracking the table with his fist. "You sure rung true to me."

"Laramie, do you know who's boss of this secret gang of rustlers hereabouts?" asked Duane, bluntly. It was characteristic of him to come sharp to the point. His voice—something deep, easy, cool about him—seemed to steady Laramie.

"No," replied Laramie.

"Does anybody know? went on Duane.

"Wal, I reckon there's not one honest native who knows."

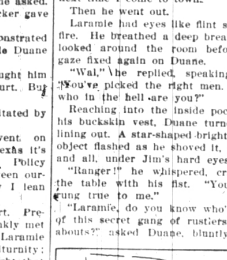
"But you have suspicions?"

"We have."

"Have you any idea whether Cheseldine and his gang are associated with this gang here?"

"Lord knows. I've always suspected them bein' the same gang. Neide of us ever seen Cheseldine—an' that's strange when Knell, Poggin, Panhandle Smith, Blossom Kane, and Fletcher, they all ride here often. No, Poggin doesn't come here often. But the others do. For thet matter, they're around all over west of the Pecos."

"Now I'm puzzled over this," said Duane. "Why do men—apparently honest men—seem to be so close-mouthed here? Is that a fact, or only my impression?"



Lawson Staggered Backward.

"It's sure a fact," replied Laramie, darkly. "Men have lost cattle an' property in Fairdale—lost them honestly or otherwise, as hasn't been proved. An' in some cases when they talked—hinted a little—they was found dead. Apparently held up an' robbed. But dead men don't talk! That's why we're close-mouthed."

The ranger was about to speak again when the clatter of hoofs interrupted him. Horses halted out in front, and one rider got down. Floyd Lawson entered. He called for tobacco.

If his visit surprised Laramie he did not show any evidence. But Lawson showed rage as he saw the ranger, and then a dark glint flitted from the eyes that shifted from Duane to Laramie and back again. A pause leaned easily against the counter.

"Say, that was a bad break of yours," Lawson said. "If you come fooling around the ranch again there'll be hell."

It seemed strange that a man who had lived west of the Pecos for ten years could not see in Duane something which forbade that kind of talk. It certainly was not nerve Lawson showed; a lack of courage were seldom intolerant. With the matchless nerve that characterized the great gunmen of the day there was a cool, unobtrusive manner, a speech brief, almost gentle, certainly courteous. Lawson was a hot-headed Louisianian of French extraction; a man, evidently, who had never been crossed in any thing, and who was strong, brutal, passionate, which qualities in the face of a situation like this made him simply a fool.

"You're right. But not the kind you think," Duane retorted, his voice sharp and cold.

Ray Longstreth wouldn't stoop to know a dirty blood-tracker like your kind," Lawson hotly. He did not seem to have a deliberate intention to rouse Duane; the man was simply rancorous, jealous. "I'll call you right. You cheap bluffer! You four-flush! You damned interfering, conceited ranger!"

"Lawson, I'll not take offense, because you seem to be championing your beautiful cousin," replied Duane, in slow speech. "But let me return your compliment. You're a fine Southerner! Why, you're only a four-flush—a cheap bull-headed rustler!"

Duane hissed the last word. Then for him there was the truth in Lawson's scorching passion-blackened face. Lawson jerked, moved, meant to draw. But how slow! Duane lunged forward. His long arm swept up. And Lawson staggered backward, knocking table and chairs, to fall hard, in a half-sitting posture against the wall.

"Don't draw!" warned Duane.

"Lawson, git away from your gun!" yelled Laramie.

But Lawson was crazed with fury. He tugged at his hip, his face corded with purple welts, malignant, murderous. Duane kicked the gun out of his hand. Lawson got up, raging, and rushed out.

Laramie lifted his shaking hands.

"What 'd you wing him for?" he wailed. "He was drawin' on you. Kickin' men like him won't do out here."

"That bull-headed fool will roar and butt himself with all his gang right into our hands. He's just the man I've counted to meet."

"If Lawson's the man you think he is he'll begin thet secret underground business. Why, Lawson won't sleep of nights now. He an' Longstreth have always been after me."

"Laramie, what are your eyes for?" demanded Duane. "Watch out. And now, there. See your friend Morton. Tell him this game grows hot. Together you approach four or five men you know well and can absolutely trust. I may need your help."

Then Duane went from place to place, corner to corner, bar to bar, watching, listening, recording. The excitement had preceded him, and speculation was rife. He thought best to keep out of it. After dark he stole up to Longstreth's ranch. The evening was warm; the doors were open; and in the twilight the only lamps that had been lit were in Longstreth's big sitting-room, at the far end of the house. When a buckboard drove up and Longstreth and Lawson alighted, Duane was well hidden in the bushes, so well screened that he could get but a fleeting glimpse of Longstreth as he went in. For all Duane could see, he appeared to be a calm and quiet man, intense beneath the surface, with an air of dignity and under insult. Duane's chance to observe Lawson was lost. They went into the house without speaking and closed the door.

At the other end of the porch, close under a window, was an offset between step and wall, and there in the shadow Duane hid. So Duane waited here in the darkness with patience born of many hours of hiding.

Presently a lamp was lit; and Duane heard the swish of skirts.

"Something's happened surely, Ruth," he heard Miss Longstreth say, anxiously. "Papa just met me in the hall and didn't speak. He seemed pale, worried."

"Cousin Floyd looked like a thunder-cloud," said Ruth. "For once he didn't try to kiss me. Something's happened."

"Oh, dear! Ruth, what can we do? These are wild men. Floyd makes life miserable for me. And he teases you unmercifully."

"I don't call it teasing. Floyd wants to spoon," declared Ruth, emphatically. "He'd run after any woman."

"A fine compliment for me, Cousin Ruth," laughed Ray.

"I don't care," replied Ruth, stubbornly. "It's so. He's mushy. And when he's been drinking and tries to kiss me—I hate him!"

There were steps on the hall floor. "Hello, girls!" sounded out Lawson's voice, minus its usual gayety.

"Floyd, what's the matter?" asked Ray, presently. "I never saw papa as he is to-night, nor you so—so worried. Tell me, what has happened?"

"We had to submit to a damnable outrage," replied Lawson, passionately, as if the sound of his voice augmented his feeling. "Listen, girls; I'll tell you about it." He coughed, cleared his throat in a way that betrayed he had been drinking.

Duane sank deeper into the shadow of his covert, and, stiffening his muscles for a protracted spell of rigidity, prepared to listen with all acuteness and intensity. Just one word from this Lawson, inadvertently uttered in a moment of passion, might be the word Duane needed for his clue.

"It happened at the town hall," began Lawson, rapidly. "Your father and Judge Owens and I were there in consultation with three ranchers from out of town. Then that damned

"The Unspeakable Ruffian!"

ranger stalked in dragging Snecker, the fellow who hid there in the house. He had arrested Snecker for alleged assault on a restaurant-keeper named Laramie. Snecker being obviously innocent, he was discharged. Then this ranker began shouting insults. Law was a farce in Fairdale. The court was a farce. There was no law. Your father was afraid of the rustlers, highwaymen, murderers. He was afraid of—he just let them alone. He used his office to cheat ranchers and cattlemen in lawsuits. All this the ranger yelled for everyone to hear. A damnable outrage. Your father, Ray, insulted in his own court by a rowdy ranger!"

"Oh!" cried Ray Longstreth, in mingled distress and anger.

"The ranger service wants to rule western Texas," went on Lawson. "These rangers are all a low set. This is one of the worst of the lot. He's to be feared. He would kill, if your father had made the least move. He would have shot him. He's a cold-hearted devil—the gunman. My God, any instant I expected to see your father fall dead at my feet!"

"Oh, how terrible!" cried Ray Longstreth, passionately.

"What do you care for the insinuations of such a man?" said Ray Longstreth, her voice now deep and rich with feeling. "Floyd, for a moment's thought no one will be influenced by them. Do not worry, Floyd. Tell papa not to worry. Surely after all these years he can't be injured in reputation by—by an adventurer."

"Yes, he can be injured," replied Floyd, quickly. "The frontier is a queer place. There are many bitter hen-fence men who have failed at ranching. And your father has been wonderfully successful. The ranger has dropped poison, and it 'll spread."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

MAY MAKE "KAPOK" OF VALUE

Fiber That Is Abundant in Haiti Has Been Mentioned as a Substitute for Wool.

There are two varieties of kapok fibers to be found in Haiti, both products of trees of the Eriodendron family and both of good quality. The local names for the fiber vary according to locality; "mahrodem," "cotton mapou" and "cotton noir" are those most commonly used.

Kapok is fairly abundant all over Haiti, but no commercial use has been made of it. The natives sometimes stuff pillows with it, and occasionally mattresses, but this is about the extent of its utilization. Indeed, all over the West Indies it is little used and has no fixed market value, except in Cuba, where it is a well-defined article of local trade, and where considerable quantities are brought from the Dominican Republic.

There has been noted of late some interest in the subject in the United States, and it is being advertised under fancy trade names as a new discovery for life preservers, cushions on steamers, pillows and the like. As filling for mattresses it is an ideal substance, exceedingly light, absolutely sanitary and possessing such resilience that even after long use it does not lump or pack. As a quilting material for comforters and other bed coverings it equals wool in warmth and excels cotton in softness and lightness. For dressing gowns, smoking jackets and other padded garments it has much to recommend it. For upholstery it is superior to most materials now in use.

Kapok is used in England to some extent in the manufacture of hats, and certain of the longer varieties are mixed with cotton to impart a silky luster to fabrics. The regular kapok, however, has too short a fiber to spin. It is extremely inflammable, and this is its chief drawback. If the fiber could be so treated with chemicals as to eliminate this dangerous quality it would be very much more valuable.

Chance for an Invention.

There are dolls which say "Mamma" and "Papa." Why doesn't someone invent a golf ball that will say "Here I am?"—Indianapolis Star.

Brattleboro, Vt., has hired a woman to superintend schools.

DADDY'S EVENING FAIRY TALE

By MARY GRAHAM BONNER

PROUD CARDINAL BIRD.

"The Cardinal Bird," said Daddy, "is a very Superior Bird and will not stand so much as to come down to the Earth."

"Do you mean he never comes on the Ground, Daddy?" exclaimed Nancy.

"Yes, he always Flying or Sitting on Branches of Trees?" asked Nick.

"Yes," said Daddy. "He loves Trees and Bushes and the Open Air and Enjoys Trees most of all. He likes it best up High. And he wouldn't Walk in the Woods or on a Lawn for anything. He delights to Fly in the Summer Breeze and have the Sun help to show off his Dazzling Coat to all the rest of the Birds.

Cardinal Bird Look-Haughty.

"One day Mr. Robin Redbreast was Walking along a lovely Green Lawn. He stopped several times to Pick up a Worm from the Ground and Swallow it Whole before he Walked on.

"In a Tree near by he spied the Cardinal Bird.

"'Hello,' said Mr. Robin Redbreast, cheerily, 'Won't you come and have a Worm with me? There are a number in this Lawn, and the good Rain we had last Night has made the Ground so Nice and Soft.' Do join me,' he ended with a bright Chirp.

"'No thank you,' said the Cardinal Bird. 'I wouldn't Soil my Feet on that Ground.' I Hate the Ground, absolutely. Hate it.' And the Cardinal Bird looked very Haughty and Proud.

"'Come now,' said Mr. Robin Redbreast, 'you won't get your Feet Dirty. And if you do, he whispered, knowingly, 'I can lead you to the Nicest Brook where you can Wash them off with fresh Rain Water. Do come!'

"'I cannot,' said the Cardinal Bird. 'I do not like the Earth. I want to be Flying in the Air, Sitting on the Branches of Trees. Sometimes I will Perch for a little while on a Laurel Bush—but come any lower? Dear me, no, I couldn't.'

"'It's a great Shame,' said Mr. Robin Redbreast. 'Of course, there is no accounting for Taste.'

"Thank you for Inviting me,' added the Cardinal Bird Politely. For he Prided himself on his Good manners.

"Pretty soon some Sollie People came along. At once they noticed the Beautiful Cardinal Bird. He wore his best Red Suit which he wears all the time—except in the Winter, when he adds Gray to his Wings. His Collar and Tie were of Black and his Feathers stuck up on top of his Head so as to make him look very Stylish and Neat.

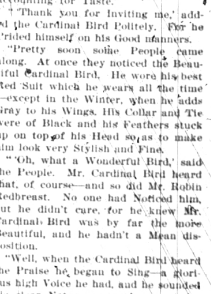
"'Oh, what a Wonderful Bird,' said the People. Mr. Cardinal Bird heard that, of course—and so did Mr. Robin Redbreast. No one had Noticed him, but he didn't care, for he knew Mr. Cardinal Bird was by far the more Beautiful, and he hadn't a Mean disposition.

"Well, when the Cardinal Bird heard the Praise he began to Sing—a glorious high Voice he had, and he sounded his clear Notes over and over again. Then suddenly he stopped, Cocked his Head on one side, as though to say, 'And what do you think of me now?'

"From down on the Ground Mr. Robin Redbreast had been Listening.

"'Oh, that was Wonderful, Wonderful,' he trilled.

"'Listen to that Dear Little Robin,' said one of the People. And they all turned from the Beautiful Bird with the high, rich Voice, to the little Friendly Robin, hopping about on the Lawn. Mr. Robin Redbreast didn't know they they were Noticing him. He was just Singing a Song of Adoring, for his Heart was so clearly, so Sweetly that even Mr. Cardinal Bird said, 'You're not such a bad little Singer yourself. But you really are not nearly Particular enough. You don't care where you go or to whom you Speak. When one belongs to a Fine Family like the Cardinal Bird Family, one must have great Dignity.' And Mr. Cardinal Bird Sang again, but the People were no longer Listening.



"Wonderful!" He Trilled.

"Off they had gone for Bread Crumbs for the little Robin. And when they came back they Scattered them all over the Ground.

"'For you, little Robin,' they said.

"But Mr. Robin Redbreast thought the Feast was for Mr. Cardinal Bird.

"'Goodness, for you!' he trilled.

"'But I can't come down,' said the Cardinal Bird. 'I will Eat up here.'

"And the People were saying, 'After all, there is nothing quite so Nice as a Dear little Robin.'"

Ladies Always First.

"Now, Willie," said the Sunday school teacher, "can you tell me why satan tempted Eve first?"

"Oh, I suppose he wanted to be polite," replied the little fellow. "Ladies come first, you know."

Used Moral Suasion.

"Is your teacher an advocate of corporal punishment?" asked the visitor.

"No, ma'am, I don't think so," replied little Willie. "I guess she believes in moral suasion, 'cause she just jaws us all the time."

Run Out of Patience.

It is better to have our pockets empty and our homes bare, than to run out of patience.